Gender Pay Gap Report 2025

Introduction

At the University of Stirling, we are committed to continuing creating opportunities for all of our staff to 'Be The Difference' within a culture of inclusivity, openness and fairness.

Inclusion is at the heart of our People Strategy, and we are proud to have taken a deliberate and sustained approach to tackling inequalities in pay and conditions. As a result, we have consistently narrowed our gender pay gap since 2016 - a clear indicator of our progress towards a fairer, more equitable workplace.

We recognise there is more to do and are determined to build on the progress we've made. We will continue to deepen our understanding of the factors driving our gender pay gap and take purposeful action to address them. Our goal is to continue to nurture an environment that recognises and supports the diverse needs and expectations of every individual, and where all our people feel respected, supported, and empowered to succeed.

Karen Lawson
Executive Director of Human Resources and Organisation Development

University of Stirling – Fast Facts

>1,700
colleagues

60%
of our colleagues are female

50%
of our senior management team are female

44%
of our professors are female, compared to 32% across sector (HESA 2025)

54%
of our academics are female, compared to 48% across sector (HESA 2025)

Our pay gap is narrowing

We've seen a narrowing in both our median and mean gender pay gaps since our 2020 report.

The median pay gap has narrowed in relative terms, by over 40% from 18.61% to 10.89% from 2020 to 2024. The average pay of female staff at the University has increased between 2022 and 2024 by over 10%.

Since our 2020 report, an extensive amount of work has been undertaken to support the development, promotion and appointment of female staff to senior roles at the University, including continued investment in the Aurora programme and other dedicated development opportunities specifically for females. Targeted reviews have been carried out to understand groups of staff where pay gaps exist, and where they have not been able to be justified, remedial action has been taken.

In ten years, the number of female staff applying for and successfully reaching promotion has tripled.
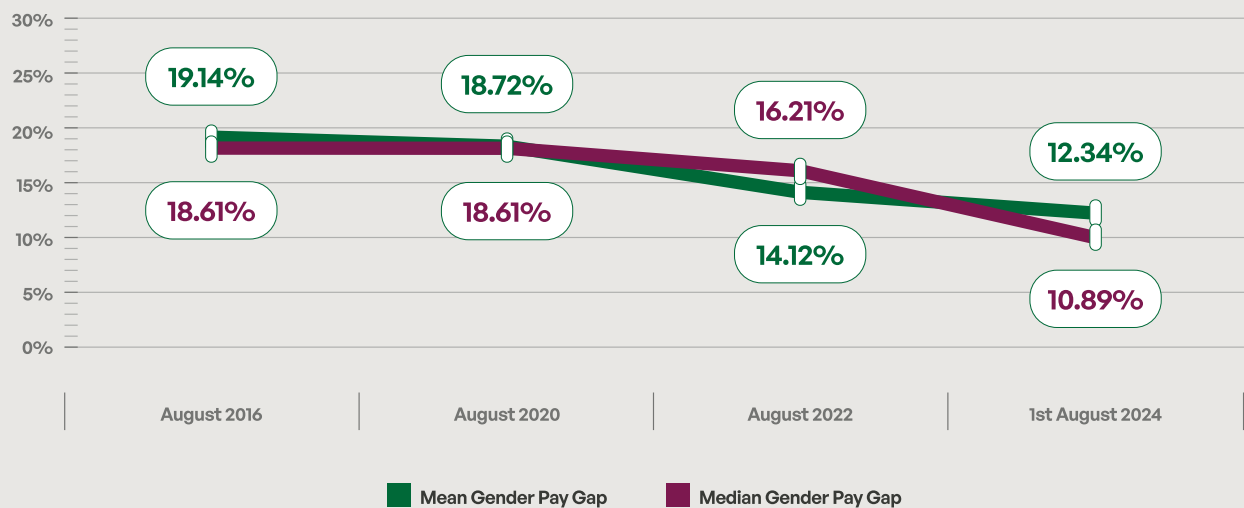
MEDIAN

