April 2026

# UCEA Briefing on HE gender pay gap infographics

UCEA continues to produce annual infographics examining the gender pay gap (GPG). These revised infographics use information and data from the latest official earnings data published by the ONS and HESA data and also draw on joint UCEA and HE trade union sector-level work.

UCEA and its members share the commitment of the sector trade unions to taking further action to reduce the gender, ethnicity and disability pay gaps. There is substantial interest and commitment from employers in accessing benchmarking data and good practice to support their attempts to reduce pay gaps.

These infographics only tackle GPG issues, aiming to present key information from the HE sector-level data. The seven individual infographics are over two pages. While UCEA has been undertaking GPG work to support its member HE organisations it is at institutional level that the GPG figures and actions matter most. There is, of course, more work to be done at a societal and employer level and we know our members continue to take steps to address the causes, seeking to ensure that women can progress in their workforces.

## Infographics: Examining the gender pay gap in Higher Education

UCEA's open-access new infographics on GPG are available at 'Examining the gender pay gap in Higher Education'. The first page of infographics addresses questions to provide context and comparison to gender pay in HE (individual infographics are numbered):

- '**What is the difference between equal pay and the gender pay gap?**' aims to clarify these different concepts by presenting two highly simplified organisational views; it is not intended to show any actual employer. Many people still confuse or conflate equal pay and pay gaps. This infographic seeks to show how an organisation can have men and women paid equally, i.e. equal pay in place – a legal requirement since 1975, but still have a gender pay gap across the organisation as a whole.

- '**Gender pay gap over the decade: how is HE doing?**' addresses the combined questions of how much GPG progress has been made in HE over a decade and how this compares with progress in the UK economy as a whole. The gender pay gaps are based on UK employees' median gross hourly earnings excluding over-time from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings produced by the ONS. The HE figure is for the whole UK HE workforce. It differs from the institution-level median gender pay gap figure that are reported in the statutory gender pay gap reporting.

- '**How are HEIs advancing gender equality?**' infographic shows the latest data on the number of Athena SWAN Charter institutional awards achieved by HEIs in 2025. The Athena SWAN Charter is available at www.advance-he.ac.uk/charters/athena-swan-charter

- '**What is the gender balance in the HE workforce?**' illustrates the HE sector workforce profile, by gender. It sets out the proportions of male/female employees

working as professional services staff and academic staff, and the proportions of male/female staff who work part-time.

The second page of infographics provides occupational segregation explanations and looks at the gender balance by roles:

- This infographic is the first of two tackling occupational segregation with the question '**What is horizontal segregation?**' It takes four example occupational groupings within the HE workforce, each at a different median pay level, and shows the differential distribution of women and men in each.

- This second occupational segregation infographic seeks to answer the question '**What is vertical segregation?**' The pyramid is used to show a hierarchy of seven academic roles, using HESA contract levels, and shows how women and men are currently represented at each level in the whole HE workforce.

- '**How does the gender balance differ by roles?**' takes five example roles in HE (using HESA contract levels) – three academic contract levels and two professional services contract levels – to show the differing balance between male and female employees at each level. It shows the figures for both full-time and part-time employees.

Each of these infographics is also available as individual jpeg attachments on the UCEA website at www.ucea.ac.uk/library/infographics/ so that they can be downloaded and used. We encourage HEIs to consider making use of them in their institution-level briefing materials.

## Contacts

If you have any questions or queries regarding this briefing, please contact UCEA's Research or Communications teams as appropriate www.ucea.ac.uk/about-us/staff/