

GENDER PAY GAP REPORT 2024

INTRODUCTION

OUJ/John Cairns



Since the University began reporting on the gender pay gap in 2017, we have made steady progress towards reducing institutional pay inequality. One of our primary objectives has been to increase the proportion of women in senior academic roles. We recognise that this will help address the gender pay gap, as one of the key drivers of global gender disparity is the underrepresentation of women in higher-paying positions. I am proud to report that as of 2024, we

have nearly reached our target of 35% female Associate Professors; the proportion of female Associate Professors now stands at 34%, up from 32% in 2023. Our mean gender pay gap has also decreased this year from 19.1% to 17.7%, in part due to an increase in hourly rates for female staff.

To accelerate our continued progress toward creating a more equitable gender distribution, in 2024, a Task and Finish Group undertook an analysis of the University's gender pay gap and provided recommendations for improvement. Based on the findings of this investigation, People Committee agreed a series of recommendations that aim to support the recruitment, retention, and the progression of women at the University by providing more flexible working opportunities and clear and transparent career pathways. A number of actions to deliver initiatives are underway, and departments/faculties are receiving support to undertake local-level analysis and implement evidence-based actions. This work is being supported by the University's work to improve gender equality more broadly.

We remain committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable environment for all staff members. By implementing these initiatives and closely monitoring our progress, we are confident that we will continue to reduce the gender pay gap. Oxford must be a workplace where everyone has the opportunity to thrive and succeed.

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

Key points

- The mean gender pay gap has decreased from 19.1% to 17.7%, and, with one exception in 2022, it continues to decrease since gender pay gap reporting was first introduced in 2017 (when it was at 24.5%).
- The median gender pay gap has remained the same, at 11.1%.
- The median bonus pay gap remains at 0%, while the mean bonus pay gap has increased from 30.5% to 61.5%. The decrease in 2023 was due to the unusual impact of the 'thank you' payment to all staff.
- The gender pay gap is primarily influenced by the uneven distribution of male and female staff across the organisation, with more men in high-paying roles and more women in lower-paying roles.
- This year, following an in-depth analysis of the gender pay gap, a series of recommendations were approved in 2024 and are underway.

INTRODUCTION

The University is dedicated to fostering an inclusive environment that champions equality, embraces diversity, and ensures that all members of its community – staff and students alike – are treated with respect and dignity. Promoting gender equality remains a central focus of the University, and this extends to a commitment to reducing the gender pay gap. In addition to our strategic equality objectives and commitments under Athena Swan, in the past year we have undertaken a detailed analysis of the drivers of the University's gender pay gap, and a number of recommendations are actively being undertaken.

This is the University's eighth gender pay gap report and it is good to see that there is a decrease in the mean pay gap from last year, down to 17.7%. Although the median gender pay remains the same as in the previous year, at 11.1%, this represents a step in a positive direction as it remains at 11.1% for a second year in a row, down from 13.6% in 2023.

The progress in lowering the mean gender pay gap is largely driven by a decrease in the proportion of female staff in the lower quartile. Overall, this has led to an increase in hourly rates for female staff. The median remains unchanged as the distribution of male and female staff around the midpoint has stayed the same.

The median bonus pay gap remains at 0%, while the mean bonus pay gap has increased from 30.5% to 61.5% this year; this is largely due to the unusual impact in 2023 of the 'thank you' payments to all staff. Since the launch of pay gap reporting, the mean gender bonus pay gap has steadily decreased over time, from 79.0% in 2017 to 61.5% this year. The median bonus pay gap has remained at 0% since 2019, and has overall decreased from 48.7% in 2017. The 0% median bonus gap shows that, for middle male and female earners, bonus amounts are similar.

There has been some limited progress across the pay quartiles, with the proportion of women in the lower quartile decreasing to 65.4% (from 65.9%).

For the first time this year, the report features a calculation of the *adjusted gender pay gap*, which measures the difference in pay between women and men after accounting for factors that determine pay, such as job function, grade, and length of service. In 2024, the adjusted mean pay gap for the University is 4.2%; this means that 13.5 percentage-points of the 17.7% mean gender pay gap can be explained using available data, and are driven by factors such as length of service and job level.



FINDINGS

On the 31 March 2024 the University's total workforce (including Oxford University Press) for gender pay gap reporting consisted of 20,537 individuals: 11,384 women and 9,153 men.

