

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2025



INTRODUCTION



OUJ/ Ian Wallman

This year marks the first full period of delivery under the University's first Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (2024–27). Through this work, we are focusing not only on setting direction, but on embedding sustained, institution-wide action to improve representation, progression and inclusion across the collegiate University. We recognise that creating an environment in which talented people from all backgrounds can thrive is essential to sustaining excellence.

The 2025 data demonstrate meaningful progress since reporting began in 2017. The median gender pay gap has reduced to 9.4% from 11.1% in the previous year, while the mean pay gap has fallen from 17.7% to 16.9%. Importantly, we have already reached our Council target of 35% female representation among Associate Professors ahead of the 2029 target, marking a significant milestone in strengthening the pipeline into senior academic roles. It is encouraging to see that 35% of all Statutory Professor appointments have been female in the last two academic years, driving growth in female representation in that population from 22% in 2024 to 25% in 2025.

These improvements reflect gradual but important shifts in the composition of our workforce, particularly increased representation of female staff in higher-paid roles. At the same time, the data continue to highlight structural challenges, including the underrepresentation of female staff at the most senior levels and within the upper pay quartile, which remain key drivers of the overall pay gap.

Over the past year, we have continued to strengthen the conditions that support long-term career progression. This includes embedding enhanced family-friendly provision, including the sector-leading and award-winning Additional Paternity/ Partner Leave scheme, and from April 2025 the enhanced Neonatal Care Leave and Pay scheme (NCLP) for parents, alongside broader work on career development, internal mobility and academic reward frameworks. These measures are intended to address structural barriers over time, particularly those related to career progression and the unequal distribution of caring responsibilities. We are committed to supporting colleagues at different stages of their lives and careers, and to ensuring that Oxford is a place where talented people can build long-term careers.

While our median gender pay gap is now below the sector average, our mean gap remains higher, reflecting the continued influence of a relatively small number of senior, highly paid roles. Addressing this imbalance will require sustained focus on progression, representation and the long-term development of our academic workforce.

Our ambition is clear: to ensure we are a collegiate University in which everyone feels they belong and is supported to succeed. Through the EDI Strategic Plan, we will continue to work with colleagues across the collegiate University to deliver our objectives, including continued action to reduce the gender pay gap and to advance gender equality across the institution.

Professor Irene Tracey CBE FRS FMedSci
Vice-Chancellor
University of Oxford

Key points

- The mean gender pay gap has reduced from 17.7% to 16.9%. With the exception in 2022, the mean gap has decreased consistently since gender pay gap reporting was introduced in 2017, when it stood at 24.5%.
- The median gender pay gap has decreased from 11.1% in the previous year to 9.4%, representing the lowest median gap recorded since reporting began in 2017 (13.7%).
- The median bonus pay gap remains at 0%, while the mean bonus pay gap has decreased slightly from 61.5% in 2024 to 58.7% 2025.
- In 2025 the Council goal of reaching 35% representation of female staff in Associate Professor roles was met.

INTRODUCTION

The University is committed to being a collegiate community where everyone belongs and is supported to succeed. Advancing gender equality remains a priority for us, including sustained action to reduce the gender pay gap.

This is the University's ninth gender pay gap report¹. In 2025, both the mean and median gender pay gaps have decreased compared with the previous year. The median gender pay gap has reduced by 1.7 percentage points to 9.4%, representing the more significant year-on-year movement, while the mean gender pay gap has decreased to 16.9%.

The reduction in the median gender pay gap reflects changes in the distribution of female employees across the pay structure, including an increase in the proportion of female staff in the upper pay quartile. Over recent years, steady progress has been made in increasing female representation in the upper quartile, which rose by 1 percentage point to 44.3% in 2025. Median hourly pay increased for both female and male staff between 2024 and 2025; however, the increase was greater for female staff, both in absolute terms (£1.60 for female compared with £1.35 for male staff) and on a percentage basis (8.0% compared with 6.0%).

Changes in workforce distribution have also contributed to the reduction in the mean gender pay gap. Average hourly rates rose by a greater percentage for female employees (4.7%) than for male staff (2.3%). Nevertheless, a substantial difference in mean hourly pay remains in the upper quartile, which continues to be a key contributor to the overall mean gender pay gap.

The median bonus pay gap remains at 0% in 2025, while the mean bonus pay gap has reduced slightly to 58.7% and continues to favour male employees. Bonus pay is awarded to a relatively small proportion of staff, with 18.6% of female and 13.8% of male staff receiving a bonus in the reporting period. As in previous years, the 0% median bonus pay gap indicates that bonus amounts for middle-earning female and male staff are comparable, while the mean gap reflects the influence of a relatively small number of higher value-bonus payments rather than widespread difference in bonus receipt.

