

FSA Gender Pay Gap report 2022

This is the FSA's sixth Gender Pay Gap report, it is based on a snapshot of all FSA staff as at 31 March 2022 and fulfils our reporting requirements.

Introduction

In 2017, the government introduced legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. Government departments are covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 which came into force on 31 March 2017.

These regulations underpin the Public Sector Equality Duty and require the relevant organisations to publish their gender pay gap data annually, including mean and median gender pay gaps; the mean and median gender bonus gaps; the proportion of men and women who received bonuses; and the proportions of male and female employees in each pay quartile.

This is the FSA's sixth Gender Pay Gap report and fulfils our reporting requirements, analyses the figures in more detail and sets out what we are doing to close the gender pay gap in the organisation.

The reporting period is 1 April 2021 to 31 March 2022.

Organisational context

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) is a non-ministerial government department established under the Food Standards Act 1999 and operational since April 2000. The FSA's role is defined in law. The Food Standards Act states that: "The main objective of the Agency in carrying out its functions is to protect public health from risks which may arise in connection with the consumption of food (including risks caused by the way in which it is produced or supplied) and otherwise to protect the interests of consumers in relation to food."

Our offices are in Belfast, Birmingham, Cardiff, London and York. We also have significant numbers of employees working through England, Wales and Northern Ireland based in abattoirs or as field staff and homeworkers.

The FSA supports the fair treatment and reward of all staff. We want to ensure that someone's background or protected characteristics are never a limiting factor in the FSA, but rather an asset that can be drawn upon to improve policy making and service delivery.

Organisational structure

The FSA uses Civil Service grades ranging from Administrative Officer to Senior Civil Servant. Grades vary according to the level of responsibility that staff have and each grade has a set pay range. Salaries are paid according to grade and annual pay awards within the grade are paid irrespective of gender.

All grades with the exception of the Senior Civil Service (SCS) have both a London and National pay range.

As our role has grown significantly as we have taken on new responsibilities since the UK left the EU, we have seen considerable growth in our workforce. As of 31 March 2022, headcount had increased by 154 from the previous year with 44% of the FSA workforce female, up from 40% in 2021.

Grade	Number of men (men as % of workforce at this grade)	Number of women (women as % of workforce at this grade)
AO/EO	342 (77%)	100 (23%)
HEO	147 (43%)	197 (57%)
SEO	176 (45%)	212 (55%)
Grade 7	103 (49%)	106 (51%)
Grade 6	33 (61%)	21 (39%)
SCS	13 (52%)	12 (48%)
Total	814 (56%)	648 (44%)

The Gender Pay Gap

Ordinary pay

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between all men and women in a workforce. If a workforce has a particularly high gender pay gap, this can indicate there may be a number of issues to deal with, and the individual calculations may help to identify what those issues are.

The gender pay gap is different to equal pay. Equal pay deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value. It is unlawful to pay people unequally because they are a man or a woman.

The mean gender pay gap is the difference in the average hourly pay for women compared to men. A negative number indicates that women on average earn more than men. The median represents the middle point of a population. If you separately lined up all female employees and all male employees, the median pay gap is the difference between the hourly pay rate for the middle woman compared to that of the middle man.

This year has seen a decrease in both the mean and median figures compared to 2021. Across the FSA, mean average pay for women is 7.8% more than that of men. Median pay for women across the organisation is 21.2% more than that of men. In monetary terms, the mean hourly difference in ordinary pay is £1.49 compared to £1.78 in 2021 and the median hourly difference is £3.38 compared to £3.68 in 2021. The following table shows the mean and median gender pay gap since 2017.

Mean and median pay gap

Year	Mean	Median
2017	-9.4%	-16.7%
2018	-9.3%	-17.5%
2019	-8%	-14.7%
2020	-9.6%	-21.6%
2021	-9.5%	-23.1%

Year	Mean	Median
2022	-7.8%	-21.2%

The negative gender pay gap across is mainly due to the structure of our workforce. The FSA workforce continues to have a significantly higher proportion of males (56%) than females (44%) although this has narrowed by 12 percentage points since 2017.

