



Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Lancaster
University



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Glossary of Contents

- BPG - Bonus Pay Gap
- CIG - Concordat Implementation Group
- EA2010 - Equality Act 2010
- EDI - Equality Diversity & Inclusion
- GPG - Gender Pay Gap
- HR - Human Resources
- ISAT - Institutional Self-Assessment Team
- KPI(s) - Key Performance Indicator(s)
- LU - Lancaster University
- pp - Percentage Points
- PS - Professional Services
- REC - Race Equality Charter
- UEB - University Executive Board

Foreword

At Lancaster University, we remain committed to reducing inequalities. This report presents our gender pay gap data from March 2025, outlines actions taken over the past year, and summarises our future plans.

The gender pay gap measures the difference in average hourly pay between female and male employees, expressed as a percentage. Like other universities, our gap reflects the distribution of men and women across different grades. We are determined to continue to narrow this gap and work towards a representative and more balanced workforce at all levels.

Our efforts have delivered measurable progress. Over the past five years, the mean and median hourly pay gaps have reduced by 4 and 2.1 percentage points respectively, in favour of female staff. We recognise that the gap stems from under-representation of women in senior academic roles and over-representation in lower-paid positions. The initiatives detailed in this report aim to address these imbalances and further reduce the gap.

We are proud that all departments and faculties maintain Athena Swan awards, and that institutional, faculty, and departmental action plans continue to drive improvement.

**Professor Rebecca Lingwood,
Interim Vice-Chancellor**

December 2025



Introduction

This report presents Lancaster University's Gender Pay Gap (GPG) data, based on the census date of 31 March 2025, in line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Since publishing our first Gender Pay Gap report, we have taken consistent steps to reduce disparities in pay. We are encouraged that this year's findings demonstrate continued progress, with a narrowing of the gap across several measures.

At the same time, we recognise that further improvement is needed. This report outlines the actions we will take to build on the progress achieved so far and to ensure that Lancaster University continues to reduce its Gender Pay Gap.

About Us

Lancaster University is among the best in the UK. We have been named the "University of the Year in the Northwest of England" in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2026. We are in the top 10 in The Complete University Guide 2026 and consistently placed in the top 15 in major UK league tables. We have been awarded 5 Stars for overall performance in the globally renowned QS World Ratings. The evaluation features 5 Stars rating for each category – teaching, employability, global engagement, research, facilities, subject ranking, and environmental impact.

As of 31 March 2025, Lancaster University employed 3,781 members of staff, 1,669 (44.1%) male and 2,112 (55.9%) female, across Professional Services Divisions and four Academic Faculties.

We are an important community employer, and our staff includes cleaning, catering and preschool centre staff, many of whom are female. We hold a Bronze Institutional Athena Swan Award, and an Institutional Self-Assessment Team (ISAT) has been evaluating the University's progress since 2019 considering quantitative and qualitative data on workforce and students. All departments at Lancaster University hold either an individual or Faculty Silver or Bronze Athena Swan Award.

Not only a Disability Confident Level 2 Employer and Race Equality Charter Bronze Award holder, the University continues to be a member of the University Mental Health Charter, and, in 2024/25, participated in the 100 Black Women Professors NOW programme. With the inaugural appointment of our new Dean for Culture and Inclusion in 2025, we are committed to inclusion across all aspects of our staff members' lives.

The Gender Pay Gap and Equal Pay

What is the Gender Pay Gap?

The Gender Pay Gap (GPG) is the difference between the average hourly pay of male staff and the average hourly pay of female staff. The figure is expressed as a percentage, with a positive figure indicating that women are paid less than men.

How is the Gender Pay Gap shown?

This is shown as mean average (calculated by adding the remuneration of all male and all female employees and dividing it by the number of employees) and median (the middle value when all female and all male staff hourly pay is listed from lowest to highest value).

What is the Bonus Pay Gap?

The Bonus Pay Gap (BPG) is the difference between the value of the average female staff member's bonus and the average male staff member's bonus awarded between 1st April 2024 and 31st March 2025. This is shown as the mean average and the median.

What is Equal Pay?

Equal pay and the Gender Pay Gap are two distinct measures. Equal pay means women and men are paid the same rate for like work, as set out in the Equality Act 2010. The University uses a job evaluation scheme to systematically measure the relative value of jobs and ensure equal pay for equal work.

How does the data define male and female?

Gender pay data and equal pay data is based on sex, not gender identity. This report uses the terms men/women and male/female interchangeably to denote staff of each sex.

Hourly Rate of Pay and Bonus Pay Gaps

University Staff Population – Gender Split



Since the statutory reporting of the gender pay gap began in 2017, the gender profile of staff at Lancaster University has consistently reflected a majority female workforce, with the proportion gradually increasing from 53.2% female in 2017 to 55.9% in 2025.

