

Gender Pay Gap Report

March 2025

Education
Partnership
North East

Sunderland
College

Northumberland
College

Hartlepool
Sixth Form
College

H6

Introduction

The Government, under the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, introduced gender pay gap reporting. The College Group now has a legal duty to report and publish data on gender pay on both the College Group website and via the Government Equalities Office.

The purpose of gender pay reporting is for organisations in the public sector with over 250 employees to report on and illustrate the difference between the average earnings of men and women in their organisation.

This year's report marks the sixth data return for Education Partnership North East since we merged with Northumberland College in March 2019. Sunderland College first reported in March 2018 in line with the new legislation. In 2019 Hartlepool Sixth Form College was first included in the data return.



Naomi Robson
Vice Principal Corporate Services

Equal pay versus gender pay

Whilst both equal pay and the gender gap deal with the difference (disparity) in pay women receive in the workplace, they are two different issues:

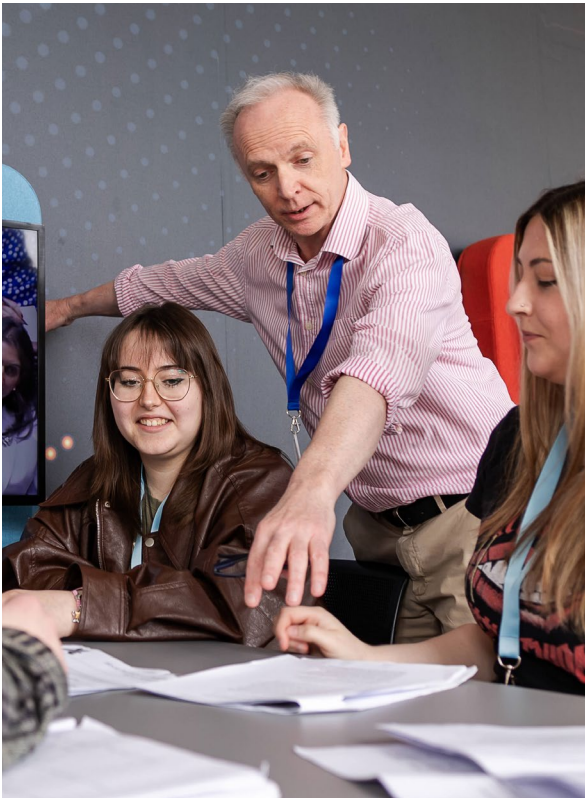
Equal pay: Means that men and women in the same employment performing equal work must receive equal pay, as set out in the Equality Act 2010.

Gender pay gap: Is a measure of the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation or the labour market. It is expressed as a percentage of men's earnings.

As explained by the Equality and Human Rights Commission the causes of the gender pay gap are complex and can be overlapping. Factors include:

- Highest paid sectors are male-dominated
- Girls often do well at school, but tend to end up concentrated in employment sectors that offer narrower scope for financial reward
- Many of the highest paying sectors are disproportionately made up of male employees
- The effect of part-time work
- The difference in years of experience of full-time work, or the negative effect on wages of having previously worked part-time or of having taken time out of the labour market to look after family
- Unconscious stereotyping, with assumptions about women not wanting to accept promotion, or not being in a position to do so, particularly where they have caring responsibilities

Our approach



We have a strong focus on inclusivity, equality and diversity across our College Group which comprises of Hartlepool Sixth Form College, Northumberland College and Sunderland College. We recognise the benefits a diverse college community brings, the greater the mix of people, the greater the mix of knowledge, skills, perspectives and ideas that can be drawn upon.

Our pay approach is to treat all our staff fairly irrespective of gender and we operate structured salary spines for each job role across the group.

Since April 2020 all our college staff are paid the real living wage, ensuring that Northumberland College staff moved onto the model already adopted in Sunderland and Hartlepool.

We see ourselves as a supportive employer that offers a range of flexible working opportunities for our employees.

Within our sector there are specific subjects that are more difficult to recruit to which means that on occasion a Market Rate supplement is required. Areas such as multi-skilled trades and engineering predominantly attract male applicants and again this is reflective of gender imbalances that exist in these areas nationally.

