

Gender pay report 2019





Sarah Perry,
Managing Partner

As one of the leading law firms in the Midlands, Wright Hassall is committed to ensuring that it has a diverse and talented workforce.

Our ambition is to make Wright Hassall an exceptional place to work for everyone, and to achieve this we have developed core values aimed at ensuring that, irrespective of gender or background, all employees have the chance to shine.

We acknowledge that we have a gender pay gap, we understand why it exists and are working hard (see detail below) to address this, though we know that – in order to make our changes sustainable – this will not be a ‘quick fix’ and it may take a number of years to achieve parity.

We will continue to see this as a priority issue.

Taking positive steps...

- We have more women than men in the higher-paying earnings bands
- More than one half of our partners are female
- More than one quarter of our partners work a part-time hours pattern
- Once again, our annual promotion round saw more women than men promoted
- We launched our new maternity/paternity pay policy in 2018 – leading to all our women returning to work after leave
- We launched our new Inclusion & Diversity learning module
- The Wright Hassall Academy targeted gender equality themes as part of the learning programme in 2018

At Wright Hassall we believe in promoting equality and diversity amongst our workforce. We therefore welcome the opportunity to publish the information required under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017 that shows the gender pay gap level in our business.

Wright Hassall is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees, regardless of sex, race, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability. It has a policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their sex (or any other characteristic set out above).

By law, men and women must receive equal pay for:

- The same or broadly similar work;
- Work rated as equivalent under a job evaluation scheme; or
- Work of equal value.

As such the Firm:

- Carries out pay and benefits audits at regular intervals;
- Ensures equal pay awareness amongst all managers and other staff members who are involved in pay reviews

Wright Hassall is confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work.

Rather it's gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries that these roles attract.

Using the standard methodologies set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017, our mean gender pay gap (i.e. average pay for men greater than average pay for women) is **33.4%**.

What are the underlying causes then of Wright Hassall's gender pay gap?

Across the UK economy as a whole, men are more likely than women to be in senior roles (especially very senior roles at the top of organisations), while women are more likely than men to be in front-line roles at the lower end of the organisation such as administrative and hospitality positions.

In addition, men are more likely to be in technical and IT-related roles, which attract higher rates of pay than other roles at similar levels of seniority.

Women are also more likely than men to have had breaks from work that have affected their career progression, for example to bring up children.

They are also more likely to work part time, and many of the jobs that are available across the UK on a part-time basis are relatively low paid.

This pattern from the UK economy as a whole is reflected to a certain extent in the make-up of Wright Hassall's workforce, where the majority of administrators and secretaries are women.

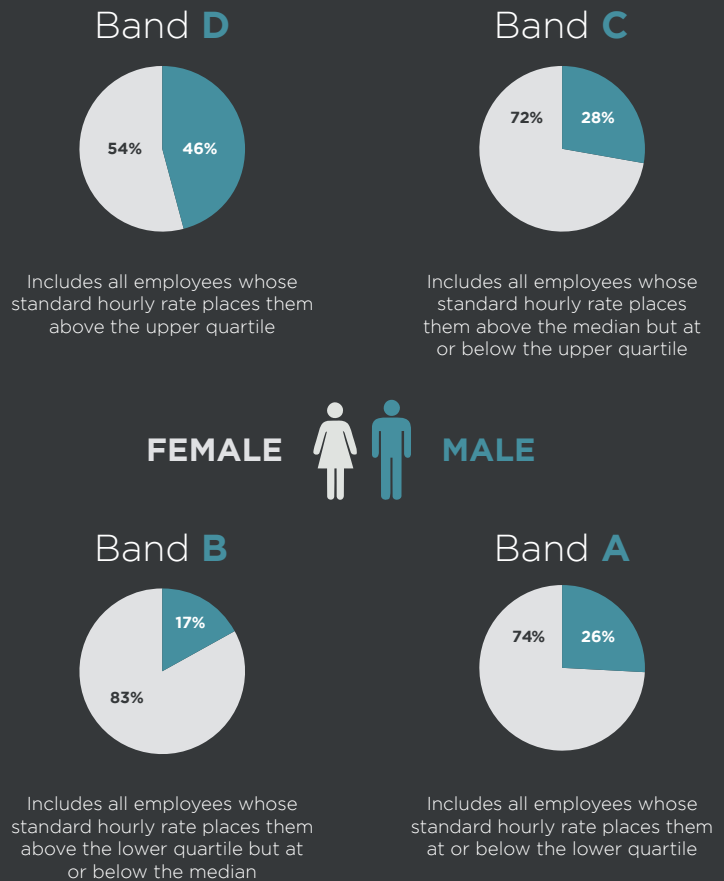
The graphic to the right depicts our pay quartiles by gender:

This shows our organisation divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rates, with Band A including the lowest-paid 25% of employees (the lower quartile) and Band D covering the highest-paid 25% (the upper quartile).