A breakdown by staff group highlights how this distribution varies across the institution (Figure 1). In 2025, 65.0% of Professional Services staff were female, compared with only 43.9% of Academic staff. This difference in gender representation across staff groups directly affects both the mean and median gender pay gaps. Professional Services roles typically span a wider range of grades and include a higher proportion of posts at the lower end of the salary scale, whereas Academic roles generally begin at higher grades with fewer lower-graded posts. Because female staff are over-represented in these lower-graded Professional Services roles and under-represented in senior academic roles (Figures 2a & 2b), this structural difference places downward pressure on average pay for the female workforce across the institution.

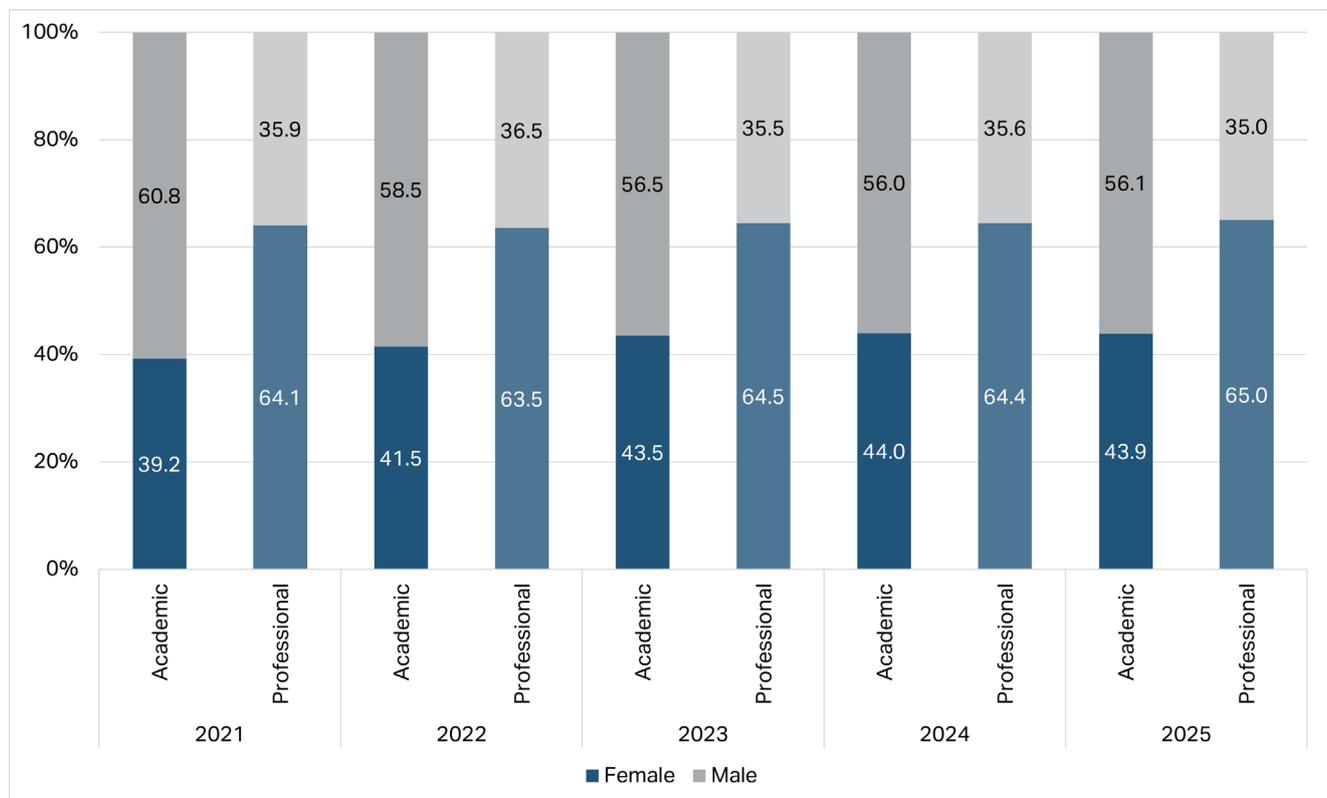


Figure 1. Gender distribution of Academic and Professional Services staff, 2021-2025.

