

# Gender pay gap report 2021

## Introduction

Venn Group is an acknowledged leader in professional interim recruitment across the UK, where performance is rewarded.

As a recruitment business we are required to report on our gender pay gap figures for our employees as well as our agency workers. This report details our gender pay gap for employees and agency workers combined, however for the purposes of this report we have also separated out our employee only figures. We believe splitting the figures down to show our own employees is more representative of what the legislation is trying to achieve, as we have direct responsibility over their career development and pay, whereas the pay for our agency workers is set by our clients.

I confirm our data is accurate and has been calculated according to the requirements of The Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.



**Deirdra Moynihan, Chief Executive Officer**

## What is Gender Pay Gap Reporting?

The Gender Pay Gap legislation requires all public, private, and voluntary sector organisations with 250 or more employees to report on their gender pay gap figures.

By measuring and comparing average earnings across all levels of an organisation, the legislation aims to highlight different earning levels and therefore a 'gap' in the level of pay. Recognising a gap in pay gives companies the opportunity to do everything they can to ensure all employees have the same opportunities and support to progress in their career and remove any potential barriers that may get in the way of this. For gender pay gap reporting, pay figures are analysed as hourly rates.

A gender pay gap is not the same as equal pay. **Equal pay** measures whether employees doing the same job are paid the same. Whereas **gender pay** compares employees across the whole organisation and can be affected by factors such as seniority and working patterns. Equal pay is a legal requirement, and we are confident our employees are paid fairly as we have robust policies in place to ensure this is the case.

## Understanding the terminology

When measuring the gender pay gap, we calculate both the **mean** and **median** pay of male and female employees. A **positive** gender pay gap is the term used to describe when male employees are paid more than female employees; and a **negative** gender pay gap is the opposite.

### Mean

The mean gender pay is calculated by adding up the hourly rates of all relevant employees and then dividing the figure by the number of employees recorded to get an average hourly rate. The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the average male hourly rate and the average female hourly rate shown as a percentage.

### Median

The median gender pay is determined by ranking the hourly rates of both male and female pay from lowest to highest. You then take the middle number for both ranges and calculate the difference which is shown as a percentage.

# Hourly Pay

INCLUDING EMPLOYEES AND AGENCY WORKERS

**24.78%**

Mean

**14.83%**

Median

The data is based on all Venn Group employees and agency workers employed on the snapshot date of 5th April 2021. The data displays a positive gender pay gap across both calculations, with females being paid 24.78% less than males when considering the mean and 14.83% when considering the median. These figures are a positive improvement on our 2020 figures, particularly the median which is 7% lower.

## Proportion of females and males in each (salary) quartile band

	MALES	FEMALES
UPPER QUARTILE	58%	42%
UPPER MIDDLE QUARTILE	55%	45%
LOWER MIDDLE QUARTILE	43%	57%
LOWER QUARTILE	41%	59%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>49%</b>	<b>51%</b>

The table above helps explain how the gender pay gap arises. As a business we have a higher proportion of males in the upper quartile (58%) and a higher proportion of females in the lower quartile (59%), when considering both internal employees and our agency workers. However, these figures have improved compared to 2020 with the gender split in each quartile more evenly balanced, which will have contributed to our lower gender pay gap for 2021.

Pay for our agency workers is set by our clients, leaving us with little influence. However, we try to actively advertise all of our client roles to a diverse range of suitable candidates across a number of platforms and have a number of procedures in place to limit the opportunity for bias during the recruitment process, including anonymising candidate CVs when they are sent to our clients.

## EMPLOYEES ONLY

For maximum transparency, we are also reporting on our internal employee data only. This is where we are able to influence change through our industry leading training practices, ongoing professional development, various career opportunities, flexible working arrangements and specific diversity and inclusion initiatives.

**26.25%**

Mean

**19.37%**

Median

The data displays a positive gender pay gap across both calculations, with females being paid 26.25% less than males using the mean calculation and 19.37% using the median. Unfortunately, when comparing this data to 2020, our gender pay gap for internal employees has increased.

## Proportion of females and males in each (salary) quartile band

	MALES	FEMALES
UPPER QUARTILE	68%	32%
UPPER MIDDLE QUARTILE	57%	43%
LOWER MIDDLE QUARTILE	56%	44%
LOWER QUARTILE	33%	67%
<b>OVERALL</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>47%</b>

The table above helps to understand why our gender pay gap may have increased. When comparing the data with 2020, our gender balance at the upper quartiles is similar, however our gender balance at the lower quartiles has increased with more females in lower earning positions. This is further highlighted by 58% of our new starters from April 2020-April 2021 being female and occupying entry level positions. Although this has contributed to our gender pay gap, it has helped improve our overall gender balance across the business.

Another contributing factor to these results is the gender balance in the senior management team, where remuneration packages are higher, which has a higher proportion of males compared to females (65% males and 35% females). This balance has improved compared to 2020, but we are continuing to actively look for ways to further increase the number of females in senior management positions.

Finally, our gender pay gap may be a result of the gender imbalance in our non fee-earning roles. 62% of our Business Services function are female. When looking at the management roles within this function the gender balance is equal, however when considering the lower earning roles the majority are occupied by females (68%).

## Bonus Pay

### INCLUDING EMPLOYEES AND AGENCY WORKERS

- 28.86% of males received a bonus compared to 16.40% of females
- Mean – minus 22.14%
- Median – 6.04%

We are pleased to see that the median bonus pay gap has reduced by 18%. The data is also showing a negative bonus pay gap when considering the mean, which shows females have been paid more in bonuses than males over the 12 month period.