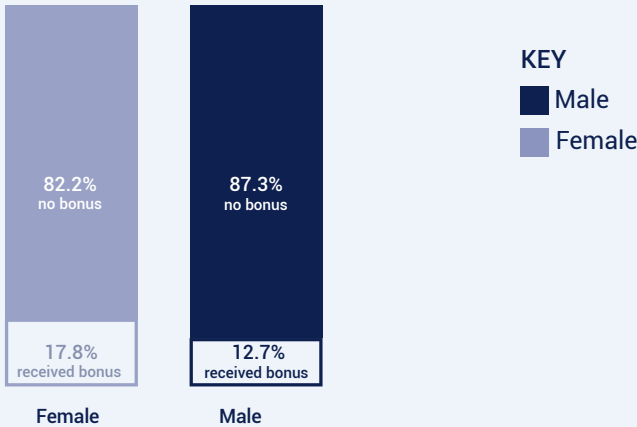
This year, the University's mean gender pay gap decreased to 17.7% and the median pay gap remained at 11.1%.

Mean and median gender pay gap (2024)	Female earnings
Mean gender pay gap in ordinary hourly pay	17.7% lower
Median gender pay gap in ordinary hourly pay	11.1% lower

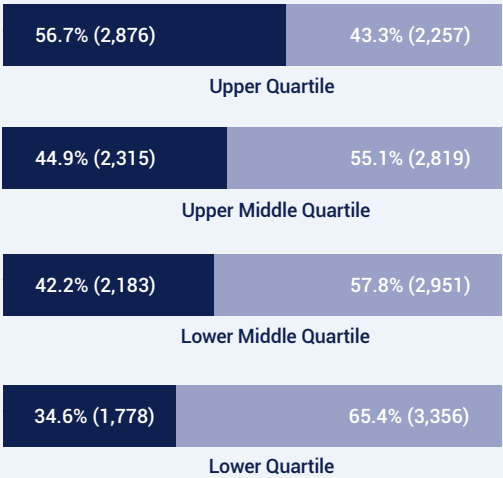
Bonus pay gap (2024)	Female earnings
Mean gender pay gap in bonus pay	61.5% lower
Median gender pay gap in bonus pay	0% lower

Breakdown of bonus pay recipients by legal sex	
Male	36.5%
Female	63.5%

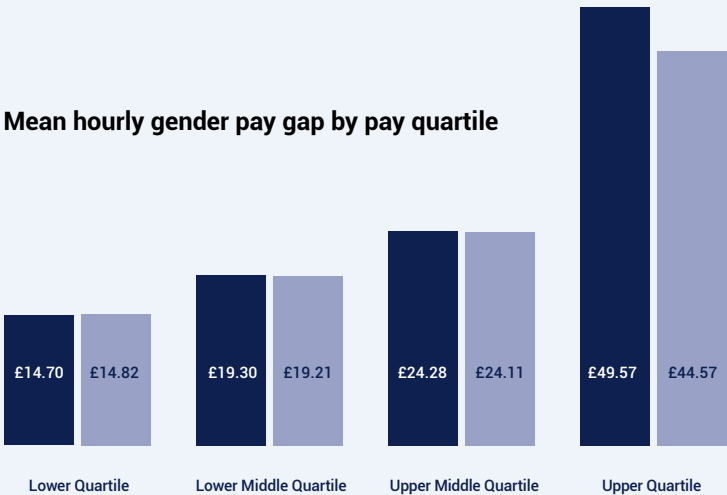
Proportion of male and female staff in receipt of bonus payments



Number of male and female staff by quartile



Mean hourly gender pay gap by pay quartile



ANALYSIS

Pay

The University's mean gender pay gap is now 17.7%, with a median gap of 11.1%.¹ This means the average pay gap has decreased by 1.4% since 2023, and by 6.8% since the introduction of gender pay gap reporting in 2017. The median gap remains the same as in 2023, and is at its lowest since reporting began. (at its lowest point) as in 2021 and 2023.

The improvement in the mean gender pay gap is driven by a decrease in the proportion of female staff in the lower quartile. Overall, this has led to an increase in hourly rates for female staff. The median remains unchanged as the distribution of male and female staff around the midpoint has stayed the same.

Benchmark

The average mean gender pay gap across the UK higher education sector in 2024 was 13.0% and the median pay gap was 11.9%.² Oxford thus trails behind other HEIs with respect to the mean pay gap, but lands squarely amongst them with respect to the median gap.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) advises using the mean rather than median earnings to measure the national gender pay gap; however, from a statistical standpoint, the median is often a more meaningful measure as it is not skewed by very low or very high pay. Thus, in situations where there are significant differences in pay between a few individuals, the median provides a more representative measure of the typical salary.

Adjusted pay gap

This year, the University has invested in more robust tools to analyse pay gaps and to better understand the factors contributing to the gaps.