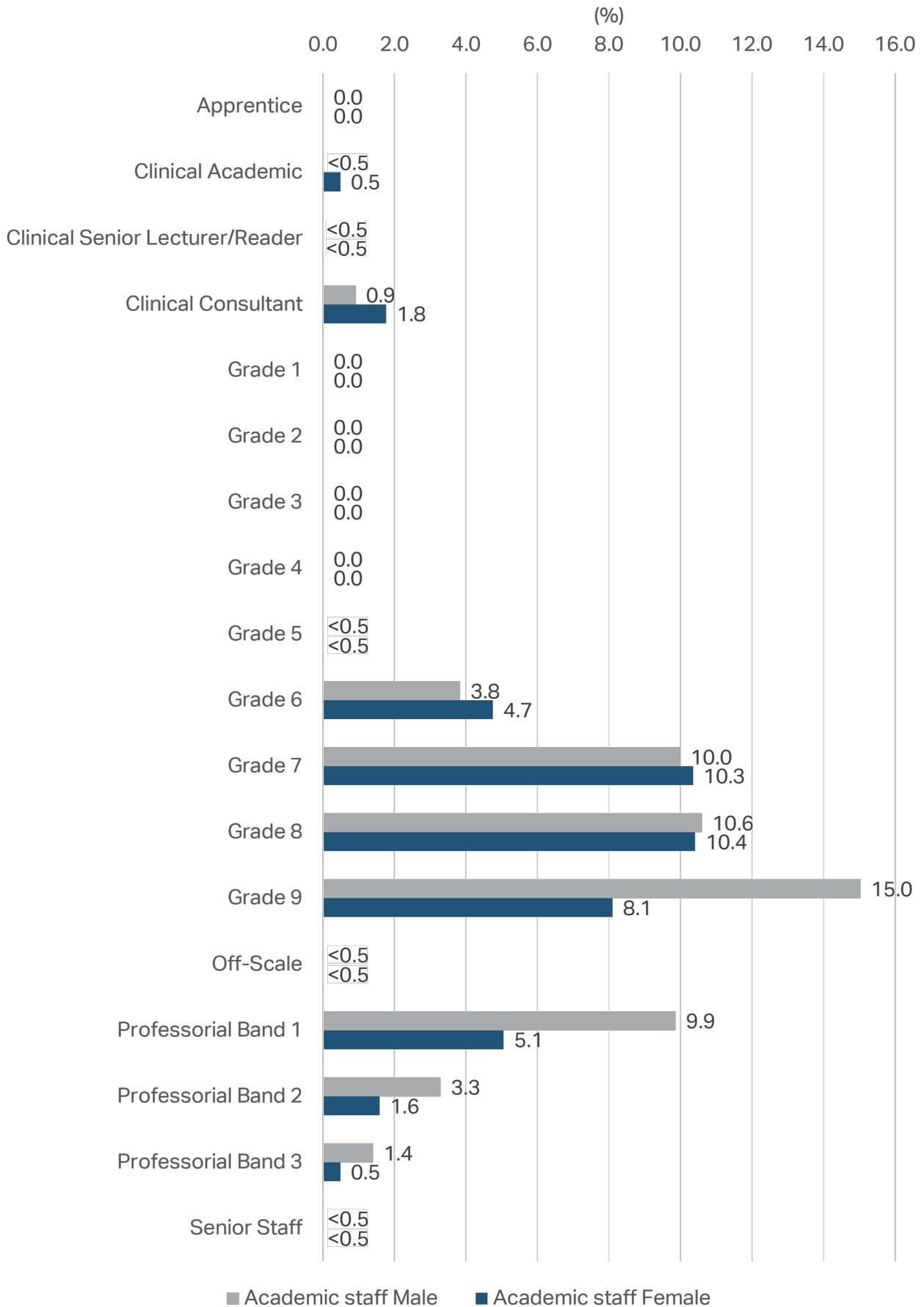


Figure 2a. Gender distribution of Academic staff by grade, 2025. Values below 0.5% of the staff population have been suppressed and are displayed as <0.5 to avoid disclosure of very small numbers.

