



Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

WHAT IS GENDER PAY GAP REPORTING?

The gender pay gap shows the difference between the mean (average) and median (mid-point) earnings of male and female employees. This is represented as a percentage of male earnings.

A positive percentage represents a bias in favour of males and a negative in favour of females. This is different from equal pay which is the pay difference between males and females who are doing the same job, similar jobs or work of equal value.



THE JARGON.

Mean – This is the average hourly wage across the college. The mean gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between women's average hourly wage and men's average hourly wage.

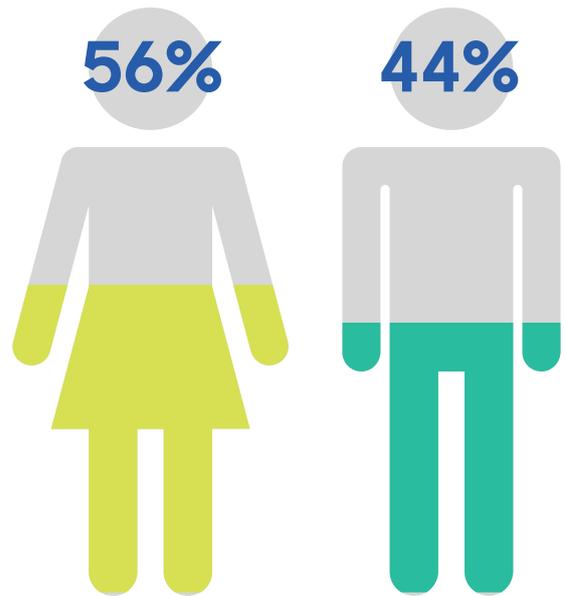
Median – The median hourly rate is calculated by ranking all colleagues from the highest paid to the lowest paid, and taking the hourly wage of the person in the middle; so the median gender pay gap is the difference between the hourly wage of the middle paid woman and the hourly wage of the middle paid man.

Quartile – Quartiles represent the pay rates of our colleagues from the lowest to the highest hourly rate. These are split into four groups as equally as possible keeping the same hourly rates together.

THE FACTS AND FIGURES.

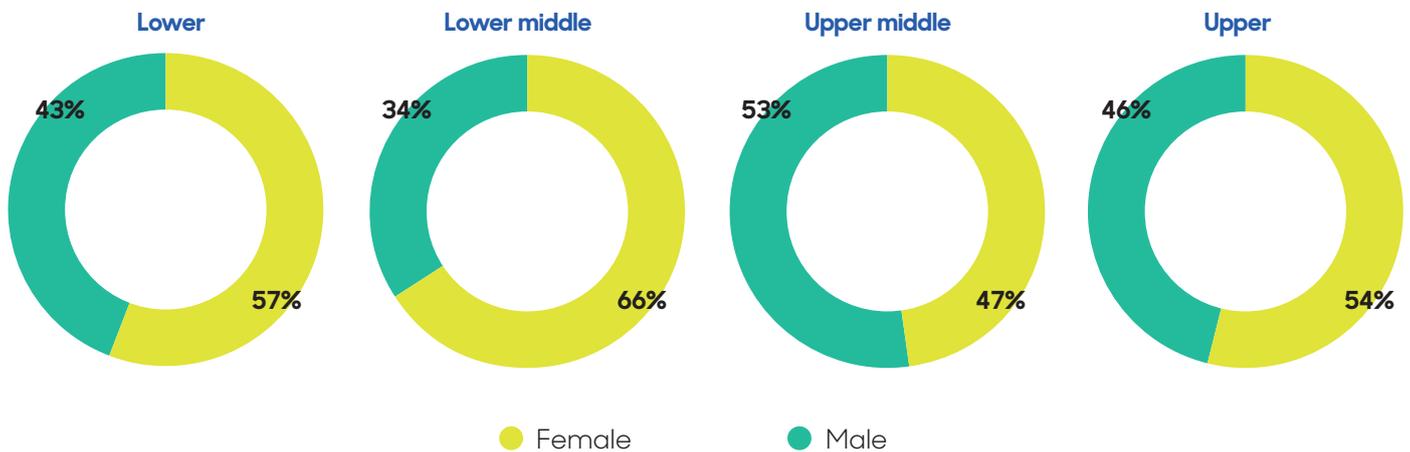
Our colleagues

Breakdown of male/female staff.



