



General Optical Council: Gender Pay Gap Report April 2022



Summary and Background

Summary

This paper summarises the results of the gender pay gap assessment carried out using snapshot data as at 5th April 2022 for the GOC.

Our results show the GOC workforce is predominantly female and this year there has been an increase in the mean pay gap in favour of men, but a reduction in the median pay gap in favour of women. Both are well within industry norms for the regulatory and charity sector.

Background

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017, which came into force on 31st March 2017, has made it a statutory requirement for organisations with 250 or more employees to publish the following calculations, as at 5 April each year, to show the size of the pay gap between their male and female employees:

1. Mean gender pay gap in hourly pay
2. Median gender pay gap in hourly pay
3. Mean bonus gender pay gap
4. Median bonus gender pay gap
5. Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus payment
6. Proportion of men and women in each pay quartile

The GOC employs less than 250 employees and so we are not required to publish our gender pay gap data. However, as part of our commitment to equality, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) we have chosen to publish our data on an annual basis.

Gender Pay Gap versus Equal Pay

Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs, or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman. The gender pay gap shows the differences in the average pay between men and women. If a workplace has a particularly high gender pay gap, this can indicate there may be several issues to deal with, and the individual calculations may help to identify what those issues are. In some cases, the gender pay gap may include unlawful inequality in pay, but this is not necessarily the case.

The gender pay reporting regulations were specifically introduced to facilitate a national shift towards greater equality in the average hourly earnings of men and women. This is influenced by a range of factors, including:

- Women historically working in lower-paid occupations and sectors and occupying fewer senior roles.
- Women taking time out and / or working part-time due to unequal sharing of caring responsibilities.
- Historical stereotyping and workplace cultures that were unsupportive.

Across the UK in 2022, The Office for National Statistics reported that the mean gender pay gap for full time employees was 11.3%, down from 11.8% in the previous year. For all employees (including part-time) the mean was 13.9%, down from 14.7%. The gender pay gap is higher for all employees than it is for full-time employees or part-time employees. This is because women fill more part-time jobs, which in comparison with full-time jobs have lower hourly median pay. (Source – [The Office for National Statistics](#), November 2022).

Gender Pay Gap Figures

Gender pay gap data has been analysed using data from data as of the 5th of April 2022.

Figures Overview

- Mean Gender Pay Gap – on average men earn 4.5% higher hourly rate than women, this an increase 3.2% on 2021.
- Median Gender Pay Gap – on average men's median pay is 0.6% higher than for women. This figure is less than 1% and not significant.
- Bonuses – we do not pay bonuses so there is no mean or median bonus gap.

Proportion of men and women in each of the four [pay quartiles](#):

	Men	Women
Lower Quartile	29%	71%
Lower Middle Quartile	33%	67%
Upper Middle Quartile	22%	78%
Upper Quartile	43%	57%
All Staff	32%	68%

Analysis

We have seen a rise in our mean gender pay gap but have also seen a reduction in the median gender pay gap. Both remain significantly better than the national averages for other full-time employees.

The reason behind the change in the mean gender pay gap is reflected in the Upper Quartile range where men working in the higher pay bands increased by 8% and correspondingly women working in the higher pay bands decreased by 8%.

Overall, these changes are reflective of appointments made where a male has replaced a female in the upper quartile. Please keep in mind when looking at the figures the impact of the small size of our population. As each person represents 1.06% in each quartile, a 2% difference equates to approximately 2 people only. This can have an even greater impact when analysing individual quartiles. To measure our progression, we have included the figures for 2019, 2020 and 2021 alongside our 2022 figures in the appendix.

Further Initiatives

The GOC recognises that it has further work to do in positively impacting the gender pay gap position and in this coming year, we intend to focus on:

- Review of recruitment practice, processes and policy to ensure best practice and promote fairer hiring practices.
- Launch new policies for reward and recognition, equality diversity and inclusion and flexible working.
- Develop succession planning to provide balance in promotion, succession planning and development opportunities.
- Explore opportunities for career coaching and mentoring for all staff to increase confidence to apply for promotion.
- Apply rigour in the negotiations of starting salaries and afford greater flexibility for part time workers to progress.
- Support staff networks to foster diversity and inclusion, including Women's, EMBRACE, LGBTQ+ and ABLE networks, plus, our Anti-Racism group; and the long-standing Staff Welfare and Engagement Group (SWEG).

Appendix

Employer	Employer Size	% Difference in hourly rate (Mean)	% Difference in hourly rate (Median)	% Women in lower pay quartile	% Women in lower middle pay quartile	% Women in upper middle pay quartile	% Women in top pay quartile	% Who received bonus pay (Women)	% Who received bonus pay (Men)	% Difference in bonus pay (Mean)	% Difference in bonus pay (Median)
GOC 2022	<250	4.5	0.6	71	67	78	57	0	0	0	0
GOC 2021	<250	1.3	5.0	75	62	65	65	0	0	0	0
GOC 2020	<250	2.5	14.6	76	67	52	62	0	0	0	0
GOC 2019	<250	3.4	6.0	68	64	64	57	0	0	0	0
National Average (all)*		11.3	8.3								
Regulatory Sector**		4.7	13.1								

Statistics from [Gender pay gap - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://www.ons.gov.uk)

*Reference: PROV-SIC07-Industry(2) SIC2007 table 4.12-Gender pay gap 2022 – row 6

**Reference: PROV-SIC07-Industry(4) SIC2007 table 16.2 -Gender pay gap 2022 – row 886

Footnote: [All part time roles via flexible working data has been revised upward to Full Time Equivalent \(FTE\) in the analysis](#)