18.61% ➡ **16.21%** ➡ **10.89%**
2020 · · · · · · · · 2022 · · · · · · · · 2024

MEAN

18.72% ➡ **14.12%** ➡ **12.34%**
2020 · · · · · · · · 2022 · · · · · · · · 2024

Making A Difference: Stirling's journey to narrow the gap: 2016- 2024

Gender Pay Gap

- **Mean Gender Pay Gap**
- **Median Gender Pay Gap**

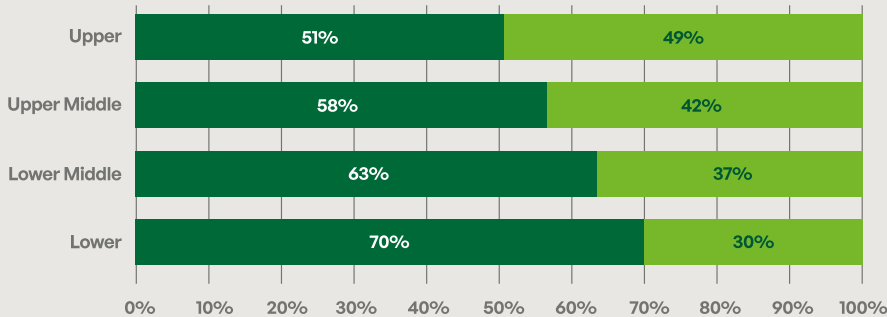|	August 2016	August 2020	August 2022	1st August 2024
Mean Gender Pay Gap	19.14%	18.72%	14.12%	12.34%
Median Gender Pay Gap	18.61%	18.61%	16.21%	10.89%

Equal pay

Gender pay is not the same as equal pay, which is a legal requirement to ensure that employees performing like work or work of equal value are treated the same. At the University of Stirling, a pay gap exists because of an imbalance in the proportion of male staff and female staff across all levels of the organisation.
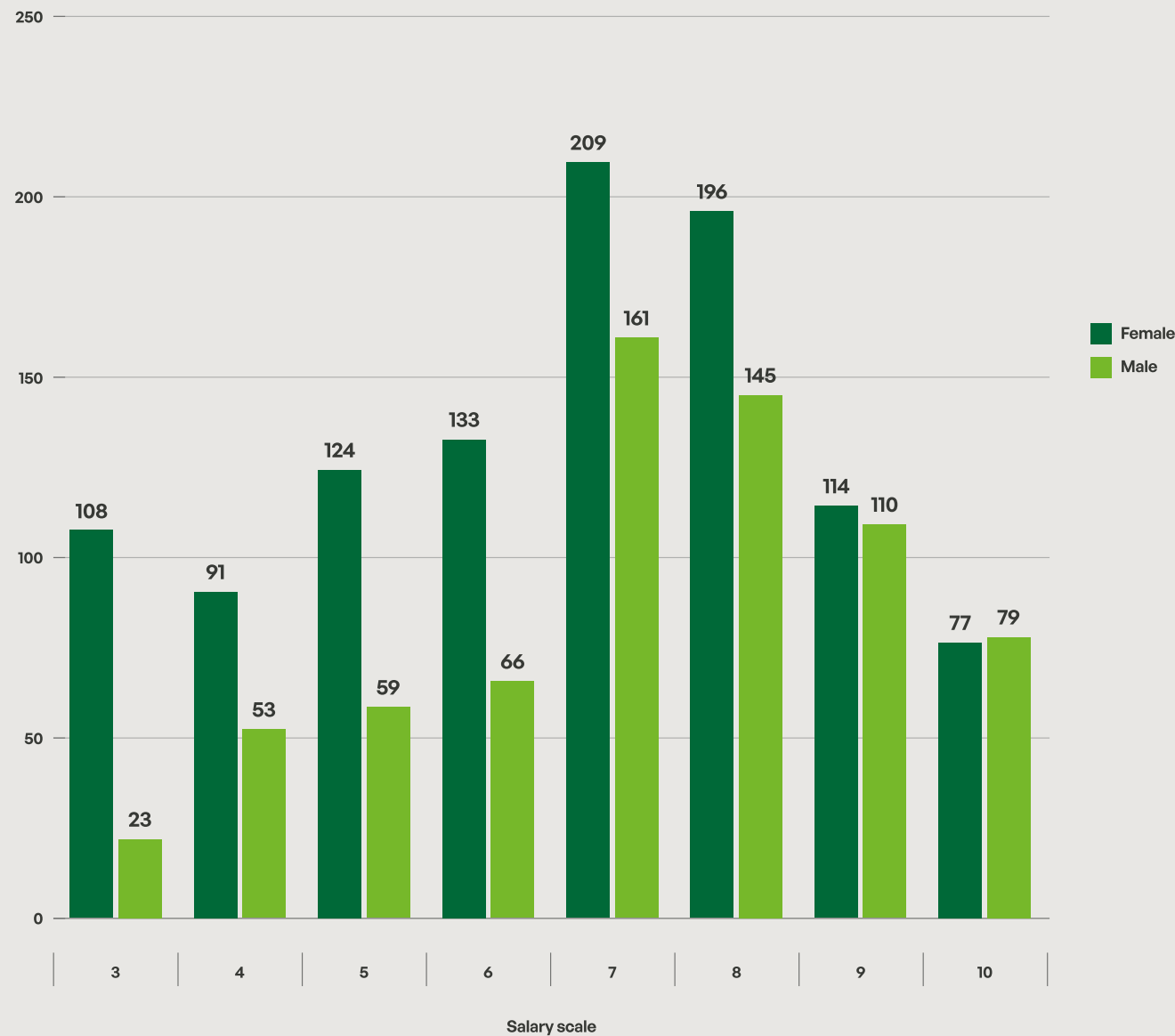
Population distribution: Vertical segregation

