

MILLS & REEVE

Achieve more. Together.

2024 Pay gap report

Incorporating progress
on diversity, inclusion
and wellbeing



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“This year sees lots of change as we come to the end of our 2025 strategy, and embark on a new, ambitious 2030 strategy, of which being a “leader in people experience” is an important strand.”

Claire Clarke

Managing Partner, Mills & Reeve

Foreword by our managing partner

Welcome to our annual pay gap report which has evolved over the years to also include reports on our ethnicity and disability pay gaps. We use this opportunity to present a broader update on diversity, inclusion and wellbeing at Mills & Reeve. As you'll see from the report, it's been a busy year again.

This year sees lots of change as we come to the end of our 2025 strategy, and embark on a new, ambitious 2030 strategy, of which being a "leader in people experience" is an important strand. As part of this we recently refreshed our values which are the foundations of all our interactions with our people, clients and the communities we serve. Our people shaped them in a collaborative way and live and breathe them every day. Find out what they are on [page 5](#).

I'm happy to say that this year sees our lowest mean pay gap since we started reporting, at 12.8%, and our lowest mean disability pay gap at 7.0%. I'm proud that we've achieved (or very nearly achieved) several of our 2025 targets in relation to diversity, having exceeded our target percentage of female partners two years early, and we're within one percentage point of our targets of declared LGBTQ+ and disabled colleagues.

Upon comparing our statistics to the wider legal sector, we were pleased that our mean pay gap was 4.8% lower than the industry average, indicating that we're doing better than the wider sector on this metric.

While we've seen progress in some areas, we must acknowledge that our ethnicity pay gap has widened this year. Though much of this is due to fluctuations in small data sets, we're very aware that we need to do more. As we further develop our approach to diversity and inclusion in line with our 2030 strategy, this continues to be an area of focus for the firm. You can find out more about what we've been doing to support greater representation on [page 11](#) (for race & ethnicity) and [page 17](#) (for social mobility).

As we move into a new strategy period, I look forward to continuing to drive equality and inclusivity within Mills & Reeve and embed it in everything we do.

Thank you for taking the time to read our report, and if you have any comments or questions, 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

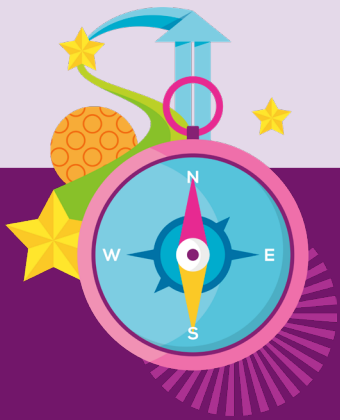




At Mills & Reeve we believe that by building connections with our clients, our people and the communities we work in, we can do great things. We call that Achieve more. Together.

In 2025 we refreshed our firm values. These values reflect what we're seeking to achieve overall as a firm in relation to diversity inclusion and wellbeing: We're ambitious as a firm to be an exemplar in this area, we care about creating an environment for

our people which is psychologically safe and inclusive for all. We're open in everything we do and clear about where we can do more. Our wide range of network groups collaborate regularly with each other, and our communities, to help us achieve our aims.



We're ambitious

We aim high, we embrace new ideas and we're passionate about our work.



We're open

We communicate openly and honestly to build trust, and we do what's right.



We care

We're committed to each other, our clients, our communities and the planet.



We collaborate

We're easy to work with, we offer help willingly and we get things done.



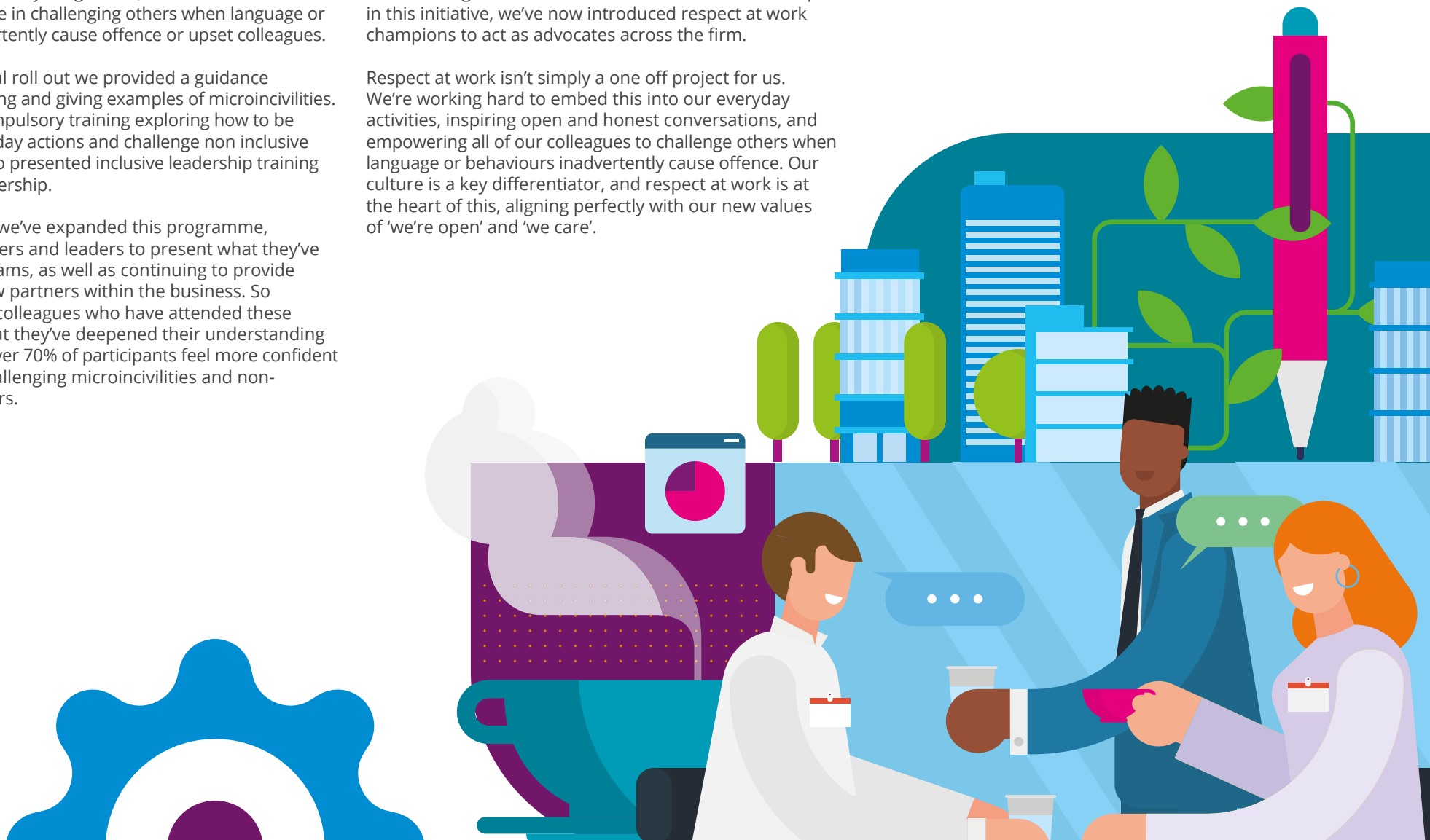
In the last year we've continued to implement our respect at work programme to encourage people to be intentional about inclusion in everything we do, and continue to improve confidence in challenging others when language or behaviours inadvertently cause offence or upset colleagues.

As part of the initial roll out we provided a guidance document explaining and giving examples of microincivilities. We introduced compulsory training exploring how to be inclusive in day to day actions and challenge non inclusive behaviour, and also presented inclusive leadership training to our whole partnership.

Over the last year we've expanded this programme, encouraging partners and leaders to present what they've learned to their teams, as well as continuing to provide training to any new partners within the business. So far, nearly 90% of colleagues who have attended these workshops feel that they've deepened their understanding of inclusion, and over 70% of participants feel more confident identifying and challenging microincivilities and non-inclusive behaviours.

By encouraging inclusive leadership from the top, we hope that confidence to challenge microincivilities will trickle down through the rest of the business. As the next step in this initiative, we've now introduced respect at work champions to act as advocates across the firm.

