



MILLS & REEVE

Achieve more. Together.



2023 Pay gap report

Incorporating progress on
diversity, inclusion and wellbeing



We aim to be a firm where we recruit, retain, and promote the best people; in a place where everyone thrives and can be themselves; and create strong partnerships with our clients and communities.

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“Publishing our various pay gaps is a useful exercise to help keep us accountable and focussed on our strategic progress, and looking at the statistics over the last five years, I’m pleased with our direction of travel.”

Claire Clarke

Managing partner, Mills & Reeve

Foreword by our managing partner

As in previous years, we're going well above standard government requirements to publish the details of our gender pay gap, as well as sharing other pay gap statistics, including ethnicity and disability. We're also taking the opportunity to provide an update on our diversity, inclusion and wellbeing strategy.

Making Mills & Reeve a place where people thrive and others want to join is a key pillar of our firm strategy, and we work hard to embed this in everything we do. We hope that by sharing details of our progress and initiatives to date, we can contribute to the wider legal sector in collectively moving the dial on diversity, inclusion and wellbeing.

Publishing our various pay gaps is a useful exercise to help keep us accountable and focussed on our strategic progress, and looking at the statistics over the last five years, I'm pleased with our direction of travel.

I'm happy to say that year on year our ethnicity pay gap has reduced by 2.6% to 11.1%, while our disability pay gap, which we reported on for the first time last year, has narrowed by 3% to 7.9%.

While we've seen progress in our ethnicity and disability statistics, we must acknowledge that our gender pay gap has widened slightly. There are very specific reasons for the gender pay gap widening slightly and we explain these later in the report. Fundamentally we feel we pay our people fairly, pay men and women the same at each level, and are doing the right thing.

I'm proud of everything our firm continues to do to push forward our wider people strategy. I along with my colleagues fully intend to continue driving this agenda forward as we work to embed ESG even more deeply in the heart of our new five-year strategy.

I hope you enjoy reading our report, and if you have any questions or comments please do get in touch.

Claire Clarke
Managing partner, Mills & Reeve



We aim to be a firm where we recruit, retain and promote the best people; in a place where everyone thrives and can be themselves; and create strong partnerships with our clients and communities.

People

- Connected, diverse and inclusive workforce
- Recruit, retain, promote the best talent
- Prioritise all aspects of wellbeing
- Networks which are active and well resourced
- Measure and monitor our impact

Place

- Psychologically safe and supportive environment
- Workforce practices underpinned by supportive policies
- Continuous development through education and Fearless Feedback
- External benchmarking
- Accountability and strong governance

Partnership

- Shared sense of values with clients and suppliers
- Collaborative relationship with clients and communities to identify and promote best practice
- Inclusive procurement policies



In the last year we've introduced our respect at work programme to encourage people to be intentional about inclusion in everything we do.

Our culture is clearly a differentiator for us, and we regularly receive feedback on how friendly we are, but we want to continue to improve confidence in challenging others when language or behaviours inadvertently caused offence or upset colleagues. The impact of this is most often felt more keenly among those from traditionally marginalised communities.

To counteract this, our comprehensive respect at work guidance, and additional microincivilities training were both rolled out as compulsory training for everyone at the firm. The guidance explores how to be inclusive in day-to-day interactions, how individuals can challenge non-inclusive language or behaviours when they happen, and where people can get help and support. Our microincivilities training further explores the concept of microincivilities and non-inclusive behaviour, and provides examples for colleagues to learn from. Going forward we'll also be introducing respect at work champions to act as advocates across the firm.

We've embedded the principles of the programme into our inductions for all new starters, and for anyone who receives a promotion. We've also rolled out inclusive leadership training to the whole partnership and to our heads of business services, and are now supporting partners and business services heads to lead discussions about inclusion with their wider teams. By encouraging inclusive leadership and activities from the top, we hope that confidence to challenge microincivilities will trickle down through the rest of the firm.

By understanding just a little bit more about how we all experience the world, we can create more productive and enjoyable places to work.



2023 snapshot data

Our mean gender pay gap has increased to 17.4% from 16.6% (+0.8%) in this snapshot period. The median has increased from 24.1% to 32.3% (+8.2%).

Understanding the pay gap

The pay gap exists because, although we pay equal salaries for equivalent roles, there are more women in the lower pay quartiles in executive services and a higher number of men in senior, higher-paid business services roles.

We're a successful and fast-growing firm and are constantly recruiting and promoting talent. Because of this, the median pay gap is easily distorted, and it can often be difficult to accurately compare statistics year on year.

As the makeup of our workforce has changed, we've continued to hire more women than men. To support our growing lawyer numbers (we hired 100 additional lawyers during this period), we've also recruited heavily into our executive service teams. Typically, women fill a large proportion of these types of roles, which tend to fall into lower quartiles, thus skewing the median somewhat.

This snapshot period also saw the highest proportion of women promoted to partner to date, at 69% of the cohort. For reporting purposes, this had the impact of removing several of our highest earning female employees from the highest quartile of our employee pay gap statistics, again affecting the median. Additionally, 29 women who'd typically be included within our upper quartile were excluded from the calculations as they were on maternity leave.

These reasons go some way to explaining the increase in our gender pay gap, though we're aware that we must continue to work hard to continue to drive towards equity within our organisation. Our mean statistic, which reveals a markedly smaller increase in the gender pay gap, is a better indication of the actual situation within our firm.

Gender bonus gap

Our mean gender bonus gap has shrunk by 4.8% to 16.7% in the snapshot period, continuing a trend which has seen it decrease by 25.9% since we began reporting. The median has decreased by 7.4% to 3.2%.

As in previous years the calculations include our regular firmwide all staff bonus, which is available to all staff employed during this period and is pro-rated for part time workers. During this snapshot we also gave all employees an additional £1000 to provide support to them during the cost of living crisis. The addition of this cost of living payment, which was not pro-rated, contributes to the marked decrease in our gender bonus gap this year, as more women work part time and so would usually receive pro-rated bonuses.

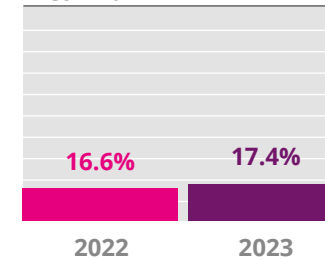
Referral and joining bonuses

A higher number of women again received higher overall payments in relation to staff referral and joining bonuses. Of 13 staff referrals, 10 were female and 3 male, demonstrating that women are happy here and keen to promote Mills & Reeve to friends, family members and contacts.

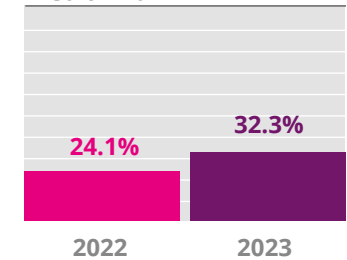
As with last year, more joining bonus payments were made to women than men (at a ratio of 10:2) with a higher value paid to women overall (£27,500 - £7,500). We feel this demonstrates our continued investment in ambitious, successful women to more senior parts of the firm, and hope that in time this will support our drive to continue to reduce our gender pay gap.

Gender pay gap

Mean %

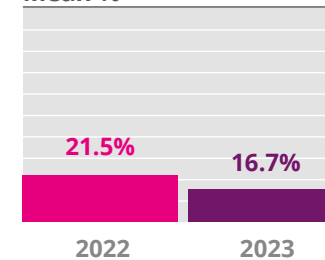


Median %

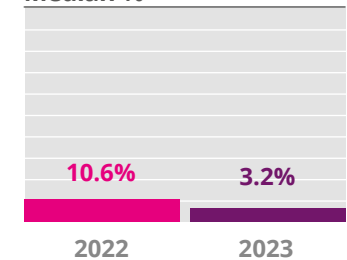


Bonus results

Mean %



Median %



2025 target

We're proud to have exceeded our target to increase the proportion of female partners to 33% by 2025. It's increased from last year to 35.6%, and we fully intend for this to keep growing.

How will we continue to grow?

