



Gender Pay Gap Report

2025 - 2026



THE SIXTH FORM COLLEGES TRUST



The Sixth Form Colleges Trust Gender Pay Gap Report for 2025-26 reporting year

Introduction

The gender pay gap (GPG) is defined as the difference between the average pay of men compared to the average pay of women (the mean). The median pay gap is the difference between the midpoints in the ranges of hourly earnings of male and female employees. Gender pay gap calculations are based on payroll data from a specific date each year (31 March 2025). The individuals counted within the snapshot categorised as being on Full Pay are those upon the snapshot date, and consequently, any individuals who are on maternity/sabbatical leave or unpaid sick leave are excluded from the snapshot. The gender pay gap is usually bigger if in practice women do more of the less well-paid jobs than men.

Gender pay gap is distinct from 'equal pay'. Equal pay covers the requirement for men and women to be paid at the same rate for performing the same work, or work that is considered to be of equal value. Each college of the Trust have an equal pay/salary setting framework where rates of pay are set according to the role and not based on the individual undertaking the role. This is designed to deliver equality, fairness and transparency when setting pay.

Having a transparent pay system means that we can be confident that our gender pay gap results from workforce composition rather than unequal pay i.e., the concentration of more males in more senior positions and in more females in lower paid jobs rather than a disparity in pay between males and females in the same grade. It allows us to then look at potential strategies to reduce our pay gap and to investigate the reasons for this.

The Trust is committed to advancing equality of opportunity, and ensuring staff are treated fairly and equitably, not least in the area of pay.

Trust Gender Pay Gap figures as at 31st March 2025

Mean Gender Pay Gap	5%
Median Gender Pay Gap	5%

This tells us that **on average women, earn 95p for every £1 that men earn** when comparing median hourly pay and that women's mean hourly pay is 5% lower than men. This is the first-year reporting as a Trust so there is no data to compare with to indicate if our pay gap is increasing or decreasing.

Long Road Sixth Form College Gender Pay Gap figures as at 31st March 2025

Mean Gender Pay Gap	-1.5%
Median Gender Pay Gap	0 %

Long Road continues to operate with no gender pay gap i.e. women and men are paid the same. This is largely because the balance between male/female employees is equitable in each quartile.

The Sixth Form College Colchester Gender Pay Gap as at 31st March 2025

Mean Gender Pay Gap	7.8%
Median Gender Pay Gap	20%

Colchester's Gender pay gap is the same as the previous year. There is a concentration of women in lower-paid roles and men are over-represented in higher paid roles which has influenced the overall gender pay gap.

Bonus Pay Gap as at 31st March 2025

We are also required to report on the pay gap in bonus payment. No staff employed by the Trust receive a bonus since the Support Staff Standards Payment Scheme was discontinued in September 2023 therefore, we have a 0% bonus pay gap.

Pay Quartiles

This is the proportion of male and female when hourly rates are ranked in order from the highest to the lowest and then split into four groups (quartiles) Lower quartile represents the lowest salaries, and the upper quartile represents the highest salaries.

The Sixth Form Colleges Trust

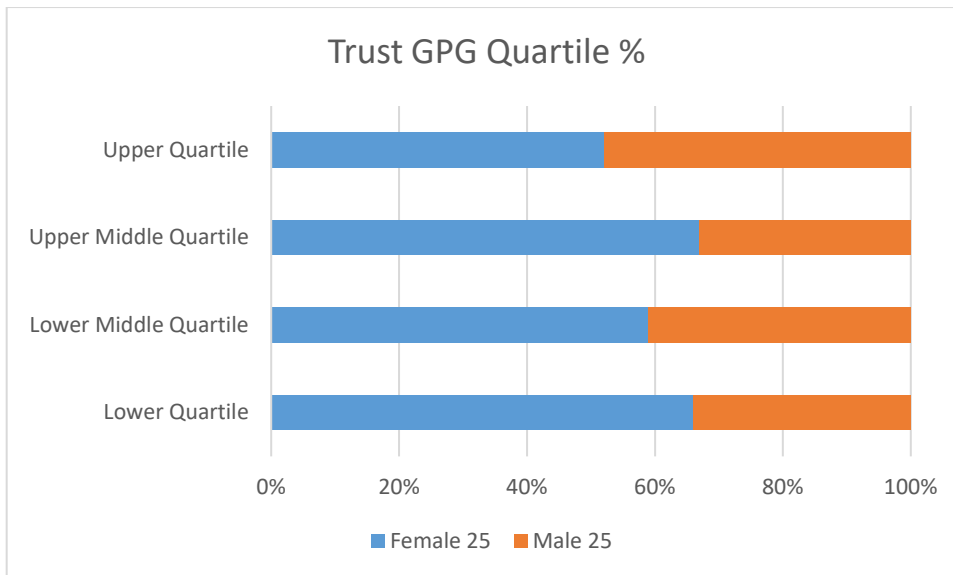
Quartile	Male	Female
Lower Quartile	34%	66%
Lower Middle Quartile	41%	59%
Upper Middle Quartile	33%	67%
Upper Quartile	48%	52%

Long Road Sixth Form College

Quartile	Male	Female
Lower Quartile	46%	54%
Lower Middle Quartile	46%	54%
Upper Middle Quartile	42%	58%
Upper Quartile	48%	52%

The Sixth Form College Colchester

Quartile	Male	Female
Lower Quartile	27%	73%
Lower Middle Quartile	35%	65%
Upper Middle Quartile	38%	62%
Upper Quartile	39%	61%



Comments.