Respect at work isn't simply a one off project for us. We're working hard to embed this into our everyday activities, inspiring open and honest conversations, and empowering all of our colleagues to challenge others when language or behaviours inadvertently cause offence. Our culture is a key differentiator, and respect at work is at the heart of this, aligning perfectly with our new values of 'we're open' and 'we care'.





2024 snapshot data

Our mean gender pay gap has reduced this year to 12.8% (from 17.4% last year), and the median has reduced from 22.6% (from 32.3% last year).

Understanding the pay gap

We're pleased to report a reduction in our gender pay gap this year, driven by an increase in the average rate of pay for women compared to the previous year. This has resulted in the lowest mean pay gap since we began reporting in 2017, and the lowest median pay gap since 2020, which was notably affected by some people being on furlough during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Key factors influencing our gender pay gap:

- 1. Role distribution:** While we ensure equal pay for equivalent roles, we employ more women than men and, therefore, have more women in lower pay quartiles roles, such as in executive support services. As we see increasing numbers of women in higher paying, more senior roles, the pay gap decreases.
- 2. Part-time work:** A significant number of our female employees (29.3%) work reduced hours compared to their male counterparts (7.3%). Since the reporting requirements don't allow us to gross up to FTE equivalents, this impacts our gender pay gap figures.
- 3. Employee benefits:** Certain benefits, such as our salary sacrifice pension scheme and the option to buy additional annual leave, are more frequently used by women (345 out of 421 colleagues buying extra annual leave were women). These benefit reductions reduce the salary reported, so adversely affect the statistics.

Though we're pleased to see that our statistics are again going in the right direction, we're continuing to work hard to increase female representation at higher levels. Read more about our recent activities on the next page.

Gender bonus gap

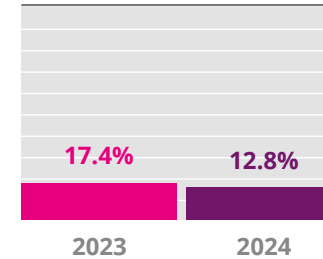
The mean gender bonus gap this year has increased by 7.9% to 24.6%, and the median from 1.3% to 4.5%.

This increase is predominantly because in 2023 we awarded a £1,000 cost of living bonus to all employees, regardless of whether they were full or part time. This had the effect of reducing last year's statistics dramatically. The mean gender bonus gap has decreased by 15.3% over the last 6 years.

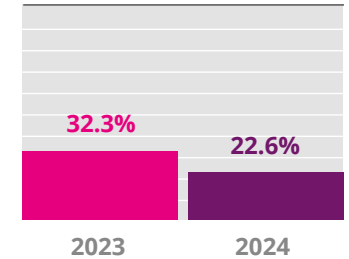
As in previous years the calculations include our regular firmwide all staff bonus, which is available to all staff employed during this period and is pro-rated for part time workers. We feel it's very important that everyone at the firm, regardless of role, benefits from the firm's growth in this way as each and every person contributes to our success. As our all staff bonus is pro-rated, and a significant proportion of our part time workforce are women, they receive lower bonuses, impacting the bonus gap. Additionally, of 49 employees not receiving a bonus (eg casual staff, new starters or leavers) 38 were women, again affecting the overall bonus distribution.

Gender pay gap

Mean %

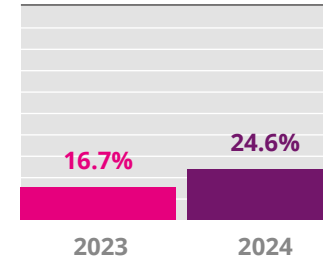


Median %

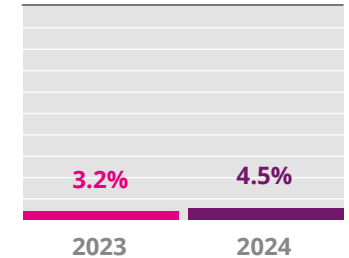


Bonus results

Mean %



Median %





2025 target

We were pleased to have exceeded our target to increase the proportion of female partners to 33% by 2025 two years early, and this percentage has kept growing since, now sitting at 39%.

Looking to the future

We were happy to have exceeded our female partner target by 6%, and have again reduced our gender pay gap this year, an indication that our work towards gender equality is working. We fully intend to keep this progress going, and will continue to work hard to improve female representation across the firm, particularly at more senior levels.

Read on to find out what we've been getting up to in the last year.



Supporting families

We overhauled our key family leave policies this year. We now offer 26 weeks full pay to eligible staff taking maternity, adoption, or shared parental leave, and four weeks of paid leave in our paternity policy, with flexibility to take half of that at any point during the first year of a new arrival. You can read more about this in our case study on [page 18](#).

Our baby loss policy provides up to ten days of paid leave for those who've experienced a miscarriage, and we also offer paid leave for people on fertility pathways and those with caring responsibilities. We're committed to supporting anyone trying to build or raise a family.

Menopause support

This year improving our menopause support has been a key priority, as it'll affect the majority of our people at some point in their careers. We've introduced menopause champions across our offices, and have launched a menopause hub on our intranet. We also shared case studies of people's lived experiences, hosted a well-attended male allyship session, and had a panel event with senior leaders talking about their experiences of the menopause, how it affected their careers, and why it's so important to talk about. As a result of our team's hard work, we were recently awarded menopause friendly employer accreditation by Henpicked, the industry recognised mark of excellence for menopause at work.

Parents and carers network (PACT)

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

We're a member of Working Families, signatories to the Pregnancy Loss Pledge and recently signed up to Parents Promise (an organisation supporting parents going through family separation).

Balance network

Our Balance network works to promote the interest of existing and future employees at Mills & Reeve in support of gender balance and equality. A recent highlight of network activity was hosting a talk with Georgina Cook (AKA #AWomanCalledGeorge) on navigating a career as a woman in the legal sector. Balance also recently hosted a well-attended client panel event for International Women's Day 2025 focussing on why allyship is important.

The network has also set objectives to work on our domestic abuse policy and wider support for victims of domestic abuse.

Supporting flexible and part time working

We encourage flexible working, and have 235 different flexible working patterns in use across the firm, adapted to suit individual needs. Our hybrid and flexible working policies positively encourage colleagues to balance all responsibilities in their life.

Workshops

We've continued to organise information sessions to raise awareness around topics linked to gender. Recent events included: Demystifying the partnership process, part time partnership, mental health through an intersectional lens, and men's mental health and wellbeing.



What inspired you to choose a career in finance in the legal sector?

To be honest, I found my way into finance within the legal sector by chance. I began my career in professional services, training with PwC, and I still vividly remember my interview with the first law firm FD I worked for - he told me, "once you join a law firm, you won't leave a law firm." While he wasn't referring to that specific firm, his words certainly ring true of my experience in the sector so far.

My inspiration has largely come from the incredible mentors and leaders I've worked with. They championed my growth, challenged me, and opened doors to new opportunities. Their guidance deepened my understanding of the legal sector and helped me recognise its potential.



How have you found navigating your career as a female senior leader in finance?

Leadership - regardless of gender - comes with its challenges. It ultimately depends on what you want from your career and how you balance that with your personal life.

Being a female senior leader in finance is both rewarding and demanding. There's often an unspoken expectation that you're "representing" or "paving the way" for others, but I believe the key is staying true to yourself, and your ambitions, and being vocal about them.

A pivotal moment in my journey was navigating career decisions around starting a family - how much maternity leave to take, when to return, and how invested I wanted to be in work after that. These choices aren't the same for everyone, but I knew for myself that continuing to build my career was important.

Growing up, my parents - first-generation immigrants to the UK - instilled in me the importance of independence and education. Their influence shaped my mindset and helped me embrace the challenges that come with leadership. Over the years, I've learned the value of resilience, continuous learning, and the power of a strong support network.

Why did you choose to move to Mills & Reeve, and how has your experience been so far?

I was drawn to Mills & Reeve because of its reputation and the insightful conversations I had with key individuals. The firm's strong commitment to professional development and its inclusive culture were also major factors in my decision. As you gain experience in the sector, you develop a clearer sense of what's the right fit for you - and, naturally, you become more selective.

The opportunities and challenges presented by the firm, along with its strategic direction, excited me enough to take the leap. My experience so far has been incredibly positive - I have a strong team, a solid foundation, and plenty of opportunities to contribute meaningfully to the firm's strategy. It's an exciting time to be here.

