

Gender Pay Gap Report 2024

**This document outlines the Scottish Prison
Service Statement**

Published by Organisational Development Directorate

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Unlocking Potential - Transforming Lives.



Directorate Owners:

Organisational Development Directorate

Scope:

All Staff

Associated Policies:

- **Pay Policy**
- **Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equality Report**
- **Job Evaluation Manual**

Approved by:

Director of Organisational Development

Effective date:

30 April 2025

Review Date:

This statement will be reviewed every 2 years.



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1.0 Introduction

Under the [Equality Act 2010 \(Specific Duties\) \(Scotland\) Regulations 2012](#), the Scottish Prison Service (SPS) is required to comply with the three aims of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) as set out below:

- Eliminate unfair, unjust or unlawful practices and other discrimination that impact on pay equality.
- Promote equality of opportunity and the principles of equal pay throughout the workforce.
- Promote good relations between people sharing different protected characteristics and those who do not in the implementation of equal pay.

As a listed authority, the SPS has a duty to publish information on the percentage difference among its employees between men’s average hourly pay (excluding overtime) and women’s average hourly pay (excluding overtime), known as the Gender Pay Gap. It involves calculating and publishing data on the difference in average earnings between men and women to help identify any disparities in pay and can drive efforts to address gender inequality in the workplace.

This 2024 report is a snapshot of our pay and gender as of **30 March 2024** and is consistent with government requirements. Our previous [Gender Pay Gap](#) report was published in April 2023 (as at 30 March 2022).

For further details of SPS’ approach to equality including how we are embedding the General Equality Duty of the Equality Act 2010, please refer to our Equality Outcomes and Mainstreaming Equality report 2025.

2.0 Definitions

- **Gender Pay Gap** is the difference in average pay between men and women. It is not the same as paying men and women equally for doing like-for-like work but instead looks at the distribution of men and women through all pay levels of the organisation, the hours they work, and the effect this has on average hourly rates of pay.
- **Mean:** is the arithmetic average of a set of numbers, calculated by adding up all the numbers and then divide by the number of numbers. It is the difference (as a percentage) between the average pay men and women receives (the ‘mean gender pay gap’).
- **Median:** is calculated by listing the data in numerical order from smallest to largest, to identify the middle value. It is the difference (as a percentage)

between the median pay men and women receives (the mid-point of the individual pay rates in the organisation)

- **Pay Quartile** is a way to divide the workforce into four equal-sized groups based on their hourly pay rates.

3.0 Gender Pay Gap Reporting

Gender pay gap reporting is a vital tool for promoting equality, transparency, and accountability in the workplace, benefiting both employees and SPS.



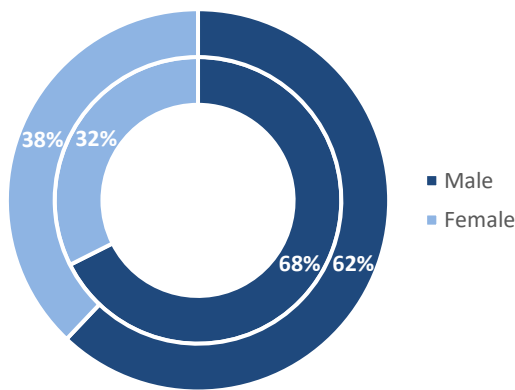
It is important that we have a diverse workforce that brings a wide range of skills, experience, and knowledge to our work. We want to encourage a balance of men and women in the workplace and consider new attitudes to work that many people have, for example: part-time vs full-time working, career plans, secondments, or career breaks.

When we recruit new employees, we always look for the best candidate for the job – irrespective of gender – but we are careful that our process for defining job structure and hours of work does not favour either men or women.

The rest of this report provides more information about our gender pay gap, the reasons why the gender pay gap exists and provides an overview of the steps we are taking to reduce the gap.

4.0 Gender Pay Gap Data

4.1 Workforce Profile



As of 31 March 2024, the SPS workforce as a whole consisted of 4,962 employees made up of 3,080 males (62%) and 1,882 females (38%) - see outer circle.