¹ With workforce exceeding 250 individuals, the University is legally obligated to report its gender pay gap using data from the snapshot date of 31 March 2025, and to publish this pay information by 30 March 2026.



FINDINGS

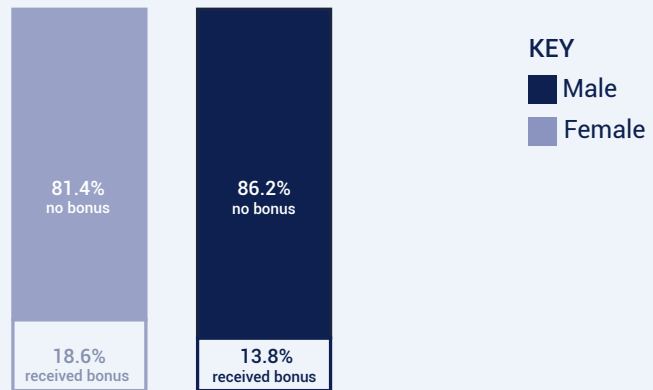
As of 31 March 2025, the University's total workforce (including Oxford University Press) for gender pay gap reporting comprised of 21,231 individuals: 11,793 female and 9,438 male staff.²

In 2025, the University's mean gender pay gap in ordinary pay was 16.9%, and the median pay gap was 9.4%.

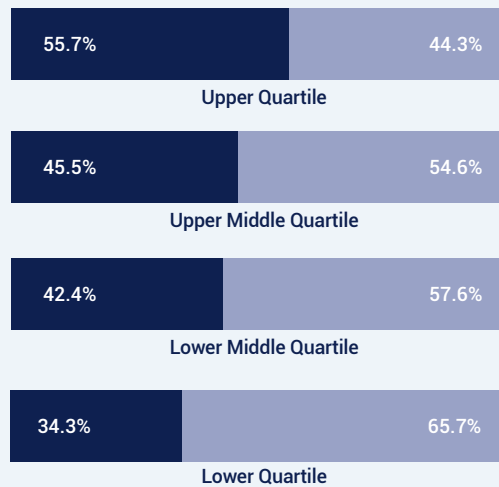
Mean and median gender pay gap (2025)	Female earnings
Mean gender pay gap in ordinary hourly pay	16.9% lower
Median gender pay gap in ordinary hourly pay	9.4% lower

Bonus pay gap (2025)	Female earnings
Mean gender pay gap in bonus pay	58.7% lower
Median gender pay gap in bonus pay	0% lower

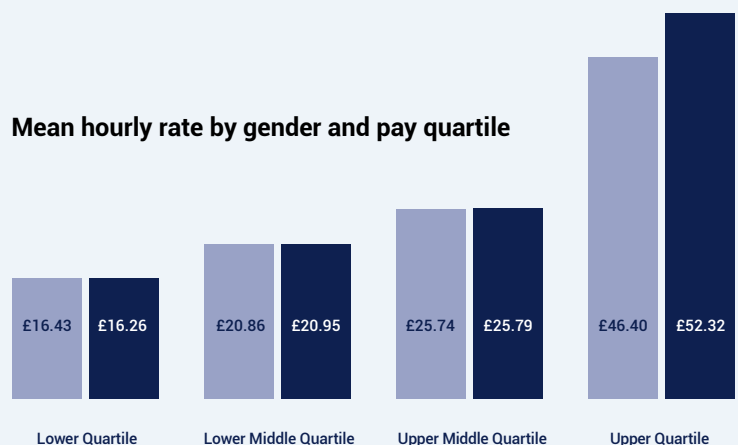
Proportion of male and female staff in receipt of bonus payments



Number of male and female staff by quartile



Mean hourly rate by gender and pay quartile



² The figures in this report are based on binary sex data as reported to HMRC. We recognise there are limitations to solely using binary sex and acknowledge that further work is required to gather gender identity data.

ANALYSIS

Pay

The University's mean gender pay gap stands at 16.9%, with a median gap of 9.4%. The mean gap has reduced by 0.8 percentage points compared with the previous year and by 7.6 percentage points since the introduction of gender pay gap reporting in 2017. The median gap has reduced by 1.7 percentage points compared to 2024 and by 4.3 percentage points overall since reporting began, reaching its lowest level to date.

The reductions in both – the mean and median gender pay gaps – primarily reflect changes in workforce distribution. In particular, an increase in the proportion of female staff in the upper pay quartile has contributed to higher average mean and median hourly pay for female staff overall.

