

Snapshot data 5 April 2025



Gender Pay Gap & Inclusion Report

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People Driven. Legal Excellence.

Our story and values

Higgs LLP is built on relationships. Our CLEAR values (Care, Legacy, Excellence, Authenticity and Relationships) shape how we recruit, develop and reward our people, and how we serve our clients and communities. This report sets out our gender pay position alongside the wider actions we take to ensure opportunities are accessible, progression is transparent and a genuine sense of belonging is embedded across the firm.

Inclusion and equality

Resource groups and networks

Inclusion at Higgs LLP is colleague-led and leadership-backed. Our Inclusion Group is supported by a network of active resource groups, including Proud Together (LGBTQ+), a Family Friendly Group and a Menopause Resource Group, alongside cross-firm committees focused on Wellness, Charity and Green initiatives. These groups play a meaningful role in shaping policy, education, awareness and day-to-day support across the firm.

Charters, pledges and standards

We are signatories to The Law Society's Diversity and Inclusion Charter and operate to recognised people standards across the firm. Our Investors in People Gold accreditation reflects a strong workplace culture in which colleagues are supported to perform, develop and thrive. We align our inclusion objectives with our wider ESG commitments, ensuring that social impact is measured, monitored and sustained over time.

Social mobility & access to the profession

We are proud supporters of Birmingham Law Society's Diversity and Inclusion Scheme. Working in partnership with other firms and legal education providers, we offer mentoring, paid work experience and financial support to talented individuals from underrepresented and lower socio-economic backgrounds. Since launch, annual cohorts have benefited from scholarships, vacation schemes and structured supervision at Higgs LLP, supporting access to the profession and long-term career progression.

Community, outreach and awareness

We actively engage with our local communities through participation in Pride, awareness events, open days and skills workshops, including sessions delivered in collaboration with Birmingham Black Lawyers. Our Charity of the Year programme and volunteering initiatives support a range of local causes, complemented by year-round fundraising activity and community partnerships.

Fair pay and good work

We are committed to paying the Real Living Wage and to applying structured pay governance to reduce bias in reward decisions. Pay equity is monitored by role family to ensure consistency and fairness. As a Cornerstone Employer, we work with schools, colleges and universities to broaden access to meaningful work experience and to build early-career pathways into the legal profession.

Recognition and external validation

In 2025, we won the Employee Wellness Excellence Award at the Express and Star Business Awards, recognising our people-centric approach. Our People team was also shortlisted for an In-House Recruitment Award for Candidate Assessment in partnership with ThriveMap, and we were shortlisted for the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Award at the Birmingham Law Society Legal Awards 2025.



Targets and measures

We will track progress against clear, transparent measures that focus on representation, progression and experience.

Representation: sustain our strong female representation across the firm while working towards greater balance at senior levels. Our aim is to increase female representation in the upper quartile by 3–5% over the next two years, ensuring that the strength of our talent pipeline is more evenly reflected at the most senior levels of the firm.

Progression: achieve balanced shortlists and calibrated promotion outcomes across all role families, supported by annual audit and Board-level oversight.

Experience: maintain Investors in People accreditation and publish an annual ESG Impact update, including inclusion outcomes and community impact.

Pay equity: complete an annual role-family pay review and take action on any gaps not explained by role scope, performance or experience.



Understanding the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap reflects the difference between average hourly pay for male and female colleagues across the firm, for all roles, not the pay difference for the same role. It is distinct from equal pay, which refers to equal remuneration for the same or equivalent work.

Quartiles split our people into four equal groups based on pay, from lowest to highest. The mean gap compares average pay, while the median gap compares midpoints.

Methodology

- Based on ordinary pay at the snapshot date (excluding overtime) including full-time, part-time and permanent workers
- Quartiles divide employees into four equal pay bands
- Mean gap is average male versus female pay; median gap is the midpoint
- A series of validation checks were undertaken to ensure the accuracy and integrity of the dataset.



2025 headline figures

The following visuals show our gender pay distribution and headline gaps.

We report both mean and median figures because they show different aspects of pay distribution across the firm.

