

Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

Foreword



Nick Pontefract
Chief strategy officer

“ We are pleased to bring you Sport England’s 2024 Gender Pay Gap Report. Producing this report means we can openly share our pay data, enabling us to track progress and engage with our staff and key stakeholders on Sport England pay. It is a valuable process which also helps us identify areas of focus moving ahead.

This year’s report shows a slight increase in the mean and median gender pay gap figures, from 8.71% to **9.83%** and from 6.93% to **7.48%** respectively. Although we would like to see a decrease in the gap, we are aware of the factors that have influenced the gap, which are outlined in this report.

Due to the size of our organisation, small changes in staff profiles can have a significant impact on our gender pay gap, based on the information taken from one snapshot date. For example, the mean gap fluctuated significantly between 2022 (13.48%), 2023 (8.71%) and 2024 (9.83%).

It is encouraging, however, to see the gap is still smaller than our December 2023 figures and, positively, that women’s mean and median pay has continued to increase over our reporting years.

We aim to build on these and continuously drive actions which we hope will contribute to closing the gender pay gap moving forward.

Foreword (continued)



Jeanette Bain-Burnett
Executive director, policy and integrity

“ Sport England’s aspiration is to become more and more inclusive, to better reflect the communities we work with and to create a deep sense of belonging for our employees. We are pleased to bring you our 2024 report.

While the gender pay gap has slightly increased this year, we are proud to have made a number of achievements across the period, which we hope will contribute towards future progress. These are detailed on [page 12](#) of this report.

We are working towards developing a robust competency framework, with an aim to make fairer and clearer recruitment and promotion prospects. Positively, we have closed our overall ethnicity pay gap by 2.27 percentage points, making the gap between white and non-white employees’ pay now 7.17%.

We know there is still work to do. To close pay gaps, we need to continue developing a collective focus on recruitment, pay, progression, development, culture and engagement, and will be working on this in future.

For information about our actions on workforce equality going forward, see our [Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan](#).

The gender pay gap is different from unequal pay

Understanding the difference between these two concepts is key.

What's the difference?

- **Unequal pay** is the unlawful practice of paying men and women differently for performing the same or similar work or work of value.
- The **gender pay gap** is a measure of the difference between the average hourly earnings of men and women.

Legislative requirements

The UK Government requires public sector employers with 250 or more relevant employees to publish gender pay gap information by 30 March 2025, based on the following data from 31 March 2024:

- mean and median gender pay gap
- mean and median gender bonus gap – this information is excluded from our report as we don't have a bonus scheme
- proportion of males and females by quartile pay band.

The mean

The mean gives an overall indication of the size of the gender pay gap. Outliers, such as very high or very low earners, influence this calculation and may skew the dataset.

To calculate the mean, the hourly pay for all employees is added together and divided by the number of employees. This is done separately for men and women.

The mean hourly rate of men is then compared with the mean hourly rate of women to calculate the mean gender pay gap.

The median

To calculate the median, employee hourly rate of pay is ordered from lowest to highest. The midpoint (the wage of the employee that sits in the middle of the line-up) is the median hourly rate.

This is done separately for men and women. The midpoint for each is then compared to calculate the median gender pay gap.

The median doesn't consider the outliers. For example, if the composition of employees remained the same year on year, but if the lowest paid women got a pay increase and the highest paid men took a pay cut, the median wouldn't change.

Reporting factors



The gender pay gap is calculated based on a snapshot date of 31 March, regardless of whether the results would be different using data from the day before or the day after. The gap may therefore look quite different if the figure was drawn from an average over the year.

For example, when using the snapshot date:

- If someone accepted a promotion on 25 March but the new role didn't begin until 1 April, data from their previous role would be captured.
- If someone left the organisation on 20 February and their replacement didn't start until 10 April, no one would be recorded as filling this vacancy.
- If someone handed in their notice and was due to leave on 4 April, but their replacement started on 1 March for a handover, both employees would be included in the calculations.
- If someone started mid-March and therefore received pro-rated pay for this month, they'd be included in the numbers, but their salary wouldn't be included in the pay gap calculations.

