

Access Creative College

Gender Pay Gap Report 2023

This document sets out the College's Gender Pay Gap information for the reporting year 2023 and complies with its statutory duty to publish information annually.

01.04.2024

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Gender Pay Gap Statement

Access Creative College (ACC) is part of the Access Further Education Limited Group. The College encompasses the following brands, Access Creative College, Access Industry and Access Sport.

ACC is committed to building a fair and inclusive workplace where all employees who are essential to the success of the business and our learners can achieve their full potential.

To achieve this we must take appropriate actions, based on data and data analysis to allow us to benchmark ourselves against the UK population and sector-specific metrics and to set realistic and achievable milestones for our journey.

We do not pay people differently based on their ethnicity, gender or any other protected characteristics. Pay gaps exist because different groups are represented unequally in the workforce. From a gender perspective, ACC still has too few women at all levels of the Company, especially at senior levels.

We all want a workplace that more accurately reflects the communities in which we operate and the learners who are seeking qualifications to enable them to succeed in their future creative careers.

We also believe that the College should be a place where the very best people can nurture, support and develop the Creatives of the future and always seek to appoint, retain and develop appropriately skilled and qualified staff regardless of their background or status. We recognise that seeking to do so in a way that moves us towards a fully inclusive workplace will take time. However, we remain committed to making progress on inclusion now and in the future.

Legislative Requirements

Gender pay gap legislation requires employers in the United Kingdom with 250 employees or more to calculate and publish on an annual basis gender pay gap data. This must be taken based on data on the 5th of April each year. The specific information we are required to publish needs to include:

- Mean and median gender pay gap (based on an hourly rate of pay on 5th April 2022)
- Mean and median bonus gender pay gap (considers bonus pay received in the 12 months leading up to the 5th of April 2022)
- The proportion of men and women receiving a bonus payment
- The proportion of men and women in each quartile pay band (looking at the proportion of 4 pay bands when we divide our workforce into 4 equal parts)

The gender pay gap is expressed as a percentage of male earnings (e.g. women earn x% less than men).

As this is our third report, this report also includes comparison figures from our 2021 report and analysis of any changes as appropriate.

Access Creative College Gender Pay Gap

Gender Pay Gap	ACC 2021	UK Economy 2021	ACC 2022	UK Economy 2022	ACC 2023	UK Economy 2023
Mean	11.69%		12.05%		11.68%	
Median	8.95%	7.9%	8.54%	8.3%	6.39%	7.7%
Bonus Pay Gap						
Mean	7.01%		12.75%		65.64%	
Median	-2.73%		-3.33%		14.82%	
% Employees receiving a bonus						
Male	7.8%		5.12%		8.43%	
Female	5.6%		4.92%		7.69%	

The 2023 Gender Pay Gap report shows improvements across both the mean and median pay gaps. The 2023 report also shows that the College's median gender pay gap drops below the UK average for full-time staff and is our biggest annual reduction by 2.15% from the 2022 figures continuing our progress towards eliminating the gap. This is a significant improvement and shows that both raising awareness and implementing our recommendations are driving the required outcomes to become a fair and inclusive workplace.

Whilst the Bonus Pay Gap has moved adversely this is related to contractual commitments in light of performance in prior financial years, which is considered exceptional based on the circumstances at the time and is the mean more easily distorted due to the small number of staff receiving a bonus.

The mean and the median explained

Mean pay gap: the mean pay gap is the difference in the arithmetic average hourly paid for women compared to men within the College.

Median pay gap: The median represents the middle point of a population. If you lined up all our women and all our men in order of the hourly rate at which they are paid, the median pay gap is the difference between the hourly rate for the middle woman compared to that of the middle man.

The mean and median are important metrics and need to be looked at together. However, the mean can be skewed by fewer individuals earning more in the upper ranges.

In terms of the organisation's performance in these metrics, both have improved with the median pay gap now tending below that of the UK economy.

Gender pay gap vs equal pay

A gender pay gap measures the difference between the average earnings of men and women (irrespective of roles or seniority). Equal pay is our legal obligation as an employer to give men and women equal pay for equal work.

	April 2021				April 2022				April 2023			
Quartile	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Upper (75-100%)	53	26	67%	33%	66	22	75%	25%	70	21	77%	23%
Upper Middle (50-75%)	55	25	69%	31%	66	23	74%	26%	63	29	68%	32%
Lower Middle 25-50%	50	30	63%	37%	57	32	64%	36%	63	29	68%	32%
Lower (0-25%)	43	37	54%	46%	49	39	56%	44%	57	34	63%	37%
Totals	201	118			254	122			253	113		

Our gender pay gap is not a result of equal pay issues, as we have a gender-neutral approach to pay across all levels of the organisation. The numbers of men relative to women across the organisation have risen and we have also seen a reduction in the number of women employed with a more even distribution except at the highest levels.

