Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Context

The University is committed to Equal Pay, and operates a grade structure based on the JNCHES pay scale which has 51 spine points. There are 13 formal grade bands with a limited number of spine points in each, which allow for salary progression subject to successful performance appraisal. This ensures that the equal pay provisions of the Equality Act 2010 are fully met.

All roles outside the Vice Chancellor's Executive are evaluated using the HERA job evaluation scheme. The HERA scores are mapped to the grading structure to ensure staff are remunerated fairly.

The Board of Governors are responsible for determination of the pay and conditions of service of the Vice-Chancellor, the holders of senior posts, and the Clerk; taking into consideration a range of metrics, external and internal data when setting pay levels. The Remuneration Committee's Annual Remuneration Report to The Board of Governors for the Financial Year details these and is published on our website.

Date of snapshot: March 2025

As part of the legal obligations for an employer with over 250 employees we must produce a report using specific metrics for snapshot data from March 31st each year.

The metrics that we must provide are mean and median pay gap, and the proportion of female and male staff at each quartile band. Explanation of the calculations are provided in *Appendix 1*.

At Arts University Plymouth, we strive towards social and gender equality while maintaining a high standard of education, ensuring that staff receive fair recompense for the level of work that they complete.

What is the Mean?

To obtain the mean we use the sum of all staff salaries divided by the number of staff at AUP. It is useful because it places the same value on every number used, giving a good overall indication of the gender pay gap. However, very large or small pay rates can distort the answer. Therefore it should not be used alone, and to provide a clearer image of the gap we also need to look at the median value.

What is the Median?

Median averages are useful to indicate what the 'typical' situation is, by showing the middle value of an ordered list of pay rates, and are not distorted by very large or small pay rates. However, this means that gender pay gap issues caused by particularly large or small wages may not be picked up.

The Single Figure gap

As an initial indication into the gender pay gap, we have calculated the Mean and Median from an all staff list, regardless of what type of contract staff are on, as this provides an overview of the gap at the University. If the figure is positive it indicates that the gender pay gap is male favoured, if it is negative it indicates that the gender pay gap is female favoured.

However, it is not effective enough to use on its own to understand the reasons for the pay gap.Table 1 below shows the single figure pay gap.

Table 1: Single Figure Pay Gap

Single Figure 2025	%	Change
Median %	**16.8**	**+1.5% from 2024**
Mean %	**13.8**	**+2.0% from 2024**

Our gender pay gap has increased due to reduction in staff numbers, particularly at higher pay grades. Lower paid roles, which are predominantly female, have remained untouched, resulting in a larger wage disparity.

We compare unfavourably to the latest reported figures (ONS 2024[1]) for the:

- Education sector overall (3.8% median, 7.0% mean, trending downwards), and
- Higher Education average (9.3% median, 10.5% mean, also trending downwards)
- Nationally (13.1% median, 13.8% mean) the median gender pay gap is still decreasing, while the mean is increasing once more.

The ONS data shows that **South West** Educational establishments (including compulsory education) report higher Single Figure Pay Gaps (SW Education 18.9% median, 13.9% mean), which would suggest that geographically we are more aligned to the benchmark.

At Arts University Plymouth we do not pay bonuses, and so have no return for the mean and median bonus pay gaps.

Proportion of Males and Females in Quartile bands

The proportion of Males and Females in Quartile bands is calculated by putting all staff in a numerically ordered list from lowest to the highest pay, and then divided into 4 quartiles. As we currently have to report on 258 individuals, which includes all paid staff both salaried and hourly, each quartile containing between 64 and 65 members of staff.