Other reporting factors influencing the gap:

Because the hourly rate is calculated **post-salary sacrifice deduction**, employees who are part of benefits schemes such as childcare vouchers and cycle to work are recorded as having lower wages. While this is part of the reporting criteria, its impact on each organisation's pay gap will vary depending on the extent of their salary sacrifice offering.

Only employees receiving **full pay** are included in the reporting data, meaning those on reduced pay due to maternity, shared parental or sick leave are excluded from the calculations. This can sometimes result in a disproportionate number of women being excluded from the data set. But this may also work the other way, whereby both the employee on maternity leave (if they are receiving full pay) and their maternity cover are included in the calculations.

Only **Sport England employees** are included in the calculations. Anyone employed by an agency (even if they've been working at Sport England for a long time) isn't included.

Gender pay gap reporting is based on **binary genders** only (women and men), meaning the gap doesn't consider non-binary or other identities.

Our 2024 gender pay gap



In 2024 our **mean** gender pay gap figure increased by 1.13 percentage points from 2023 to **9.83%**. Our **median** has also increased from 6.93% to **7.48%**.

This compares with an estimated 13.1% gender pay gap among all full-time and part-time employees and sectors in April 2024, [reported by the ONS](#), and 12.9% for the public sector.

Several factors can influence the gap; for example, external societal factors and the size of our organisation. The following page will cover some of these factors in more detail.

	Mar-22	Mar-23	Mar-24
Mean gap%	13.48%	8.71%	9.83%
Mean pay (men)	£27.13	£26.34	£27.83
Mean pay (women)	£23.47	£24.04	£25.09
Median gap%	7.01%	6.93%	7.48%
Median pay (men)	£24.21	£25.06	£26.36
Median pay (women)	£22.51	£23.32	£24.39
Total employees*	300	300	327

* Total eligible employees

Challenges and factors influencing the pay gap at Sport England



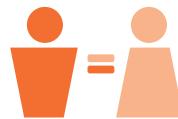
Our challenges

- Our approach to pay reflects government policy, which may impact on ability to reduce pay gaps.
- As a relatively small organisation, minor structural changes can significantly impact the overall pay gap.
- The gender pay gap can partly be associated with societal factors and gender norms. While we can't influence these, we continue to work towards reducing our own pay gaps.

Other factors

- Some specialist teams receive a **salary market supplement**. While this is necessary for attraction and retention, it can skew our pay scales meaning a potential influence on the pay gap. For further commentary on this please see [page 16](#) on our equal pay audit.
- Pay differences for those on **long-term absence** can impact the gap, as those on reduced pay aren't included in reporting figures. On the snapshot date there were a total of eight female employees on maternity leave; four were in the nil-pay period and two were in the half-pay period. In contrast, there were no male employees on long-term parental absence.
- Removing **senior employees' salaries** alters the gap. If you were to remove the chief executive on 31 March 2024, the mean gap would decrease to 8.47% and the median gap would decrease to 7.40%. The mean and median gap would further decrease to 7.99% and 7.42% respectively, by removing our entire executive leadership team.

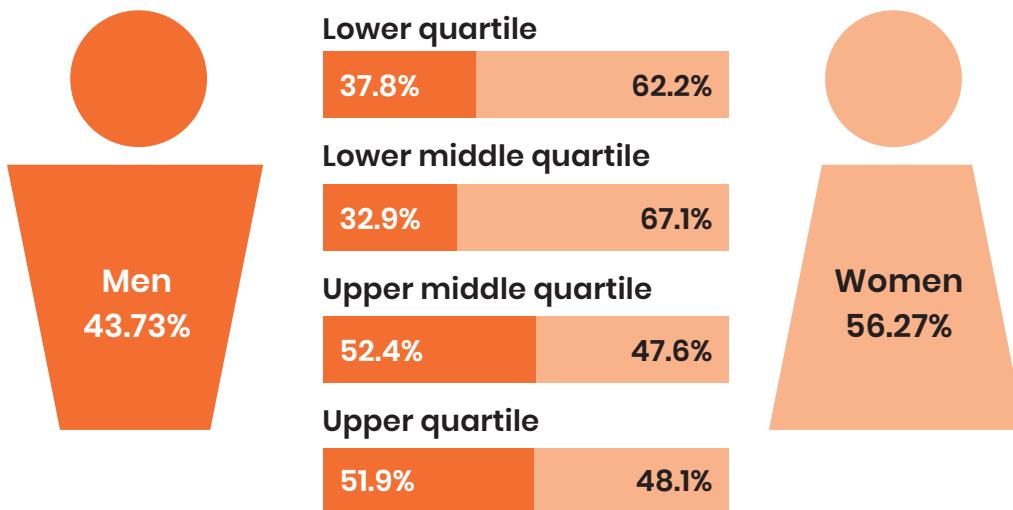
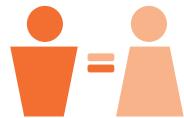
Grade representation by gender