Staff development is key for all staff and we are keen to offer career progression opportunities to all employees who wish to progress. Our job adverts are open to internal candidates to encourage internal movement and progression across the College Group and our different campuses and departments.



Background information

The regulations specify that the data must be a snapshot of 31 March 2024, this is taken from our payroll data. They advise that a pay period of a month equates to 30.44 days.

All employees who are paid are included in the calculations; permanent, fixed term and casual. If a casual employee has irregular working hours then the average earnings over a 12 month period have been used. Basic pay is comprised of allowances (including Market Rate Supplement payments).

The following are excluded from any calculations: overtime pay, redundancy or termination payments, or non-cash benefits such as those paid through salary sacrifice.

The regulations require us to report on six specific calculations and they also outline the methodology we have to use and what is included in each calculation. These are listed below;

1. Mean average gender pay gap
2. Median average gender pay gap
3. Mean average bonus gender pay gap
4. Median average bonus gender pay gap
5. Proportion of males receiving a bonus payment and proportion of females receiving a bonus payment
6. Proportion of males and females when divided into four groups ordered from lowest to highest pay

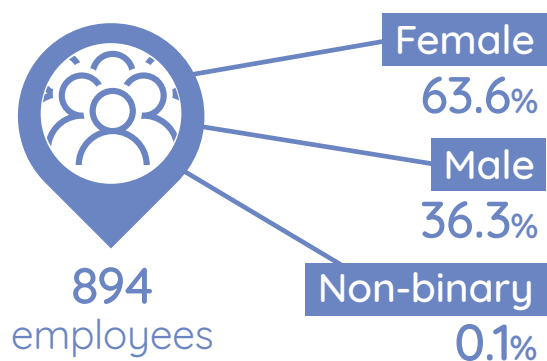
The regulations split employees into two different categories for this reporting, these are called **relevant employees** and **relevant full-pay employees**.

A relevant employee is someone employed by the College Group as at the 31 March 2024. This equates to a total of 894 employees of which 324 are males (36.3%) and 569 are females (63.6%) and 1 non-binary (0.1%). This split of male to female staff is common in the FE sector, however this is the first year that a non-binary employee has been included in relevant employees.

A full-pay relevant employee is someone who is employed by the College Group and is receiving “full pay” during the specified pay period. If an employee is paid less than their usual rate of pay or zero (i.e. due to sickness or maternity for example) then they are not classed as a “full-pay relevant employee”.




Within our College Group relevant full-pay employees equated to 829 employees in total of which 300 are male (36.2%) and 529 are female (62.8%). The employee who identified as non-binary was not full-pay relevant.

Gender split at EPNE



Overall outcome

The results are calculated based on full-pay relevant employees and show that there is a decrease in the mean gender pay gap of 1%, and an increase in the median gender pay gap of 1.4%.

Gender pay gap				
Mean	2024	£16.43	£17.64	6.9%
	2023	£15.27	£16.58	7.9%
	2022	£14.81	£15.82	6.4%
	2021	£14.71	£15.71	6.4%
	2020	£14.44	£15.34	5.9%
	2019	£14.26	£15.28	6.7%
Median	2024	£14.80	£16.92	12.5%
	2023	£13.96	£15.71	11.1%
	2022	£13.42	£15.02	10.7%
	2021	£13.68	£14.80	7.6%
	2020	£13.55	£14.80	8.45%
	2019	£13.55	£14.80	8.45%

It is likely that the increase in mean wage rate can be attributed to bringing salaries in line with the increase in national living wage to £11.44 in April.