By comparison, for Operational colleagues only, over 68% are male (2,526) compared to 32% of females (1,212) – see inner circle.

Chart 1: Gender Breakdown

4.2 Mean Gender Pay Gap

Our mean gender pay gap is: 6.1%

The average hourly rate paid to women is £18.54 compared to £19.75 for men. This means women’s hourly rate is £1.21 less than men, a slight decrease from 2023 when the average women’s hourly rate was £1.26 less than men.

4.3 Median Gender Pay Gap

Our median gender pay gap is: 15.58%

The median hourly rate paid to women is £17.34, £3.20 less than men, and a slight increase from 2023 when the median hourly rate difference was £2.99. The median gender pay gap for all workers across Scotland in 2024 was 8.7%, compared to 14.3% across the whole of the UK.

The median is generally used to compare the gender pay gap because the distribution of earnings is uneven, with more people earning lower salaries than higher salaries. The mean is highly influenced by the salaries at the upper end of a pay scale and so may not be truly representative of the average earnings of a typical person. The median avoids this issue and so is considered a better indicator of typical ‘average’ earnings.

4.4 Year-on-Year Comparator

Our year-on-year comparator indicates a slight reduction in our mean gender pay gap over the last 5 years, dropping from 9% in 2020 to 6.2% in 2024. Although our median pay gap has seen little movement, it has reduced from 15.61% to 15.58% and we remain committed to taking steps to reduce it further.

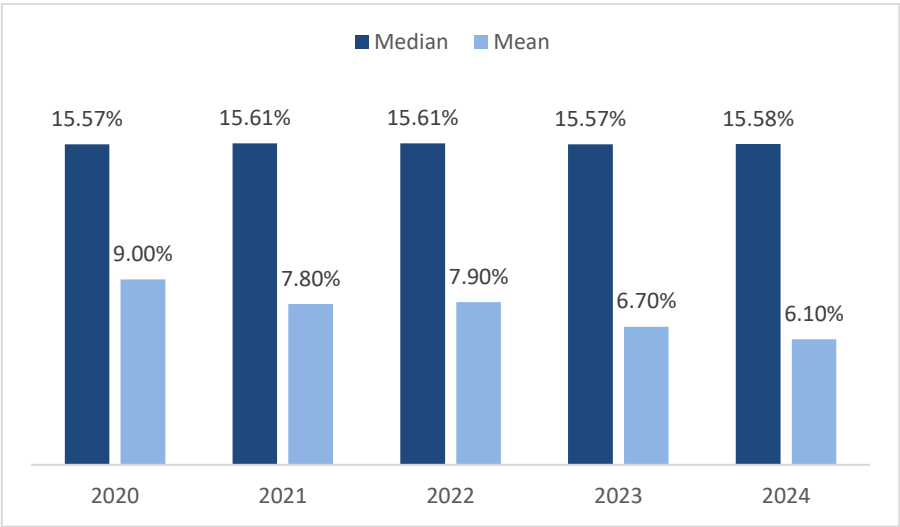


Chart 2: SPS Yearly Comparator – Mean/Median

4.5 Pay Quartiles

Pay quartiles help to analyse and compare the distribution of male and female employees across different pay levels within an organisation.

We have calculated the mean pay gap by quartile, as outlined below, through dividing the workforce into four equal parts, sorting the hourly rates by lowest to highest rate and recording the number of females and males in each quartile. The table below illustrates the ratio of females to males according to their hourly rate of pay and our data indicates that there are pay gaps across each quartile in favour of male employees.

	Female	Male
Upper Quartile (<i>highest 25% of earners</i>)	29.34%	70.66%
Upper Mid Quartile (<i>next 25% of earners</i>)	31.52%	68.48%
Lower Mid Quartile (<i>next 25% of earners</i>)	41.55%	58.45%
Lower Quartile (<i>lowest 25% of earners</i>)	48.43%	51.57%

Whilst SPS employs more males (70.66%) in the upper quartile than females (29.34%), it should be noted that we have seen a positive increase in the percentage of women in both the upper and upper mid-quartiles over the past four years, as detailed below in Chart 3. Equally the proportion of females employed in the lower quartile has decreased.

