

# Gender Pay Gap Report

## April 2024

### Executive Summary

MHA is a firm of chartered accountants, tax and business advisers and is required by law to publish an annual gender pay gap report. We strongly believe in equity, and we are confident that the gender pay gap reported does not stem from women and men being paid differently for different work, but rather from other factors. Our mean gender pay gap has decreased from 2023 and our statistics are lower than our sector average, however, the results will not make us complacent, and the firm will continue to take proactive steps to bringing the gap closer to zero.

#### This is its report for the snapshot date of 5 April 2024

- The mean gender pay gap for the firm is 8.4%.
- The median gender pay gap for the firm is 6.4%.
- The mean gender bonus gap for the firm is 32.8%.
- The median gender bonus gap for the firm is 4%.
- The proportion of male employees in the firm receiving a bonus is 76% and the proportion of female employees receiving a bonus is 79.3%.

### Pay quartiles by gender

Band	Males	Females
Lower quartile	53.6%	46.4%
Middle-lower quartile	47.6%	52.4%
Middle-upper quartile	49.6%	50.4%
Upper quartile	60.1%	39.9%

The figures set out above have been calculated using the standard methodologies used in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

### What are the underlying reasons for the firm's gender pay gap?

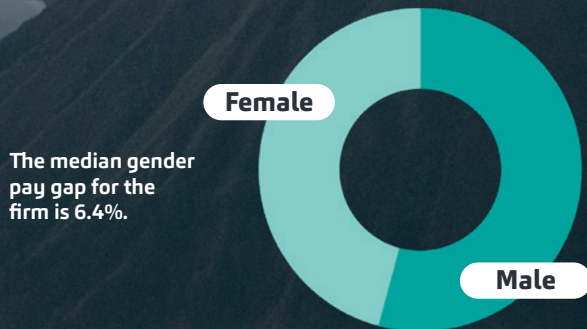
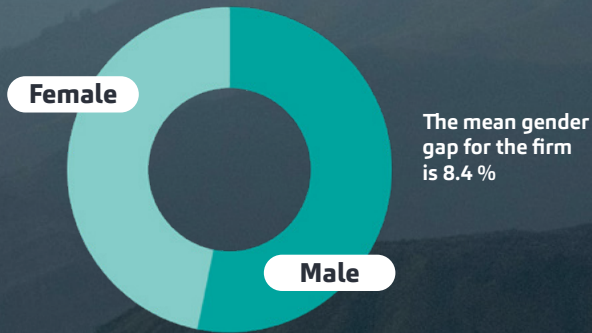
Under the law, men and women must receive equal pay for:

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

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

- carries out pay and benefits audits at regular intervals;
- ensures that regular equal pay training is included for all managers and other staff members who are involved in salary reviews;
- provides equality and diversity training;
- evaluates job roles and pay grades as necessary to ensure a fair structure; and
- advertises roles internally and externally to attract the best candidates.

MHA is therefore confident that its gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. Rather its gender pay gap is the result of the roles in which men and women work within the organisation and the salaries that these roles attract.



Research by the Young Women's Trust has highlighted that women get "funnelled" into lower paid jobs and sectors right from the beginning and then get stuck there; where women go whilst they are in the 18-22 age range therefore has huge implications for their future.

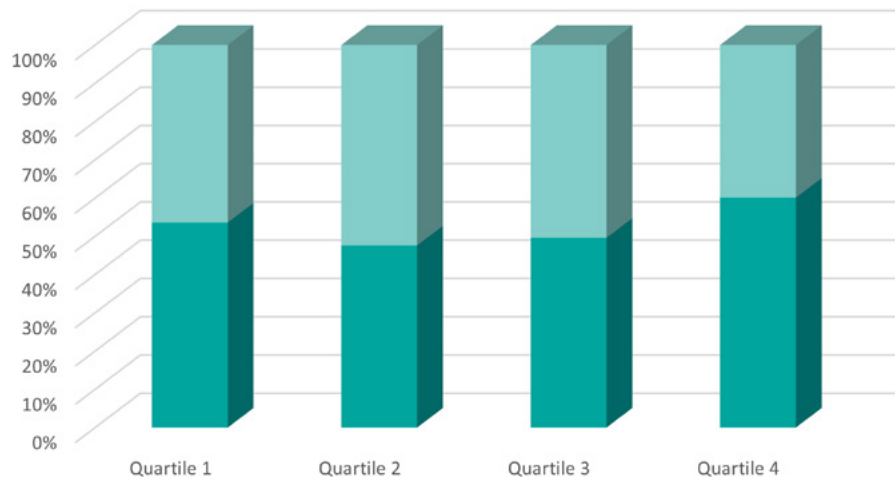
In addition, as households move towards having greater caring responsibilities, often from the mid-30s upwards, women are still more likely to leave their job than men because of a long commute.