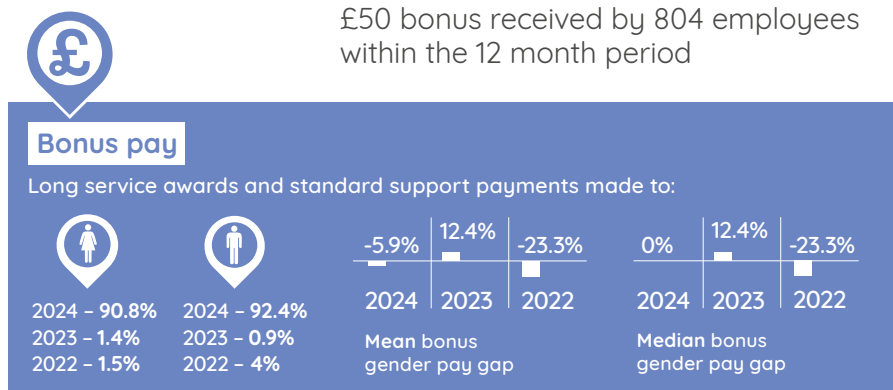
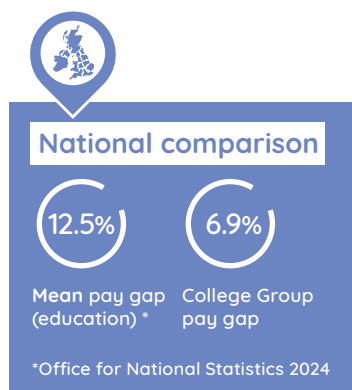
In 2024, the Office for National Statistics recorded the mean average pay gap as 13.8% for all employees, and the median was recorded as 13.1% for all employees. A further breakdown of the tertiary Education sector reports a mean average pay gap of 12.5% and median average pay gap of 17.2%. EPNE's mean and median pay gaps are both lower than this.

Bonus Payments

(Long Service/Standard Support Payments only)



These bonus payments are calculated on all relevant employees.

- At Christmas 2023, 804 staff received a £50 voucher bonus. 511 were female and 293 were male
- Under the regulations long service awards and standard support payments also fall into this category
- For long service awards across the group, the value of the awards is based on the length of service with 30 years being £200 and 20 years being £150. In the 12 month period covered 24 awards were paid – 19 were to women and 5 to men
- The standard support payment is paid to qualifying support staff at Hartlepool Sixth Form College. 4 staff college-wide are eligible for this payment and those staff who successfully apply for the payment receive a one-off payment of £320 (pro-rata for part-time staff). In the 12-month period covered, the College Group made 4 such payments, 3 were to women and 1 to men
- Proportionally this means that 92.4% of males received a bonus and 90.8% of females
- The average bonus received by males was £53.82 and by females was £57
- This equated to a mean bonus gender pay gap of -5.9% (difference of £3.18), meaning that females received more bonus than males. A median bonus gender pay gap of 0% is likely due to the £50 bonus received by 804 employees within the 12 month period



Quartile Bands

As part of reporting, we are required as an employer to show the proportions of male and female full-pay relevant employees in four quartile pay bands, which is done by ranking hourly rate of pay and dividing the workforce into four equal quartiles (or as close as possible to this). These are based on the full-pay relevant employees:

Employment quartile bands					Grand total
Lower Quartile	150	72.1%	58	27.9%	208
Lower Middle Quartile	138	66.7%	69	33.3%	207
Upper Middle Quartile	121	58.5%	86	41.5%	207
Upper Quartile	120	58.0%	87	42.0%	207
Grand Total	529		300		829

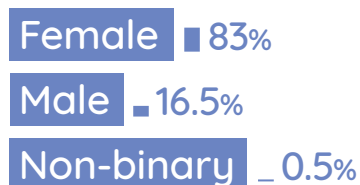
Why do we have a gender pay gap?

The make-up of staffing within the College Group has not changed significantly in the last year in terms of the male/female ratio and still employs a higher proportion of female than male staff, 63.6% to 36.3%. There continues to be clear evidence of female employees accounting for a disproportionately higher number of colleagues in lower and lower middle quartiles.

Why a gender pay gap?

Part-time or term-time only
(excluding teaching staff)

2024



2023



More females occupy senior roles within the organisation, reflected in the upper middle and upper quartiles. There has also been an increase in females and a decrease in the number of males occupying roles within these pay quartiles compared to last year.

