

The College of West Anglia: Gender Pay Gap Report for 2025

Introduction

The gender pay gap is defined as the difference between the average (expressed as either the mean or median) earnings of men and women across a workforce. The causes of gender pay gaps are complex and, often, relate to structural aspects of the workforce such as the number of women disproportionately concentrated in lower-paid jobs.

It is important to note that gender pay gaps are not the same as equal pay disparities. The latter are pay differences between men and women who are employed in the same roles or who are carrying out work that is, objectively, considered to be of equal value. The Government Equalities Office has stated that *"The gender pay gap should not be confused with unequal pay. Unequal pay is the unlawful practice of paying men and women differently for performing the same or similar work or work of equal value; whereas the gender pay gap is a measure of the difference between the average hourly earnings of men and women."* (Closing the gender pay gap: actions for employers, December 2017).

All employers with 250 or more employees are required to publish annual gender pay gap information. There are specific reporting requirements:

- Mean and median gender pay gaps using hourly pay
- The proportion of men and women according to quartile pay bands
- Mean and median gender bonus gaps
- Proportion of men and women who received bonuses

The College of West Anglia (CWA) does not operate any bonus schemes and so has not made any disclosures against the last two of these.

The data presented here are based on a snapshot date of 31 March for each of the reporting years. The calculations underpinning the data have been carried out using the standard methodologies set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Gender Pay Gap

	31/04/24	31/04/25
Mean Gender Pay Gap <i>(The mean is calculated by adding up the hourly pay of all members of staff of a particular gender and dividing this figure by the total number of individuals in the category)</i>	15.97%	15.83%
Median Gender Pay Gap <i>(The median is the central value in the range where the hourly pay for every individual in a gender category is lined up from smallest to largest)</i>	21.71%	22.00%

Pay quartiles

Quartile	Snapshot date 31 March 2024		Snapshot date 31 March 2025	
	Males	Females	Males	Females
1 - Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them in the upper quartile	45%	55%	44%	56%
2 - Upper middle	33%	67%	32%	68%
3 - Lower middle	29%	71%	25%	75%
4 - Includes all employees whose standard hourly rate places them in the lower quartile	13%	87%	15%	85%

Analysis of Pay Gap Data

After several years where CWA's pay gap has shown an increasing trend, both the mean and median pay gaps have remained broadly static between 2024 to 2025. This is welcome and suggests that some of the measures we have put in place to address the gender pay gap are having a positive impact. However, the Office for National Statistics has reported a national median pay gap for 2024 of 13%. This is significantly better than the College's position suggesting that there is more to do.

Women make up the majority of CWA's employees. At 31 March 2025, CWA had 779 relevant staff members, 228 of whom were male (29%) and 551 female (71%). The College's pay quartile data show that women make up the majority in each of the four bands and that the gender disparity increases from the first through to the fourth pay quartile.

What are the underlying causes of the College's gender pay gap?

The College is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees. It has a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, regardless of their gender. The following arrangements are in place:

- A formal job evaluation scheme for support roles to ensure that jobs of equal value are paid the same.
- Equality training for all managers and other staff members who are involved in setting pay levels.
- Regrading and pay appeal processes which enable staff to bring to management's attention any apparent unfairness in pay levels.

Management is 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. For example:

- There is a much higher percentage of female staff in the lower pay quartiles. These are more likely to be part-time and/or term time only roles, such as Learner Support Officers, and therefore lower salaries.
- Anecdotally, in the College, females are more likely than males to take time out from work to start a family or to fulfil caring responsibilities with a consequent impact on career progression and salary.
- CWA's workforce is predominantly aged over 40. Nationally, the ONS reports that the gender pay gap grows with increasing age.

What is the College doing to address its gender pay gap?

The steps that the College has taken to promote gender diversity in all areas of its workforce include the following:

- Monitoring and reporting on gender as it relates to application, shortlisting and interview outcomes for all applicants and using this information to inform our approach to staff recruitment.
- Considering gender statistics in a range of employment situations including performance management and absence and using this information to inform our approach to staff retention.
- Operating a flexible working policy to ensure that staff with caring responsibilities are supported and to encourage a good work life balance.
- Ensuring that job pay bands are clearly advertised through both job opportunities and through the on-line library of job descriptions.
- Adopting the menopause awareness pledge and actively supports female staff to remain in the workplace throughout their menopause.
- Using a job evaluation scheme for support grades to ensure equity in pay arrangements.

There are signs that our approach is beginning to have an impact. For example, the proportion of females in the College leadership Team has increased from 52% to 64% over the last two years.

Commitments for the Future

The College is committed to improving the gender pay gap and will prioritise the following areas for action over the next 12 months:

- To continually review the College recruitment and career progression opportunities.
- Where appropriate, encourage both males and females to consider family friendly and flexible working policies.
- Consult with the College joint trade unions to identify any barriers to career progression.
- Continue to encourage staff at all levels to participate in formal job training opportunities.
- Continue to ensure staff can discuss their development opportunities and to embed succession planning within the formal Performance Development Review framework.
- Continue to review new roles in line with the College's agreed job evaluation framework.

Signed: Paul Harrison
Date: 15 October 2025