Almost half (45%) of male employees work in the two most junior grades (mainly as Meat Hygiene Inspectors at EO grade). Male staff account for 77% of employees in the two most junior grades. The proportion of women in more senior grades (HEO-SCS) is higher with 85% of female employees in HEO-SCS grades.

In addition to this, most Meat Hygiene Inspectors are on national pay bands, which are lower than the London range to reflect the difference in living costs. The gender balance for roles in London is 53% to 47% in favour of women whereas outside of London it is 59% to 41% in favour of men.

Our dataset is substantially changed from that on which previous analysis was based. Since 31 March 2021 303 new employees were included and 133 included in last year's report have left in the time since. An increase in female employees, in particular at HEO where there are 50 more women than men – in 2021 there were equal numbers, and SEO with 36 more (up from 13), has helped to close the gender pay gap as most new starters join at the minimum salary of the grade.

The number of female Senior Civil Servants increased from 41% to 48%. Although average salaries for male and females increased, the difference in average salaries dropped from almost £5,000 to £1,500 in favour of women.

The Civil Service Pay Pause in 2021/22 meant no pay award, aside from the £250 rise to staff at the lowest grade, no movement up the pay ranges for the majority of staff and limited the opportunities to close the gap.

Bonus pay

The FSA offers an in-year reward and recognition scheme for delegated grades (AO to Grade 6), funded from a non-consolidated performance pot of 0.5% of delegated payroll.

Individuals or teams may be rewarded for exceptional achievements relating to specific tasks or activities, and/or for acting as an outstanding role model in the demonstration of the FSA's Values. Awards are limited to specific values (cash awards of £100, £250, £500 or £1,000). There is no limit to the number of awards an individual may receive but the total amount is capped at £2,500.

The People and Organisational Change team analyse the scheme by grade and protected characteristics, not just gender, and report quarterly to senior managers allowing them to see the full equality analysis of performance awards in their own areas and across the FSA.

SCS receive end of year performance awards and in-year bonuses. The rules and funding for the SCS schemes follow Cabinet Office guidance and are different to those for the delegated scheme. Funded from a performance pot of 3.3% in line with the Cabinet Office rules, this year, SCS performance bonuses ranged between £3,000 and £7,000 depending on whether they were for in-year or end of year performance recognition.

End of year performance awards and in-year awards at FSA are not pro-rated for part-time staff (so these staff receive the full value of the bonus). Therefore, the gender bonus pay gap is not affected by numbers of part-time staff in either gender.

The difference in schemes means in one, an employee could receive a bonus of £50 (FSA reward and recognition scheme) and in another an employee could receive a bonus of £7,000 (SCS end of year). As a result, the bonus pay gap can change quite significantly from one year to the next. The following table shows the mean and median bonus gaps since 2017.

Mean and median bonus pay gap

Year	Mean	Median
2017	4.7%	5.5%
2018	0.9%	0%
2019	11.8%	0%
2020	-16.3%	0%
2021	-25.3%	-40%
2022	-7.8%	0%

Last year the mean and median bonus gaps at SCS were -18.49% and -23.08% (a difference in cash terms of £786 for the mean and £750 for the median). However this year the gaps were in favour of men at 8% and 20% (£400 mean and £1,000 median). The average bonus received by SCS (£4,636) is approximately 15 times that of the mean bonus received at delegated grades (£318). Therefore, bonus payments at SCS are likely to increase the bonus difference more substantially than increases in the delegated grades.

This year, Field operations staff, the majority of whom are men, were recognised for their collective hard work, commitment and resilience in helping to maintain the food supply chain and ensure food is safe during a period of unprecedented challenges. This also contributed to the reduction in the bonus pay gap. There is no median gender bonus pay gap this year with the median for men and women being £250. Last year it was £350 for women and £250 for men. This year the mean for women is £383.73 which is £27.88 higher than the male median. The year before the gap was £110.16 with the female median at £545.88.

Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus

The following table shows the proportion of men and women receiving a bonus since 2017. Whereas there was a fairly even split of bonuses between men and women in previous years, this year saw a larger proportion of males receiving bonuses due to the awards made to field operations staff.