Ensuring equality across our firm is integral to our core strategy. We continue to push forward the equality agenda through activities such as panel sessions, workshops, mentoring and improved policies. Though we've exceeded our targets in some areas, there's still much to be done (as our gender pay gap indicates) and we're committed to continue working hard to move in the right direction. Read on to find out about some of our recent activities.

Balance network

Balance has become more established over the last year, following its launch in 2022. The network works to promote the interests of existing and future employees at Mills & Reeve in support of gender balance and equity. Recent activities include organising an awareness session on embracing equity for International Women's Day, hosting a Women in BD webinar to support women to feel more confident when networking, and collaborating with Spectrum (our LGBTQ+ network) on a trans inclusion in sport session.

Supporting flexible and part time working

We want everyone to thrive at Mills & Reeve, including those who work part time. In total, 23.8% of our people work part time (up from 22.5% last year), with over 200 different working patterns adopted to suit individual needs. Our hybrid and flexible working policy positively encourages colleagues to balance all responsibilities in their life.

Parents and carers network (PACT)

PACT works to ensure policies and procedures are updated to support colleagues in the best way possible.

We recently made several changes to improve our maternity and paternity support offering across the firm. We're a member of Working Families, and are signatories to the Pregnancy Loss Pledge. Our baby loss policy offers up to ten days of paid leave for those who've experienced a miscarriage.

We also offer paid leave for people on fertility pathways, and for those with caring responsibilities. We're committed to supporting those trying to build a family as well as those who need additional time to look after them.

Returning to work

We continue to offer maternity and paternity mentors to people embarking on and returning from parental leave, offering practical advice and emotional support.

We recently released a podcast in our Talking ESG series on re-entering the legal profession after time away, and the new co-chair of our Balance network Tamsin Morris spoke on a panel at the 2023 National Women's Returner Conference.

You can read more about Tamsin's experiences in her case study on page 8.

Period products

We now provide free, easily accessible, period products for anyone who needs them in our offices.

Menopause support

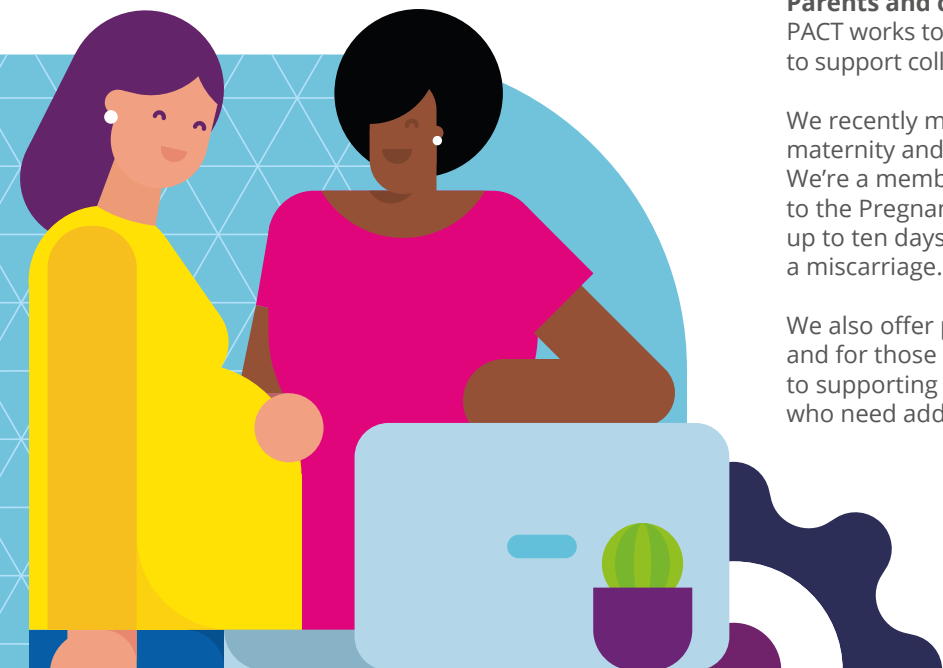
We offer support groups and training around menopause to our staff, and are introducing a team of menopause champions to provide support to our colleagues.

Secondments

We actively encourage colleagues to explore secondments to support their career development. Of 17 secondments this year, we were pleased to see that 88% were women.

Workshops

We run various workshops and initiatives to raise awareness around topics linked to gender. Last year, these included: Talking ESG podcast episodes on returning to work, and maternity leave and working parents, wellbeing drop-ins for carers, celebrations for International Women's Day, fostering awareness and endometriosis awareness.



Tamsin Morris
Associate

Can you tell us about your career before returning to Mills & Reeve?

Having trained at Mills & Reeve over 20 years ago and worked here upon qualification, I later moved to another firm in Manchester. After having my first child, that firm unfortunately rejected my request for part time working post-maternity leave, so I decided to leave the law and become a stay-at-home mum. Once my boys were at school I took a more flexible job at a local women's prison supporting the families of prisoners, and then progressed to managing the Mother and Baby Unit. During the Covid pandemic I worked as an advocate for high-risk domestic abuse victims.

How did returning to law come about, and how was the experience?

I'd been thinking about my career and wanted to explore returning to law. My youngest son was about to start high school and it felt like a 'now or never' moment. The legal profession isn't generally very progressive in encouraging women to rejoin after career breaks, and I really wasn't sure if it was possible! Upon spotting a job at Mills & Reeve, some old colleagues put me in touch with the recruiting partner who was really helpful and encouraged me to apply.

It's definitely been challenging adjusting back to life as a lawyer. Not many lawyers currently return after such a long career break and law has traditionally followed a very linear career path. Returners, however, often have useful skillsets that we've developed during our years away. In my case, for example, management skills gained in previous roles.

Mills & Reeve has recognised the challenges and welcomed me back with open arms. Everyone has been very supportive and happy to help. The firm has really invested in my legal training since my return to ensure that my knowledge is up to date, and supported me to undertake a qualification in environmental management. While it's involved a lot of hard work, I'm really happy with my role and have been pleased at how quickly I've settled back in.

I had the privilege of speaking at the 2023 National Women Returners Conference about my experiences. I've had so many emails since from other female lawyers asking for advice about returning to law, as there really isn't much information out there. It really sets Mills & Reeve apart from other firms that they've supported my return.

What inspired you to become co-chair of the Balance network?

I'm a huge believer in empowering other women and supporting others to succeed. My other experiences during my career break mean I bring a different perspective to the role of Balance co-chair. Our networks do a great job of enabling colleagues from across the firm to share their experiences, and facilitate valuable conversations about important gender related issues. Mills & Reeve has always been a friendly and supportive place to work and the staff networks play a key role in taking this to the next level.



Race, ethnicity and cultural heritage

2023 snapshot

2023 snapshot data

This year we're pleased to see that our ethnicity pay gap is back on a downward trajectory. Our mean employee pay gap has reduced from 13.7% to 11.1%, and the median has reduced dramatically from 27.3% to 15.0%.

Understanding the gap

We've been working hard to recruit and retain talent from racially minoritised backgrounds, and believe that the impact of this is starting to show within our employee ethnicity pay gap statistics. Our median has dropped quite so much because we recruited 31 new employees from racially minoritised backgrounds with particularly large increases in the upper and lower quartiles, therefore reducing the pay range significantly.

Partner pay gap

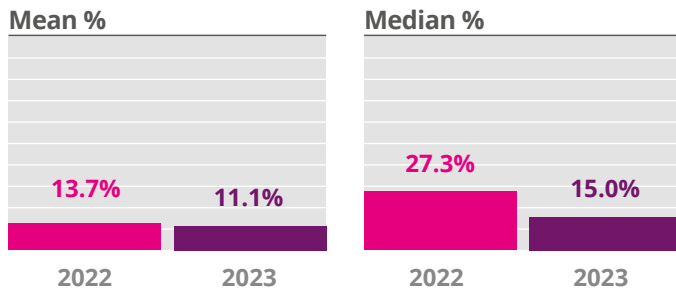
We're aware that we need greater representation of people from racially minoritised backgrounds at partner level, and this is corroborated by the increase in our mean partner pay gap to 17.6% (from 12%) and median to 25.0% (from 16.7%). Given that we have a small number of partners from a racially minoritised background, a slight fluctuation in numbers (such as a few partners retiring) can significantly impact our percentages. Our data sample is small and hugely sensitive to people leaving.