Gender distribution (March 2025)

Breakdown of male/female staff by quartile.



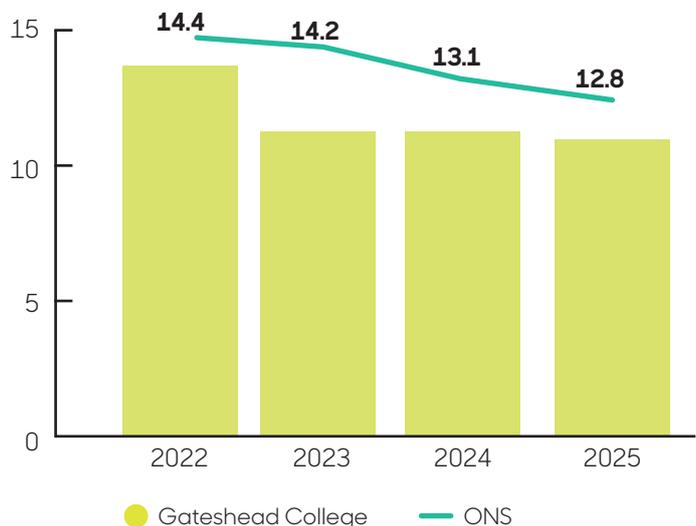
Hourly pay figures

The national average gender pay gap reported by the ONS for 2025 (12.8%), demonstrates a decline in the gender pay gap, from 13.1% in 2024. The gender pay gap in the North East has also narrowed, now at 9.9%, down from 11.2% in 2024.

Figure 1 represents the trend in UK gender pay gap for median hourly earnings from 2022 to 2025. The College's 2025 median gender pay gap of 11.1% remains below the national average of 12.8%. While the North East regional gap has reduced to 9.9%, the College's position remains broadly consistent with wider labour-market patterns. An analysis of the factors contributing to this trend can be found in section 3 of this paper.

March 2024		March 2025	
Mean	Median	Mean	Median
6.6%	11.2%	6.7%	11.1%

Figure 1: UK Trends in gender pay gap for median hourly earnings - 2022 to 2025 (%)



Pay quartiles

The tables below present the gender distribution across the college in four equally sized quartiles. Table 1 illustrates the position in March 2024 and Table 2 shows the progress at March 2025.

Table 1

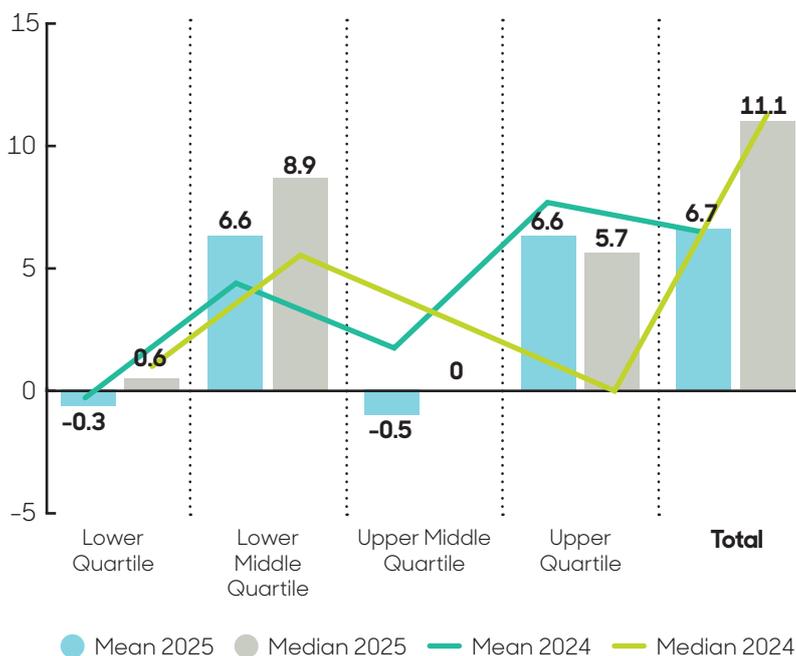
Quartile	March 2024			
	Female (%)	Male (%)	Mean Hourly Pay Gap (%)	Median Hourly Pay Gap (%)
Lower	56%	44%	-0.1%	1%
Lower Middle	66%	34%	4.2%	5.6%
Upper Middle	48%	52%	1.9%	2.7%
Upper	54%	46%	7.8%	0%
TOTAL	56%	44%	6.6%	11.2%