These tools have, for the first time, allowed an analysis of the unadjusted pay gap as well as the adjusted pay gap. The unadjusted pay gap measures the average raw difference in hourly pay between men and women. This is the manner in which gender pay gap is calculated for reporting purposes, and uses hourly rates to determine average pay for women and men.

The adjusted pay gap measures the difference in pay between women and men after accounting for factors that determine pay, such as job role and experience. This is done through a regression analysis which enables an analysis of how various pay-determining characteristics, such as job level and length of service, influence the mean gap.

The analysis found that the adjusted mean pay gap for the University is 4.2%; this means that 13.6 percentage points of the total 17.7% gap can be explained using available data, and are largely driven by grade, job function, location or tenure. This 4.2% gap equates to a £1.22 variance in hourly pay between male and female employees, whereas the unadjusted hourly pay gap is £5.20 per hour. The remaining unexplained 4.2% does not necessarily indicate bias; it could be further reduced with linking pay data more closely to staff data, so that other factors that influence pay can be included.

¹ Definitions: Mean is the sum divided by the count. Median is the middle value.

² HEPI Report Number 171 (2024). [Show me the money: an exploration of the gender pay gap in higher education](#)

Pay quartiles

Women comprise a higher proportion of staff in the lower, lower-middle and upper-middle pay quartiles compared to men. However, this trend reverses in the upper quartile. There has been some progress across the pay quartiles, with the proportion of women in the upper quartile remaining at 43% and the proportion of women in the lower, lower middle and upper middle quartile decreasing. The most significant shift was observed in the lower middle quartile where the percentage of female staff decreased by 3.9 percentage points.

In the lower quartile, the hourly rate for women is 12p higher than for men. However, in the three highest quartiles, male employees consistently earn more per hour, with the largest gap appearing in the upper quartile. This trend suggests that while pay disparities favour women in the lowest-paid roles, men tend to occupy higher-paying positions, leading to an increasing gender pay gap as earnings rise. The significant difference in the upper quartile indicates that male employees are more likely to be in senior or highly paid roles, contributing to the overall gender pay disparity.

Factors driving the gender pay gap

Low proportion of women in senior roles

Grade accounts for 62.8% of the unadjusted gap, revealing that a higher proportion of male staff occupy senior, better-paid roles compared to female staff. This is explained by the low proportion of women in academic roles (the staff group with the highest proportion of top earners), with women accounting for only 28% of professors.

High proportion of women in professional service roles

Women account for a high proportion of earners in professional service roles, especially in grades 5 and 6, where they account for 70% of staff. Women in grades 5 and 6 account for over 2,300 staff; as a result, when there is turnover in these grades, it impacts the mean gender pay gap and can improve it (if hourly rate increases) or widen it (if hourly pay decreases because new starters join at the bottom of the grade).

Upper quartile of earners

The pay gap is influenced by the top quartile of earners, and the gap between the highest-paid and the lowest-paid earners across the University.

Bonus pay gap

The definition of bonus pay includes any rewards that relate to productivity, performance or incentive. The bonus pay included in gender pay gap reporting includes Clinical Excellence Awards/Clinical Impact Awards; Awards of Excellence, one-off payments of £200 made under the Recognition scheme, and the Oxford University Press (OUP) bonus scheme.

Only a small proportion of the University's non-clinical staff receive bonus pay.

Rewards and Recognition Scheme

The University operates a Reward and Recognition Scheme for all staff in its main salary and grading structure, covering 13,477 employees. It consists of the Awards for Excellence, which provides incremental payments, and a Recognition Scheme, offering awards of £200. In 2024, 8.1% of male and 11.0% of female staff received a payment under this scheme. In the 2024 Awards for Excellence programme, there was a 5.5% increase in awards compared to 2023. Female employees experienced a 6.9% increase in awards, while male employees saw a smaller increase, of 2.4%. In the Recognition Scheme, a larger portion of female employees (at 60.4%) received awards.

Clinical Excellence Awards

The Clinical Excellence Awards have now transitioned to the Clinical Impact Award scheme; Clinical Excellence Awards (now Clinical Impact Awards) are available to eligible staff on clinical grades with honorary contracts with Oxford University NHS Trust. In 2024, the number of clinical awards decreased by 8.5% for female staff and 19.5% for male staff.

Oxford University Press bonus scheme

Oxford University Press operates a number of different bonus plans in the UK and these are included in the reported figures. These include a bonus plan for senior-level employees based on financial and non-financial metrics; sales bonus plans for some customer-facing roles; and a discretionary bonus plan for employees not included in one of the other plans. Any decisions relating to OUP's bonus scheme are taken by OUP. OUP reports its gender pay gap separately and agrees actions accordingly. Out of 2049 OUP employees, 1355 female and 694 male staff received a bonus payment.