We recognise the need to do more and are working hard to recruit and retain individuals from racially minoritised backgrounds at all levels, but appreciate that due to the wider situation in the legal sector, it takes time for individuals to progress through the ranks to more senior roles within a firm.

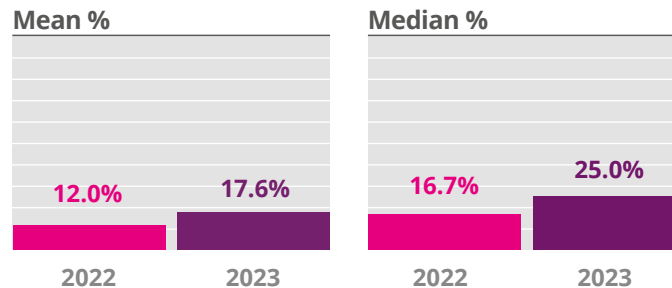
We've adapted our graduate recruitment programme to make it more inclusive, and have started a new diversity recruitment and retention group to focus on this challenge. You can read more about the work we're doing on the next page.



Ethnicity pay gap



Partner pay gap



Race, ethnicity and cultural heritage

A closer look

2025 target

We aim to increase the proportion of staff and partners from racially minoritised backgrounds to 18%.

We're currently at 11.9%, up from 11.6% in 2022. The regular increases, plus the reduction in our ethnicity pay gap this year, demonstrate that our efforts to attract people from racially minoritised backgrounds are starting to work. There's still much to do, however, and we know we'll have to keep meeting the challenge head on to increase and strengthen our diverse talent recruitment year on year.

We also plan to enhance the diversity of our board. This is a work in progress as while our board has gender balance, it currently has no representation of people from racially minoritised background. Opportunities to grow or change membership of the board present themselves only occasionally, due to the seniority of people who sit on the board, but we have been focussing our attentions on pipeline planning in order to see this statistic improve in the near future. A focus on building a diverse talent pool lower down the firm will hopefully also lead to increased representation in the future.

Increasing inclusion for people from racially diverse backgrounds

We want to attract more people from racially minoritised backgrounds. Everyone brings unique perspectives and ideas and we work hard to provide a workplace where everyone can thrive and be themselves.

Our Reach (race, ethnicity and cultural heritage) network remains at the heart of this. They work to identify policy gaps and opportunities, promote outreach and act as a springboard for discussions and awareness raising.

After our second successful year partnering with 10,000 Black Interns where we hosted four paid six-week internships, we're excited this year to be offering an increased five internships.

Supporting students

Through the 10,000 Black Interns Programme, we diversify our junior-level talent pools. Reach has also expanded their Reach into Schools programme, where each of our offices engages with a school with a high proportion of students from racially minoritised backgrounds. The aim is to reduce barriers to entering the legal sector and raise aspirations.

Black Solicitors Network

We continue to work with the Black Solicitors Network and recently hosted their Big Conversation in London. This event centred around supporting black talent career progression, and was led by Julian Richard, author of *The 1% Study* which analyses progression of Black solicitors through the legal profession.

Network collaborations

Alongside Birmingham Black Lawyers Network we hosted an insight evening about entering the legal profession for aspiring lawyers. Additionally, we held an event for Black students from the University of Manchester, and sponsored an event with the WCAN network who work to support the personal and professional development of Black women.

Recruitment

We provide bias training, and all CVs are anonymised for graduate hires to level the playing field during recruitment. We've altered our graduate recruitment practices to make them more inclusive, and hope by doing so, to attract a broader and more diverse set of applicants.

This year we've formed a diversity recruitment and retention working group to focus on attracting diverse talent (particularly those from racially minoritised backgrounds) and supporting them throughout their careers.

Interfaith group

We've created an inter-faith sub-group of Reach who work to encourage awareness of and celebrate different religions, provide peer-to-peer support and networking opportunities, and promote wider faith discussions across the firm.

Celebrations and awareness sessions

We host various activities to raise awareness and celebrate racially minoritised communities. This year, we celebrated South Asian Heritage Month with lunches across our offices, information sheets and recipes from South Asian countries, and an In Conversation With session with career inclusion consultant Sunita Harley. We ran a Black History Month book club where we read Bernardine Evaristo's *Girl, Woman, Other* and were privileged to host an event with Professor Martin Levermore, the Independent Person to the Windrush Compensation Scheme.

Recognition and commitments

- We're signed up to the Race at Work Charter
- Race Equality Matters: Silver Trailblazer Award



Dawn Prescod

Executive Services Team Leader

Can you tell us about your career before returning to Mills & Reeve?

Since beginning my career in the typing pool of a local council, I worked for 15 years in engineering, and later moved into the legal sector, where I've been ever since. After a while I ended up at Mills & Reeve in the employment team. However, because of personal reasons I wanted a change of city and handed in my notice to move to London. I lived with my best friend for a while and then spotted a job at Mills & Reeve in London. Having liked the firm when I worked here before, I applied and got the job!

Can you tell us about your time at Mills & Reeve?

After my move, one thing I really wanted was to have more variety and get involved in initiatives outside my everyday role. I've definitely had that chance, and have particularly enjoyed supporting our London charity committee. I've always loved charity work and through helping with this I was able to meet more people in London. I'm still actively involved and enjoy being able to help and see the different charities develop.

When I started in 2018, I knew I wanted to better myself and see if I could get promoted. I really focussed on developing my role and profile and, after a while, our team leader encouraged and supported me in promotion to the next level. Then, alongside another colleague, I just happened to be in right place at the right time with someone else going on maternity leave, and the covid pandemic enabling us to work more collaboratively. The two of us worked well with each other to lead our London executive services team (ESS), and really supported one another to run the

office and keep everyone in the team focused. I feel from having that experience and people believing in me I've gained so much confidence. I've also just joined our Diversity Inclusion & Wellbeing Steering Group, representing our ESS team in this strategic group.

How has Mills & Reeve supported you over the years?

Mills & Reeve is a great firm to work for because they have compassion for their people. I always find colleagues reach out to ask if I'm okay or offer their support whenever I'm in need. For example, my mum has developed dementia, and my team and HR have been fantastic. They're considerate about what's going on and I know I could go to anyone and let them know my issues. The hybrid working has really helped me as it lets me be flexible around my mum. If it wasn't for this, I would've had to hand in my notice, so I'm very grateful.

Everyone here is very approachable, I've never had anyone put me down because of my race and it's so nice to see the diversity and inclusion work, in activities like the Reach network and partnership with the 10,000 Black Interns programme. I can honestly say working at Mills & Reeve has been a really good experience.



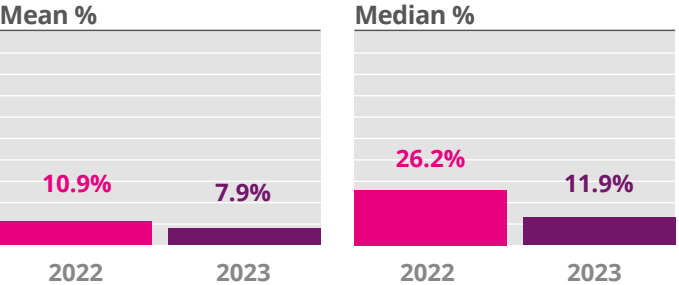
Disability

2023 snapshot

2023 snapshot data

This is the second year in which we have published our disability pay gap data. Our mean pay gap is 7.9% (down from 10.9%) and the median is 11.9% (down from 26.2%) between employees who've declared a disability and those who don't have one or have chosen not to declare one.

Disability pay gap



Employee pay gap

We're pleased that we've seen marked decreases in our disability pay gap during the snapshot period. We want all of our colleagues to thrive and receive equal opportunities to do so, and have been working hard to support everyone with additional needs to perform to the best of their abilities.