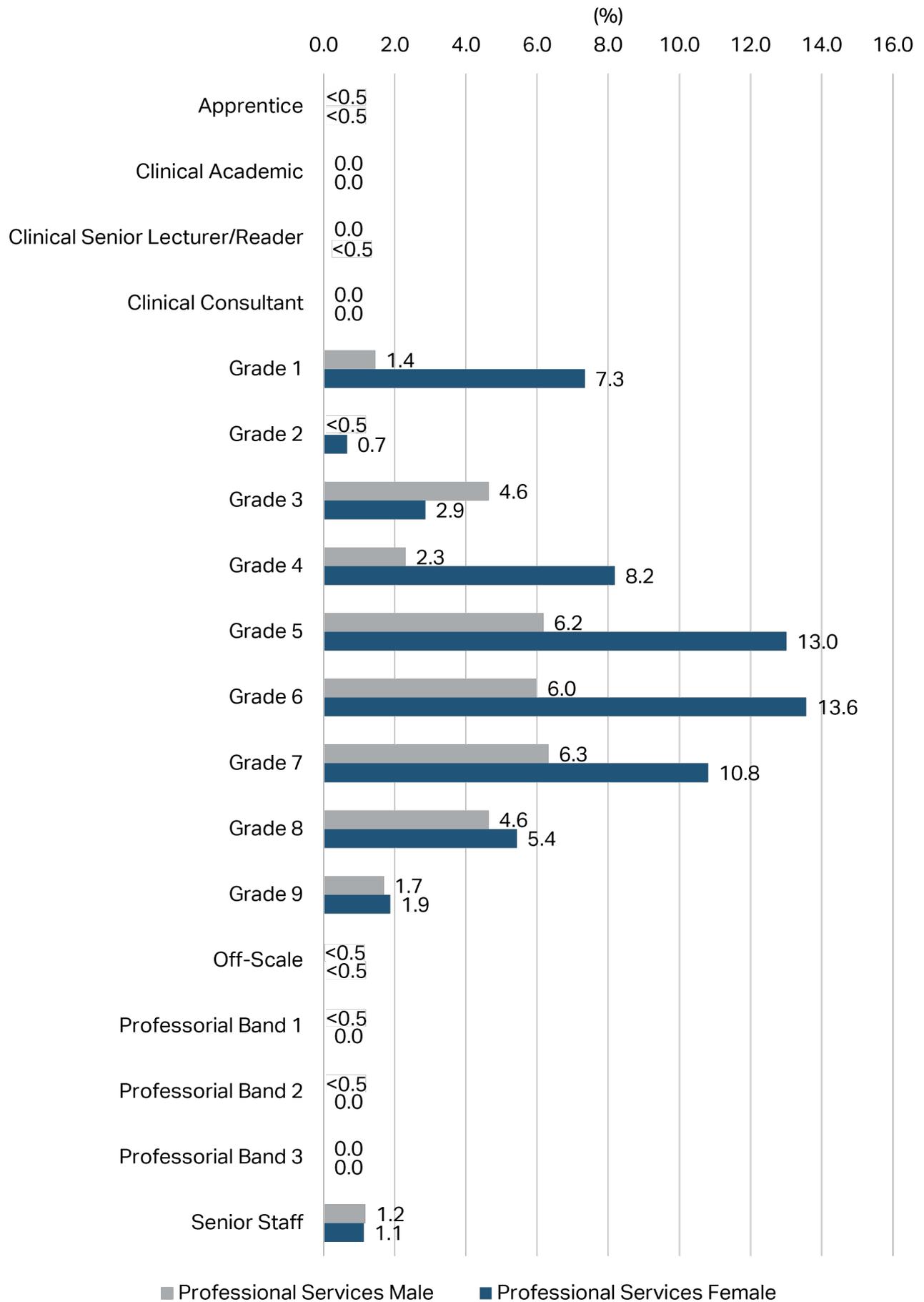


Figure 2b. Gender distribution of Professional Services staff by grade, 2025. Values below 0.5% of the staff population have been suppressed and are displayed as <0.5 to avoid disclosure of very small numbers.

Pay Quartiles

The staff population is divided into four pay quartiles, from lowest to highest hourly pay. There are notably more women in the lower pay quartile (71.9%) and more men in the upper pay quartile (61.5%) (Figure 3). Since the previous year, the proportion of female staff increased in both the lower quartile (by 1.5 percentage points) and the upper quartile (by 0.5 percentage points), while the proportion of female staff declined in the lower middle quartile (by 0.8 percentage points) and the upper middle quartile (by 0.2 percentage points). This uneven distribution of female and male staff across the pay quartiles and its influence on average pay continues to underpin the gender pay gap.