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1 *https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/earningsandworkinghours/datasets/annualsurveyofhoursandearningsashegenderpaygaptables&sa=D&source=docs&ust=1678288058053071&usg=AOvVaw3tZIyTwwPObhAMi_GHkuL3, table 14.12; 5.12*

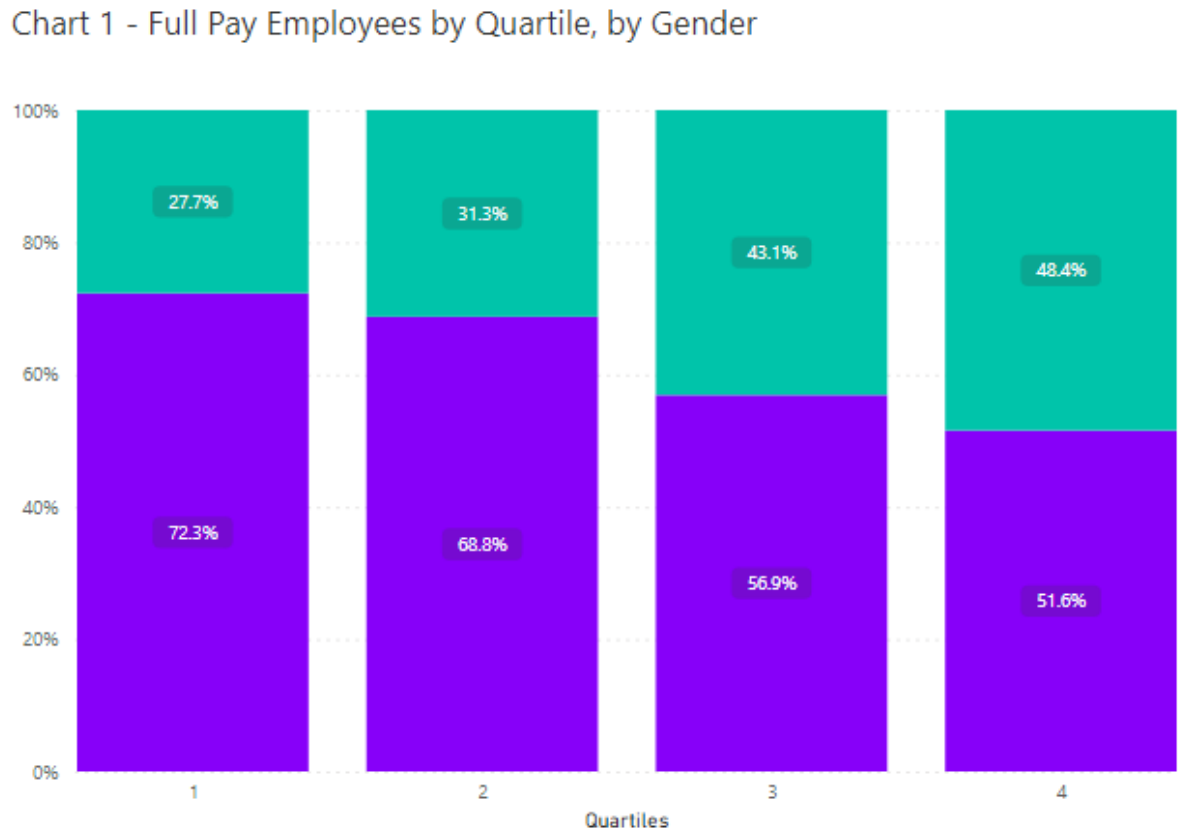
Then from each quartile the percentage of the number of females and males were calculated. For this report we are not required to submit salary bands for each quartile but rather just the percentage of each gender within these quartiles.

Table 2 below shows the percentage of female and male staff from each quartile.

Table 2: Male/Female % per Quartile

	Female %	Male %	
Quartile 1	73	27	Lowest Paid
Quartile 2	69	31	
Quartile 3	57	43	
Quartile 4	52	48	Highest Paid
Total	62	38	