Take a look at the next page to find out some of the activities we've been getting involved in.



Target by 2025

Our target is to increase the number of declared disabled staff and partners to 11%.

Providing a safe space for people with disabilities

We're confident we're moving toward our goal as the percentage of our people with declared disabilities has stayed fairly steady, increasing to 9.9% from 9.8% in March 2023. We've also been working hard to increase the number of people declaring their diversity data and workplace requirements, giving a more accurate read on the proportions within our workforce more broadly.

We were pleased that the proportion of colleagues who haven't entered data has decreased from 23.3% to 16.7% and that those who have selected 'prefer not to say' have decreased from 7.6% to 6.8%. We feel this demonstrates that our people feel more confident in declaring their disabilities and being themselves at work, allowing us to better support them going forward.

Recognition and commitments

- Members of the Business Disability Forum
- *Financial Times* Innovative Lawyers 2023: Highly commended Responsible Business – for disability inclusion work
- We're a Disability Confident Employer



What have we been doing in this space?

Ability network

Our Ability network continues to spearhead positive change for candidates, colleagues and clients by promoting discussions and identifying best practices. It's formed of colleagues who share their own experiences of both visible and non-visible disabilities and health conditions, as well as allies.

Regular reviews

We recognise requirements may change. That's why we train our line managers to check in regularly and compassionately to ask what support individuals need, including building these into regular reviews, and embedding them within our triannual review structure.

Recruitment

We continue to update our graduate recruitment processes to further remove barriers for people with a disability or health condition. As a Disability Confident Employer, we offer interviews automatically to candidates who have a disability and best meet the minimum criteria for our roles.

10,000 Able Interns

This year we partnered with 10,000 Able Interns to offer a student with a disability a six-week paid internship over the summer.

Development award

We also offered a £1,000 bursary, mentoring, and a week's work experience to a law student with a disability in partnership with the Business Disability Forum (BDF).

IT accessibility

We're constantly looking for ways to improve the accessibility of our software. This year our IT trainers have delivered a series of workshops, each focussing on a particular accessibility area. They've also organised drop-in sessions, promoted accessibility during new starter inductions and within powerpoint presentations, and regularly support and coach individuals on workplace adjustments to help them operate to the best of their abilities.

Hidden disabilities working group

As part of our Ability network, we've brought together a group focussing on hidden disabilities, as these can often get overlooked in the workplace. The intention is to ensure all our offices are as accessible as possible for people attending who may have hidden disabilities and need some additional support.

Communications

We work with a preferred supplier to offer alternative format documents including braille, audio and large type. We also offer British Sign Language interpreting on demand in all our offices, and other communication support for people who are deaf.

Flexible working

Our flexible working policy is fully inclusive and supportive of those with disabilities.

Workshops

Last year we held several disability related events, including sessions on: Diabetes awareness, autism awareness and dyspraxia awareness. In addition to promoting neurodiversity celebration week, we also hosted a session with an expert neurodiversity coach specifically for neurodiverse colleagues. Our Head of Diversity, Inclusion & Wellbeing, and one of the chairs of Ability also presented a session with All About Law on career journeys and balancing a legal career with chairing a diversity network.

Targets and current statistics

Our target is to increase the number of staff who identify as LGBTQ+ to 8%.

Across Mills & Reeve 5.7% of staff currently identify as LGBTQ+, a decrease from 7.3% in the previous year. This is, perhaps, due to a significant increase in our response rate, giving us a more accurate read on the true makeup of our firm.

Our LGBTQ+ network, Spectrum, is highly active and offers representation and support for the LGBTQ+ community and its allies. It drives activities that enhance our inclusive culture, from removing gendered language to hosting awareness sessions.

We're a Stonewall Diversity Champion and are currently ranked 38th in the Top 100 employers for LGBTQ+ inclusion in their annual Workplace Equality Index.

Recognition and commitments

- Stonewall: Gold Award for Inclusion, ranked 38th in their Workplace Equality Index
- Stonewall: Spectrum is a Highly Commended Staff Network



Here's how we support LGBTQ+ staff, candidates, partners and clients:

Policies

All our family policies are inclusive of all types of family, including maternity, paternity, adoption, pregnancy, baby loss, compassionate leave and shared parental leave. This fits within a wider strategy to use gender-neutral language internally and externally.

Language

We use gender-neutral language in correspondence, and encourage colleagues to use the pronoun of their choice. We also encourage the inclusion of pronouns in our email signatures, and are rolling out the option to add them to event badges and as individual pronoun badges on our lanyards.

Allyship guides

Spectrum has compiled a useful set of allyship guides on different LGBTQ+ identities, how to be a good ally to each, and providing links to additional resources.

Dress at work policy

We encourage colleagues to feel comfortable and safe to bring their authentic selves to work with an inclusive dress code.

Spectrum library

We've introduced a new Spectrum library which provides books on related topics and by LGBTQ+ authors. This is rotated around our offices every couple of months, and has had great engagement.

Events and workshops

Spectrum has had a busy year hosting various workshops, events and awareness sessions for all in the firm. This year we sponsored Pride in Cambridge and supported the Norwich Pride 5k run. We've hosted sessions on LGBTQ+ allyship, a webinar with charity OutTogether and an LGBTQIA-Z awareness session (encouraging open conversations on terminology).

Our Leeds office organised a LGBT queer history walking tour, several offices participated in creating Pride bunting, and we raised money for LGBTQ+ charities by creating and auctioning off wreaths made using surplus Progress Pride flag patterned lanyards.

Several of our Spectrum members are also involved in wider regional and legal profession LGBTQ+ networks.



Social mobility

A closer look

Targets and current statistics

79.4% of our colleagues, including partners, attended a non-selective state school, an increase from 71.6% last year. This is testament to the work we've been doing to improve social mobility within our workforce. The percentage of people with parents who didn't attend university, however, has decreased slightly from 68.9% to 62.4%. This is likely as a result of better data collection for this metric over the last year, giving us a more accurate read on the proportions within the firm. Meanwhile 23.7% of all staff and partners are from a lower socio-economic background based on parental occupation, an increase from 21.3% last year.

Improved social mobility is one of our key objectives. We recognise that this is an area that needs more focus, and we continue to plan and improve our activities to help increase our impact. Our targets are to increase the proportion of staff and partners from lower socio-economic communities by 5%, and increase the proportion of graduate and experienced hires annually from lower socio-economic communities by 5%.

Some recent work towards our goal includes:

Removing recruitment barriers

We use specialist recruitment software to help us contextualise candidate submissions in our graduate recruitment processes, helping us to identify those from lower socio-economic communities and to ensure that bias isn't influencing decision-making. We no longer include minimum grade requirements and have removed the work experience sections of applications.

Living wage

We've been paying the living wage as a minimum for some time now, and recently received Living Wage accreditation to demonstrate our commitment to this.

Graduate recruitment

Our graduate recruitment team have proactively engaged with a different range of universities this year to encourage social mobility and attract a more diverse range of candidates. This included attending several non-Russell Group university fairs.

Apprenticeships

This year, two of our original apprentice solicitors have qualified as solicitors within Mills & Reeve.

We've also launched a more comprehensive graduate apprenticeship solicitor route to qualification, using the Graduate SQE Solicitor Apprenticeship model. We welcomed our first cohort of apprentices in September 2023. We want to create an environment where people thrive regardless of their pathway, and enable people to qualify through routes other than the traditional trainee path. We're also looking to introduce a school leaver apprenticeship programme in the coming years, with a likely start date of September 2025.

Monitoring

We participated in the Social Mobility Employer Index and continue to use their feedback to proactively enhance our impact and activities.

Partnerships

We partner with organisations to support applicants from lower socio-economic groups to enter the legal profession. We've been a corporate partner of IntoUniversity, a charity that supports young people from disadvantaged neighbourhoods to achieve their chosen aspirations, for 10 years, and regularly host or contribute to their outreach days. We also have an active collaboration with schools in lower socioeconomic areas across all our office locations as part of our Reach into Schools programme.