This indicates a positive trend and a crucial step towards achieving gender equality, fostering a more inclusive workplace, and enhancing the SPS’ overall performance and reputation. Increasing the number of women in higher-paying roles helps to reduce the overall gender pay gap.

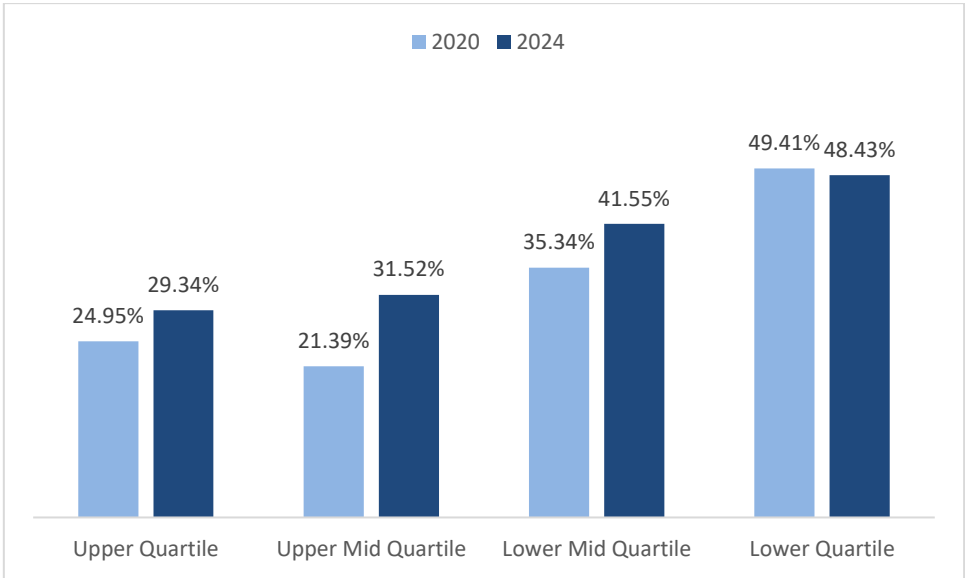


Chart 3: Female Ratio by Quartile

5.0 Pay Gap Findings

The gender pay gap is influenced by a variety of factors, including societal norms, workplace practices, and individual choices. The main reasons we have a gender pay gap are:

- Our workforce structure is designed to ensure optimum delivery of services, with significant numbers of staff being employed as Operational D Band Residential Officers working directly with our prison population groups. We recognise the challenges we face to balance the gender profile within this job role, and we have committed to scoping future opportunities, alongside increasing opportunities for women within other areas of our workforce.
- Our organisational structure means we have the greatest number of job roles within specific lower Pay Bands (Pay Bands B – D), and we recruit the majority of staff into these roles.
- Societal expectations often dictate that women still assume disproportionate responsibility for caring responsibilities, influencing career choices and therefore more likely to take career breaks or work part-time due to caregiving responsibilities, leading to less work experience and career progression.
- Higher numbers of women tend to be in roles in the lower quartiles of our Pay brackets. For example, only 30.43% of women in SPS fall into the top two quartiles (upper-mid and upper), compared with 69.57% of all males. With the introduction of direct external recruitment to higher Operational Pay Bands, and an increase in the numbers of women being recruited to our most senior roles, including our first female Chief Executive, we hope to address this imbalance.

Addressing these factors requires a comprehensive approach, including promoting pay transparency, supporting career development for women, implementing fair recruitment practices, and challenging societal norms.

6.0 Progress

SPS continues to make positive advancements towards gender pay parity and implementing these strategies can help create a fairer and more equitable workplace, ultimately reducing the gender pay gap.

- Our salary negotiation is carried out on a corporate basis with our recognised trade unions, rather than an individual basis.
- All our salary points are published on our intranet and are visible to all our employees. The relevant salary points are included in job adverts.