Benchmark

Across the higher education sector in England and Wales in 2024, the average mean gender pay gap was 13.6%, and the median gender pay gap was 11.5%.³ The University's mean gender pay gap therefore remains above the sector average, while its median gender pay gap has dropped below the sector median.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) recommends the use of mean earnings when reporting the gender pay gap. However, from a statistical perspective, the median can provide a more representative measure of typical earnings, as it is less affected by a small number of very high or very low salaries.

Pay quartiles

Female staff continue to be overrepresented in the lower, lower middle and upper middle pay quartiles. This pattern reverses in the upper quartile, where male staff remain the majority. Over recent years, sustained progress has been made in increasing the proportion of female staff in the upper quartile. Compared with the previous year, this proportion increased by 1 percentage point to 44.3% in 2025 and is almost 4 percentage points higher than in 2021 (40.4%). The proportion of female employees in the lower and lower middle quartile has remained broadly unchanged compared to 2024. In the upper middle quartile the ratio of female staff has slightly decreased from 55.1% in 2024 to 54.6% in 2025.

In the lower pay quartile, female staff earn slightly more per hour on average than male staff. For both, the lower middle and upper middle quartile, average hourly pay is marginally higher for male than for female staff. The differences in these quartiles are small, however, indicating near pay parity in average hourly rates at these levels. The largest difference in mean hourly pay continues to be observed in the upper quartile, where male staff earn on average £5.92 more than their female counterparts (£52.32 compared with £46.40). This substantial gap indicates that male employees are more likely to be in senior or highly paid roles and highlights the disproportionate influence of the highest-paid roles on the overall gender pay gap.

³UCEA mean and median benchmark for Higher Education institutions in England and Wales based on statutory reporting. At the time this report was produced the 2025 figures had not been released.

Factors influencing the gender pay gap

Gender distribution across academic and professional services roles

There has been gradual improvement over time in the representation of female staff in academic roles, which include the highest proportion of top earners. However, female employees continue to hold just over one third (35.9%) of academic positions in 2025. At professorial level, where average earnings are highest, female academics account for approximately one quarter (25.6%) of roles in 2025.

By contrast, female staff remain overrepresented in professional services roles, where they account for almost two thirds of employees (60.7% in 2025). This concentration is particularly evident in the middle grades. Grades 5 and 6 together comprise over a quarter of professional services roles, with female staff representing 69.4% of staff in grade 5 and 68.7% in grade 6.

Taken together, the lower representation of female employees in higher-paid academic roles and their higher concentration in lower-paid professional services roles constitute structural factors that impact the University's gender pay gap.

Upper quartile of earners

As set out in the previous section, the upper quartile persists to have the greatest influence on the overall mean gender pay gap, due to both higher average pay disparities and differences in the distribution of female and male staff within this quartile.

Bonus pay gap

For the purposes of gender pay gap reporting, bonus pay includes any remuneration relating to productivity, performance, or incentive. During the relevant reporting period, bonus pay awarded by the University included Clinical Impact Awards (formerly Clinical Excellence Awards), Awards for Excellence, one-off payments made under the Recognition Scheme, and bonus payments made under the Oxford University Press (OUP) bonus scheme.

Reward and Recognition Scheme

The University operates a Reward and Recognition Scheme for all staff on its main salary and grading structure. The scheme comprises Awards for Excellence, which provide incremental payments, and a Recognition Scheme, which offers one-off awards of £200 or £400. During the reporting period, the University made 1,132 awards under the Recognition Scheme and 417 Awards for Excellence. As in previous years, female staff accounted for the majority of recipients under both schemes, representing 61.8% of Recognition Scheme awards and 63.3% of Awards for Excellence. Average bonus values under the Rewards and Recognition Scheme are broadly comparable for female and male staff.

Clinical Impact Awards

Clinical Impact Awards (formerly Clinical Excellence Awards⁴) are available to eligible staff on clinical grades who hold honorary contracts with NHS Trusts and undertake clinical work.

In 2025, the number of clinical awards granted declined further to 127, compared with 150 in 2024. Male staff continued to account for the majority of clinical academics in receipt of clinical awards, representing 73% of award holders in 2025.

⁴Clinical Excellence Awards have been replaced since 2022 with Clinical Impact Awards by the NHS. The motivation for this change was to support a wider and more diverse group of applicants.



Oxford University Press bonus scheme

Oxford University Press operates a number of different bonus arrangements in the UK, all of which are included in the reported figures. The schemes include a bonus plan for senior-level employees based on financial and non-financial performance metrics; sales-based bonus plans for certain customer-facing roles; and a discretionary bonus plan for employees not covered by other plans. Decisions relating to bonus arrangements at Oxford University Press are made independently by the Press, which reports its gender pay gap separately and agrees actions accordingly.