Exceptional one-off payments

In 2022–23, staff received a one-off lump sum "thank you" payment. As a result, the mean bonus pay gap in 2023 decreased to 30.9% (from 61.7% in 2022).

In this reporting year, no exceptional payments were made, and the average bonus pay returned to previous levels, at 61.5%.

Factors influencing the bonus pay gap

The mean bonus pay gap is driven by the upper quartile. This indicates that while gender differences in bonus payments are minimal in the lower quartiles, the gap becomes significantly wider at higher bonus levels.

The further breakdown of the bonus pay gap shows that a significant portion of the disparity is concentrated within specific employee categories. Clinical grades (Statutory Professors, Research-Clinical, and Associate Professors) contribute 47.8% to the overall 61.5% gap, while Oxford University Press accounts for 13.2%. These two factors alone explain the majority of the gap (61%). It indicates that the disparity is largely driven by high bonus amounts awarded in these specific groups rather than a systemic issue across all grades.

COMMITMENTS AND PROGRESS

2024 Gender Pay Gap Review

In 2023/24, a Task and Finish Group undertook an in-depth analysis of the University's mean and median gender pay gaps. The group found that:

- The gender pay gap is heavily impacted by the over-representation of women in grades 4, 5, 6 and 7
- There is a high proportion of women working part time, limiting progression into higher roles and likely impacting the gender pay gap
- Although there does not appear to be an overall gap in starting pay between women and men, in some staff groups (particularly Associate Professors), men are slightly more likely to start at the top of the salary scale, and women are slightly more likely to start at the bottom of the scale
- Academic responsibility allowances are driving the gender pay gap in professorial roles
- The pay gap is heavily influenced by the top quartile, because of the gap between Oxford's highest-paid and lowest-paid staff

Recommendations

1. Increase part-time and flexible working opportunities, particularly in senior roles
2. Encourage and normalise the uptake of paternity leave, shared parental leave, flexible working and part time working for fathers/partners
3. Improve recruitment and salary-setting process, particularly for academic staff
4. Develop clear and transparent career pathways and improve progression and mobility of Professional and Support staff
5. Publish annual ethnicity and disability pay gap reports (and their intersections with gender)

6. Develop a structure and process to take forward the Gender Pay Gap recommendations

A number of actions are already underway:

- As part of the proposed Academic Career and Reward Framework, the University will undertake a review of academic salary scales and allowances, with the aim of making allowances more structured and transparent.
- In 2025, the Equality and Diversity Unit (EDU) launched an equal parenting campaign, to bring focus to the impact of the motherhood penalty and to encourage take-up of the new paternity and partner leave entitlement.
- There is improved support for departments to access and analyse local pay gaps, including the piloting of pay analysis software in 2025. Departments are also supported to take action in addressing their gaps with a framework for action, providing evidence-based options for action.

Strategic actions

Targets to increase the proportion of female professors

In 2021, Council set 2029 targets to close the professorial gender gap, with the objective of improving the proportion of female Statutory Professors to 27% representation, and the proportion of female Associate Professors to 35% representation. In 2024, the proportion of female Statutory Professors stands at 22%, and the proportion of female Associate Professors has improved to 34% (1 percentage point off the 2029 target).

In the last year, there has been an increased focus on actively searching for, and encouraging, candidates to apply for Statutory Professor (SP) roles, and recruitment continues to be underpinned by an active, robust and inclusive search for a diverse and global candidate pool. Since early 2023, 40% of SP appointments have been women.

Many departments and faculties have taken action to address the Associate Professor gender gap through a range of interventions, including redesigned job descriptions, gender-split shortlisting, provision of childcare for interview and active search practices. This is anchored in the Associate Professor Inclusive Recruitment (APIR) Guidelines which have been embedded since they launched in 2022.

Academic Career and Reward Framework

The University is currently developing the Academic Career and Reward Framework which entered a consultation phase in 2025. The framework will involve a series of recommendations to improve the career paths, workload, and reward and recognition of academic staff. A specific focus is on improving clarity on progression and promotion, with a focus on retention and the cultivation of a pipeline into senior roles. Focus is also on improving transparency around academic pay and benefits.