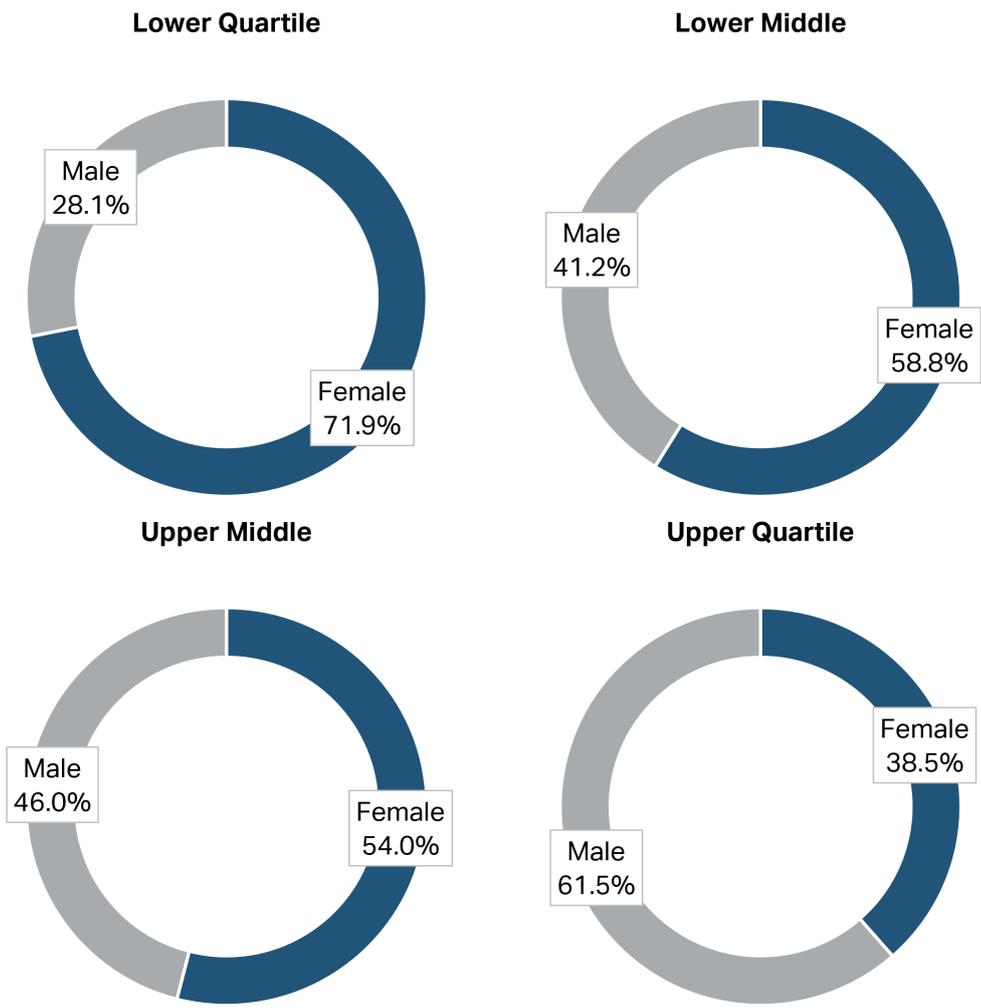


Figure 3. Gender distribution across pay quartiles, 2025.

Mean Hourly Rate of Pay by Gender

In 2025, the mean actual hourly rate was £23.34 for female staff and £28.90 for male staff, resulting in a mean hourly pay that was 19.2% lower for female staff compared with their male colleagues. This represents a decrease of 0.8 percentage points from 2024 and continues the downward trend observed since 2017, when the gender pay gap stood at 27.7% (Figure 4). It also marks the second consecutive year in which the mean gender pay gap has fallen below 20%.

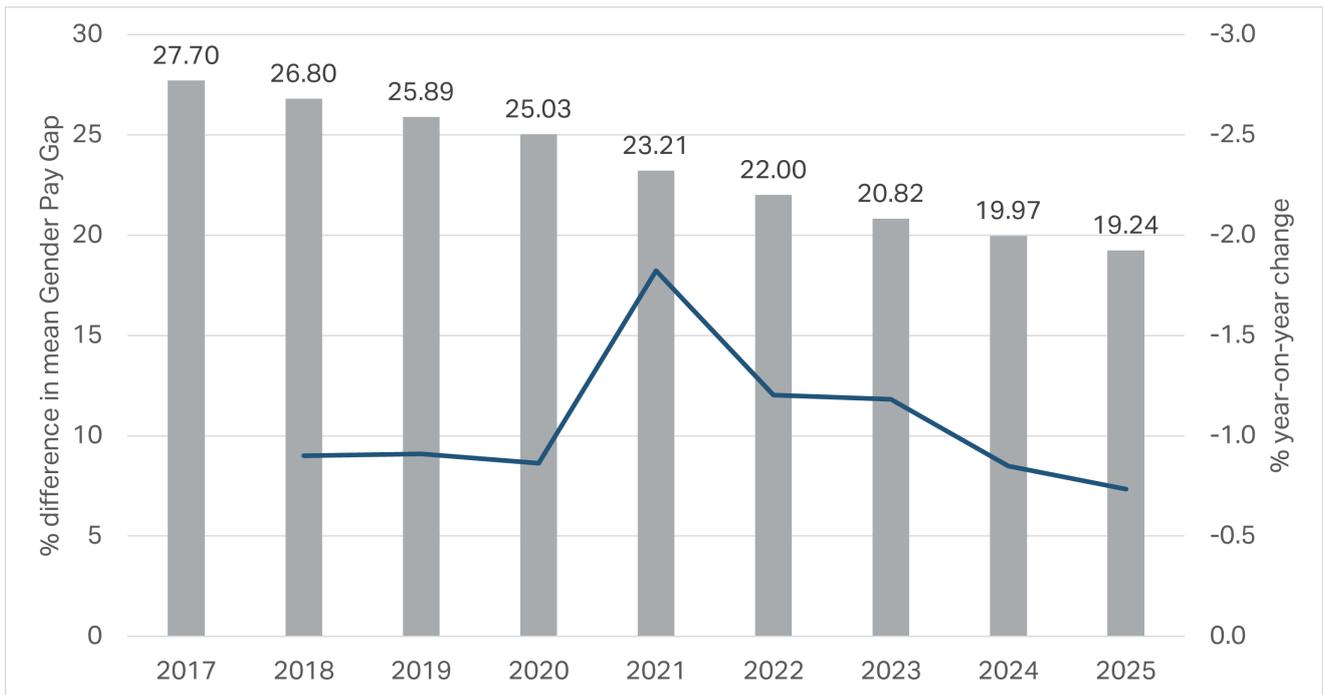


Figure 4. Percentage difference in the mean gender pay gap (grey bars) and year-on-year change (blue line), 2017-2025.