In the 2023 report an action taken by the organisation was to evaluate 'our recruitment practices to encourage more female staff to apply into male dominated academic subjects'. The addition of a Talent Acquisition service within the organisation has begun to support a whole-group approach to inclusive recruitment practice and ensure equal access to opportunities.

Additionally, in some vocational subjects which have previously been hard to recruit to and hard to recruit females to (e.g. Construction), there has been an increase in female recruitment. However, in balance, within Engineering there has also been a salary increase to attract potential talent, which includes historically male-dominated roles.

Conversely, you will see in our report that we continue to have higher proportions of females within quartiles 1 and 2. These are the quartiles which have lower paid salaries and include Catering and Administration (in common with the rest of the UK).

42.5% of our entire workforce are part-time or term-time only. This figure excludes teaching staff, to provide further analysis of the lower and lower middle quartiles and as the vast majority of teaching staff are not on term-time contracts, with the exception of a small number within Hartlepool college. Of this 172 (83%) are female and 34 (16.5%) are male and 1 is non-binary (0.5%). This demonstrates a 4% increase in females working in part-time or term-time only roles, on top of an already large majority of those opportunities being filled by females.

Actions we will take:

The College Group is satisfied that the differences are not due to the underpayment of women in roles similar to male colleagues. We will continue to monitor this and we will take the following actions:

- Continue to review our recruitment practices, to encourage more female staff to apply into male dominated academic subjects
- Conduct additional analysis in line with the gender pay gap service recommendations to further understand why the pay gap continues to exist and appropriate actions which can be implemented to further reduce the gap
- Review our existing process for capturing exit data and carry out additional turnover data analysis to understand reasons for leaving, to determine appropriate actions to encourage retention
- Review declaration of equality data and take appropriate actions, in conjunction with the implementation of a new organisational people system, to encourage an increase in applicant and workforce declarations



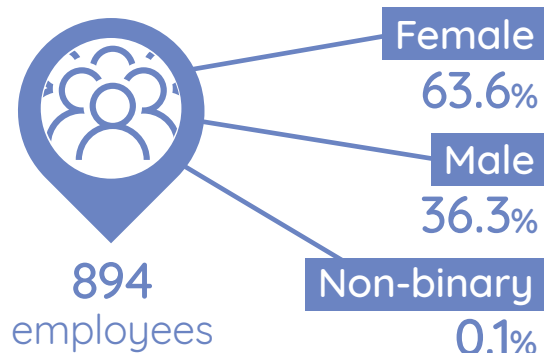
For and on behalf of
Education Partnership North East

Naomi Robson

Vice Principal Corporate Services

Gender pay gap report summary

Gender split at EPNE

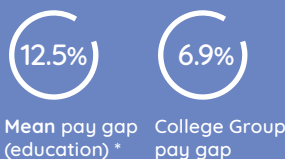


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National comparison

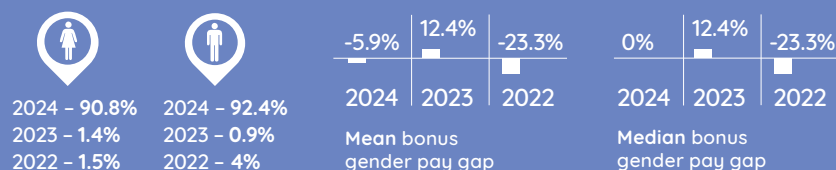


*Office for National Statistics 2024



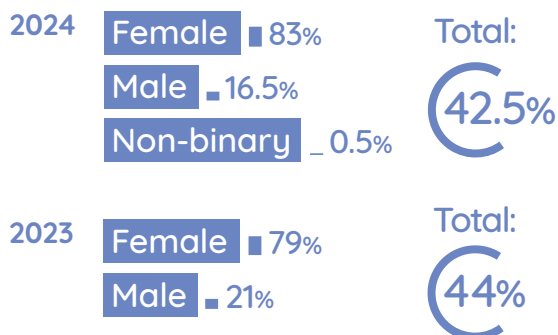
Bonus pay

Long service awards and standard support payments made to:



Why a gender pay gap?

Part-time or term-time only (excluding teaching staff)



Employment quartile bands

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Actions

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