Year	Men	Women
2017	33%	38%
2018	28%	32%
2019	60%	60%
2020	62.9%	62.8%
2021	60.6%	65.3%
2022	73.5%	58.3%

Distribution of men and women through each pay quartile

The hourly pay quartiles show the proportion of men and women that are in each pay quartile, when we arrange staff in order of hourly pay rate.

The lower quartile continues to have a higher proportion of male staff. This is because there continues to be a higher concentration of men at more junior grades where pay is lower. The

recruitment of more female to male employees at HEO and above has contributed to the percentage of women in the remaining quartiles increasing. The proportion of women in the middle lower quartile has increased by 13.2 percentage points since March 2021, mainly due to the 7 percentage points increase in the proportion of women at HEO grade. The gap between men and women in the top quartile has reduced by almost 4 percentage points due to an increase in the number of women in SCS roles.

Quartile	Men	Women
Q1 Lower	77.6%	22.4%
Q2 middle lower	49.3%	50.7%
Q3 middle upper	45.6%	54.4%
Q4 upper	50.7%	49.3%

Taking action

We are committed to fair pay irrespective of gender and to eliminating our gender pay gap. We will continue to promote policies and initiatives to support equal opportunities for our entire workforce.

The structure of our workforce is unlike many organisations with more men than women occupying the lowest paid jobs. We have been successful in increasing the number of women into these roles, however, the long length of service, particularly amongst meat inspectors, means there is little turnover and low recruitment so the demographic at these grades is unlikely to see a significant shift for some time.

Recruitment

We ensure the selection process is clear on our job adverts, providing prospective candidates with transparency regarding the selection panel, assessments and criteria. We are committed to representative selection panels and each panel must include female representation to ensure gender balance. To eliminate potential bias in the recruitment process we use gender-neutral language in job adverts and inclusive language in all communications to gain the attention and interest of diverse applicants.

Flexible working

We support all staff who wish to work more flexibly such as job share, reduced hours, compressed hours. We have developed modern working practices that offer staff greater flexibility, focussing on outcomes, and location agnostic roles where possible. Our employees have the opportunity to be office-based, work from home or split their time between the office and another location.

Career development

The FSA recognises the importance of talent management and how it interlinks with performance management. By taking a consistent approach to how we define, identify and manage talent across the FSA, we ensure that everyone can think about, discuss and plan their development needs in line with their ambitions and potential. At quarterly check-ins we expect managers to hold career conversations with individuals in their team discussing their career aspirations and the development needed to get there (for example, potential for lateral moves) along with, what things engage and motivate and how these can be developed in role.

We help colleagues to progress their careers through schemes such as Beyond Boundaries (a talent programme for under-represented groups), Crossing Thresholds (a year-long career development programme for Women in the Civil Service) and Catapult (a Government wide mentoring programme that aims to support staff from less privileged backgrounds to realise their full potential to help build confidence, aspiration, and aid progression). These programmes provide access to the right opportunities, exposure, stretch and development to assist participants reach their potential. In addition to this, we provide access to the Future Leaders Scheme (for Grade 7 and Grade 6) and Senior Leaders Scheme (for SCS) enabling those with potential to develop their senior leadership skills and move into the top civil service roles.

Diversity

Developing and supporting staff networks is a key element of our diversity and inclusion strategy. We have a range of employee led networks that provide a forum to discuss, and provide mutual support, for those with a common interest. Our networks provide a voice for and support to all employees within the FSA and each network is championed by a director who promotes their work and provides senior representation and strategic direction for their areas.

The FSA Women's Network's vision is to encourage and inspire women to achieve their full potential and our Parent Support Network aims to encourage and support parents who have not only recently had children, but all parents in their career journey and as their children grow, as well as providing support to managers so they can in turn support staff who are on the parental journey. Our Men's Network is a safe and supportive space to support and encourage the promotion of Men's Health and Wellbeing. All employees are encouraged to join these networks.

Networks are also represented on the FSA Diversity Council which is chaired by our Chief Executive and was established to ensure we deliver our commitments under the diversity and inclusion strategy. Ring-fenced funding is available to support networks stage events.

Declaration

We confirm that our data has been calculated according to the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017.