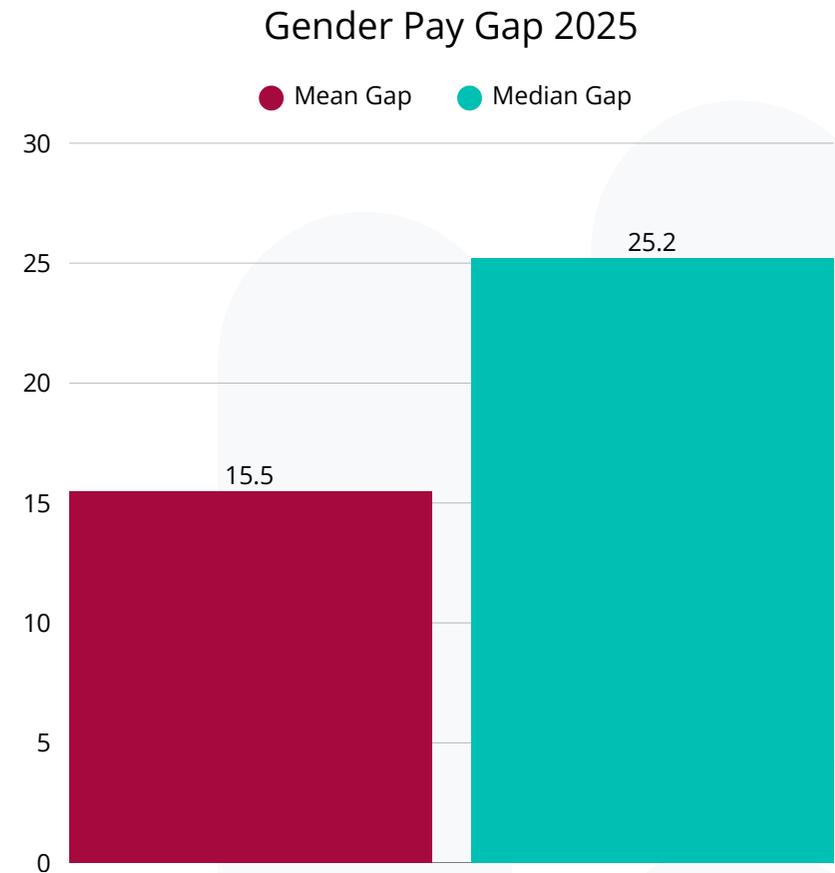
At the point of reporting the firm had 230 employees - **176** women (77%) compared to **54** men (23%).