Table 2

Quartile	March 2025			
	Female (%)	Male (%)	Mean Hourly Pay Gap (%)	Median Hourly Pay Gap (%)
Lower	57%	43%	-0.3%	0.6%
Lower Middle	66%	34%	6.6%	8.9%
Upper Middle	47%	53%	-0.5%	0%
Upper	54%	46%	6.6%	5.7%
TOTAL	56%	44%	6.7%	11.1%

Figure 2 represents the movement in the gender pay gap for the college across the four quartiles.

Figure 2: Trend in gender pay gap by quartile - 2024 to 2025 (%)



Bonus differentials

The college does not make bonus payments.

● Mean 2025 ● Median 2025 — Mean 2024 — Median 2024

WHAT DO THE FIGURES TELL US?

Overall, the College's 2025 gender pay gap remains stable, with the mean gap increasing slightly to 6.7% and the median gap decreasing marginally to 11.1%. These small changes indicate no significant widening or narrowing of the gap.

The College employs more females (56%) than males (44%), which has remained consistent with last year.

The lower quartile which contains a wide range entry-level and operational roles such as Learning Support Officers, Invigilators, Caretakers and Learning Facilitators, remains female-dominant (57% female in 2025, compared to 56% in 2024). While this is positive for overall representation, it also means a higher proportion of women are positioned in the lowest paid part of the structure, contributing to the overall gender pay gap.

The lower-middle quartile also remains female-dominant (66% female), unchanged from last year. This group includes learning support roles, learning facilitators, assessors and teachers at the lower end of the pay scale, most of whom are female. The mean gap has increased from 4.2% to 6.6% and the median gap has increased from 5.6% to 8.9%, reflecting small shifts in the types of roles within this quartile. This means that a slightly higher proportion of men in this quartile are now occupying roles or pay points at the upper end of the quartile or have progressed into higher-earning positions within it, resulting in men being paid more on average than women. The pattern continues to show that the gender pay gap is influenced by where women are clustered in roles, not by unequal pay for comparable roles.

The upper-middle quartile is slightly male-dominant (53% male). This group includes a higher proportion of longer-serving teachers, Curriculum Leaders (CLs) and some leadership support roles. The mean gap is now -0.5%, meaning women are earning slightly more on average than men. The median gap has reduced to 0%, showing that the midpoint of hourly pay is now the same for men and women within this quartile. This shift suggests that the overall distribution of pay within the quartile has evened out, partly because of changes in which roles sit in this group. This year, most CLs - 53% of whom are female - are in the upper-middle quartile, whereas last year they were almost all in the upper quartile. This has helped balance both the average and median pay between men and women.

The upper quartile remains balanced (54% female), showing strong female representation in the highest-paid roles, including senior leadership. While the mean gap has decreased to 6.6%, the median gap has increased from 0% to 5.7%, likely due to minor changes in salary distribution. Balanced representation at this level continues to be a positive indicator of career progression for women and helps prevent the pay gap from widening.



HOW ARE WE PERFORMING?

The College continues to maintain a relatively low gender pay gap, with both the mean and median figures showing only minimal movement from last year. Our median gender pay gap of 11.1% remains below the national average of 12.8% and although the North East average has reduced to 9.9%, our position remains broadly aligned with wider labour-market trends.