Gender pay gap

Our figures show that we do have a gender pay gap and a gender bonus gap

We understand why we have a gender pay gap at ACC. It is mainly due to the levels of female representation overall and in particular at senior/leadership positions. A more balanced distribution of men and women at all levels will be needed to narrow and ultimately eliminate the gap with particular emphasis on recruiting more higher-paid female senior staff.

Our Gender bonus gap in 2022/23 is skewed due to some exceptional payments which were made in the year linked to performance goals and are not typical of our normal performance bonus arrangements.

Initial analysis of our recruitment and candidate attraction suggests that the pattern of representation in our workforce is replicated in the proportions of applicants of each gender, although there are encouraging signs that more women are being attracted to work with us and there is a balance of candidates being interviewed but this is still not generating significant improvements in respect of hires with only a marginal increase in the percentage of female hires in the 2022/23 reporting period. In part this may be linked to the nature and type of curriculum offered, sports, computing, and games alongside our music and media offers, or the nature of the roles being location-specific may also be contributory factors in this imbalance.

Recruitment

We have reviewed our recruitment profile for the 2020/2021, 2021/2022 and 2022/2023 years, which nationally was as follows:

Gender	Applicants			Interview			Hire		
	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023	2021	2022	2023
Male	69.1%	67.6%	58.9%	55.4%	61.4%	49.3%	51.9%	61.9%	59.8%
Female	29.7%	30.3%	39.2%	42.3%	38.6%	48.4%	48.1%	36.9%	39.2%
Not Disclosed	1.2%	2.1%	1.9%	2.3%		2.3%	1.2%	1%	

Whilst there are some regional variations, at each stage of the process, these are not significant and are broadly in line with the profile above.

Whilst there was an increase in the number of female applicants and the proportions progressing through to interview this is not reflected in the numbers at appointment. We are still some distance away from the levels recorded in 2021. In the context of actions to address the gender pay imbalance, more needs to be done to attract female applicants to roles and to improve the ratios progressing through the stages to final hire.

An increase in the number of female applicants progressing through the process to hire regardless of level will contribute to closing the gender pay gap overall and in particular the appointment of increased numbers of females to higher paid roles needs to be significantly improved to tackle the imbalance of representation in more senior and higher paid roles.

Actions

Recruitment.

We will try to ensure that wherever possible there is an appropriate diversity balance of the membership interview panels engaged in the recruitment process. This will allow for a more balanced decision-making process with a broader representation of views, knowledge and experience when reaching decisions.

We will review recruitment sources to identify gender-positive sites to promote higher female engagement with our employment opportunities. In addition, where we work with recruitment agencies to source candidates for hard-to-recruit roles and senior staffing appointments, they put forward a minimum gender 50:50 balance split and we will consider introducing a more positive female-to-male ratio for such referrals where we are underrepresented at this level.

We will consider a programme of recruitment based on encouraging women returners to careers aligned with flexible working arrangements, including compressed hours, term-time working and job share arrangements at all levels of the business including senior positions.

We will evaluate options for targeted training roles to recruit female staff to underrepresented roles with associated training and/or higher apprenticeships providing them with an opportunity to acquire the skills, knowledge and

experience necessary to enable them to be employed and progress at all levels of the business and especially at higher levels.

Retention and Progression

We will consider the use of career progression pathways and fast track for female staff together with the provision of targeted and specific training to allow staff to progress.

We will continue to review and introduce a range of gender-sensitive policies to respond to the needs and interests of both women and men in their structures, operations, and methods of work, and seek to remove barriers to women fulfilling their potential. An example of the policies recently introduced include our Menopause Policy and the Parental Bereavement and Baby Loss Policy alongside which we also improved the enhancement of our maternity pay arrangements.

Other examples that we will look to promote, review and consider are:

- Compressed Hours, flexible working and term-time-only roles
- Job Share
- Enhancing provisions for shared parental leave to encourage participation in the scheme.

We will also consider options for ring-fencing a proportion of progression roles to internal candidates, aligned with the areas of skills and knowledge development of female employees.

We will determine if it is possible to set a range of incremental targets for female representation in senior roles and the higher pay bands and monitor our progress against them.

Undertake awareness-raising of female employee issues, encouraging greater openness and support and analysis of employee data to identify issues and areas of concern.

Offer mentoring and coaching to female staff from appropriate internal and external female role models.

Review our organisational values to ensure these align to driving greater diversity and inclusion with a focus on how to continue to develop to be a good employer and employer of choice.

Review

Progress against agreed actions and any targets set to be monitored and the results published in future reports including any analysis and trend data for comparative purposes annually as part of this report.