Due to the nature of agency work, a large portion of our candidates do not receive bonuses, which in turn lowers the overall number of employees receiving bonuses when comparing this to our employee only data. The bonuses paid are predominately reserved for more senior contractors. The payment of bonuses for our agency workers is set by our clients, leaving us with no influence over what is paid out.

### EMPLOYEES ONLY:

- 84.51% of males received a bonus compared to 61.36% of females
- Mean – minus 30.71%
- Median – 4.61%

Similarly, our median bonus pay gap for internal employees only has reduced and we now have a negative mean bonus pay gap. This shows that females in the business have been paid more in bonuses than males. The figures do still suggest we have a positive bonus pay gap when considering the median and that more males are paid bonuses than females, although generally less bonuses were paid out in the 12 month period this data refers to compared to previous years due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

As a recruitment business, commission payments are the main way in which our employees earn bonuses. However, employees within our Business Services function are not eligible for commission payments which will have impacted the median bonus pay gap. 62% of our Business Services function are female and this could also be a contributing factor to explain why less females earned a bonus compared to males and why there is a gender pay gap of 26.25% for hourly pay, as the calculation for this also includes bonus figures.

Where seniority affects salary, it also impacts bonus earning potential with more senior employees having the opportunity to earn increased commission and senior management able to earn quarterly bonuses based on sales performance (creating a bigger median sample group). As our senior management team is mostly male, this will have impacted our positive bonus pay gap when considering the median.





## Closing the gap - what we have already done

Cultivating a diverse and inclusive workforce continues to be at the forefront of our Board's strategic plan. We recognise that all initiatives brought in to improve diversity and inclusion at Venn Group must be supported by a culture of openness and education. Our CEO, Deirdra Moynihan, is committed to listening and learning, with a strong focus on speaking on topics previously stigmatised as taboo.

Flexible working options – We understand each individual is different, with different responsibilities outside of work. We actively encourage employees to speak with their manager/director regarding flexible working opportunities which will further benefit those with caring responsibilities. We also allow employees the opportunity to work from home at least one day per week to provide them with greater flexibility.

Inclusive Leadership training – All employees who undergo our internal management training programme must have completed our Inclusive Leadership training session which focuses on topics such as unconscious bias, “noise” and how to speak about D&I issues with more confidence.

Diversity and Inclusion focus groups – We continue to run our monthly D&I forum meetings which serve as a focus group to listen and understand issues being raised by all employees regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality etc. In March 2022, we held a “Celebrating Success – Women at Venn Group” event led by female members of the senior management team. This was a great opportunity for employees across the business to see the opportunities to progress, whilst also being able to ask questions that will aid them on their own career path.

Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement Associate – We continue to employ a full time Diversity, Inclusion and Engagement Associate working within the HR team to further cultivate and promote an inclusive workplace. The DI&E Associate reports to the Head of HR on all D&I initiatives and works closely with them to strategically influence diversity and inclusion at Venn Group.

Pathways and Milestones – P&M is the meritocratic and transparent pay and commission structure in which all fee earning employees benefit. Clear targets are given for salary reviews and promotions. This scheme has recently been reviewed to ensure it is offering part time employees the same opportunities for progression and development, as well as those returning from extended parental leave.

Empowering Employment – We continue to work in partnership with Young Women's Trust charity as well as several local councils and their constituents to aid people in their search for work. We run free workshops on “how to interview”, “how to write a CV” and more. We understand how important it is to provide the tools to underprivileged members of the local community to succeed and this is something we feel very strongly about. This has also allowed us to attract talent from a wider than ever variety of socio-economic backgrounds.

De-biasing recruitment training – Specialist training has been delivered to all employees within hiring roles, which focused on aiming to remove unconscious bias in all forms of recruitment, both internal and external. We continue to reaffirm our commitment and support to equal opportunities across our workforce.

## Closing the gap - what we plan to do

Board of directors - We are pleased to announce that from April 2022, female representation on our board of Directors will increase from 12.5% to 20%. Although there is still a gender imbalance, we believe this is a positive step in the right direction.

Progression opportunities - We have begun to review the promotion route to management, ensuring the process is as fair and equitable as possible, and barriers to progression are limited. We will be speaking with employees across the business, including females, to understand and explore any barriers to progression they feel may have impacted them or could impact them in future. The aim will be to create a strategy which addresses any issues and ensures promotion and progression opportunities are available for everyone.

Recruitment - Following the debiasing recruitment training, we aim to review our internal recruitment processes and procedures to ensure objective procedures are in place throughout our business which ensure equal opportunities for all and limit the opportunity for bias. We also want to review our internal vacancy advertising platforms to ensure we are attracting a diverse range of suitable candidates.

Celebrating success - We will continue to celebrate our internal success stories through our monthly D&I forum meetings and other internal initiatives, including a mentorship scheme that we are trialling at the moment. We hope to roll out this mentor scheme across the business, which will allow employees throughout the business to share their tips for success with each other to help encourage personal development and progression.

*'We are committed to inclusion and while we have made some excellent progress with our diversity and inclusion initiatives over the past 12 months, we recognise we still have some way to go. One area of particular focus over the next 12 months, alongside our other D&I initiatives, is to start to try and address the gender balance within the business. We need to attract more males into our administration roles and look internally at how we can support females to progress within the business. If we can start to address the gender balance at each end of the pay scale, we can start to close our gender pay gap.'*

**Kirsty MacDougall, Head of HR**