	Mar-22		Mar-23		Mar-24	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Total employees*	46.0%	54.0%	43.67%	56.3%	43.73%	56.27%
Lower quartile	33.3%	66.7%	34.7%	65.3%	37.8%	62.2%
Lower middle quartile	48.0%	52.0%	40.0%	60.0%	32.9%	67.1%
Upper middle quartile	48.0%	52.0%	48.0%	52.0%	52.4%	47.6%
Upper quartile	54.7%	45.3%	52.0%	48.0%	51.9%	48.1%
Executive director	87.5%	12.5%	60.0%	40.0%	57.1%	42.9%
Most senior manager	51.0%	49.0%	46.9%	53.1%	49.1%	50.9%
Senior manager	43.7%	56.3%	47.2%	52.8%	52.1%	47.9%
Manager	53.8%	46.2%	48.6%	51.4%	39.8%	60.2%
Junior manager	38.6%	61.4%	28.8%	71.2%	30.6%	69.4%
Senior admin	26.3%	73.7%	47.6%	52.4%	48.3%	51.7%
Admin	23.1%	76.9%	25.0%	75.0%	16.7%	83.3%

* Total eligible employees

Grade representation by gender (continued)



The pay quartiles divide the workforce into four equally-sized groups based on their hourly pay rate. The lower quartile refers to the lowest paid 25% of employees, and the upper quartile is the highest paid 25% of employees.

Despite our total eligible employees increasing to 327 in 2024, the split between men and women is relatively even. However, as the proportion of women in the lower quartile remains higher, this shows fewer women are hired at the higher levels.

People changes

- From April 2023 – March 2024, there were 65 **new starters**, of whom 22 were male and 43 were female.
 - Out of the 43 females, 18 (41.9%) joined on a salary above the bottom of the salary band, whereas eight (36.4%) of the males started above the band. While most new starters were female, the salary data indicates that more males were appointed at a relatively higher salary.
 - Appointments made above the bottom of the salary band relate to job-market specific issues, particularly within finance, planning and legal.
 - We'll continue to address this through recruitment guidance updates and our existing pay policy.
- From April 2023 – March 2024, there were 41 **leavers**. Of these, 15 were male and 26 were female. The higher proportion of female leavers is similar to that of new starters within the period.
- In the calendar year 2024, of all **internal promotions**, 37.5% were male and 62.5% were female. While the majority promoted were female, the gap is likely due to the males being promoted into higher-paid roles.
 - The percentage of men at the most senior manager level has increased from 46.9% to 49.1%.
 - The percentage of women at the senior manager level has decreased from 52.8% to 47.9% since March 2023.

Our 2024 successes



We upgraded our Employee Assistance Programme to offer 24/7 free counselling, an app and digital resources, supporting employee engagement.

We became a Disability Confident Leader, the highest level of recognition under the Disability Confident scheme run by the DWP.

We launched an internal HR site to support employee engagement with resources including ED&I policies and legislation changes.

We've created a new sexual harassment policy and updated our existing Dignity at Work policy following recent legislation.

To aid retention and recruitment we support flexible working practices. Since April 2024, 47 employees (57.5% women) have moved to flexible working arrangements.

We continue to publish our pay scales and assess our strategic approach to reward annually.

Our 2025 commitments



To launch the Nurture Programme, designed for colleagues in level 6, 7 and 8 roles to support career development.

To support employee development and strategic ambitions, we've leveraged our apprenticeship levy to support those in administrative roles to gain a professional qualification.