The gender balance across the quartiles remains largely unchanged from last year. Women continue to be more highly represented in the lower and lower-middle quartiles, while the upper quartile remains balanced. This distribution continues to shape the gender pay gap, with the gap reflecting the roles in which men and women work rather than unequal pay for comparable roles.

This year's analysis indicates that the lower-middle quartile remains a key area for further work and the upper-middle quartile continues to require monitoring. Although the pay gap in the upper-middle quartile has closed this year, this improvement is largely due to changes in role distribution. Both quartiles are where shifts in role composition and gender representation continue to have the greatest influence on the overall gender pay gap.

We will continue to review our processes and practices to reduce our gender pay gap where possible.



WHAT WE'VE DONE SINCE 2025.

Last year, we committed to reviewing occupational segregation and strengthening recruitment and progression pathways. Over the past year we have modernised our recruitment approach through improved employer branding, a new Applicant Tracking System and more inclusive attraction materials. This has expanded the diversity and volume of applicants and supported fairer access to roles across the College, helping to address imbalances in where women and men are represented across pay quartiles over time. We have also improved the quality of our people data, giving us clearer insight to measure progress and plan targeted activity more effectively.

We also committed to enhancing progression opportunities and addressing development barriers. Significant progress has been made through the development of a three-year Learning and Development Plan, expansion of leadership development programmes and the creation of a new appraisal framework. These actions are improving the visibility and accessibility of career pathways, particularly for colleagues in lower and middle pay quartiles, where gender imbalance has an impact on the overall gender pay gap.

To support a more inclusive culture, we embedded the newly approved EDI Commitment Statement and strengthened governance through the EDI Steering Group and Staff Inclusion Group. Key policies and processes were reviewed, including the Equality Impact Assessment approach and key anti-harassment policies, to reduce bias and support more inclusive and consistent decision-making, which underpins fair access to opportunity and progression across the workforce.

We said we would continue to develop supportive and flexible working practices. Over the past year, we have strengthened our reward and benefits offer and supported flexible and hybrid working and digital capability through whole-College training and targeted support, helping to retain and support colleagues with caring responsibilities, who are often disproportionately women.

Finally, we committed to improving wellbeing and reducing barriers that disproportionately impact women. We achieved "Maintaining Excellence" in the Better Health at Work Award, delivered a wide range of wellbeing initiatives, increased counselling support and reduced absence levels through strengthened case management, supporting retention and sustained participation in work.



WHAT ACTION WILL WE TAKE?

We will build on our progress in reducing occupational segregation by further strengthening our approach to attracting and recruiting talent. This includes expanding outreach to under-represented groups, improving recruitment intelligence and embedding more inclusive recruitment guidance and training for managers, to improve gender balance across roles and pay quartiles over time.

To support continued progression and capability development, we will launch the new appraisal framework, roll out enhanced leadership programmes, implement a new learning management system and refresh our induction processes. These actions will provide clearer, more consistent pathways into higher-paid roles, supporting improved representation of women in higher-paid positions.

We will continue to support an inclusive culture by delivering the annual EDI action plan, strengthening the impact of the Staff Inclusion Group's, embedding the updated Equality Impact Assessment process and improving cultural awareness and governance across leadership levels. This will help reduce bias in decision-making that can affect access to development, progression and reward.

We will continue to prioritise wellbeing through the launch of a new wellbeing portal, targeted health and wellbeing interventions and strengthened departmental absence dashboards. These actions will help maintain reduced absence levels and support retention and sustained participation in work, particularly for colleagues disproportionately affected by caring responsibilities.

We will progress our commitment to flexible and hybrid working by delivering a College-wide updated hybrid working approach. This will support managers to apply flexible working practices consistently, ensure fairness across departments and help remove barriers that can limit progression and earnings for some groups, including women.

We will prepare for and implement key elements of the Employment Rights Bill, ensuring that changes relating to flexible working, sexual harassment duties and wider employment protections are embedded effectively. This will strengthen protections and support a fair and inclusive working environment that underpins long-term equality in pay and opportunity.

The agreed actions will form part of our EDI action plan and be monitored by our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Steering Group with oversight from the People Committee.