Athena Swan gender equality framework

Since the University's first Silver Athena Swan award in 2023, progress has been made in progressing actions underpinning the eight objectives of the 2023 to 2028 action plan, including an objective to specifically tackle the structures impacting gendered and the impact on the gender pay gap. The focus of delivery in 2025 will be on supporting improved career progression and mobility for professional services staff, implementing the actions of the 2024 gender pay gap review, and encouraging uptake of the new paternity/partner leave entitlement via a campaign to encourage 'parenting out loud.'

As of March 2025, 43 departments/faculties hold an Athena Swan award, with 4 Gold departments holding an award, placing them in the top 3% of Athena Swan award holders in the UK.

In the past year, the EDU launched a termly series to support the Athena Swan community across the University, starting with the Athena Swan Learning Showcase in September. The event featured an overview of progress on gender equality and Athena

Swan over the last ten years, and highlighted impactful initiatives by departments, including inclusive recruitment strategies, actions that addressed the academic gender gap, and initiatives to close the gender pay gap.

The Vice-Chancellor, Professor Irene Tracey, celebrated the achievements of four departments that have actively worked to improve the proportion of women professors at an International Women's Day event in February 2025.

Equity and Inclusivity in Research Funding

Work to progress the Equity and Inclusivity in Research Funding project continues, with the aim of identifying and addressing the barriers to securing research funding experienced by researchers in marginalised groups.

In 2024, the University held a series of fora with internal and external stakeholders, including representatives from research funding bodies and research-intensive universities; this culminated in the publication of a Research Funder and University Joint Statement outlining a series of agreed measures, including mapping of existing measures, potential positive action initiatives, and data improvements.

2025 Enhanced paternity/partner leave entitlement

In a significant enhancement to its Family Leave scheme, the Oxford University Additional Paternity/Partner leave scheme came into effect on 31 January 2025, with the new policy extending the leave period up to 12 weeks, inclusive of the two-week statutory period.

With this new scheme, the University reinforces its commitment to fostering a workplace where new parents feel valued and supported, and that encourages a better balance between parents/guardians.

Oxford joins a small group of organisations across the UK to offer paid paternity/partner leave to this extent. This reflects a progressive approach to supporting new parents, ensuring that employees can fully embrace this life-changing moment with fewer financial or professional concerns.

Oxford Women's Staff Network (OWN)

In early 2025, the University supported the launch of the Oxford Women's Staff Network (OWN). The women's staff 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.

Returning Carers Fund

The Returning Carers' Fund supports academics and researchers who have taken a break for parenting/caring responsibilities to re-establish their research careers. These career breaks include maternity and shared parental leave, as well as breaks to care for disabled or elderly family members.

In the 23–24 academic year, 45 applicants received a Returning Carers Fund award at an average reward amount of £5,143, including five applicants returning from a period of Shared Parental Leave.

METHODOLOGY

Equal Pay

The gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between the mean and median earnings of men and women across the University, whereas equal pay ensures we are paying the same level of pay for those who are performing the same work, or where work is assessed as being of equal value. It is possible therefore to have a gender pay gap without having any equal pay gaps.

The last equal pay audit undertaken by the University was in 2020. It indicated that in broad terms the University is achieving equal pay for work of equal value. Relatively few pay gaps were identified in the analysis of mean basic and total pay by legal sex and, where further investigation was carried out, an objective justification has been found.

Calculations

The "mean" hourly rate is calculated by adding all of the hourly rates together and dividing by the number of individuals in the data set.

The median hourly rate is calculated by arranging the hourly rates of all individuals in the data set in ascending order to identify the middle (or median) hourly rate. 50% of individuals will earn more than this hourly rate and 50% will earn less.

The pay gaps are calculated as the difference in the mean and median hourly rates for men and women.

Included data

In accordance with the regulations and with reference to the Equality Act 2010, the University's gender pay gap report includes data relating to persons who are engaged by the legal entity incorporated under the name 'The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford' ("the University"). This includes employees in the University of

Oxford departments, casual workers (including those undertaking casual teaching), those engaged through the University's Temporary Staffing Service and those who work within Oxford University Press ("the Press").

The University reporting 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. The Press has not historically been included in reporting undertaken by the rest of the University. It operates completely separate remuneration arrangements and operates in a different employment market to 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 on 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 is determined by an individual's stage in training and mirrors what the individual would receive in the NHS. Salaries for clinical academics with consultant contracts are determined by recognised seniority and experience within the NHS.

Snapshot date

The data provided in this report is based on the snapshot date of 31 March 2024. The initial 'pay period' for employees is therefore the March payroll plus the previous 12 working weeks for those with irregular hours in addition to the previous 12 months of data relating to bonus pay. The data excludes those individuals on reduced pay (for example, through sickness, maternity, paternity, or other unpaid leave).