Our Women's Network will be running a survey to help understand what women at Sport England would value from their network.

To develop a competency framework to support employee performance and accountability in the workplace.

To launch a support line, refreshed policies and mandatory training on sexual harassment and whistleblowing.

Analysis of our engagement survey data through the lens of different demographics to identify areas for improvement.

Our policies and practices



Recruitment

- We use anonymised recruitment to help reduce unconscious bias within our selection process.
- We include positive action statements in our job adverts encouraging those in currently underrepresented groups to apply, bringing a wider pool of talented, skilled and experienced people from which to recruit.
- Where possible we ensure gender balance on interview panels.
- We use skill-based assessments and structured interviews for recruitment and promotions.
- We regularly review our recruitment statistics (ethnicity, gender, disability and sexual orientation) for each stage of the recruitment process. This data is shared at our Equality Group meetings and with the Board and is published externally.
- Where possible, we remove mandated minimum qualifications in recruitment (exceptions include technical skilled roles like HR, finance and planning).
- We're transparent with salary on our job adverts and clearly state that it's our policy to appoint to the advertised salary.

Pay

- Our pay is underpinned by job evaluation.
- We ensure our pay policy is adhered to and used to justify our hiring and pay-related decisions. It's our policy to recruit to the bottom of the pay grade band. Any deviation must be justified through a robust business case.

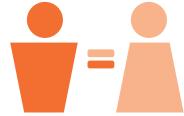
Benefits

- Employees have access to a wide range of benefits, including 32 days of annual leave plus bank holidays, a benefits platform with discount vouchers, an employee assistance programme, a range of flexible policies, generous pension scheme, cycle-to-work scheme and a healthy lifestyle benefit of £500 per annum.

Family-friendly policies

- We offer enhanced shared parental, maternity and adoption leave, and return-to-work coaching for those who've been on long-term leave.
- Flexible working policies and practices are well embedded, ensuring that our employees can work in a way that enables them to balance a successful career with commitments outside of work.

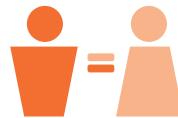
Our policies and practices (continued)



Other

- For the past five years, we've offered a bespoke development programme for administrative roles, providing tailored training and coaching to enhance skills and support career progression. In 2025, we'll review the content to ensure it continues to meet the needs of our target audience. Additionally, we'll expand this opportunity to include all non-management roles, offering more colleagues the chance to benefit from this valuable opportunity. The refreshed development programme will be called **Nurture**.
- We've four staff-equality networks – Culture Crew (Culturally Diverse Group), Stride (Disability), LGBTQ+ and the Women's Network.
- By providing our executive directors with regular staff profiles and recruitment dashboards, we hope to enhance their awareness of gender representation at Sport England.
- Where we observe diversity imbalances in specific areas of our business, we explore the potential causes to remove any possible barriers to entry and progression.

Ethnic breakdown by job category



Below is data by ethnic group, showing representation across the organisation on 31 March 2024 and including all employees, not only those who meet the gender pay gap reporting criteria. Due to GDPR we've grouped ELT (executive leadership team) with most senior managers. **Our overall ethnicity pay gap between White and non-White staff has reduced to 7.17%**, decreasing from 9.44% in March 2023. Due to the small number of our employees, these figures are volatile and one individual leaving, for example, can have a significant effect on the gap figure.

	Asian/ Asian British	Black/ African/ Caribbean/ Black British	Mixed/ Multiple ethnic groups	White	Other	Prefer not to say
ELT and most senior manager	5%	3.33%	0	91.67%	0	0
Senior manager	4.21%	4.12%	4.12%	84.54%	0	3.09%
Manager	5.95%	2.38%	2.38%	89.29%	0	0
Junior manager	10%	4%	2%	82%	2%	0
Senior admin	6.9%	6.9%	0	86.2%	0	0
Admin	16.67%	8.33%	16.67%	58.33%	0	0
Ethnicity pay gap (ABB, BACBB and MME compared to WHI)	12.35%	-6.45%	17.95%	n/a	n/a	n/a

Disability pay gap



Our **disability pay gap** (difference between staff who've disclosed/not disclosed a disability) is **7.95%**.