"Being a female senior leader in finance is both rewarding and demanding. There's often an unspoken expectation that you're "representing" or "paving the way" for others"

What advice would you give your younger self?

If I could give my younger self any advice, it would be to trust the journey and embrace every learning opportunity, and if you see something you want to be involved in, speak up. Don't be afraid to take risks and step outside your comfort zone - these moments often lead to the greatest personal and professional growth. In my own career, the defining moments have come from pushing boundaries and taking on new challenges.

Building a career is a marathon, not a sprint, so patience and persistence are key. Finally, always seek out mentors and allies who can provide guidance, challenge you, and support your growth.

Race, ethnicity and cultural heritage

2024 snapshot



2024 snapshot data

Our mean ethnicity pay gap has increased to 12.1% (from 11.1% the year before), our median pay gap has increased from 15.0% to 24.2%.

Understanding the gap

Our mean and median ethnicity pay gaps have increased this year predominantly due to an increase in the number of employees reporting their ethnicity to us. 92.2% of colleagues have now reported their ethnicity (up from 90.3% last year), with almost 85% of this new data coming from white colleagues. The impact of this more accurate data, with an increase in white people reporting their ethnicity, leads to a broader range of salaries being included in the calculations. As the firm grows, even small shifts in any of our pay quartiles can impact our percentage gaps, both positively and negatively.

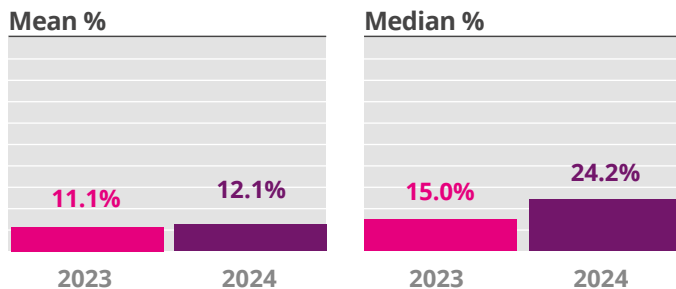
Saying this, we know we need to improve these statistics in the coming years, and are working hard to encourage people from racially minoritised backgrounds to join not only us, but the wider legal profession in order to help collectively improve the diversity of our sector. Read on to the next page to find out what we've been up to.

Partner pay gap

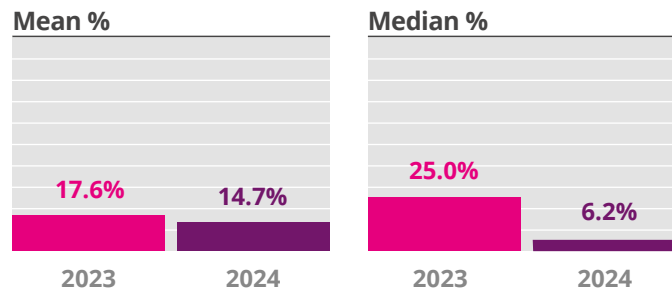
Our mean partner ethnicity pay gap has decreased this year to 14.7% (from 17.6%) and the median has decreased significantly to 6.2% (from 25.0%). The fluctuation this year is due to a high number of new partners joining. We're aware, though, that given we have a small (but increasing) number of partners from racially minoritised backgrounds these statistics are highly sensitive to people leaving and joining the firm during any snapshot period.

As well as working hard to encourage people from all backgrounds to consider a career in the legal sector, we're also focussing on recruiting and retaining more senior individuals from racially minoritised backgrounds to provide better representation at all levels. It's good to see that this is starting to take effect within our partnership.

Ethnicity pay gap



Partner pay gap



Race, ethnicity and cultural heritage

A closer look



2025 target

Our aim for 2025 was to increase the proportion of staff and partners from racially minoritised backgrounds to 18%. While we were pleased to see that this percentage has increased again this year, rising from 11.9% to 13.3%, we still have more work to do to hit this target. Increasing representation of people from racially minoritised backgrounds remains a key focus of our 2030 approach, and one where we're committed to increasing the pace of change over the coming years.

Saying this, the fact that we continue to increase this percentage indicates that our efforts to attract people from racially minoritised backgrounds are working. As well as continuing these efforts to increase representation, we're also continuing to decrease the existing attrition gap (the gap in the rates at which people from different backgrounds leave an organisation). Although this has been decreasing year on year, we're very aware that attracting diverse talent is only half of the challenge, and we need to continue to ensure all of our people thrive and want to stay.

In the last year we've also improved the diversity of our board, something we'd been working towards for some time. Not only does our board now have a majority of female members (62.5%), but we also now have representation of people from a racially minoritised background (12.5%). We plan to maintain the focus on our talent pipeline and to continue to see this balance improve in the coming years, both through attracting good people and focussing on building a diverse talent pool lower down the firm.

Find out about some of our recent activities below:

Reach network

Our race, ethnicity and cultural heritage (Reach) network remains at the heart of our drive to attract more people from racially minoritised backgrounds and build a diverse and dynamic workforce. Reach works to identify policy gaps and opportunities, promote outreach and act as a springboard for discussions and awareness raising.

This year, in partnership with other organisations, Reach hosted insight evenings for aspiring lawyers from racially minoritised backgrounds, and sponsored a student table at the Birmingham Black Lawyers summer ball. They also recently collaborated with the Government Legal Department on an event focussing on breaking glass ceilings.

One of the network's main focusses this year was to expand our Reach into Schools initiative to establish relationships with schools from low socio-economic areas and encourage students to consider a career in the legal sector. Read more about this in our spotlight on [page 12](#).

10,000 Black Interns

We again partnered with the 10,000 Black Interns scheme to host five, six-week internships to support improved access to the legal sector, and help diversify our junior talent pool. It's been great to see that our first ever intern from this scheme will be returning to the firm as a trainee this September.

As well as a series of mini-seats, interns are offered the opportunity to join a series of webinars throughout the summer and network with interns in other law firms as part of a cross-sector collaborative approach to the programme.

Multi-faith group

This subcommittee of the Reach network has been busy this year, with members providing spotlights on different faiths and how they celebrate through the year. A highlight included a rangoli making event in October.

Celebrations and awareness sessions

As always, we've hosted various activities to raise awareness and celebrate minoritised communities. This year we celebrated South Asian Heritage Month with an "in conversation" session with Jaspreet Kaur, and were taught how to cook Aloo Paratha by a guest chef from Team Migrateful, which supports asylum seekers, refugees and other migrants. Our Black History Month celebrations included an in person event with the authors of *My Little Black Book: A Blacktionary* and a book club reading *Queenie* by Candice Carty-Williams.

Recognition and commitments

- We're signed up to the Race at Work charter
- Race Equality Matters: Silver Trailblazer Award
- Members of Black Solicitors Network
- Members of Birmingham Black Lawyers



Spotlight

Reach into Schools with George Dixon Academy



Our Reach into Schools programme aims to foster partnerships with local secondary schools that have a large proportion of students from racially minoritised or low socio-economic backgrounds to create sustained collaborations, understand student needs, and raise their aspirations through exposure to our firm. We've continued to strengthen our longstanding partnership with George Dixon Academy (GDA) in Birmingham through a range of initiatives.

In October, colleagues volunteered at the school to help "turn dark places green" by constructing garden furniture for the school's outdoor gardening project, transforming an unused space into a welcoming area for the community.

When our Birmingham and Leeds offices relocated recently, we chose to donate unwanted furniture to GDA to enhance the school's facilities. The academy library now features dedicated spaces for career meetings, workshops, reading, and board meetings.

In September, we invited GDA staff and students to our Birmingham office launch party, which was attended by clients and contacts. The event gave the students an opportunity to practice their networking skills and build their confidence in a professional setting.

We also offered work experience to a GDA alumna who recently completed her law degree at Aston University. This opportunity enhanced her career prospects and introduced her to a law firm environment – an opportunity we plan to offer annually to GDA alumni.

Through this ongoing partnership and the wider programme, our goal is to continue to positively impact students' self-belief and career aspirations, regardless of their background or financial status. We've had some fantastic feedback from the students so far and it's been great to see them grow in confidence and ambition.