Sushila Pindoria

Principal Associate and Professional Development Lawyer

My current role

My role is hybrid, diverse and unique! I split my working week between transactional work supporting clients with their commercial property portfolios, and using my legal experience to provide practical and collaborative training to our real estate lawyers. I also coach and mentor colleagues on career progression and becoming the “best version” of themselves.

Mills & Reeve has really supported me to grow laterally and pursue my teaching passion. I’m very proud of my profession, and being able to develop our lawyers is my way of giving back. I haven’t reached a stage where I’m willing to sacrifice the thrills of being a transactional lawyer yet though. I think I have the best of both worlds!

My route into law

The road to qualification came with its challenges! Growing up in London in a traditional Indian family, my parents had a strong emphasis on educational ethics, something common amongst Indian families. Although females were expected to attend higher education, this came with certain constraints. For example, there was a stigma attached to women leaving home to study. For me this meant trying to secure a place at a London university which wasn’t an easy feat, especially coming from a less privileged socio-economic background.

Advice to my younger self and junior lawyers

As a junior lawyer, I remember trying hard to be “someone else” so I could be accepted and “fit in”. Three decades ago, where the legal profession was overwhelmingly white, male and middle class, this wasn’t going to be easy given my background.

Unsurprisingly, this was wearing and affected my self-esteem, but over time, I’ve learnt to embrace and appreciate my cultural, ethnic and economic differences. So, my advice is to be your best self and bring your whole self to work. We all have our individual strengths, and everyone can offer something unique.

Be clear about your sense of purpose and goals. These’ll change as you reach career milestones, so remember to reassess them. Be willing to step outside your comfort zone, have a positive mindset and explore opportunities. After all, there’s no such thing as failure, just experiences to learn from.

Work-life balance – this’ll mean something different to everyone. For me, it’s making sure I have a balance between my family and career. Many working parents experience feeling “guilty at home and guilty at work” so aren’t the best in either place. These feelings are natural and you can let them be. Do your best in both spheres, accept that your best is “good enough”.

What’s a successful career?

Everyone has different visions of career success depending on their values, experiences and stage of life. Defining one’s own success isn’t always straightforward. For me, success is being happy by doing meaningful work, and feeling fulfilled and valued for my contribution.

Financial stability, good health and quality relationships are also very important to me. Power and position are less so, and I strongly believe that if you’re happy in what you do at work, success and happiness will follow.



As the cost of living continues to cause challenges, and wider events spark worry around the world, we continue to prioritise supporting our people's wellbeing.

We regularly offer firm-wide communications on emotional and wellbeing support, and provide training to all staff on how to provide support to one another and spot the signs of poor mental wellbeing.

All colleagues have access to our employee assistance programme for mental and physical health support 24/7, 365 days a year. We also have 18 mental health first aid trained wellbeing supporters.

Here's how we've supported colleagues:

Wellbeing workshops

We regularly remind colleagues of the support available to them, and provide additional awareness sessions to help with wellbeing. Recent workshops have included sessions on: nutrition and fitness at work, alcohol awareness, mortgages, nutrition for men's health, and financial wellbeing.

Employee survey

We undertake a biennial employee survey to give employees the chance to anonymously have their say on working at Mills & Reeve. The results of these are analysed, shared widely with the firm, and acted on to maintain and improve employee wellbeing. Results feed directly into our strategy to continue to make Mills & Reeve a great place to work.

Employee support fund

We continue to provide an employee support fund, so that anyone who's struggling financially can confidentially obtain support with no repayment required. Anyone receiving support also has access to 1:1 financial coaching for a year to help them manage their finances.

Wellbeing apps

All colleagues have access to the Thrive mental awareness app providing another route to counselling and resources to help understand and self-manage mental health.

Additionally, those with 2+ years' service (and all principal associates) have access to the Aviva Digicare+ Workplace app providing home based annual health tests, digital GP appointments, second medical opinions, and mental health and nutritional consultations.

Fitness sessions

We offer weekly exercise classes in some of our offices. In January, our month of fitness, we provide a range of virtual fitness sessions, as well as weekly virtual sessions during the rest of the year.

Wellbeing challenges

We regularly encourage colleagues to participate in wellbeing challenges. Activities range from office walks to our January Blues Fitness Challenge where people are encouraged to undertake as many miles of activity as possible.

Discount platform

We have discounts for various shops to help staff save money, from major supermarkets, to retailers and travel providers.

We're proud to be:

- A member of the Mindful Business Charter
- Members of the Zero Suicide Alliance
- Signatories to the Mental Health at Work Commitment