We have arranged our colleagues' remuneration in order from the highest to the lowest paid and then split these into four groups of equal number of people. The upper quartile shows that there is a slightly higher proportion, 51%, of female staff in senior roles. We have more than twice as many female staff as male staff in the lowest earning quartile. The higher number of female staff in the lower quartiles, where some degree of occupational segregation exists, reduces the average female hourly rate overall which contributes to our gender pay gap.
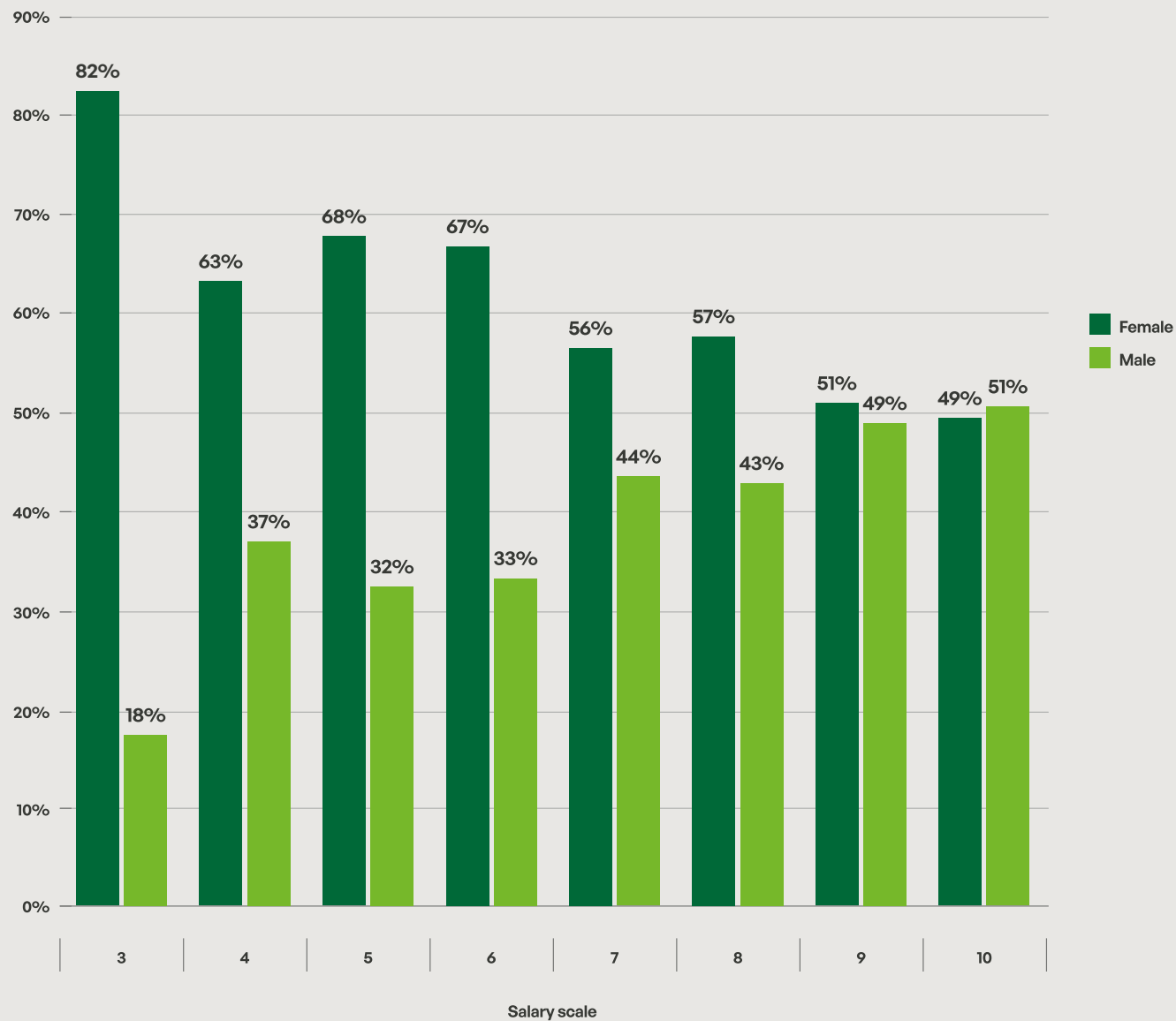
Whilst we are proud of the strong representation of female staff across the University, we acknowledge that a higher proportion of our female colleagues are in roles within the lower pay quartiles. This pattern reflects historic occupational trends across the sector and contributes to our overall gender pay gap. We are actively addressing segregation this through inclusive career and skills development opportunities, including identifying and building progression pathways to ensure all colleagues can thrive at every level.