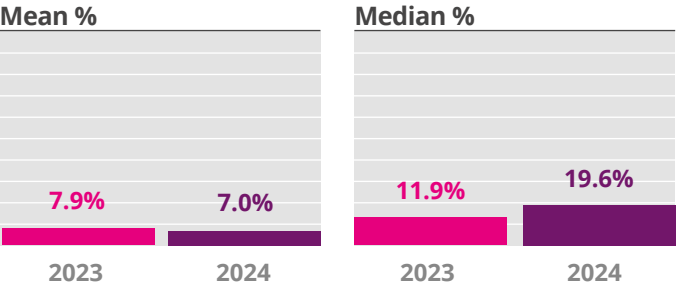
Disability 2024 snapshot



2024 snapshot data

As this is the third year of publishing our disability pay gap data, we're now able to more comprehensively look at trends. Our mean pay gap has decreased again from 7.9% to 7.0% this year, however, the median pay gap has increased from 11.9% to 19.6% between employees who've declared a disability, and those who don't have one or have chosen not to declare one.

Disability pay gap



Understanding the gap

It's great to see a consistent downward trend in our mean disability gap, which has decreased from 10.9% since we started publishing this data. This is a real indication that our hard work in this field is paying off. We feel that the continued decrease of our mean pay gap is a more accurate indication of the true situation. We must acknowledge, however, that our median has increased by 7.7% this year, predominantly due to a more comprehensive data set across the firm giving us a more accurate picture.





Target by 2025

Our target by 2025 was to increase the number of declared disabled staff and partners to 11%. We're incredibly close to hitting this target, with the percentage having increased from 9.9% to 10.5% this year.

We were pleased to see that we've again managed to increase the percentage of colleagues reporting their disability status to 77% (up from 75.2% in 2023), and this regular upward trend demonstrates that our people trust us and feel confident in declaring their disabilities, allowing us to better support them going forward.

We're working hard to make sure that all our colleagues thrive and receive equal opportunities to do so, and our flexible working policy is fully inclusive and supportive of those with disabilities.

Ability Network

Our Ability network spearheads 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. In addition to welcoming two new co-chairs, Ability has also appointed two subject matter leads this year, one to focus on neurodiversity and another on accessible technology, as the network had identified these as two areas they wanted to focus attention on.

Development award

We offer a development award annually to a law student from a marginalised group. This year, we once again focused this on students with a disability, long-term condition and/or who are neurodivergent, offering a £1,000 bursary, mentoring and a week's work experience in partnership with Business Disability Forum.

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.

Colleagues are supported by a host of resources, including our comprehensive adjustments menu, which outlines the adjustments that have been made in the past associated with particular challenges or barriers people encounter at work. For those with more complex adjustment requirements, a dedicated HR representative leads the work to coordinate relevant teams and occupational health, and supports individuals and managers to check in and evolve as required.

Workshops and awareness

In the last year we've held several disability related events, including sessions on mental health through an intersectional lens, and flexible working at the firm. Our neurodiversity lead also recently spoke as a panellist at Business Disability Forum's event, exploring intersectionality and neurodiverse experiences: insights from lived experience.

Recognition and commitments

- Members of the Business Disability Forum
- We're a disability confident employer
- Joined Legal Neurodiversity Network
- Members of the Hidden Disabilities Sunflower scheme



Case study

Chloe Gustave

Associate



What inspired you to become a lawyer?

I've always been interested in law, I studied it at A-level and found it fascinating. However, I didn't know any solicitors or barristers, so decided to not pursue a career in the profession. It was always something that I kept in the back of my mind though. For instance, when I was working a part time job, I was always the person who would read the employee handbook and knew all the rules about employee rights. So, employment law was always something I was genuinely interested in. It was only when I completed work experience at Citizen's Advice, that I was really inspired to become a lawyer and pursue a career in the industry.

What did your route into law look like?

After studying it at A-level I went on to study English language and English language teaching at university.



During my second year, I realised I didn't want to pursue English as a career, so decided to apply for the GDL when I finished. I studied that for a year, then completed my LPC and a master's in law. After my studies, I was an in-house paralegal for a year, then went on to secure a training contract in-house at Transport for London.

Why did you go on to choose Mills & Reeve?

When I made the decision to move into private practice, I applied to Mills & Reeve because they were well regarded for their employment team. The culture also really stood out for me. Having never worked in private practice before, I really wanted to work in a firm that supported its employees and where I could see myself fitting in. From everything I'd read and heard about Mills & Reeve, I felt like it was the best fit for my career.

Advice to aspiring lawyers

My tip to all aspiring lawyers would be to persevere. My journey wasn't smooth, it took several years, and I didn't take the usual route. All experience is valuable experience, whether it be part time roles or volunteering. Anything that helps you build skills, and deal with customers/clients will be beneficial to applications and CVs.

What's it like working at Mills & Reeve?

Mills & Reeve is genuinely a firm that follows its messaging. A lot of firms talk about diversity, inclusion, and supporting colleagues, but don't fully put it into practice. With Mills & Reeve, what they say is what they do! I've felt incredibly supported since I started, and while there's always more to do in terms of diversity, I've never felt othered here, which is really important to me.

“Mills & Reeve is genuinely a firm that follows its messaging. A lot of firms talk about diversity, inclusion, and supporting colleagues, but don't fully put it into practice. With Mills & Reeve, what they say is what they do!”



2025 targets

Our target for 2025 was to increase the number of staff who identify as LGBTQ+ to 8%. This year we're incredibly close to hitting that target, with the percentage of declared staff identifying as LGBTQ+ increasing from 5.7% to 7.6%.

Here's some of the things we've done this year to support LGBTQ+ staff, candidates, partners and clients:

Spectrum network

Our Spectrum network continues to offer advice, representation and support to our LGBTQ+ colleagues and allies, driving forward activities that enhance our inclusive culture, from awareness sessions to gendered language in documentation. They've also produced a useful set of allyship guides on different LGBTQ+ identities, and how to be a good ally.

The Spectrum library introduced last year provides books on related topics and by LGBTQ+ authors, and has been touring our offices, proving very popular with colleagues.

The network has spearheaded the introduction of pronouns on our email footers and on staff badges at firm events, for those who would like to.

Trans and gender diverse support group

This year we've established a support group for colleagues who fall under the trans/gender diverse umbrella. This is a confidential space for colleagues to meet and gain peer-to-peer support, share experiences and build connections.

Events and awareness sessions

We've collaborated on various events this year, including sponsoring Cambridge Pride, the Out Together ball in Leeds, and a Birmingham Law Society trans awareness event. We've also collaborated with The Kite Trust on an event in Cambridge to assist LGBTQ+ and neurodivergent youths to build their professional networks and practice interview skills.

As part of LGBTQ+ History Month 2025, Spectrum hosted a presentation on the work and history of the Bishopsgate Institute and their LGBTQIA+ archive, a webinar on international surrogacy, and an LGBTQ+ history themed quiz.

Commitments

- We're a Stonewall diversity champion.





Current statistics

Improved social mobility continues to be one of our key objectives, and we recognise that, alongside much of the legal industry, it's an area we need to improve on. Our focus has been on increasing the amount of data available to us and we now have a response rate of 70.4% of our people declaring the main income-earner's role at age 14, giving us a clearer picture of the socioeconomic background of staff and partners at the firm.

While we're still working to improve this number further, we currently have 23.7% of all staff and partners from a lower socioeconomic background, and 16.9% of our lawyers (compared to 18% across the wider legal sector).

We're now considering how we ensure that our 2030 targets reflect the areas in which we can make the most impact, including increasing representation among our lawyer population.

Read on to find out what we've been up to this year to work towards our goals.

Removing recruitment barriers

This year we introduced a new applicant tracking system which better enables us to track the DEI data of our applicants, so that we can identify trends and areas for improvement in our talent attraction strategies, and ensure that everyone – regardless of background – is able to perform at their best in our recruitment processes.

Living wage

We've been paying the living wage as a minimum for some time and are accredited as a Living Wage employer to demonstrate our commitment to this.

Emerging talent

Our recruitment team and networks have been working hard to proactively engage with non-Russell Group universities and schools with a high proportion of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds to encourage social mobility, attract a diverse range of talent, and inspire school age students to consider a career in the legal profession. To find out more, read our Reach into Schools spotlight on [page 12](#).

Our graduate recruitment process no longer asks for minimum grade requirements, as this was a key barrier to people from lower socioeconomic communities, and our application forms no longer ask for work experience. Instead, applicants are asked to complete online testing that assesses for potential against a set of key transferable skills that are important to thriving at our firm.