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), fewer women than men are in occupations such as managers, directors and senior officials in their 40s and 50s which is the age at which pay for these occupations typically increases. This pattern from the UK economy as a whole is reflected to a degree in the make-up of MHA's workforce. There has been a decrease in the percentage of women in the lower paid roles and an increase in the percentages of women in more highly paid roles; however, the majority of the highest-paid roles are held by men although the percentage has decreased.

### Pay quartiles by gender

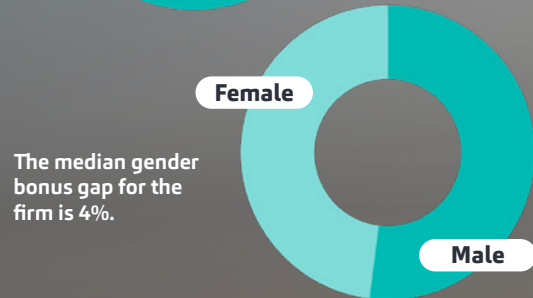
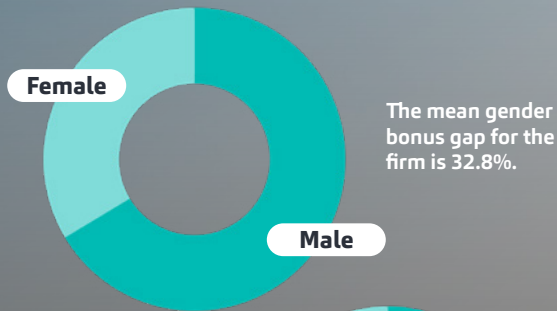
Band	Males	Females
Lower quartile	53.6%	46.4%
Middle-lower quartile	47.6%	52.4%
Middle-upper quartile	49.6%	50.4%
Upper quartile	60.1%	39.9%

### Quartiles



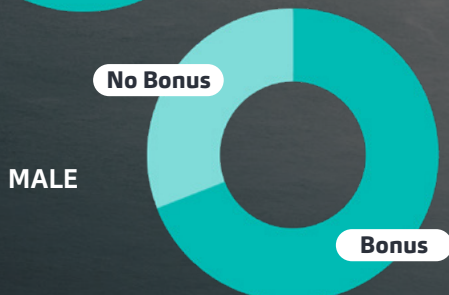
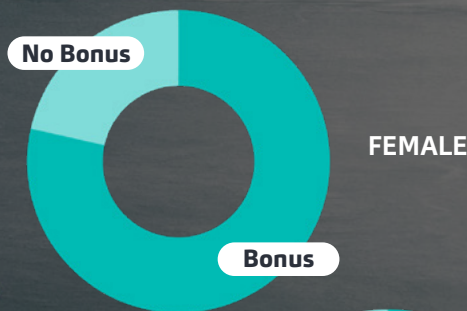
This can be seen above in the table depicting pay quartiles by gender. This shows the firm's workforce divided into four equal-sized groups based on hourly pay rates, with the lower quartile including the lowest-paid 25% of employees and upper quartile covering the highest-paid 25%. In order for there to be no gender pay gap, there would need to be an equal ratio of men to women in each quartile. Within the firm, the ratios are fairly equal in the first three quartiles;

there are slightly more men than women in the first quartile, and slightly more women than men in the second and third quartiles. The percentage of women in the third quartile has increased since 2023; there are now more women than men in the second highest-paid 25%. The percentage of men is, however, higher in the upper quartile at 60.1%, although this is a decrease on last year.