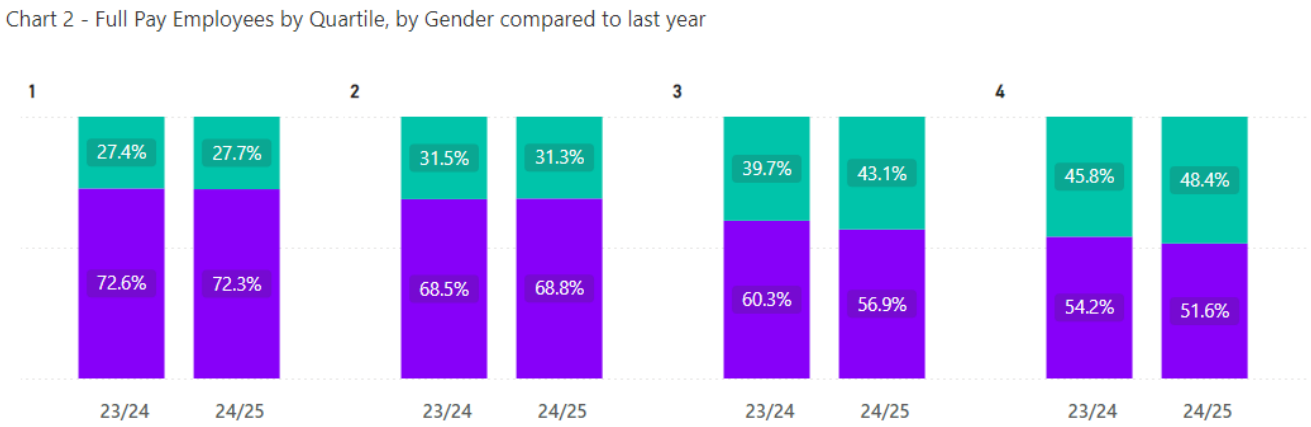
Fig 1: Male/Female % per Quartile



We have a clear split in our population of female staff between $Q_{1\text{-}2}$ and $Q_{3\text{-}4}$. We have a larger overall proportion of female staff at all quartiles. Our female staff population proportion shrank in Q_3 and Q_4 last year, while Q_1 and Q_2 remained mostly unchanged.

While a 50% split between genders would be the ideal end result of our actions to reduce the gender pay gap this may be unrealistic. Ensuring a constant percentage split between genders at all 4 quartiles would help reduce our gender pay gap.

Fig 2: Male/Female % per Quartile, this year vs last year



Factors Influencing our Gender Pay Gap:

1. **Student ambassadors** - Our body of student ambassadors continues to be mostly female, with 74% female and 26% male. This closely matches our student demographic (75% female and 25% male), and is a significant re-balance on 23/24 where 86% of our student ambassadors were female.

   While these demographics accurately reflect our student body, our Student Ambassadors are paid at National Living Wage, which has a large effect on both median and mean pay gap.

2. **Higher percentage of females in lower wage groupings** - When dividing our hourly wages into groupings of £2 the groups with the largest number of employees are between £10 and £16. Both £10-12 and £14-16 are 63% female, while £12-14 is 83% female. This level includes a number of professional service roles, as well as atypical roles such as life models and invigilators.

3. **Senior post holders** - Many of our executive post holders are male, with our 4 highest paid members of salaried staff being male.

Actions we are taking to address the gap:

Arts University Plymouth is committed to improving our Gender Pay Gap, and more broadly ensuring that equality, diversity, and inclusion are at the heart of decisions we take regarding our whole community - staff, students, and our broader community. We recognise that our relatively small size means that any staff turnover impacts our gender pay gap significantly and that any initiatives introduced will take time to embed real change.

The adoption of the University's first dedicated People Plan, as part of the University's Strategic Plan, has equality, diversity and inclusion woven throughout all of its considerations, and sets specific measurable KPIs in relation to our diversity and specifically the Gender Pay

Gap. The plan takes a holistic view of workplace inclusivity and fairness of policy and sets out a number of priorities to develop people practices to remove actual or perceived barriers throughout the employment cycle.