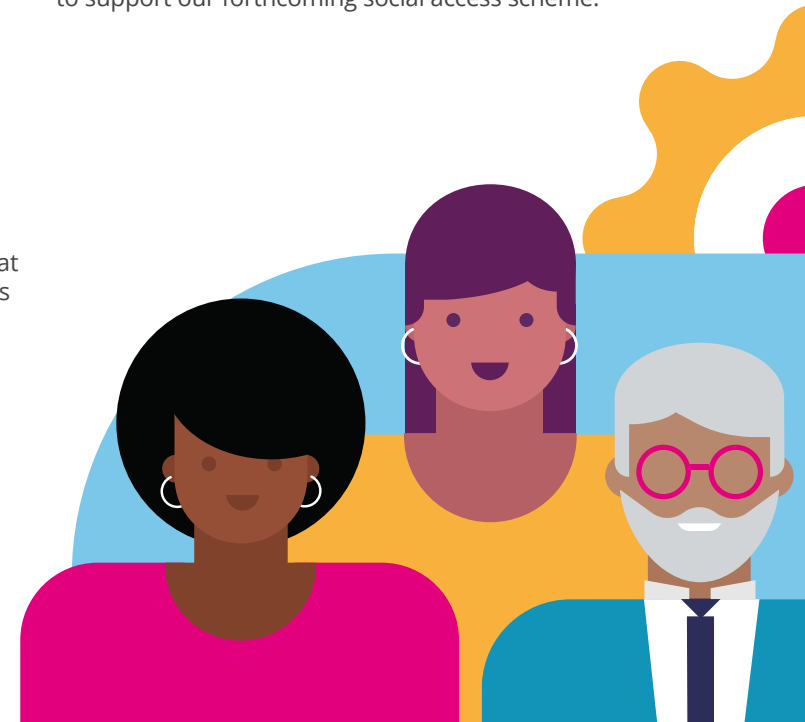
Apprenticeships

This year, alongside our graduate apprenticeship solicitor route (which welcomed its first cohort in 2023), we've launched a new six year solicitor degree apprenticeship scheme aimed at school leavers. Our first cohort will be starting in Autumn 2025. Though we've had a couple of individuals already working towards qualification through this route, we wanted to establish a more comprehensive

scheme to provide an extra route to qualification other than the usual training contracts or graduate apprenticeships, and help improve access to the legal sector for people from all backgrounds.

Partnerships

As well as our Reach into Schools relationships across the country, 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 11 years. We've also collaborated with the Social Mobility Business Partnership (SMBP) to deliver insight weeks in Norwich and to convene a local support group for young people in secondary schools in Oxford. We're also entering into a more formal partnership with SMBP in Manchester to support our forthcoming social access scheme.



Case study

Alex Round

Principal Associate



Can you tell us about your journey into law?

After completing my undergraduate degree in politics, philosophy and economics, I started the GDL. My initial approach to vacation scheme and training contract applications was a bit sporadic and ultimately unsuccessful, which I found a bit dispiriting. I ended up taking a two-year break and took on a graduate job in sales, which I quickly realised wasn't for me, so I set on finding some legal work experience, and getting myself lined up to do the LPC. I taught guitar and piano to earn some extra money, did charity work, and eventually secured the right legal opportunity. I applied to Mills & Reeve in 2012 and started my training contract in 2014, qualified into the planning team in 2016 and was promoted to principal associate in 2023.

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

I've always felt supported and that there's been encouragement for my growth and development. I've seen the firm expand quite a bit in the last 10 years, but as we've grown in size, revenue, reach, and in the amounts and quality of work we do for increasingly large clients, the firm's ethos and the way it treats its employees hasn't changed. Work-life balance is still a realistic goal if you work at Mills & Reeve, and the firm is extremely supportive in circumstances of personal difficulty, or even crisis. I experienced that myself around seven years ago, when I had an extended leave of absence when my wife was very unwell. The firm did everything they could to make what was otherwise an extremely difficult time as palatable as possible from a work point of view, which really marks it out as being a bit special.

“The firm did everything they could to make what was otherwise an extremely difficult time as palatable as possible from a work point of view, which really marks it out as being a bit special.”

What was your experience of taking shared parental leave?

Our new shared parental leave policy rolled out in 2024 is more generous and supportive for dads than the previous one. I took my two weeks of statutory paternity leave and two weeks of annual leave when my son was born in January, and then took the additional benefit of the new policy when I took a further seven weeks off in the autumn. It wasn't difficult to secure approval for that with my line manager or with HR; I was never made to feel that doing so would be difficult to manage. HR was brilliant in helping me understand the logistics of how it would work.

It's a brilliant policy and a great opportunity, particularly for dads, where historically it might've been less typical to take an extended period away from work for child raising purposes. I think anything that allows a more equal balance when it comes to childcare is a real step in the right direction.





Our team regularly offers firmwide communications on wellbeing and emotional support, both in response to difficult situations, and as part of a wider underlying campaign of wellbeing support. All colleagues have access to our employee assistance programme for mental and physical health support 24/7, 365 days a year.

Mental health first aiders

We've recently enhanced our mental health first aid support, increasing the number of wellbeing supporters from 18 to 29, and also ran refresher training for our existing supporters. In addition, for more specific requirements, we also offer respect at work, menopause and wellbeing champions.

Wellbeing workshops

We update colleagues on the support available on a regular basis, and also provide awareness sessions to aid their wellbeing. Over the last year we've included sessions on digital wellbeing, understanding bereavement, mental health through an intersectional lens, good sleep habits, and courageous conversations and psychological safety in the workplace.

Month of wellbeing

To support colleagues in the dark month of January we hosted a month of wellbeing, with each week focussing on a different pillar of wellbeing, namely mental, physical, financial and digital. Activities included: office wellbeing walks, chair yoga, online fitness classes, a financial planning webinar, and a 25 tips for 2025 session.

Employee support fund

We continue to provide an employee support fund, to assist anyone struggling financially to confidentially obtain support with no repayment required. Any beneficiary also has access to 1:1 financial coaching with Octopus Money for a year to help manage their finances.

Wellbeing apps

All colleagues can access the Thrive mental awareness app, which provides another route to counselling and resources to help understand mental health. Those with 2+ years' service (and all principal associates) also 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.

Discount platforms

Through the SmartSpend app we offer discounts at numerous shops, retailers and travel providers to help staff save money.

We're proud to be:

- A member of the Mindful Business Charter
- Members of the Zero Suicide Alliance
- Signatories of 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	12.8%	22.6%
Year on year change	-4.6%	-9.7%