The median gender pay gap is 5%. This means that women earn 95p on average for every £1.00 earned by a male colleague. This is lower than the national median pay gap which is currently reported at 6.9% (women earn 93p for every £1 men earn). Colchester's median pay gap of 20% means that women earn 80p for every £1.00 men earn whilst Long Roads negative pay gap of 0% mean that there is no difference in earnings.

The workforce of the Trust is 61% female and 39% male. This is skewed to some extent by the fact that Colchester, with the larger workforce, has 65% female staff whilst Long Road is 55% female and has a more equitable male/female balance. Long Road has a negative gender pay gap indicating they have a more equitable balance between male and female staff and in particular have more female than men in the upper quartiles.

When reviewing the pay quartile data Colchester's workforce profile has a notable effect on the overall gender pay gap within the Trust. Colchester has higher female representation in the lower and lower-middle quartiles. The concentration of women in lower-paid roles increases the gender imbalance at the lower end of the pay structure and influences the trust wide gender pay gap.

Even though most of the workforce are female (61%) relative to their overall presence, women are under-represented in the top quartile (52% vs 61%). Men are over-represented at the top (48% v 39% overall) and under-represented at the bottom (34%-v's 39%) which is influencing our gender pay gap. We employ a disproportionate amount of males in our higher paid roles. This pattern correlates with a positive gender pay gap (i.e. men are paid higher) because a higher share of men sit in the most highly paid quartile, while women's share is relatively higher in the lowest paid quartiles.

Long Roads gender balance with 55% female against 45% is more equitable than Colchester's 61% female 39% male workforce but more males, relative to their overall percentage, are employed in more senior roles in both colleges.

The Upper middle quartile shows a difference of 2/3rds 1/3rd between male and female employees which is possibly explained by the number of female teachers at lower/middle

management level. The difference between this quartile and the Upper quartile is interesting and worth some investigation – i.e. what are the barriers for females to progress to the higher paid roles in the Trust.

Our quartile data shows that the gender pay gap within the organisation is driven primarily by the distribution of men and women across different pay bands, rather than by unequal pay for equal work. Women are significantly overrepresented in the lower quartile, where they make up 73% of employees, compared with 27% men. This concentration of women in the lowest-paid roles has a direct impact on both the mean and median gender pay gap, lowering women's average earnings across the Trust.

As pay levels increase, the proportion of men (relative to the % of men employed across the trust at 39%) rises steadily from 41% in the lower middle quartile to 48% in the upper quartile. Although women continue to represent the majority at all pay levels, the consistent increase in male representation at higher pay bands indicates that men are more likely to occupy higher-paid or senior positions. This pattern suggests that the organisation's gender pay gap is influenced by structural role distribution, including differences in job types, seniority, and progression pathways, rather than by pay disparities for equivalent roles.

Overall, the data indicates that addressing our gender pay gap requires continued focus on improving gender balance, relative to the % of male/female employees, across all levels of the organisation, particularly in progression into more senior and higher-paid roles. We remain committed to reviewing our recruitment, development and talent pipelines to support more equal representation across all pay bands.

The Trust workforce reflects national trends and has what could be considered a traditional balance of male/female workers i.e. more females than men in the lower pay bands and more female part time workers, particularly amongst teaching staff. It is common for a female worker to work full time, reduce to part time whilst balancing childcare and other caring responsibilities. This pattern of work impacts directly on earning potential and promotional opportunities, leading to the imbalance between male and female colleagues in the Upper Middle and Upper Quartiles. Women are well represented in the middle ranking positions but are proportionately underrepresented in senior roles i.e. of 61% female staff 52% are in the upper quartile.

Age also has an impact on gender pay gaps. The Office for National Statistics (ONS) report that the pay gap is largest for employees aged 40 years and over (9.1%) and there is some evidence that this is linked to motherhood. This is substantially higher than 30–39-year-olds where the gap is 3.9% and 22–29-year-olds which is the lowest at 0.9%. This shows that the proportion of women in high-paying occupations (those where pay increase with age and experience) decrease with age. As an employer we have more employees aged 40 and over than under 40. There is no reliable benchmarking data for the education sector as a whole but it is likely, with a predominantly female workforce that the gender pay gap is lower in this sector than in others.

When comparing our GPG with other organisations it is worth noting that a significant proportion of the Trusts workforce in the lower quartile are employed in areas that are traditionally contracted out (cleaning/catering) and in many instances this is not included in comparator institutions data.

Future Areas of Focus

1. We will continue to work towards closing the gender pay gap and work to identify barriers to progression for female staff.
2. We will actively develop family friendly policies and culture to encourage and reduce barriers to female participation at senior levels with specific emphasis on female related issues i.e. menopause/childcare etc.
3. Training and development remain a key strength of the Trust, and we will continue to ensure that our staff have access to training and development that will enable them to maximise their potential and to develop the skills and knowledge to be able to move into management and senior positions.
4. We will ensure that a review of the workforce is undertaken to understand the age/gender/ ethnicity profile across the Trust, in order to identify areas for improvement and develop targeted succession planning.
4. To increase the use of social media and innovative recruitment practices to target unrepresentative sections of our work force and to foster a culture of inclusion and aspiration.
5. We are committed to encouraging flexible working and job share opportunities for all roles, including management positions. This will include working from home initiatives (where appropriate and the job allows)