It's likely that disabilities are underreported at Sport England, meaning the figures shown are not necessarily a true representation of our employees. This is in part due to our data collection method, which relies on employees informing us of any changes since completing the data monitoring forms at the start of their employment. It's also due to some employees only reporting a disability if it has a direct impact on their work.

Disability declaration	Average hourly pay
No	£27.38
Prefer not to say	£27.80
Yes	£25.21
Total	£27.20
Non-disabled compared to disabled	7.95%

In 2024, we updated our data management software so that employees can now review the disability information we hold for them and request to update this if required. In 2025, we're looking to complete an organisation-wide exercise to update personal data. We hope for both initiatives to lead to more accurate reporting of this gap next year.

Equal pay audit



The following figures are extracted from our 2024 equal pay audit, in which we review pay of men and women who do the same work to investigate differences in pay. We're working to remove these differences through our current practices and policies. Some data has been redacted for GDPR reasons, but we're aware of the figures that sit behind this data.

London	%	Men	Women	Total
L1	n/a	*	0	*
L2	n/a	*	0	*
L3+	1.27%	*	*	*
L3	-4.69%	*	12	*
L4	2.87%	13	*	*
L5	2.91%	*	*	*
L6	-8.24%	*	*	10
L7	-18.74%	*	*	*
L8	-11.02%	*	*	*
L9	n/a	0	0	0
Total		39	42	81

Non-London	%	Men	Women	Total
L1	n/a	0	0	0
L2	n/a	0	*	*
L3+	2.91%	*	*	*
L3	4.23%	12	11	32
L4	0.98%	36	36	72
L5	7.86%	29	45	74
L6	0.73%	12	27	39
L7	-8.66%	12	10	22
L8	n/a	0	*	*
L9	0%	*	*	*
Total		104	142	255

*GDPR rules applied

Equal pay audit (continued)



The equal pay data is presented in three separate tables to show the difference between staff based at our London and non-London locations. Due to GDPR, data for groups with fewer than 10 employees has been redacted. The percentage gaps related to these groups must be treated with caution, as such small groups can skew the data and therefore may not give a true picture of the gap for this job level.

All	%	Men	Women	Total
L1	n/a	*	0	*
L2	2.66%	*	*	*
L3+	2.70%	*	*	*
L3	-1.1%	21	23	44
L4	2.27%	49	45	94
L5	7.47%	33	50	83
L6	-1.46%	15	34	49
L7	-17.08%	14	15	29
L8	10.77%	*	*	*
L9	0%	*	*	*
Total		143	184	327

- Furthermore, London-based salaries tend to be higher to reflect the higher cost of living in the capital, but they can widen the gap when the data is grouped as shown at L2 and L8.
- Planners at L5 receive a market-pay supplement, due to labour market conditions for qualified town planners. This contributes to the gap, as a disproportionate number of people in these roles are men, and women at this level are in other roles within our standard pay grades.
- The gap at L7 is wider due to the number of PA roles at this level. To aid recruitment and retention in these roles, PA roles also receive a market-pay supplement, which skews the gap in favour of women as they're in the majority at this level.

*GDPR rules applied

CEO comments



Tim Hollingsworth
Chief executive

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Thank you to all involved in compiling this year's report. While it is disappointing to see a slight increase in Sport England's mean and median gender pay gaps, it reaffirms the importance of our monitoring and reporting. This year's data helps us to identify where we need to focus our efforts in addressing the pay gap into the future.

We understand the factors contributing to the increased gap – including more men than women being in level 5 specialist roles and some senior recruitment having been predominantly filled by men. Acknowledging this, I am absolutely committed to ensuring that at Sport England we do everything we can to address these inequalities.

Beyond the gender pay gap data for the past 12 months, Sport England is also publishing our disability and ethnicity pay gap figures. They further demonstrate the need for us to continue to address inequalities in the workplace.

We must keep up our efforts to close our pay gaps, recognising that their root causes could lie within social structures, labour market dynamics and workplace culture shaped by broader societal norms. Sport England is committed to driving meaningful change and addressing these inequalities through fair recruitment processes and continuous monitoring.

This report serves both as a reflection of our progress and a motivation to take further action.

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March 2025

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