The median gender bonus gap, which is considered to be a more accurate measurement, is 4%, indicating that males received slightly more in terms of the amount bonus received.

The proportion of male employees in the firm receiving a bonus is 76% and the proportion of female employees receiving a bonus is 79.3%.



The proportion of men in the firm who received a bonus in the 12 months up to 5 April 2024 was 76%, while for women this was 79.3%. This demonstrates that a fairly equal percentage of women and men are now in roles which attract a bonus, with a slightly higher percentage of women receiving a bonus than men.

## How does MHA's gender pay gap compare with that of other organisations?

The vast majority of organisations have a gender pay gap, and we are pleased to be able to say that MHA's gap compares favourably with that of other organisations within our industry.

The mean gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) figures published on 29 October 2024) is 13.8%, while in the legal and accounting activities sector it is 30.5%. At 8.4%, MHA's mean gender pay gap is, therefore, lower than that for the whole economy, and significantly lower than that for our sector.

The median gender pay gap for the whole economy (according to the ONS ASHE figures published on 29 October 2024) is 13.1%, while in the legal and accounting activities sector it is 29.8%. At 6.4%, MHA's median gender pay gap is, therefore, lower than that for the whole economy and significantly lower than that for our sector.

## What is MHA doing to address its gender pay gap?

While the firm's gender pay gap compares favourably with that of organisations both across the whole UK economy and within the legal and accounting activities sector, this is not a subject about which the firm is complacent, and it is committed to doing everything that it can to reduce the gap. However, the firm also recognises that its scope to act is limited in some areas - it has, for example, no direct control over the subjects that individuals choose to study or the career choices that they make.

### Over the last 12 months:

- The mean gender pay gap has decreased.
- Equal percentages of women and men are now in roles which attract a bonus.
- The percentage of women in the lower-middle quartile is roughly the same as 12 months ago, indicating that women have remained in these higher paid roles within the firm; meanwhile the percentage of women in the upper-middle quartile has increased, indicating that women have moved or been recruited into these higher paid roles. The percentage of men in the upper quartile has decreased slightly, indicating that whilst men are still more likely to be in the most highly-paid roles, the gap is closing. This is the second consecutive year in which the gap has closed.
- There are more men than women in the lowest paid roles although it is still fairly equal.

**To date, the steps that the firm has taken to promote gender diversity in all areas of its workforce include the following:**

**Creating an evidence base:** To identify any barriers to gender equity and inform priorities for action, since 2016 the firm has used gender monitoring to understand:

- the proportions of men and women applying for jobs and being recruited;
- the proportions of men and women applying for and obtaining promotions;
- the proportions of men and women leaving the organisation and their reasons for leaving;
- the numbers of men and women in each role and pay band;
- take-up of flexible working arrangements by gender and level within the organisation;
- the proportion of men and women who return to their original job after a period of maternity or other parental leave; and
- the proportion of men and women still in post a year on from a return to work after a period of maternity or other parental leave.

**Implementing the agile working policy within the firm** – The firm's agile working policy makes it clear that employees in all areas and levels of the organisation will be considered for agile working (including core hours and working from home) regardless of their role and level of seniority, and that agile working need not be limited to part-time working. The utilisation of agile working has increased which will make senior positions more attractive and more accessible to women.

**We have a number of part-time Partners** thus demonstrating that senior roles can be fulfilled whilst maintaining childcare.

**Continuing our mentoring programme** whereby senior female role models (including at Partner level) support junior members of staff.

**Checking our recruitment adverts** periodically for gender bias so as to ensure that women are encouraged to apply, even if they do not tick all of the boxes.

**Working with BITC** surveying all our employees and setting up focus networks to examine our policies from a diversity perspective. Training has been provided across three levels

**Benchmarking our roles annually** with the external market and realigning when required.

**Continuing to focus on diversity** training across our hiring managers in order to reduce interviewer bias. We also have a Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging and Social Impact strategy which will seek to promote equality within the firm, including gender equity.