We are committed to:

- Vice Chancellor's Executive engagement with the gender pay gap and to identify sustainable solutions.
- Improved and enhanced HR practices and policies including:
    - Improved recruitment procedures and documentation to ensure a best practice approach to recruiting staff regardless of gender or other protected characteristics, including use of gender decoder software during recruitment.
    - Enhanced analysis of exit interviews to consider reasons for leaving and feedback by gender.
    - Applying a consistent approach to starting salaries. Where there is a request for negotiation, or market conditions dictate the need for appointment at a higher spine point, HR will lead these discussions to ensure negotiations are fair, consistent, and centred around a candidate's evidenced knowledge and experience.
    - HERA evaluation on all role profiles, to ensure robust grading and fair recompense for work completed, and that role banding is strongly centred on role requirements.
    - Enhancement of resource approval process to ensure full use of HERA role analysis, market comparators, and that any role profile amendments required for staff vacancies accurately reflect the needs of the role and therefore salary.
    - Consideration of attraction strategies such as part-time and flexible working for all roles regardless of seniority where the role allows
    - Development of recruitment strategies and the AUP Employer Brand to widen our recruitment geography, and to appeal to a breadth of market including younger demographics, potentially widening the pool of female and male candidates.
    - Enhancing recruitment and selection processes to improve candidate success including sharing interview guidance and experience based questions in advance to give all candidates the best opportunity for success including marginalised or disadvantaged groups.
    - Include explicit references to Equality, Diversity and Inclusion in policies, processes and decision making to ensure transparency around all decisions and practices; to embed our position as a fair & equitable employer.
    - Develop, consult and further embed the use of Equality Impact Assessments in process, policy and operational changes relating to staff.
    - New Flexible Working Policy introduced to clarify process, introduce consistency of application and approval routes, and to support flexibility for all staff wherever possible.
- Develop guidance to support managers in writing standardised, inclusive role profiles that accurately reflect roles and clearly describes what qualities and skills an applicant would need to be successful
- Review and benchmarking of all family friendly policies and entitlements, including time off for dependants (which is known to disproportionately impact females) and raising

awareness of policies that focus on supporting female staff e.g. menopause support procedure

- Maintaining our expectation that all staff, including atypical staff, complete all core training such as EDI, to include: regular monitoring of training completion and a commitment to review this at relevant committees such as EDI Committee with oversight from the Vice Chancellor's Executive; and further review of our training provision and frequency to ensure it remains relevant for a modern and diverse workforce.

Due to the amount of turnover at the University and the skilled work that is required, maintaining a gender pay gap of zero is unrealistic and as a small organisation individual variances in roles can have a disproportionate statistical impact when compared to larger institutions.

Appendix 1
Explanation of the Calculations

The **mean pay gap** is an average calculated by adding the hourly pay rate of each member of staff together and dividing by the total staff body, by gender. Then the female mean is subtracted from the male mean, and the result divided by the male mean.

Our mean pay gap was calculated with the following formula:

> **Mean Male** Hourly Wage - **Mean Female** Hourly Wage / **Mean Male** Hourly Wage:
>
> - Mean Male Hourly Wage = 19.6734
> - Mean Female Hourly Wage = 16.9522
> - Mean Pay Gap = (19.6734 - 16.9522) / 19.6734 = 0.1383 * 100 = 13.8%

The **median pay gap** is calculated by arranging all of the hourly pay in ascending order and finding the middle value for each gender. Then the female median is subtracted from the male median, and the result divided by the male median.

Our median pay gap was calculated with the following formula:

> **Median Male** Hourly Wage - **Median Female** Hourly Wage / **Median Male** Hourly Wage:
>
> - Median Male Hourly Wage = 17.4260
> - Median Female Hourly Wage = 14.5022
> - Median Pay Gap = (17.4260 - 14.5022) / 17.4260 = 0.1678 * 100 = 16.8%

For both mean and median pay gap percentages:

- A **positive percentage** indicates that an average male earns more than an average female.
- A **negative percentage** indicates that an average female earns more than an average male.
- A **zero percentage** represents parity between an average female and male.

A **quartile** is calculated by arranging the data in order of hourly pay and then dividing the list into four equal, smaller segments. We then ensure that if the quartile intersects a pay point (for example if there were staff at £20 ph in Q_3 and Q_4) that we divide the staff between the quartiles so there are an equal proportion of male and female staff at that pay rate in both quartiles.

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