Median Hourly Rate of Pay by Gender

In 2025, the median hourly rate of pay was £20.36 for female staff and £25.28 for male staff, with the female rate 19.5% lower than the male rate. This represents a decrease of 0.2 percentage points compared with the previous year and a reduction of 7.0 percentage points since 2017, when the median gender pay gap stood at 26.5% (Figure 5). Despite the slight increase observed in 2024, the overall trend continues to show a gradual decline over time. As in 2024, more female staff were appointed to higher-paying roles in 2025, particularly at grades above the median, which contributed to the reduction in the median gender pay gap this year.

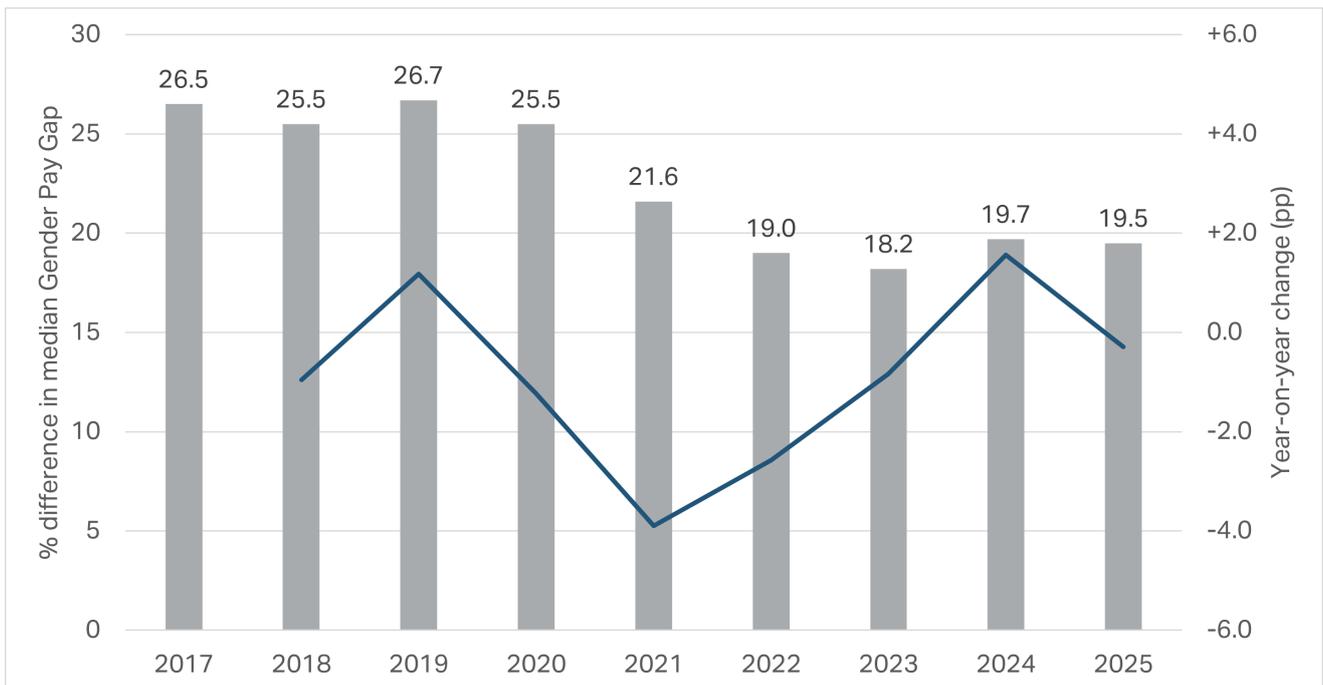


Figure 5. Percentage difference in the median gender pay gap (grey bars) and year-on-year change (blue line), 2017-2025.

Bonus Payments by Gender

2.8% of female staff and 1.6% of male staff received bonus payments in 2025. The mean bonus value was higher for male staff, resulting in a mean bonus pay gap of 31.9% in favour of the male workforce (Figure 6). The median bonus value was also slightly higher for male staff, producing a median bonus pay gap of 9.1%. As in previous years, the overall number of bonuses* awarded was very small, meaning that even minor variations can lead to significant fluctuations in the reported bonus pay gap figures.