In order for there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of men to women in each Band.

However, within Wright Hassall 74% of the employees in Band A are women and 26% men.

The trend is that the percentage of male employees increases throughout the Bands, from the aforementioned 26% in Band A to 46% in Band D.



Wright Hassall

- The mean gender pay gap is **33.4%**
- The median gender pay gap is **36.7%**
- The mean gender bonus gap is **18.1%**
- The median gender bonus gap is **58.1%**
- The proportion of male employees in Wright Hassall receiving a bonus is **8%** and the proportion of female employees receiving a bonus is **9%**

It is notable that at Wright Hassall, there are a greater percentage of women than men in the higher-paying Bands C & D which demonstrates that a good proportion of senior roles are held by women.

At Wright Hassall, these senior roles include solicitors, heads of support teams, team leaders and partners.

At partner level, often viewed as a key career achievement in the legal sector, 53% of individuals are female compared to 47% male, reflective of a culture where women are encouraged to succeed.

In order to support this progression for women, Wright Hassall operates a firm-wide flexible working policy which enables a large proportion of the workforce to work part time and to amend their hours to suit personal circumstances. More than one-quarter of those achieving partnership in the firm work on a part-time hours pattern.

In terms of career and job promotions through the firm, in the reporting period 8 women and 5 men were promoted into more senior roles, again demonstrating that women are being encouraged to progress through the firm with higher paid roles being as achievable for them as for their male counterparts.

In terms of bonuses, the awards during the 2017/18 period led to the quantum of award being greater for men, though more female employees received a bonus than their male colleagues.

As the snapshot data illustrates, however, a very modest number of bonus awards were made during the year (less than 10% of the workforce) and hence caution should be applied to any analysis of bonus-related trends.

What further action is Wright Hassall taking to address its gender pay gap?

While Wright Hassall prides itself on the availability of flexible working options for its employees, it is in no way complacent and remains committed to doing everything that it can to reduce the gap.

However, Wright Hassall also recognises that its scope to act is limited in some areas - it cannot for instance do a great deal to influence the proportion of female to male employees in the lower quartiles as, across British society, it is typically women who choose administrative and secretarial roles which are generally lower paid.

Nonetheless, actions undertaken include:

- **Flexible working policy:**
Wright Hassall's flexible working policy was substantially revised in the period to make it clear that employees in all areas and levels of the organisation will be considered for flexible working and that flexible working need not be limited to part-time working. This was communicated across the firm.
- **Substantial enhancements to the maternity/ paternity pay policy:**
Wright Hassall launched a policy that offers enhanced pay above statutory levels in order to better support staff with family responsibilities.

In this regard, it is notable that 100% of females returned to work after maternity leave in 2018 compared to 50% in the previous 12 month period.

We will now extend our evidence gathering and monitor the proportion of men and women still in post a year on from a return to work after a period of maternity or other parental leave to assess the ongoing impact of this improved policy.

- **The launch of a new Inclusion & Diversity learning module:**
as part of improvements to the Wright Hassall induction programme, a new 'Inclusion & Diversity' online course has been launched that includes coverage of unconscious bias and how deep-seated implicit preferences may affect judgements and assessments, including those relating to gender and career progression.

It is intended that this learning is applied across the organisation in due course.

- **WH Academy learning programme:**
The firm is aiming to increasingly champion gender equality through learning initiatives.

In this regard Tracey Westall, named in 2016 as one of the Top 50 influential women in IT and non-executive member of the Department for Transport Board, recently gave a memorable presentation on leadership, gender diversity and how diverse teams deliver better results.

Our Managing Partner, Sarah Perry also presented to one of the firm's networking groups on paths to equity partnership within WH.

We will continue to seek to develop senior sponsors and role models to encourage women into senior roles in the firm.

None of these initiatives will, of itself, remove the gender pay gap - and it may be several years before some have any impact at all. In the meantime, Wright Hassall remains focussed on fairness for all employees and are committed to reporting on an annual basis on what it is doing to reduce the gender pay gap and the progress that it is making.

I, Paul Gregson, Human Resources Director, confirm that to the best of my knowledge, the information contained herein is accurate and reliable as of the date of publication.

Signed:



Date: 26/03/19

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