Quartile	Female	Male
Upper	51%	49%
Upper Middle	58%	42%
Lower Middle	63%	37%
Lower	70%	30%

Distribution of male and female staff (salaried staff) by grade at 1st August 2024

Salary scale	Female	Male
3	108	23
4	91	53
5	124	59
6	133	66
7	209	161
8	196	145
9	114	110
10	77	79

Salary scale

Proportion of male and female staff (salaried staff) in each grade as of 1st August 2024

Legend: Female (dark green), Male (light green)

Salary scale	Female	Male
3	82%	18%
4	63%	37%
5	68%	32%
6	67%	33%
7	56%	44%
8	57%	43%
9	51%	49%
10	49%	51%

Salary scale

Making A Difference:
How we have narrowed our pay gap

Academic promotion

We have undertaken an extensive amount of work to support the development, promotion and appointment of females to roles at the University.

As a result, there are three times as many female academic staff applying for and successfully reaching promotion in the 10 years between 2014 and 2024. Since 2020, the proportion of academic promotion applicants who were female also grew from 42% in 2020 to 54% in 2024.

Academic promotion representation

Proportion of applications by academic year and sex

| Academic year	Female	Male	Other
2019/2020	42.22%	57.78%	
2021/2022	60.00%	40.00%	
2022/2023	50.85%	47.46%	
2023/2024	54.00%	46.00%	

Legend: Female, Male, Other

Growth in average pay

The average pay of female staff increased by 10.65% between 2022 and 2024. The average pay of male staff increased by 8.4%. This has contributed to a reduction in the mean gender pay gap. A shift in the University population distribution has been the main contributor to the rate of increase, primarily the fact there are now more female staff in higher grades.

10.65%

8.4%

Balance in our professoriate pay

The pay gap between male staff and female staff in our Professoriate group has, through targeted action via promotions and salary review, narrowed to -0.42% in favour of female staff, from 3.24% in 2022. This signals our continued progression towards understanding and addressing the gender pay gap.