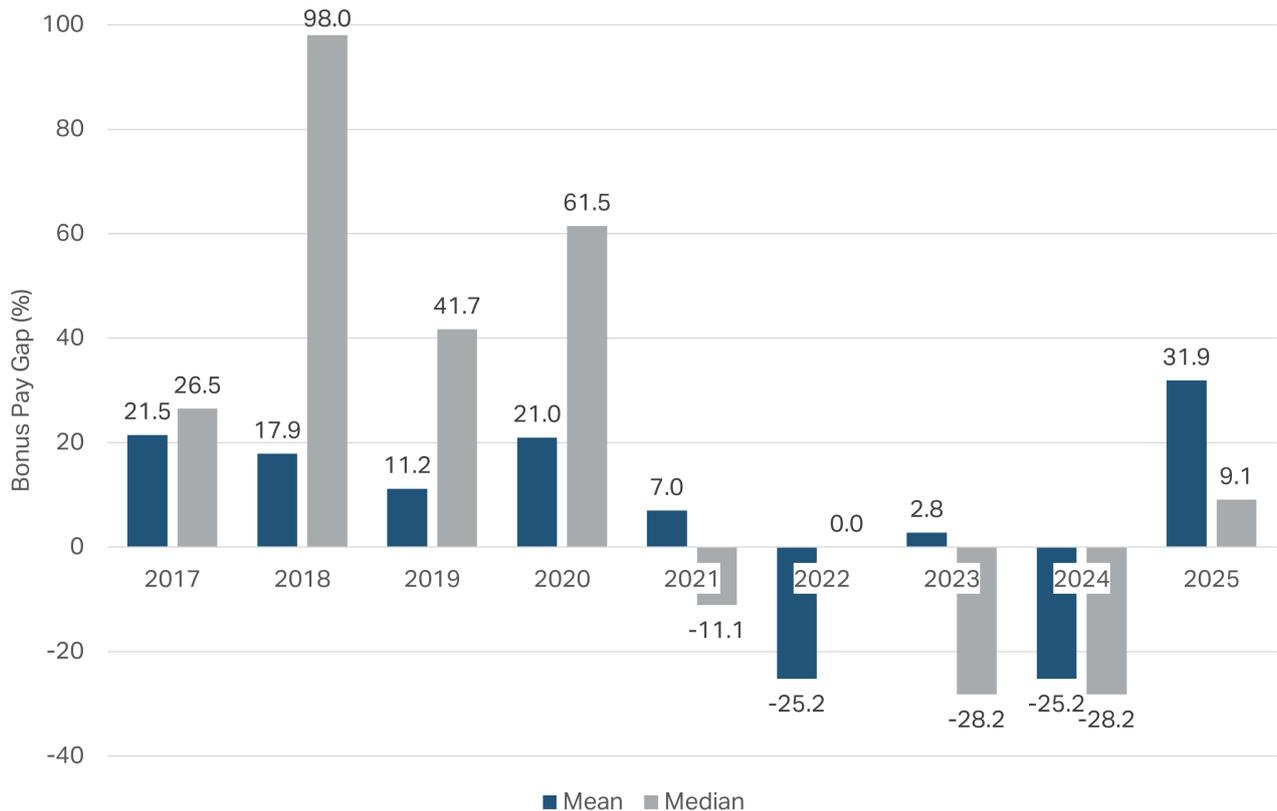


Figure 6. Percentage differences in the mean and median bonus pay gaps, 2017-2025.

*Bonus payments included in this report are small rewards for exceptional individual performance, rather than a core element of pay as they might be in other sectors. Additional work such as consultancy or exam marking is classed as "ordinary pay," not bonus pay, and is therefore included in the main GPG calculations.

Analysis

Statutory reporting of the gender pay gap began in 2017, and since then the institution's mean pay gap has declined steadily from 27.7% in 2017 to 19.2% in 2025, an overall reduction of 8.5 percentage points. The median pay gap has also decreased over this period, from 26.5% in 2017 to 19.5% in 2025, a fall of 7.0 percentage points. At Lancaster, the median pay gap is particularly influenced by the spinal point wage distribution, with large numbers of staff clustered at identical salary points around the middle of the grades. As a result, improvements to the female median pay point are not always immediately visible in the reported figure. This was evident in 2024, when the median gender pay gap showed an increase despite more female staff being appointed to higher-paying roles and the female median pay point rising more than the male equivalent.

Quartile data shows slight increases in the proportion of female staff in the lower and upper quartiles, alongside decreases in the lower middle and upper middle quartiles relative to 2024. Compared with 2023, however, there have been clearer improvements, with the upper middle quartile rising by 1.6 percentage points (from 52.4%) and the upper quartile rising by 2.7 percentage points (from 35.8%). Despite this progress, a higher proportion of female staff remain concentrated in lower paid roles (71.9% in the lower quartile), while a greater proportion of male staff are employed in higher paid roles (61.5% in the upper quartile). Continuing to increase female representation in higher-paid roles and reduce the concentration of female staff in lower-paid roles will support in further narrowing the gender pay gap.

Gender Pay Gap Action - Achievements in 2024/25

The University is committed to reducing the gender pay gap. Below are some of our key EDI initiatives that continue to contribute positively to the gender pay gap.

Athena Swan

The University continues to implement its current [Institutional Athena Swan action plan](#), which focuses on enhancing EDI culture, supporting Academic and Professional Services career progression, and improving family-friendly policies. In preparation for the next institutional submission, the Institutional Self-Assessment Team (ISAT) has been reviewing progress since 2019, drawing on both quantitative and qualitative data. Staff and student consultation has informed the self-assessment process and the development of future gender equality priorities. The Lancaster University Management School and the Faculty of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences have commenced their local self-assessments to identify progress, challenges, and opportunities in support of their upcoming Athena Swan submissions.