Mental Wellbeing

Physical Wellbeing

Financial Wellbeing

Digital Wellbeing

Data in depth



Gender pay gap at Mills & Reeve

	Mean	Median
Gender pay gap	17.4%	32.3%
Year on year change	0.8%	8.2%

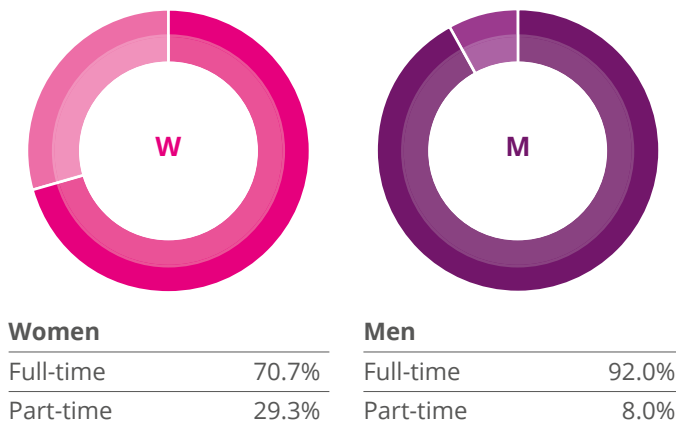
Gender bonus pay gap at Mills & Reeve

	Mean	Median
Gender bonus pay gap	16.7%	3.2%
Year on year change	-4.8%	-7.4%

Proportion of women and men receiving a bonus at Mills & Reeve

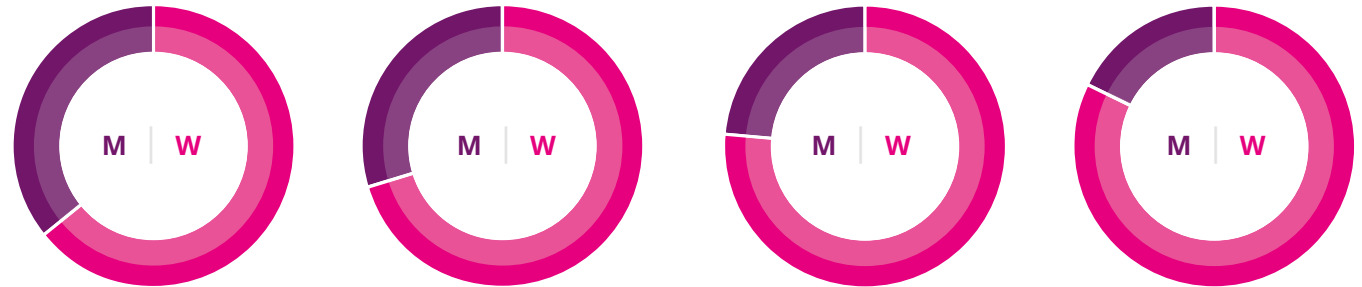


Working patterns at Mills & Reeve

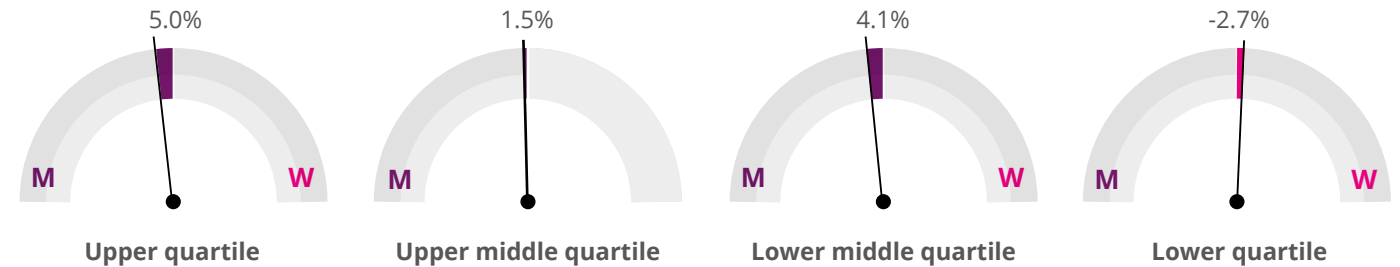


The percentage of women and men in each quartile (of equal size) of the payroll

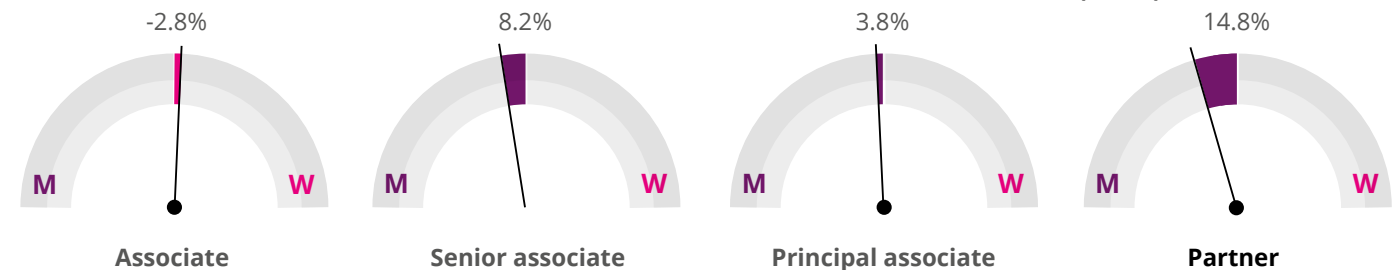
Upper quartile		Upper middle quartile		Lower middle quartile		Lower quartile	
Women	64.3%	Women	70.3%	Women	75.7%	Women	82.4%
Men	35.7%	Men	29.7%	Men	24.3%	Men	17.6%



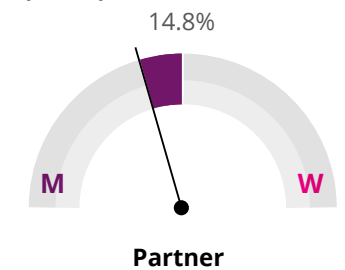
Gender pay gap broken down by pay quartile (Mean)



Gender pay gap broken down by associate solicitor level (Mean)



Partner gender pay gap (Mean)



All the figures reported above are for employees except for the Partner gender pay gap figure. Calculating the median involves taking all salaries in a sample, lining them up in order from lowest to highest, and picking the middle-most salary. Meanwhile, the mean is the overall average of the whole sample and is more subject to skewing by a small number of outliers.

Employees

Employees	Mean					Median				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Pay gap	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	16.6%	17.4%	32.1%	19.5%	26.1%	24.1%	32.3%
Bonus pay gap	39.9%	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	16.7%	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	10.6%	3.2%

Employees	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Proportion of men/women in each quartile										
Upper	40.0%	41.3%	36.7%	38.2%	35.7%	60.0%	58.7%	63.3%	61.8%	64.3%
Upper middle	33.6%	30.7%	33.5%	29.5%	29.7%	66.4%	69.3%	66.5%	70.5%	70.3%
Lower middle	16.7%	23.4%	21.4%	19.9%	24.3%	83.3%	76.6%	78.6%	80.1%	75.7%
Lower	22.3%	20.7%	19.6%	21.6%	17.6%	77.7%	79.3%	80.4%	78.4%	82.4%

Employees	Mean				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Gender pay gap by quartile					
Upper	5.6%	-0.3%	4.6%	2.0%	5.0%
Upper middle	-0.7%	-1.8%	1.4%	-0.2%	1.5%
Lower middle	5.1%	-1.0%	3.8%	1.2%	4.1%
Lower	-4.7%	-5.6%	-1.2%	-5.0%	-2.7%

Employees	Mean				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY22
Gender pay gap by associate solicitor level					
Associate	3.7%	0.2%	4.3%	0.7%	-2.8%
Senior associate	5.4%	0.7%	1.1%	5.7%	8.2%
Principal associate	6.9%	6.9%	7.7%	8.2%	3.8%

Employees	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Proportion of men/women receiving a bonus	98.0%	94.7%	97.3%	94.9%	94.7%	96.4%	95.4%	95.1%	93.7%	95.6%

* All percentages to 1 decimal place

The firm operates a lockstep partnership with gateways at certain points. All partners are remunerated by way of a share of the firm's profit, we don't have any salaried partners.

The profit share a partner receives largely reflects the time spent as a partner and the gateways they have moved through.

Employees	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Working patterns at Mills & Reeve										
Full-time	93.1%	92.1%	91.4%	90.9%	92.0%	70.3%	69.6%	69.5%	69.3%	70.7%
Part-time	6.9%	7.9%	8.6%	9.1%	8.0%	29.7%	30.1%	30.5%	30.7%	29.3%

Employees and partners

Employees and partners	Mean					Median				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Pay gap	59.3%	55.6%	58.8%	58.0%	56.1%	42.4%	32.4%	35.7%	35.1%	36.4%
Bonus pay gap	39.9%	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	16.7%	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	10.6%	3.2%

Employees and partners	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Proportion of men/women in each quartile										
Upper	59.4%	59.2%	58.2%	57.8%	55.3%	40.6%	40.8%	41.8%	42.2%	44.7%
Upper middle	33.5%	30.4%	33.3%	27.9%	29.0%	66.5%	69.6%	66.7%	72.1%	71.0%
Lower middle	21.4%	28.4%	23.5%	25.1%	26.3%	78.6%	71.6%	76.5%	74.9%	73.7%
Lower	20.3%	20.0%	18.6%	19.9%	16.7%	79.7%	80.0%	81.4%	80.1%	83.3%

Employees and partners	Mean				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Gender pay gap by quartile					
Upper	32.4%	29.1%	32.5%	31.2%	31.7%
Upper middle	-2.3%	1.5%	-2.2%	1.3%	-1.1%
Lower middle	7.0%	2.7%	2.2%	4.7%	1.5%
Lower	-6.7%	-5.9%	-2.2%	-6.4%	-3.5%

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Partners

Partners	Mean					Median				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Pay gap	5.2%	7.2%	8.9%	8.8%	14.8%	3.0%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	17.6%

Partners	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Proportion of men/women in each quartile										
Upper	77.4%	90.6%	73.5%	94.1%	91.9%	22.6%	9.4%	26.5%	5.9%	8.1%
Upper middle	71.0%	59.4%	79.4%	54.3%	57.9%	29.0%	40.6%	20.6%	45.7%	42.1%
Lower middle	80.6%	71.9%	64.7%	73.5%	73.0%	19.4%	28.1%	35.3%	26.5%	27.0%
Lower	61.3%	63.6%	65.7%	60.0%	42.1%	38.7%	36.4%	34.3%	40.0%	57.9%

Partners	Mean				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Gender pay gap by quartile					
Upper	-1.0%	-7.6%	0.1%	-9.1%	-4.3%
Upper middle	2.7%	-3.0%	1.2%	-3.9%	-8.7%
Lower middle	-6.5%	-0.5%	4.2%	-4.0%	-10.9%
Lower	-5.4%	1.1%	7.5%	7.0%	0.9%

Equity partners

Equity partners	Mean					Median				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Pay gap	0.7%	2.7%	1.0%	1.4%	0.1%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%	5.0%	-2.6%

Equity partners	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Proportion of men/women in each quartile										
Upper	76.2%	81.8%	59.1%	90.9%	91.3%	23.8%	18.2%	40.9%	9.1%	8.7%
Upper middle	80.0%	76.2%	91.3%	60.9%	56.5%	20.0%	23.8%	8.7%	39.1%	43.5%
Lower middle	71.4%	66.7%	77.3%	73.9%	69.6%	28.6%	33.3%	22.7%	26.1%	30.4%
Lower	71.4%	68.2%	69.6%	69.6%	78.3%	28.6%	31.8%	30.4%	30.4%	21.7%

* All percentages to 1 decimal place

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The profit share a partner receives largely reflects the time spent as a partner and the gateways they have moved through.