3.24%

-0.42%

■ Female   ■ Male

2022   2024
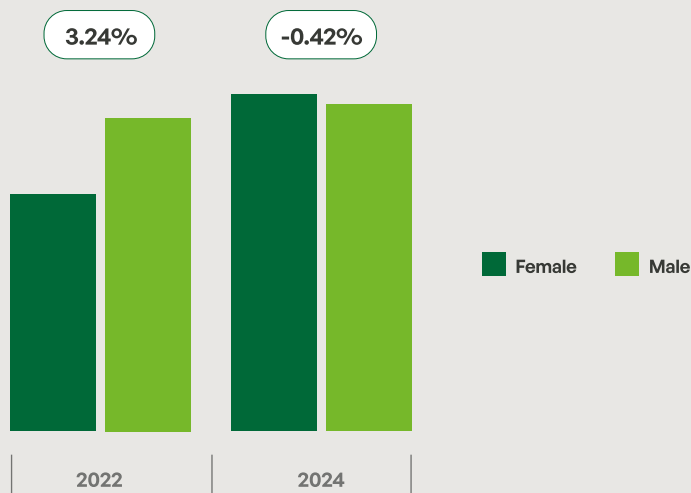
Professoriate gender pay gap

Our plans to continue
to narrow the gap

Understanding our data

Data is a powerful tool in enabling us to continue to build an inclusive and supportive workplace for our people.

We will continue to increase focus on improving disclosure rates of equality characteristics of staff at the University. This will inform the development of targeted actions to strengthen our inclusive culture, ensuring every staff member at Stirling feels valued, respected, and heard.

Addressing vertical and occupational segregation

We're committed to continuing to build on the work done to support the development, promotion and appointment of females to senior roles at the University.

Work will be undertaken aimed at attracting staff from under-represented groups into specific role types which have uneven distribution.

Developing an inclusive culture

Attracting and retaining diverse talent is essential to the University's long-term success. We are committed to embedding inclusive and progressive working practices that expand opportunities for all staff.

Our Agile Working Framework has been instrumental in supporting the attraction and retention of female staff to senior roles, demonstrating the value of flexible, people-centred approaches in fostering a more inclusiveleadership pipeline.

Using our data to do what's right

We will use our people data to measure progress, identify trends across protected characteristics, and take informed action where needed.

By working closely with senior leadership teams, we will ensure data-driven insights shape decisions and lead to meaningful improvements in the staff experience - supporting a more inclusive, equitable, and engaging working environment for everyone at Stirling.

Making A Difference:
Our plans to continue
to narrow the gap

Menopause support

With female staff making up 60% of our workforce - and 27% of those within the menopausal age range - providing tailored support is a priority.

The Peppy app offers practical, specialist guidance alongside opportunities for emotional and peer support, helping staff to thrive in the workplace. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, and we remain committed to offering this service to ensure our people have timely access to the support they need, when they need it most.

Supporting work/life balance

Our Agile Working Framework continues to play a key role in fostering a supportive and flexible working environment. In a dedicated pulse survey, over 93% of female staff respondents in senior roles reported that their work/life balance had improved as a direct result of the Framework - demonstrating its positive impact on retention, wellbeing, and career sustainability.

Challenging bias

We all have a role to play in shaping a welcoming, diverse, and inclusive university community. To support this, all staff involved in recruitment or promotion are required to complete unconscious bias learning. This learning reinforces individual responsibility in recognising and mitigating bias and equips colleagues with practical tools to ensure fair and inclusive decision-making.

Creating a culture of belonging

A welcoming environment is key to an inclusive culture. In a dedicated pulse survey, 92% of staff reported feeling welcomed to the University upon joining, and 96% felt welcomed by their immediate team.

We will continue to monitor the new joiner experience and take proactive steps to enhance it - ensuring every colleague feels valued, included, and part of the Stirling community from day one.

Developing leadership potential

We are committed to building a diverse and inclusive leadership pipeline by continuing to offer funded development opportunities.