Flexible Working

A new flexible working workflow has been integrated into the University's HR system. This initiative introduces a standardised process that enhances visibility of flexible working requests across the institution and enables the identification of emerging trends. The data gathered will inform future efforts to assess the effectiveness of support provided to staff with caring responsibilities, particularly in relation to career progression for women.

Policy Enhancements

Over the past 12 months, the University has introduced a series of policy enhancements aimed at improving inclusion and workplace accessibility for growing and changing families. These include new provisions relating to carers, neonatal leave, pregnancy loss, and fertility treatment.

Race Equality Charter

In August 2024, Lancaster University was awarded the AdvanceHE Race Equality Charter (REC) Bronze Award. The University is now implementing its [associated action plan](#), which focuses on enhancing understanding, governance and leadership, student experience, staff pipeline development, and transparency of processes. In addition, the University participated in the 100 Black Women Professors Now. This programme is aimed at increasing the representation of Black women in academia. Developed by the Women's Higher Education Network (WHEN), the programme is a 12-month accelerator and change programme for UK Higher Education Institutions.

Research Staff Progression

New guidance for the progression of research staff was introduced at the start of the 2024/25 academic year. This guidance establishes a unified, streamlined, and consistent framework across Lancaster University for progression from Research Associate to Senior Research Associate. It is designed to support managers in budgeting, bidding, recruitment, and the career development of Research Associates.

Researcher Career Development (Bridging) Scheme

The Researcher Career Development (Bridging) Scheme was introduced to address the job insecurity faced by externally funded research staff. Evidence indicates that female researchers are disproportionately affected by contract precarity, due to both their higher representation and the impact of caring responsibilities on mobility. Successful applicants to the scheme may receive up to three months of contract extension, providing valuable time to pursue career development and professional opportunities.

Researcher Progression and Induction

The Concordat Implementation Group (CIG) continues to oversee the [HR Excellence in Research action plan](#), which reflects the University's commitment to researcher career development. One important aspect of the action plan is ensuring researchers receive an effective induction so that researchers are integrated into their communities and are aware of relevant policies and processes. A report outlining best practices for researcher induction has been submitted to CIG, and a task and finish group is being established to ensure consistent induction experiences across faculties and departments.

Support for Working Families

Support for working families has been strengthened through the introduction of parental leave checklists tailored for maternity/birthing parents, and adoption/surrogacy leave. These resources are intended for both staff and their line managers, with the aim of enhancing consistency and the quality of support provided. Insights from parental leave focus groups informed the development of these checklists and highlighted future priorities, particularly around improving return-to-work support.

Technician Commitment

As part of the University's engagement with the Technician Commitment, headline findings, particularly those related to diversity, have been reviewed to assess alignment with institutional representation. A demographic analysis of programme attendance indicated that participation is broadly representative of the wider University community. This will continue to be monitored to ensure ongoing inclusivity.

Gender Pay Gap Action - Future Action

- The University's [Equality Objectives \(2022-2026\)](#) will continue to serve as a strategic framework for advancing the institution's equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) agenda. Key priorities will include the development and implementation of corresponding action plans, underpinned by robust reporting mechanisms and informed by consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- Preparatory work is underway to review and establish a new set of University Equality Objectives for the period 2026–2030, ensuring alignment with institutional priorities and sector developments.
- The University is working on its next Athena Swan institutional submission, due in 2026, within which there will be a range of data-informed actions that focus on addressing gender disparities across our workforce, such as the gender pay gap.
- In response to staff consultation regarding awareness and experiences of shared parental leave, the University is developing comprehensive guidance to support colleagues in understanding and accessing shared parental leave entitlements. This initiative seeks to promote increased uptake and foster greater gender equity in parenting responsibilities during the first year, recognising that early shared involvement contributes to long-term equality in caregiving roles.
- A series of researcher case studies is being developed for inclusion on the [research culture webpages](#). These case studies aim to highlight effective practices in recruitment and support, with a particular focus on enhancing the experiences and outcomes of PhD students from under-represented groups.
- The University will continue to progress the implementation of its [Equality Impact Assessment \(EIA\) Framework](#) during the current academic year. This work will support consistent and equitable assessment of the impacts of large-scale projects, including analysis by sex-disaggregated data.
- The University will continue to build on the work of the 100 Black Women Professors Now programme to look at equality of opportunity, address deep-rooted barriers, move beyond racial gesture politics and ultimately:
 - Retain Black women in the sector,
 - Create visible role models,
 - Achieve a pipeline of future black women academics.
- The University remains committed to progressing its key performance indicators (KPIs) including gender equality, with ongoing monitoring and oversight provided through the University Executive Board.