Out of 2,007 Oxford University Press employees included in the dataset, 1,125 female and 598 male employees received a bonus payment in 2025.

Factors influencing the bonus pay gap

While the median bonus pay gap remains 0% in 2025, the mean bonus pay gap continues to strongly favour male staff. This divergence indicates that the mean bonus pay gap is influenced by a small number of higher-value bonus payments.

Overall, only a small ratio of the University's employees receive bonus pay: 18.6% of female and 13.8% of male staff in 2025. Although female employees are proportionately more likely to receive a bonus payment, the average bonus value is higher for male employees.

This pattern is particularly evident in relation to Clinical Impact Awards (formerly Clinical Excellence). Although the number of eligible staff and the number of staff in receipt of these awards are relatively small, the total value of Clinical Impact/Clinical Excellence Awards accounted for over one third of all bonus payments in 2025 (34.4%). As highlighted, male staff make up the majority of recipients of these awards and as individual award values are relatively high, these payments have a material effect on the mean bonus pay gap and represent a significant contributing factor.

In addition, more than half (53.8% in 2025) of the total bonus value included in the gender pay gap calculations is paid by the Oxford University Press. While a higher proportion of female staff at the Press receive bonus payments, male staff are on average awarded higher-value bonuses, which further contributes to the overall mean bonus pay gap.

The Reward and Recognition Scheme has a limited impact on the overall bonus pay gap, as award values are relatively low and evenly distributed between female and male staff.

This indicates that the disparity in the mean bonus pay gap is largely driven by higher-value bonus payments awarded within these specific groups, rather than by differences across all grades.

COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

In September 2024, the University launched its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategic Plan (2024–27). The plan, developed through extensive consultation, was the first time the University articulated a strategic equality, diversity and inclusion vision for the whole collegiate University. The Strategic Plan consolidates our longstanding objectives and actions toward gender equality and provides shared framework for action, including targets approved by Council in 2021 to close the professorial gender gap by 2029.

Gender Equality Work

The University has held an institutional Athena Swan Silver Award since February 2023, in acknowledgement of our continuous efforts to address gender inequalities across the institution. Since then, the University has seen good progress on the outcome measures, with 44 out of 49 departments now holding an Athena Swan award. This includes 4 Gold awards, 19 Silver awards and 21 Bronze awards.

In 2025, the University celebrated an important milestone – reaching the proportion of 35% of female Associate Professors in post. This reflects the many initiatives taken by faculties and departments to address the Associate Professor gender gap and the embedding of the Associate Professor Inclusive Recruitment Guidelines launched in 2022.

The University also saw a growth in the proportion of female Statutory Professors in post, now at 25% (from 22% in 2024). In the last two academic years, 35% of all Statutory Professors appointments have been female.

To celebrate these achievements, the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Irene Tracey, invited representatives from four Oxford departments who have made significant progress in improving the representation of female staff at professorial level for a discussion on leadership and gender equality to mark International Women's Day 2025.

Beyond this, the University is also developing an Academic Career and Reward Framework to improve the career paths, workload, and reward and recognition of academic staff; as well as an Internal Mobility Framework to enable professional services staff to easily and effectively develop and progress their careers at Oxford, particularly by undertaking different roles across the University.

Family-friendly policies

The University has several family-friendly policies and initiatives in place, which go beyond the statutory minimum. We offer family leave schemes, subsidised University nurseries, flexible working, and dedicated funding to support academics and researchers who have taken a break for parenting or caring responsibilities to re-establish their research careers.

In January 2025, the University introduced the Oxford University Additional Paternity/ Partner Leave scheme for eligible staff, offering up to 12 weeks of paid paternity/ partner leave at the rate of full pay within the first 52 weeks following the birth or placement of the child. This replaced the previous two-week allowance and positioned the University within a relatively small group of organisations to do so across the UK.

Since April 2025, the University has also offered an enhanced Neonatal Care Leave and Pay (NCLP) scheme for parents, or others who share formal responsibility with the mother or primary adopter, for care of babies who are admitted to neonatal care within the first 28 days after birth for a minimum of seven full days. The NCLP scheme effectively extends other statutory family leave schemes to allow the parent to have the same amount of time at home with their new child as they would have, if the child had not required neonatal care.

These changes reflect a strong commitment to supporting parents, promoting gender equality, and enabling fairer sharing of early childcare. Following the introduction of the University's

12-week paternity/partner leave, the Equality and Diversity Unit launched the Shifting the narrative on gender and caregiving: Parenting 'out loud' campaign to support parents and carers with resources, conversations, and policy awareness. The initiative, funded by the Diversity Fund, sought to create a more inclusive workplace and challenge outdated gender norms around caregiving.