Our approach will prioritise areas where there is clear potential to strengthen representation and accelerate progress. By targeting investment in this way, we aim to ensure leadership development has a tangible and lasting impact - shaping a more inclusive future for leadership at Stirling.

Empowering representation

We are committed to ensuring that all staff have a voice in shaping an inclusive and supportive workplace. We will actively support the development of peer-led networks - creating meaningful opportunities for colleagues to connect, contribute, and support one another.

By working in partnership with these networks, we will deepen our understanding of diverse experiences, identify barriers, and co-create solutions that drive real change.

Prioritising staff voice

We will continue to develop our 'Be Heard' approach to staff voice. Through regular feedback and open dialogue, we will better understand how our staff experience work and engage in collaborative discussions that drive tangible actions to strengthen our culture and ensure that every voice contributes to shaping a positive and inclusive workplace.

Support when returning from long-term leave

Building on the provision already inplace, we will introduce a 'reinduction' for colleagues who have been out of the organisation (research leave, parental leave, long-term absence) to enable a successful transition back to the University with the outcome of increasing employee engagement and wellbeing and retaining talent.

Appendix

How we calculate the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average hourly earnings of males and females across an organisation, regardless of their roles or industry sectors. This can be affected by a range of factors, including the different number of males and females across all roles in the workforce. The gender pay gap is different from equal pay, which is about males and females receiving equal pay for the same jobs, similar jobs, or work of equal value.
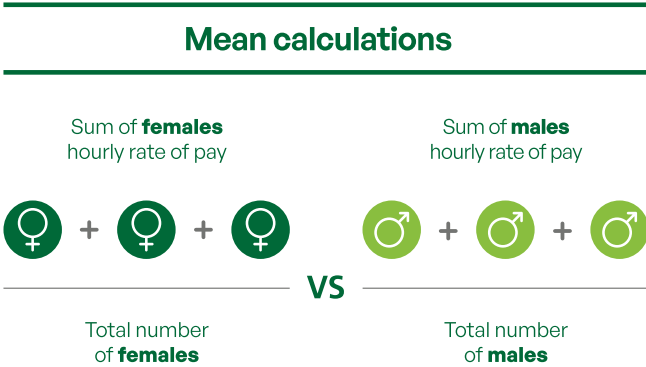
A note on language

Throughout this report, when we talk about 'gender' in the context of pay gap reporting we actually mean 'biological sex' which is binary, male and female. This is because the Regulations focus on the pay gap between males and females. We recognise that not all colleagues identify as male or female, but for the purposes of this report we have used the 'legal sex' data recorded on our HR system in compliance with current legislation.

Distinguishing between median and mean

Median calculations

Lowest paid

Median

Lowest paid
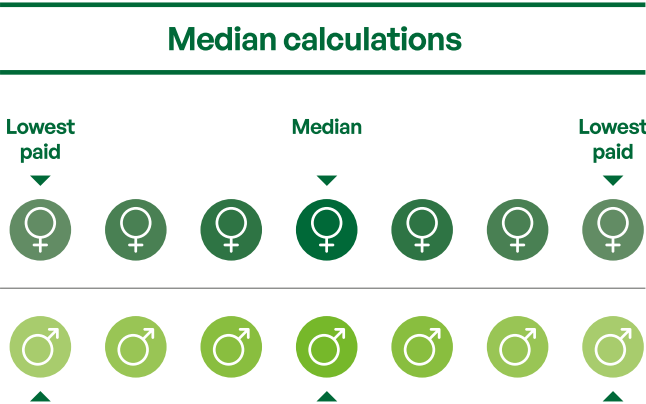
The **median** is the figure that falls in the middle of a range where wages of all relevant employees are lined up from smallest to largest. The median gap is calculated based on the difference between the employee in the middle of the range of male wages and the middle employee in the range of female wages.

Mean calculations

Sum of **females** hourly rate of pay

Sum of **males** hourly rate of pay

VS

Total number of **females**

Total number of **males**

The **mean** is calculated by adding up the wages of all relevant employees and dividing the figure by number of employees.

The mean gender pay gap is calculated based on the difference between mean male pay and mean female pay.

UNIVERSITY *of* STIRLING

BE THE DIFFERENCE