Equity partners	Mean				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Gender pay gap by quartile					
Upper	-1.1%	-3.8%	3.0%	-7.1%	-5.9%
Upper middle	-0.9%	0.4%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%
Lower middle	0.4%	0.4%	-0.2%	0.8%	0.8%
Lower	-2.6%	1.0%	-0.9%	-2.3%	-1.4%

General partners

General Partners	Mean					Median				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Pay gap	3.5%	7.2%	5.6%	6.8%	6.1%	0.0%	5.0%	15.0%	20.0%	15.8%

General Partners	Men					Women				
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Proportion of men/women in each quartile										
Upper	90.0%	81.8%	63.6%	63.6%	64.3%	10.0%	18.2%	36.4%	36.4%	35.7%
Upper middle	63.6%	63.6%	66.7%	83.3%	73.3%	36.4%	36.4%	33.3%	16.7%	26.7%
Lower middle	50.0%	63.6%	66.7%	66.7%	28.6%	50.0%	36.4%	33.3%	33.3%	71.4%
Lower	70.0%	60.0%	58.3%	41.7%	46.7%	30.0%	40.0%	41.7%	58.3%	53.3%

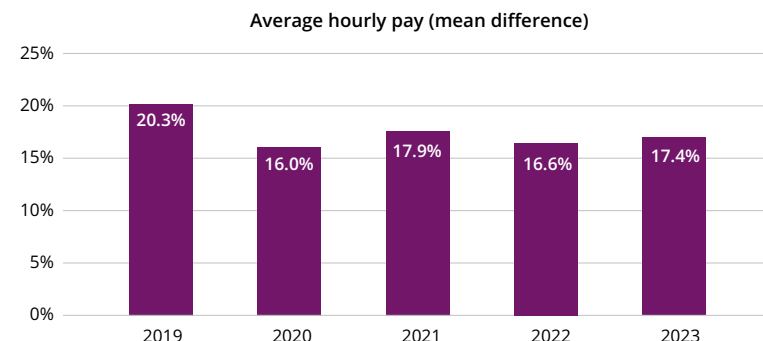
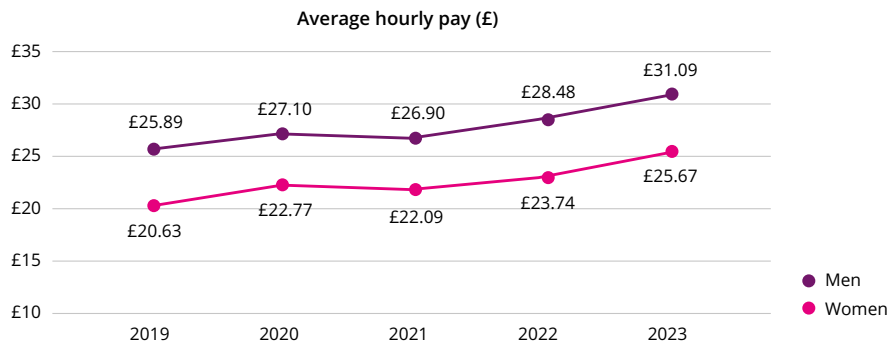
General Partners	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY23
Gender pay gap by quartile						
Upper	-5.4%	5.5%	5.3%	-1.1%	-11.3%	
Upper middle	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.5%	-2.5%	
Lower middle	0.0%	-4.8%	7.0%	0.2%	3.6%	
Lower	-12.1%	4.5%	3.7%	-2.9%	1.3%	

* All percentages to 1 decimal place

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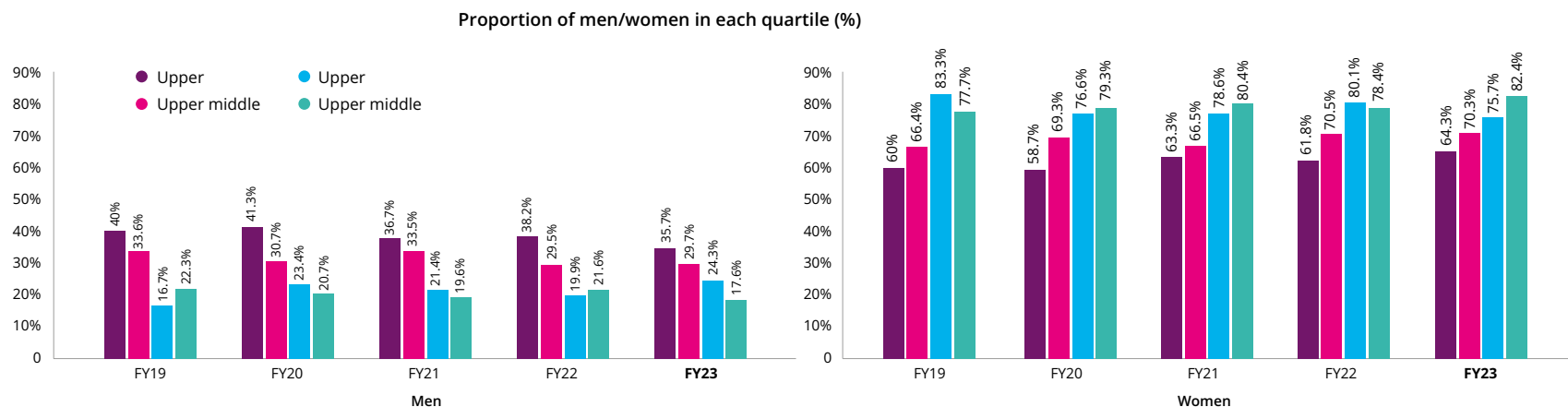
The profit share a partner receives largely reflects the time spent as a partner and the gateways they have moved through.

Average hourly pay (£)



Average hourly pay (£)	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Men	£25.89	£27.10	£26.90	£28.48	£31.09
Women	£20.63	£22.77	£22.09	£23.74	£25.67
Mean difference %	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	16.6%	17.4%

Proportion of men/women in each quartile (%)



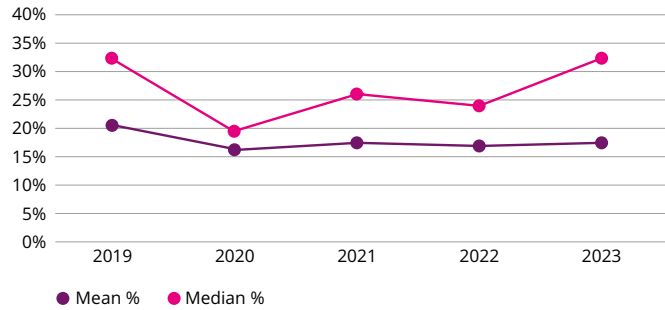
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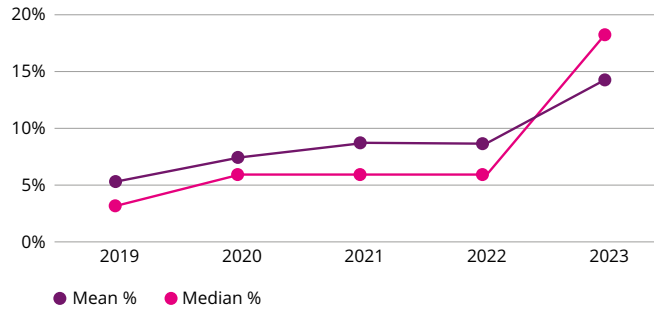
Employees	Men					Women				
Proportion of men/women in each quartile	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23
Upper	40.0%	41.3%	36.7%	38.2%	35.7%	60.0%	58.7%	63.3%	61.8%	64.3%
Upper middle	33.6%	30.7%	33.5%	29.5%	29.7%	66.4%	69.3%	66.5%	70.5%	70.3%
Lower middle	16.7%	23.4%	21.4%	19.9%	24.3%	83.3%	76.6%	78.6%	80.1%	75.7%
Lower	22.3%	20.7%	19.6%	21.6%	17.6%	77.7%	79.3%	80.4%	78.4%	82.4%