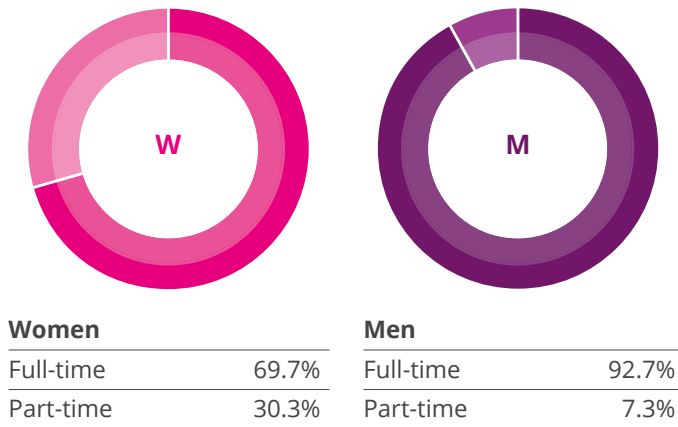
Gender bonus pay gap at Mills & Reeve

	Mean	Median
Gender bonus pay gap	24.6%	4.5%
Year on year change	7.9%	1.3%

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

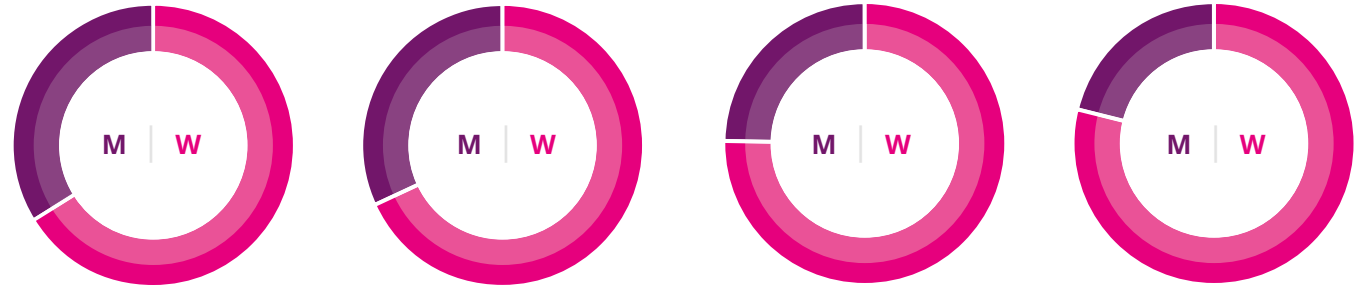


Working patterns at Mills & Reeve

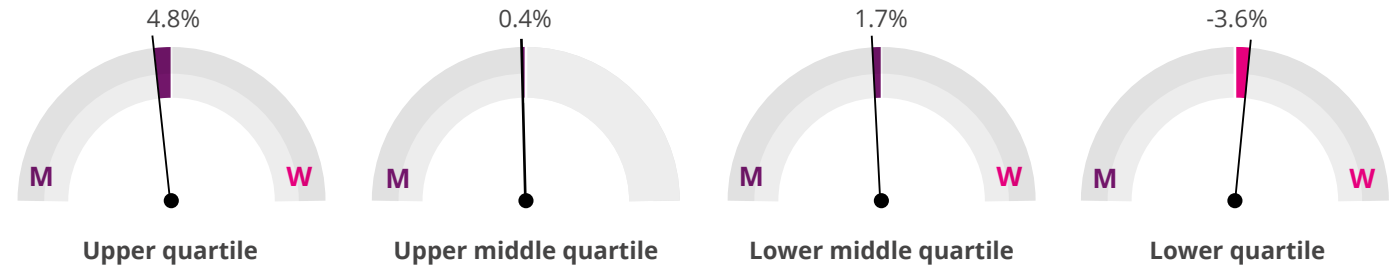


The percentage of women and men in each quartile (of equal size) of the payroll

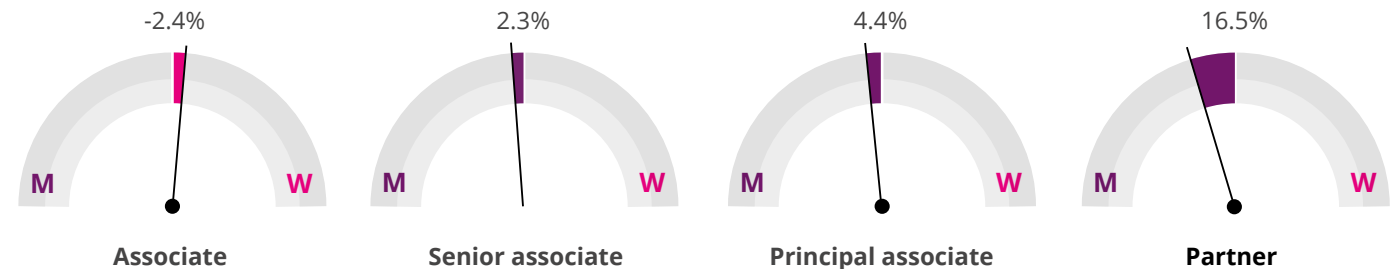
Quartile	Gender	Percentage
Upper quartile	Women	66.2%
	Men	33.8%
Upper middle quartile	Women	68.1%
	Men	31.9%
Lower middle quartile	Women	75.4%
	Men	24.6%
Lower quartile	Women	78.9%
	Men	21.1%



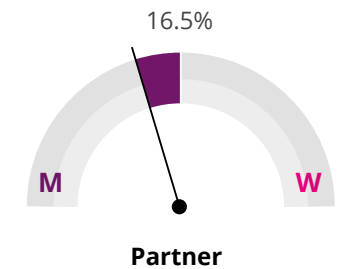
Gender pay gap broken down by pay quartile (Mean)



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	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Pay gap	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	16.6%	17.4%	12.8%	32.1%	19.5%	26.1%	24.1%	32.3%	22.6%
Bonus pay gap	39.9%	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	16.7%	24.6%	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	10.6%	3.2%	4.5%

Employees	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women in each quartile												
Upper	40.0%	41.3%	36.7%	38.2%	35.7%	33.8%	60.0%	58.7%	63.3%	61.8%	64.3%	66.2%
Upper middle	33.6%	30.7%	33.5%	29.5%	29.7%	31.9%	66.4%	69.3%	66.5%	70.5%	70.3%	68.1%
Lower middle	16.7%	23.4%	21.4%	19.9%	24.3%	24.6%	83.3%	76.6%	78.6%	80.1%	75.7%	75.4%
Lower	22.3%	20.7%	19.6%	21.6%	17.6%	21.1%	77.7%	79.3%	80.4%	78.4%	82.4%	78.9%

Employees	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Gender pay gap by quartile						
Upper	5.6%	-0.3%	4.6%	2.0%	5.0%	4.8%
Upper middle	-0.7%	-1.8%	1.4%	-0.2%	1.5%	0.4%
Lower middle	5.1%	-1.0%	3.8%	1.2%	4.1%	1.7%
Lower	-4.7%	-5.6%	-1.2%	-5.0%	-2.7%	-3.6%

Employees	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Gender pay gap by associate solicitor level						
Associate	3.7%	0.2%	4.3%	0.7%	-2.8%	-2.4%
Senior associate	5.4%	0.7%	1.1%	5.7%	8.2%	2.3%
Principal associate	6.9%	6.9%	7.7%	8.2%	3.8%	4.4%

Employees	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women receiving a bonus	98.0%	94.7%	97.3%	94.9%	94.7%	96.7%	96.4%	95.4%	95.1%	93.7%	95.6%	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	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Working patterns at Mills & Reeve												
Full-time	93.1%	92.1%	91.4%	90.9%	92.0%	92.7%	70.3%	69.6%	69.5%	69.3%	70.7%	69.7%
Part-time	6.9%	7.9%	8.6%	9.1%	8.0%	7.3%	29.7%	30.1%	30.5%	30.7%	29.3%	30.3%



Employees and partners

Employees and partners	Mean						Median					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Pay gap	59.3%	55.6%	58.8%	58.0%	56.1%	52.3%	42.4%	32.4%	35.7%	35.1%	36.4%	25.8%
Bonus pay gap	39.9%	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	16.7%	24.6%	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	10.6%	3.2%	4.5%

Employees and partners	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women in each quartile												
Upper	59.4%	59.2%	58.2%	57.8%	55.3%	54.2%	40.6%	40.8%	41.8%	42.2%	44.7%	45.8%
Upper middle	33.5%	30.4%	33.3%	27.9%	29.0%	28.5%	66.5%	69.6%	66.7%	72.1%	71.0%	71.5%
Lower middle	21.4%	28.4%	23.5%	25.1%	26.3%	26.1%	78.6%	71.6%	76.5%	74.9%	73.7%	73.9%
Lower	20.3%	20.0%	18.6%	19.9%	16.7%	21.2%	79.7%	80.0%	81.4%	80.1%	83.3%	78.8%

Employees and partners	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Gender pay gap by quartile						
Upper	32.4%	29.1%	32.5%	31.2%	31.7%	30.7%
Upper middle	-2.3%	1.5%	-2.2%	1.3%	-1.1%	-2.5%
Lower middle	7.0%	2.7%	2.2%	4.7%	1.5%	2.5%
Lower	-6.7%	-5.9%	-2.2%	-6.4%	-3.5%	-3.0%

* All percentages to 1 decimal place

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Partners

Partners	Mean						Median					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Pay gap	5.2%	7.2%	8.9%	8.8%	14.8%	16.5%	3.0%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	17.6%	28.1%

Partners	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women in each quartile												
Upper	77.4%	90.6%	73.5%	94.1%	91.9%	92.7%	22.6%	9.4%	26.5%	5.9%	8.1%	7.3%
Upper middle	71.0%	59.4%	79.4%	54.3%	57.9%	58.5%	29.0%	40.6%	20.6%	45.7%	42.1%	41.5%
Lower middle	80.6%	71.9%	64.7%	73.5%	73.0%	61.0%	19.4%	28.1%	35.3%	26.5%	27.0%	39.0%
Lower	61.3%	63.6%	65.7%	60.0%	42.1%	45.2%	38.7%	36.4%	34.3%	40.0%	57.9%	54.8%