**Our DIBS (Diversity, Inclusion, Belonging & Social Impact) strategy** works to promote the message that inclusion is for all, and diversity is essential. We have made improvements in increasing the diversity of our workforce and supporting inclusion by adjusting our working practises and providing comprehensive training to all our staff and will continue to develop an inclusive culture, both internally and amongst our clients.

**A full-time DIBS officer** was appointed last year to oversee and implement our strategy, and continues to monitor and review it.

**We identified behaviour, culture and education** as the three pillars of focus for our DIBS strategy and action plan, so have a reference point of commitment and measurements for success. We also feel that in the absence of one, the other two become less effective, meaning a holistic approach of these pillars to driving DIBS needs to be taken to achieve real long-term success.

**Our Gender Equality Network** was formed as a subcommittee of the DIBS group and actively recruited members. The group continues to be a confidential space for women to talk openly about their experiences and challenges, and also to identify any areas for improvement within the firm.

The group analysed data across the firm regarding gender disparity and at what levels it occurs. This review identified two main areas of focus:

- new trainee intake – we have now built stronger links and relationships with girls' schools, in most regions. We also link into the women in Stem programme and deliver activities around this, to attract girls into the business, whilst myth-busting on what a career in accountancy can mean for them and their career. We have also partnered with Penwortham Girls School in Preston, Lancashire and our Early Careers Assistant Manager will soon become an enterprise adviser for that school. This forms part of the national work carried out by the CEC careers hubs. We plan to roll this out nationally, once we have a model in Lancashire that can be replicated.
- top level – in June 2024, the Gender Equity Network piloted a three-month Sponsorship Programme, pairing nine women with a senior colleague. Sponsors offered guidance around personal development planning, made introductions, provided exposure to new projects, and extend invitations to meetings. The feedback received was positive, with several pairs expressing a commitment to maintaining an informal relationship beyond the programme. It is important to note that not all pairs met with the same frequency. Two pairs indicated plans to resume their engagement informally after losing momentum due to work commitments and annual leave.

**Continuing our “Leading With Ambition Work Experience Programme”** where we have work experience juniors from local schools come to the firm for a structured week to gain an understanding of what we do within our Business Services, Tax and Audit departments. They complete a group project along with learning pathways and sessions.

**Continuing to be a member firm of Access Accountancy** and committing to improve social mobility via access to and progression within the firm.

**Continuing to promote Shared Parental Leave** so that the childcare 'break' is more equally shared amongst men and women.

**Offering Enhanced Maternity Pay** to encourage women who are thinking of having children to join the firm and to stay.

**Our Regional HR Development Committees** continue to work to identify female talent whilst enabling and encouraging women to apply for senior positions where they are currently under-represented.

**Continuing our initiatives for the retention of talent** within the firm including Learning and Development for managers, Modern Manager, and LEAD to encourage women to remain within the Firm and apply for senior positions

**We will continue to demonstrate** that senior roles can be successfully fulfilled on a part-time / flexible basis via our “day in the life” stories.

**We will continue to offer apprenticeship and training routes** for women who wish to re-join the profession after a break.



I, Rakesh Shaunak, Managing Partner of MHA, confirm that the information in this statement is accurate.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in white ink that reads "R. Shaunak". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

Date 25 February 2025

## **mha.co.uk**

MHA is the trading name of MacIntyre Hudson LLP, a limited liability partnership, registered in England with registered number OC312313. A list of partners' names is open for inspection at its registered office, 201 Silbury Boulevard, Milton Keynes MK9 1LZ.

MHA is an independent member of Baker Tilly International Limited, the members of which are separate and independent legal entities. Arrandco Investments Limited is the registered owner of the UK trade mark for the name Baker Tilly. The associated logo is used under licence from Baker Tilly International Limited. Further information can be found via our website <https://www.mha.co.uk/terms-and-conditions>

**Now, for tomorrow**