Employees Gender Pay Gap (%)



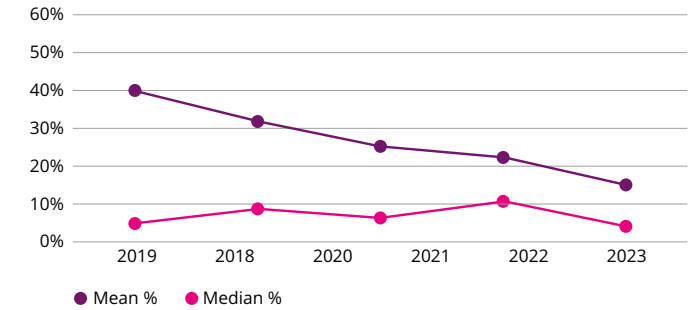
Employees Pay Gap (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean %	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	16.6%	17.4%
Median %	32.1%	19.5%	26.1%	24.1%	32.3%

Partner Gender Pay Gap (%)



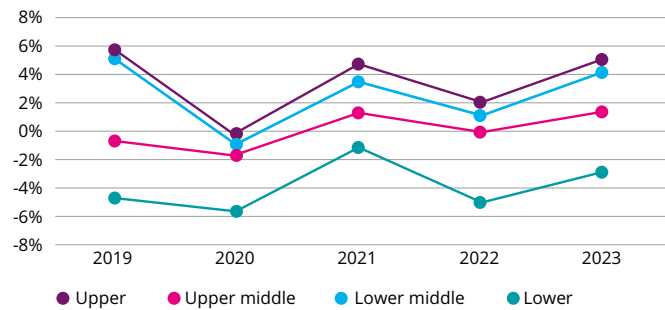
Partner Pay Gap (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean %	5.2%	7.2%	8.9%	8.8%	14.8%
Median %	3.0%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	17.6%

Employees Gender Bonus Gap (%)



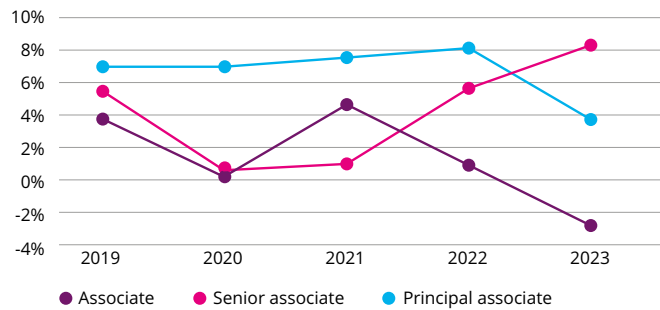
Employees Bonus Gap (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean %	39.9%	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	16.7%
Median %	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	10.6%	3.2%

Gender Pay Gap by quartile (%)



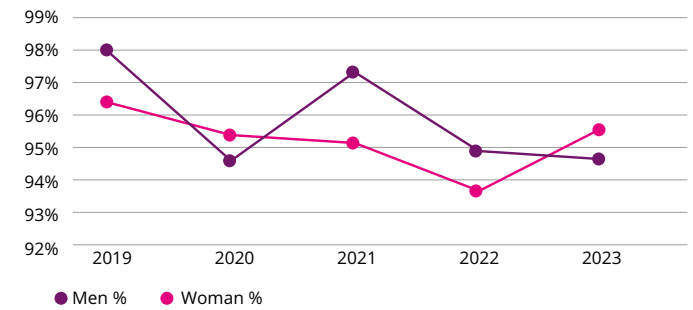
Pay gap by quartile (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Upper	5.6%	-0.3%	4.6%	2.0%	5.0%
Upper middle	-0.7%	-1.8%	1.4%	-0.2%	1.5%
Lower middle	5.1%	-1.0%	3.8%	1.2%	4.1%
Lower	-4.7%	-5.6%	-1.2%	-5.0%	-2.7%

Gender Pay Gap by associate level (%)



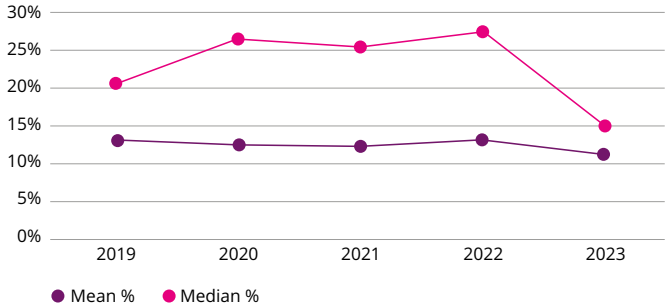
Pay gap by associate solicitor level (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Associate	3.7%	0.2%	4.3%	0.7%	-2.8%
Senior associate	5.4%	0.7%	1.1%	5.7%	8.2%
Principal associate	6.9%	6.9%	7.7%	8.2%	3.8%

Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus (%)



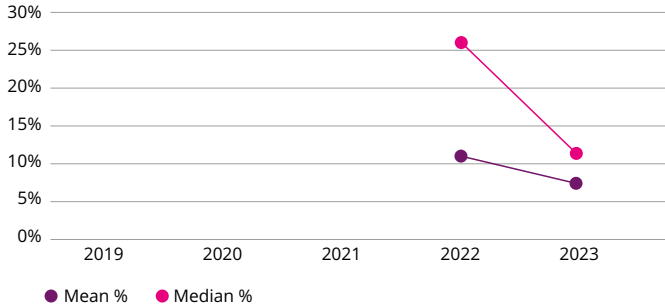
Proportion of Men and Women receiving a bonus (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Men	98.0%	94.7%	97.3%	94.9%	94.7%
Women	96.4%	95.4%	95.1%	93.7%	95.6%

Ethnicity Pay Gap (%)



Ethnicity Pay Gap (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean	13.4%	12.5%	12.2%	13.7%	11.1%
Median	21.2%	26.6%	25.4%	27.3%	15.0%

Disability Pay Gap (%)



Disability Pay Gap (%)					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Mean %	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.9%	7.9%
Median %	N/A	N/A	N/A	26.2%	11.9%



Mills & Reeve is centred on achieving more for clients, their businesses and the wider communities we serve.

Our clients and their industries benefit from our knowledge and learning – on everything from wellbeing, diversity and inclusion to global trends. The wider community benefits from a focus on sustainability in client and business decisions.

Our 1,250 plus people and over 750 lawyers share one vision – achieving more for clients.

Meet the team

For more on:

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Internal Communications Executive

The small print

The pay gap statistics provided in this report are based on Mills & Reeve's snapshot data from 5 April 2023.

Under legislation which came into force in April 2017, UK employers with more than 250 employees are required to publish their mean and median gender pay gap.

These metrics are complementary and illustrate different aspects of the distribution of pay across an organisation. Calculating the median involves taking all salaries in a sample, lining them up in order from lowest to highest, and picking the middle-most salary. Meanwhile, the mean is the overall average of the whole sample and is more subject to skewing by a small number of outliers.

We confirm that Mills & Reeve's gender pay gap calculations are accurate and meet the requirements of the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

The data published in this report is published by Mills & Reeve Services Limited, a wholly owned subsidiary and the service company of Mills & Reeve LLP. Mills & Reeve Services Limited is the main employing entity for Mills & Reeve's employees.

Current gender pay gap reporting requirements dictate that we need to report in a binary way, recognising only men and women. For the purposes of this report, we refer to biological sex using the terms 'gender', 'men', and 'women'.

We know that gender is more complex than the reporting requirements allow for, and our policies reflect this.