- We have a clear policy of paying employees equally for the same or equivalent work, underpinned by our job evaluation system.
- Our recruitment assessor training is designed to ensure they make recruitment decisions based on suitability for the job against the stated job criteria (as opposed to gender or any other protected characteristics)
- Embedding Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) thinking into our employee policies/procedures, so that we have confidence that they support a diverse and inclusive workforce. We ensure this through the completion of Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessments.
- In December 2024 we implemented the reduction in the working week, reducing all employees' contractual hours from 37 to 35 (full-time equivalent). This reduction, alongside the range of flexible working policies available to all employees, provides greater flexibility for women to seek employment and promotion within SPS.
- We continue to operate our family-friendly policies to support individuals who wish to blend family or caring responsibilities with work. The introduction of the Right to Disconnect and Carers Leave during 2024 continues to support diverse ways of working. Furthermore, our Flexible Working Policy has been updated in line with changes to legislation.
- Leadership development include topics around inclusion and belonging and valuing diversity within the courses they provide as it is a core part of the Leadership strategy. This encourages open discussions at all levels.
- Identifying opportunities to utilise advances in digital and technical systems, reducing the requirement to undertake physical searches by staff.

7.0 Next Steps

It is recognised there is still ongoing effort required to further reduce the imbalance. We propose to take further action in the forthcoming year to reduce our pay gap by:

- Continuing to develop talent management strategies that focus on supporting our colleagues through their career journey in the organisation.
- The continued digitisation of our Residential and Officer Foundation Programme encourages localised delivery. This shift from a previous 6 weeklong in person training at the Scottish Prison Service College, looks to increase accessibility for care givers from all communities throughout Scotland.
- Developing management guidance and resources to upskill line managers on inclusive people practices, including a review of our existing equality and diversity training packages.

- Continuing to undertake reviews of our employee policies, both in line with expected revisions to the Employment Rights Act, and to ensure they provide the widest range of support for employees to help them remain within work.
- Refining inclusive recruitment practices through the organisational change programme and beyond; building on existing strategy, tools, resources and local promotion and recruitment practices to engage and employ applicants and retain employees from all communities to build diversity throughout our talent pipeline.
- We will continue to monitor our equalities duties and report each year about our commitment to reduce the gender pay gap and the progress that we are making.

Further Information:

The SPS recognises that from time-to-time employees may have questions or concerns relating to equal pay. In certain situations, employees' rights and obligations regarding pay policies may change. In these circumstances the SPS will abide by any statutory obligations.

The SPS wishes to encourage open discussion with employees to ensure that questions and problems can be resolved as quickly as possible. Employees are encouraged to seek clarification on any issues with the appropriate Line Manager in the first instance.

Sustainability

Improving our environmental performance and doing things in a more sustainable way should be seen as integral to our core business practices.

In line with the SPS Sustainable Policy and to demonstrate compliance with the Scottish Government's commitment to improving environmental and sustainable development performance, please be mindful if printing this document – keeping paper usage to a minimum (print only version), printing on both sides, and recycling.

Equality Statement

The SPS is an equal opportunities employer where all employees are treated with dignity and respect. We are fully committed to equality, diversity and human rights and to ensuring our culture, working environment, policies, processes and practices are free from bias. This policy applies to all employees regardless of protected characteristics, and, subject to any eligibility criteria, length of service, grade, working pattern or operational status.

Inclusive Communications

It is our ambition to ensure that SPS documents are readable, accessible, and engaging for staff.

In formatting this document, good practice principles around engagement and inclusive communications have been adhered to.

If you require this document in an alternative format, please contact Human Resources.

Review and Monitoring

This Statement will be reviewed every two years

Human Resources Policy and Guidance in SPS

SPS policies consider current legislation, rules, regulations and best practice guidance from a range of professional and public bodies, including the following:



UK Civil
Service
Management
Code



UK Legislation



EU
Legislation



ACAS



CIPD Best
Practice