Partners	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Gender pay gap by quartile						
Upper	-1.0%	-7.6%	0.1%	-9.1%	-4.3%	-7.1%
Upper middle	2.7%	-3.0%	1.2%	-3.9%	-8.7%	-11.6%
Lower middle	-6.5%	-0.5%	4.2%	-4.0%	-10.9%	-1.6%
Lower	-5.4%	1.1%	7.5%	7.0%	0.9%	2.0%

Equity partners

Equity partners	Mean						Median					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Pay gap	0.7%	2.7%	1.0%	1.4%	0.1%	1.0%	5.3%	5.3%	0.0%	5.0%	-2.6%	5.0%

Equity partners	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women in each quartile												
Upper	76.2%	81.8%	59.1%	90.9%	91.3%	92.0%	23.8%	18.2%	40.9%	9.1%	8.7%	8.0%
Upper middle	80.0%	76.2%	91.3%	60.9%	56.5%	64.0%	20.0%	23.8%	8.7%	39.1%	43.5%	36.0%
Lower middle	71.4%	66.7%	77.3%	73.9%	69.6%	64.0%	28.6%	33.3%	22.7%	26.1%	30.4%	36.0%
Lower	71.4%	68.2%	69.6%	69.6%	78.3%	72.0%	28.6%	31.8%	30.4%	30.4%	21.7%	28.0%

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Equity partners	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Gender pay gap by quartile						
Upper	-1.1%	-3.8%	3.0%	-7.1%	-5.9%	-10.1%
Upper middle	-0.9%	0.4%	4.3%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.3%
Lower middle	0.4%	0.4%	-0.2%	0.8%	0.8%	-4.4%
Lower	-2.6%	1.0%	-0.9%	-2.3%	-1.4%	0.9%



General partners

General Partners	Mean						Median					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Pay gap	3.5%	7.2%	5.6%	6.8%	6.1%	5.7%	0.0%	5.0%	15.0%	20.0%	15.8%	11.1%

General Partners	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women in each quartile												
Upper	90.0%	81.8%	63.6%	63.6%	64.3%	75.0%	10.0%	18.2%	36.4%	36.4%	35.7%	25.0%
Upper middle	63.6%	63.6%	66.7%	83.3%	73.3%	50.0%	36.4%	36.4%	33.3%	16.7%	26.7%	50.0%
Lower middle	50.0%	63.6%	66.7%	66.7%	28.6%	50.0%	50.0%	36.4%	33.3%	33.3%	71.4%	50.0%
Lower	70.0%	60.0%	58.3%	41.7%	46.7%	29.4%	30.0%	40.0%	41.7%	58.3%	53.3%	70.6%

General Partners	Mean					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Gender pay gap by quartile						
Upper	-5.4%	5.5%	5.3%	-1.1%	-11.3%	-14.6%
Upper middle	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	-0.5%	-2.5%	-7.5%
Lower middle	0.0%	-4.8%	7.0%	0.2%	3.6%	-0.8%
Lower	-12.1%	4.5%	3.7%	-2.9%	1.3%	-9.1%

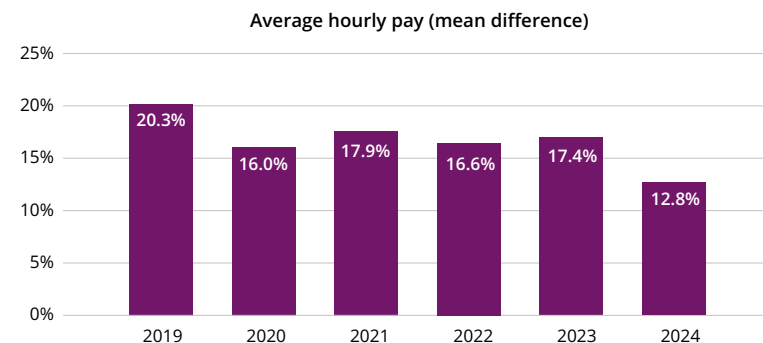
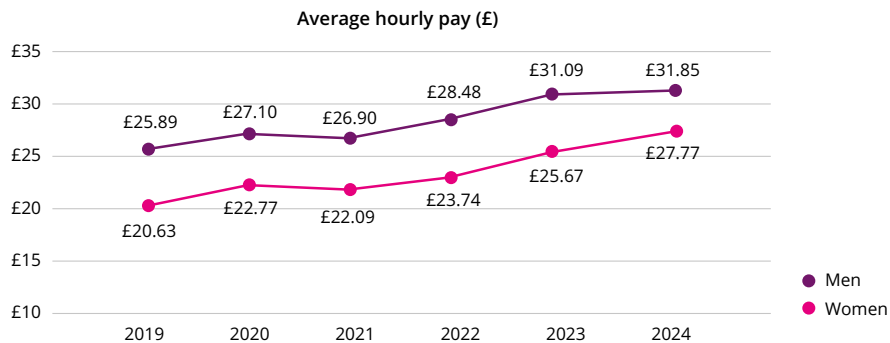
* All percentages to 1 decimal place

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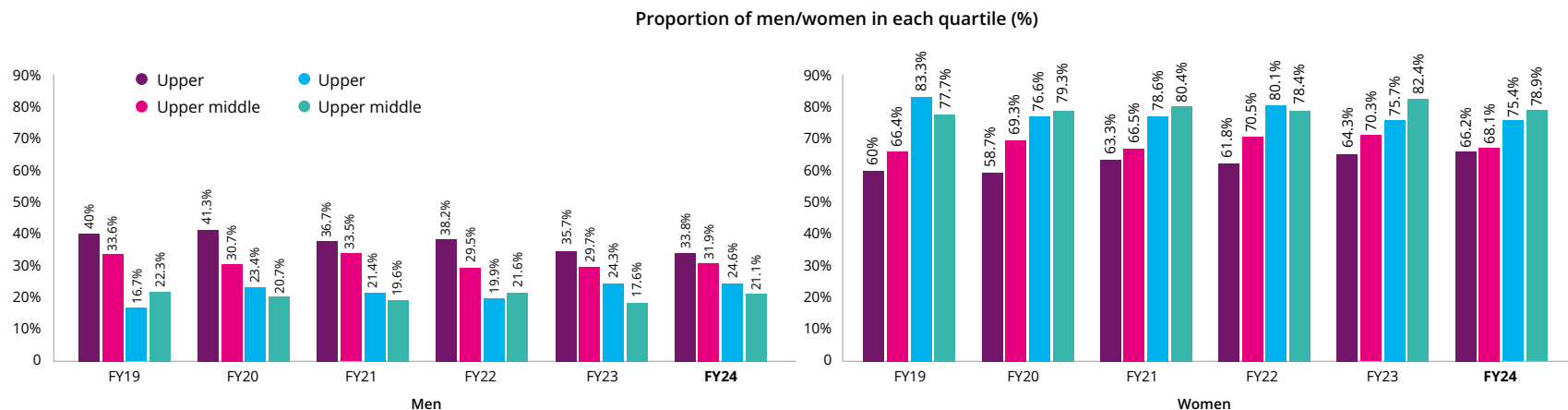


Average hourly pay (£)



Average hourly pay (£)						
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Men	£25.89	£27.10	£26.90	£28.48	£31.09	£31.85
Women	£20.63	£22.77	£22.09	£23.74	£25.67	£27.77
Mean difference %	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	16.6%	17.4%	12.8%

Proportion of men/women in each quartile (%)