In recognition of our sector-leading work, the University was awarded the Working Dads Employer Award in 2025.

Returning Carers Fund

The Returning Carers' Fund supports academics and researchers who have taken a break for parenting or caring responsibilities to re-establish their research careers. These career breaks include maternity, paternity/partner, adoption and shared parental leave, as well as breaks to care for disabled or elderly family members. In the 2024–25 academic year, 47 applicants received a Returning Carers Fund award at an average reward amount of £6,523.

Building networks for women

This year, the University saw the launch of two women-led networks. Motherhood at Work is a network for colleagues who want to explore how motherhood shapes identity, leadership, and life at work. Launched in December 2024, the network brings colleagues together in facilitated peer learning circles, adapted from the Lean In Circles model and modified for a UK higher education context.

The Oxford Women's Staff Network (OWN) launched in early 2025. The network is anchored in a shared commitment to raising the profile of women at Oxford and creating a

supportive, inclusive and motivated community that connects women from across the collegiate University. Since its inception, OWN has held termly meetings and has grown its membership to over 200 women, spanning different job roles and career stages.

Progress over time

Over recent years, the University has strengthened its focus on workforce strategy through the People Strategy and the Pay and Conditions Review. This has included action on inclusive recruitment practices, academic career and reward frameworks, internal mobility, and enhanced family-friendly provision. These initiatives align closely with the University's equality, diversity and inclusion objectives, and are driven principally by pay and workforce strategy considerations aimed at improving progression, retention and long-term sustainability of the academic and professional services workforce.

In particular, the introduction of enhanced paternity/partner leave formed part of this strategic approach. The policy was developed with the explicit objective of supporting a more equitable sharing of early caring responsibilities and, over time, mitigating the career interruptions that disproportionately affect women's academic progression. The intended impacts are structural and long term.

The gender pay gap has also reduced over recent years, but it is influenced primarily by workforce distribution, especially representation within senior academic roles and in the upper pay quartile. Shifts in these patterns typically occur gradually and reflect recruitment, promotion, turnover and pipeline effects over multiple years rather than the immediate impact of individual interventions.

METHODOLOGY

Equal Pay

The gender pay gap measures the difference between the mean and median earnings of female and male staff across the University. Equal pay, by contrast, concerns whether individuals receive the same pay for performing the same work, work rated as equivalent, or work assessed as being of equal value. It is therefore possible to have a gender pay gap without being in breach of equal pay legislation.

The University's most recent equal pay audit was conducted in 2023. The audit found that, in broad terms, the University is achieving equal pay for work of equal value.

Calculations

The mean hourly rate is calculated by adding together the hourly rates of all individuals in the relevant dataset and dividing the total by the number of individuals.

The median hourly rate is calculated by sorting all individual hourly rates in ascending order and identifying the middle value (or median). 50% of individuals will earn more than this hourly rate, and 50% will earn less.

The pay gaps are calculated as the difference (shown as a percentage) between the mean and median hourly rates for male and female staff.

Included data

In accordance with the relevant regulations and the Equality Act 2010, the University's gender pay gap report includes data relating to persons engaged by the legal entity incorporated under the name 'The Chancellors Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford' ("the University"). This includes employees in departments of the University of Oxford, casual workers (including those undertaking casual teaching),

individuals engaged through the University's Temporary Staffing Service and staff employed by Oxford University Press ("the Press").

The report does not include colleges or subsidiary companies, which are separate legal entities.

The Press has provided its UK data to the University's People Committee in an anonymised format. Historically, the Press has not been included in reporting undertaken by the rest of the University. It has separate remuneration arrangements and operates within a different employment market from the University.

University employees are employed on either clinical or non-clinical grades. The majority of non-clinical staff are employed on one of the eleven grades within the University's main salary and grading structure. Senior staff are employed on grades relating to job type (for example, the Statutory Professor grade, Senior Research grade, or Senior Managerial and Professional grade). For staff on clinical grades, grade and pay are determined by an individual's stage of training and mirrors NHS arrangements. Salaries for clinical academics with consultant contracts are determined by recognised seniority and experience within the NHS.

Snapshot date

The data presented in this report is based on the snapshot date of 31 March 2025. The relevant pay period for employees is therefore the March payroll plus the preceding 12 working weeks for individuals with irregular hours, and the preceding 12 months for data relating to bonus pay. The dataset excludes individuals receiving reduced pay during the pay period (e.g., those on sickness, maternity, paternity, or other unpaid leave).