

# Withers Gender Pay Gap

## Statement 2020/21 (snapshot date 5 April 2020)

We have always been proud of our record of female leadership and the ways in which we have supported women's careers, including promoting flexible working practices for both men and women for many years.

68.3% of our employee workforce is female. Furthermore, the business has been led by a female CEO since 2002, 45.33% of our London Partners are female, and we have a newly elected female Chairperson. There are few other leading international law firms with such high female representation in their senior leadership teams.

We are committed to creating a bias free working environment and to maintaining our reputation within the legal profession for an inclusive culture – not just in relation to women but for all our staff.

### What is the gender pay gap?

In line with section 78 of the Equality Act 2010 and as outlined in the Gender Pay Gap Regulations 2017, gender pay and bonus gaps for our employees are reported here. In the interests of full transparency and in line with the Solicitors Regulatory Authority's guidelines, we also include pay gap information for UK based (self-employed) Partners.

While we have provided employee bonus gap information, we have not done so for Partners. This is simply because bonus payments alone do not reflect our reward strategy for Partners as we use a system of partnership points alongside bonus payments.

A gender pay gap is a measure of disadvantage (a gap) expressed as a comparison between what, on average, men earn and what, on average, women earn (gender pay).\*

The gender pay gap is not the same as unequal pay which is paying men and women differently for doing the same (or similar) work. Unequal pay has been unlawful since 1970.

We regularly review and moderate our appraisal and remuneration processes and are confident that individual men and women are paid the same for doing the same or similar work and have equal access to promotion opportunities.

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\* Definition from the CIPD, Gender Pay Gap Reporting Guide, 2017.

## Summary of 2020 pay gap data

When looking at our gender pay gap it's useful to give general consideration to the distribution of men and women at different levels within our business and across the legal profession. Our pay gap continues to be influenced by several key factors:

- Our Business Services division accounts for 26% of the total 29.5% pay gap, with the make-up of some teams still largely male.
- A high proportion of our workforce in our lower and lower middle pay quartiles are female. In line with other law firms, our secretarial team is predominately female (and accounts for 17% of our London workforce).
- Whilst we have more females in senior roles than many other law firms, we still have more men than women in the most senior employed roles. This is due in part to retiring equity partners taking up employed Consultancy roles and in part due to all of our UK based Business Services Directors being male. Our female Chief People Officer is based in the US and therefore not included in the reporting.
- 17% of our workforce work part time and of those, 86% are female.\*

Our Partner pay gap in London remains low at 4.6%. Compared to 2019, both the employee and partner pay gaps have reduced by 2.4% and 2.7%, respectively.

Our employee and partner median pay gaps continue to be higher than the mean pay gaps because of the gender distribution in the upper quartiles particularly. In addition to this, since last year we have seen an increase in the number of women in the lower quartiles, in both the employee and partner populations.

Our mean bonus gap is higher than our median, which is largely a result of a small number of large bonus payments being made to individuals at senior levels (whose remuneration packages are closely tied to the firm's performance and who are predominantly male) which is skewing the data. This, coupled with the high number of women in our lower paid roles, is creating the bonus gap.

## Our priorities for the year ahead

We recognise that it may take time to close our gender pay gap and, whilst there are immediate actions that we can take, a longer term focus is also required.

We have invested in specific technology and specialist advice to provide deeper analysis and closer monitoring of the impact of our decisions on our gender pay gaps. This investment is helping us to establish an effective long term action plan to narrow our pay gaps. Working groups will be established to give consideration to potential issues identified to date and to ensure ongoing monitoring. Priorities for the firm include:

- Continuing to review and refine our policies and processes to ensure decisions around recruitment, performance appraisal, work allocation, promotion, pay and bonus are equal, fair and objective, and free from any bias.

## Pay data

	Mean	
	2020	2019
Employees	29.5%	31.9%
Partners**	4.6%	7.3%

	Median	
	2020	2019
Employees	38.6%	37.8%
Partners**	12.8%	4.7%

## Bonus data

	Mean	Median
	2020	2020
Employees	61.2%	32.6%

\* The Government has specified that pay and bonus gap reporting figures must be based on the actual amounts paid rather than the full time equivalent rates. Those who have had a period of absence such as maternity leave receive prorated pay and bonus – impacting particularly on bonus gaps

\*\* Partner data provided is based on the 2019–20 financial year

- Monitoring the gender imbalance within our upper and lower quartiles and actively looking to address these. In particular, we will endeavour to ensure there are more women on recruitment short lists for traditionally male dominated roles and vice versa.
- Engaging compensation and benefits specialists to
  - review the relevant processes and procedures which impact on performance, progression and pay and
  - provide deeper insight and recommendations to our working groups on how to reduce our pay and bonus gaps.
- Establishing regular updates from our working groups who will be charged with taking forward a pay gap action plan.
- Undertaking a specific modeling exercise to ensure proportionate gender balance within our promotion processes and future leaders' programmes.
- The introduction of our new mobile working policy provides the maximum possible choice to our people, enabling them to work in agile and flexible ways that help them balance their work and other demands on their time. We will continue to embed the policy and monitor its impact on working practices.
- Embedding new gender neutral roles, for example Administrative Assistant and Matter Management Coordinators at the lower quartile roles.
- Providing a supportive working environment, which includes a full review and active promotion of enhanced care giving policies (and in particular shared parental leave), dependent care solutions, as well as a strong focus on personal growth and the opportunity to network with diverse and like-minded others.
- Promoting our ongoing programme of 'Respect at work' training which covers unconscious bias, being an active bystander and anti-harassment.



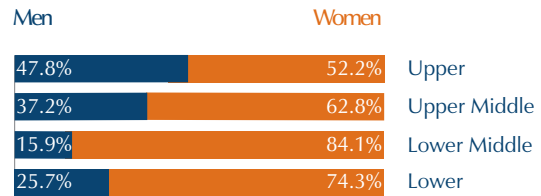
Margaret Robertson  
CEO



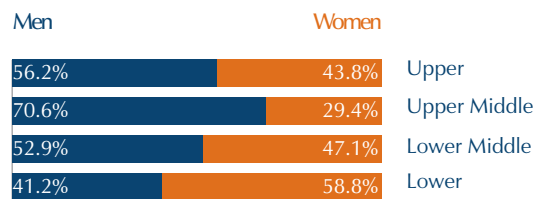
Anne Mahoney  
Chief people officer

## Pay quartiles 2020

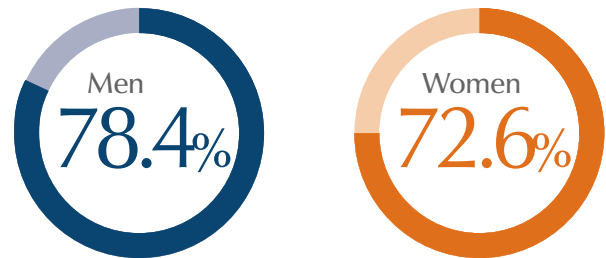
### Employees



### Partners



## Proportion of staff receiving a bonus 2020



Footnote: The data used for calculating hourly pay is for UK employees (excluding partners) who were employed on the snapshot date of 5 April 2020. The bonus figure has been calculated using the 12 month reference period preceding 5 April 2020. The data also includes those who work under a contract of service and those who are under a contract to do work personally.