At our inaugural Gender Matters think tank event in 2018 we observed a renewed focus on the need to promote and enhance inclusive business practices. This was reflected in media interest in gender issues and the introduction of UK legislation on gender and pay. Yet despite this renewed attention on gender equality in the workplace, women continue to be under-represented in positions of power in organisations.

In this second Gender Matters brochure we draw on a range of sources to illustrate the current scope and range of gender and inclusion challenges that we identify as prevalent in 2020. We focus on the gender pay gap, the leadership pipeline and managing the personal and the professional. We use the financial services sector as an exemplar of the challenges facing a key player in the UK economy.

The illustrations identify the continuing resilience of workplace gender inequalities and the stubborn persistence of the practice-policy gap. We use the term ‘practice-policy gap’ to explain how the development of fair and equitable ‘gender neutral’ policies fail to take account of gendered social assumptions that can (dis)advantage women and men’s everyday practice at work. The figures in this and the first Gender Matters brochure reveal the enduring nature of the divide between good intentions of ‘neutral’ policy and the reality of our own practice, behaviours and perceptions, influenced by social norms.
GENDER PAY GAP

Women’s pay continues to lag behind that of men; this is a global phenomenon. The figures reveal a widening gap that increases with age, status and family responsibilities.

THE LEADERSHIP PIPELINE

Women’s progression in the workplace to leadership positions is persistently problematic. The figures below demonstrate a status gap between women and men; women are more prevalent in junior roles and men are more prevalent in senior roles.

MANAGING THE PERSONAL AND THE PROFESSIONAL

Family responsibilities affect social perceptions of women and men differently and this has an impact on behaviour. Figures reflect a ‘practice-pathy gap’ where well-intentioned policy fails to be realised in practice.

THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

In the UK sector the pay gap widens with age and seniority, extending to additional aspects of the reward package including substantial differences in bonus pay.

THE FINANCIAL SERVICES SECTOR

Women’s lack of progression is mirrored in the UK financial services sector with a widening gap in the most senior roles.

Source: Office for National Statistics (2014-2018);


Source: Office for National Statistics.


Source: FTSE 350 Board Women’s Executive Committee.


Source: FTSE 350 Executive Committees and Sub-Committees.


Source: Parents, Work and Care: Striking the Balance (2016).


Source: The Glass Pyramid: Women’s under-representation in senior roles.


Source: Women, Recruitment and Family.”

Source: The Glass Pyramid: Women’s under-representation in senior roles.


Source: Women, Recruitment and Family.”

Source: Office for National Statistics.