* All percentages to 1 decimal place

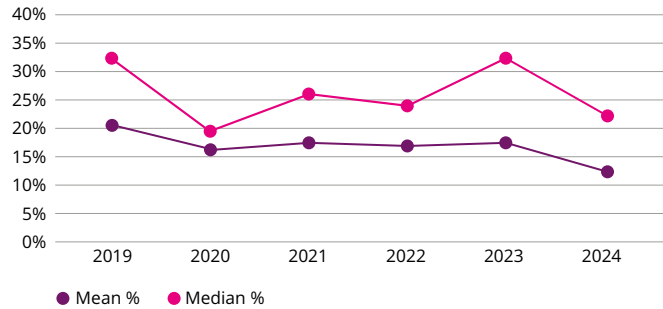
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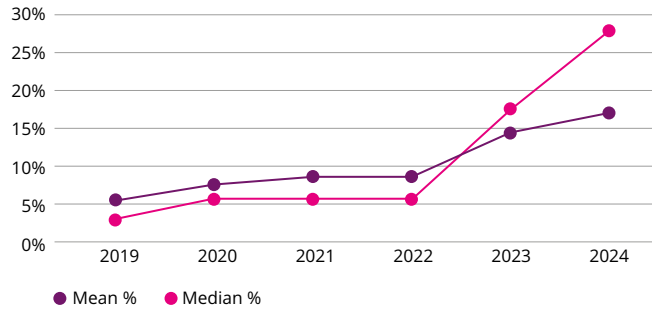
Employees	Men						Women					
	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24	FY19	FY20	FY21	FY22	FY23	FY24
Proportion of men/women in each quartile												
Upper	40.0%	41.3%	36.7%	38.2%	35.7%	33.8%	60.0%	58.7%	63.3%	61.8%	64.3%	66.2%
Upper middle	33.6%	30.7%	33.5%	29.5%	29.7%	31.9%	66.4%	69.3%	66.5%	70.5%	70.3%	68.1%
Lower middle	16.7%	23.4%	21.4%	19.9%	24.3%	24.6%	83.3%	76.6%	78.6%	80.1%	75.7%	75.4%
Lower	22.3%	20.7%	19.6%	21.6%	17.6%	21.1%	77.7%	79.3%	80.4%	78.4%	82.4%	78.9%



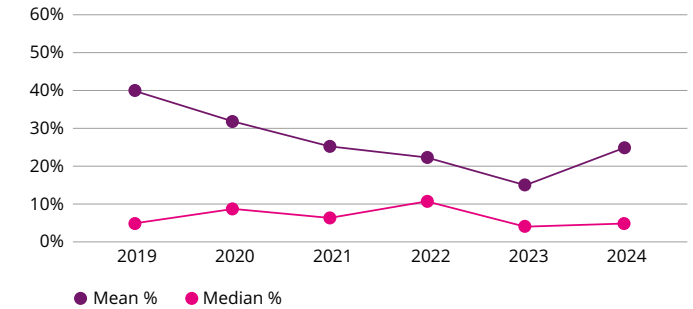
Employees Gender Pay Gap (%)



Partner Gender Pay Gap (%)



Employees Gender Bonus Gap (%)

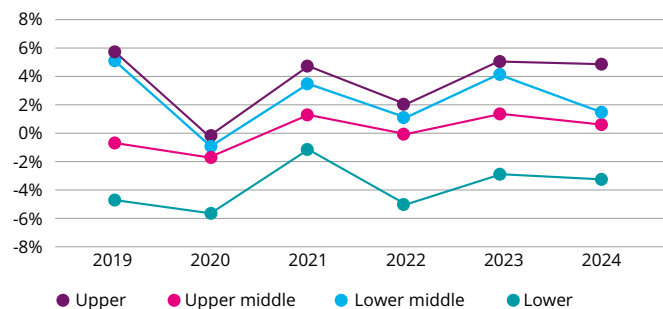


Employees Pay Gap (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mean %	20.3%	16.0%	17.9%	16.6%	17.4%	12.8%
Median %	32.1%	19.5%	26.1%	24.1%	32.3%	22.6%

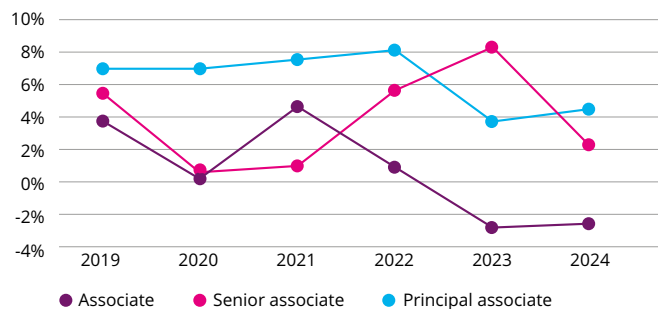
Partner Pay Gap (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mean %	5.2%	7.2%	8.9%	8.8%	14.8%	16.5%
Median %	3.0%	5.9%	5.9%	5.9%	17.6%	28.1%

Employees Bonus Gap (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mean %	39.9%	31.7%	25.8%	21.5%	16.7%	24.6%
Median %	4.6%	8.0%	5.9%	10.6%	3.2%	4.5%

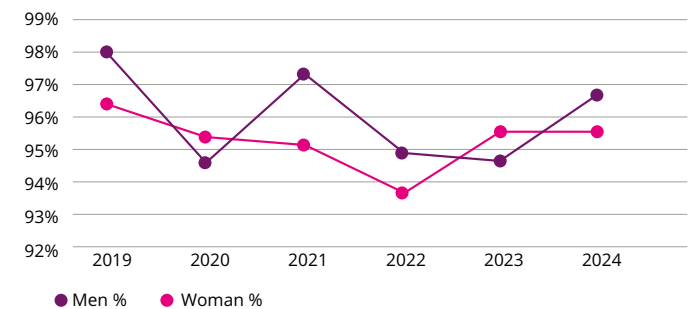
Gender Pay Gap by quartile (%)



Gender Pay Gap by associate level (%)



Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus (%)



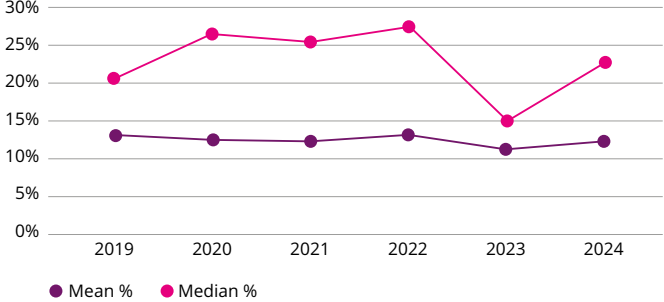
Pay gap by quartile (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Upper	5.6%	-0.3%	4.6%	2.0%	5.0%	4.8%
Upper middle	-0.7%	-1.8%	1.4%	-0.2%	1.5%	0.4%
Lower middle	5.1%	-1.0%	3.8%	1.2%	4.1%	1.7%
Lower	-4.7%	-5.6%	-1.2%	-5.0%	-2.7%	-3.6%

Pay gap by associate solicitor level (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Associate	3.7%	0.2%	4.3%	0.7%	-2.8%	-2.4%
Senior associate	5.4%	0.7%	1.1%	5.7%	8.2%	2.3%
Principal associate	6.9%	6.9%	7.7%	8.2%	3.8%	4.4%

Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Men	98.0%	94.7%	97.3%	94.9%	94.7%	96.7%
Women	96.4%	95.4%	95.1%	93.7%	95.6%	95.6%

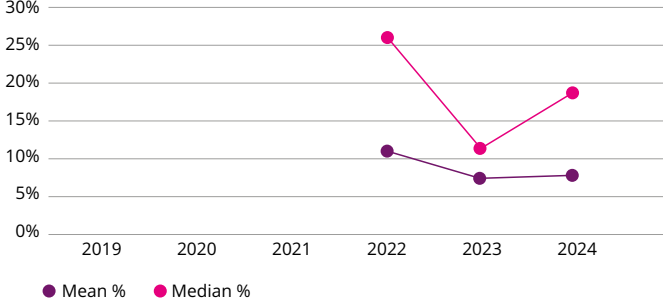


Ethnicity Pay Gap (%)



Ethnicity Pay Gap (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mean	13.4%	12.5%	12.2%	13.7%	11.1%	12.1%
Median	21.2%	26.6%	25.4%	27.3%	15.0%	24.2%

Disability Pay Gap (%)



Disability Pay Gap (%)						
	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Mean %	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.9%	7.9%	7.0%
Median %	N/A	N/A	N/A	26.2%	11.9%	19.6%



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 1,450 plus people and over 830 lawyers share one vision – achieving more together.

Meet the team

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The small print

The pay gap statistics provided in this report are based on Mills & Reeve's snapshot data from 5 April 2024.

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.