£29.03

*is the mean hourly pay for men compared to **£24.52** for women*

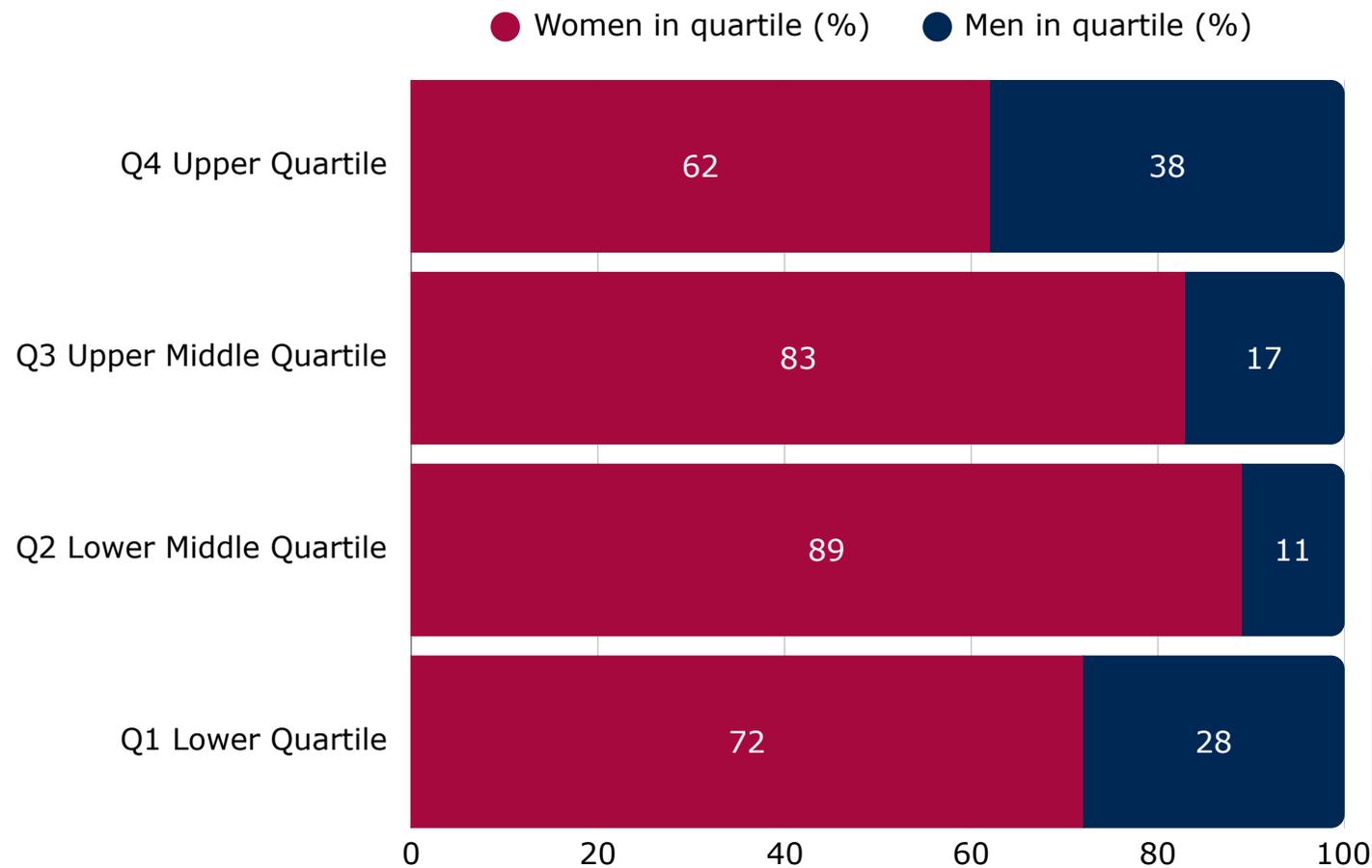
25.2%

*Our median gender pay gap is **25.2%**. In practical terms, for every £1 earned by a man at Higgs LLP, a woman earns around **75p** when comparing median pay.*



2025 headline figures

Pay quartile by gender



The data tells us is there is a higher proportion of men in the upper quartile than in the lower quartile which will inevitably skew the distribution of salaries

Figure 1: Proportion of female and male across pay quartiles.

Benchmarking and structural context

By comparison with wider UK data, the national gender pay gap for all employees was **12.8%** (median figure) in 2025 (ONS data). This gap is influenced by the distribution of male and female employees across full-time, part-time and senior roles. The median pay gap for regulated professional sectors such as legal has historically been higher than the UK average, notably when senior roles are weighted more heavily towards one gender.

Research of mandatory and voluntary disclosures from over 100 UK law firms shows the average law firm gender pay gap is around **26%** (median figure), with considerable variation based on firm size, structure and career progression patterns.

This places our median gap broadly in line with legal sector trends but above the overall UK labour market average.



What's driving the gap?

Across our role categories, we see patterns that mirror broader trends in the UK legal sector:

a. Structured remuneration in fee-earners

Legal roles such as Legal Directors, Principal Associates, Senior Associates and Associates show only minor differences in average pay between male and female colleagues. This reflects structured pay bands coupled with transparent progression frameworks where performance, billings and post qualification experience (PQE) are primary drivers of reward.

c. Junior entry-level representation

Junior and early-career roles (trainees, paralegals, legal assistants and administrative positions) have a strong female majority. Nationally, women account for a majority of solicitors on the roll, and early career pipelines are heavily female-weighted. However, this structural pipeline effect increases the median gender pay gap because these roles typically have lower starting salaries.

b. Central teams pay patterns

Central Team roles, including senior business professionals, operational leadership and specialist technical functions, show higher male pay averages in this snapshot. Within the legal sector, senior business professionals and technical leadership roles have historically had lower female representation, particularly at more senior levels. These roles typically sit within the upper pay quartiles, meaning that even a relatively small number of higher-paid colleagues can have a disproportionate impact on the mean gender pay gap. This effect is consistent with patterns observed across the wider legal market.

d. Structural representation, not unequal pay

Taken together, these dynamics indicate that our pay gap reflects structural representation differences across roles rather than like-for-like pay inequality. Ensuring a strong female pipeline at junior levels continues through into senior leadership remains a recognised challenge across the profession.

Higgs in action: equality and inclusion in practice

Our gender pay figures sit within a wider commitment to building an inclusive culture and engaging with our communities. This commitment is evident through:

- Blind recruitment and colleague inclusion networks
- Our pledge to the Law Society's Inclusion Charter and focus on social mobility
- The Diversity and Inclusion Scheme with the Birmingham Law Society
- Regular listening exercises and ongoing training for all colleagues
- Diverse recruitment panels and structured scoring frameworks to reduce subjectivity
- Gender-neutral and jargon-free job descriptions



What we are doing next

We recognise that closing the gap is not about a single initiative but about creating a consistent, fair and inclusive experience across the whole firm. To achieve this, we will focus on the following priorities:

a. Deepen progression support

We will strengthen career pathways to ensure that talent is recognised and nurtured at every stage. This includes targeted mentoring for female and colleagues from under-represented groups, access to stretch projects, and transparent criteria for promotion. Our ultimate aim is to see balanced representation at senior levels and to create confidence that progression is based on merit and potential. By Q4 2026 we will report gender breakdowns for all promotion decisions, with target metrics such as at least 45% female representation in final senior promotion lists. We will also introduce an external recruitment programme in order to offer Solicitor Apprenticeship places each year.

b. Focus reward reviews on central teams

We will carry out a detailed review of pay structures and progression routes within our Central Teams, where some of the disparities are most visible. This will involve benchmarking roles against the wider market, introducing clearer pay bands and ensuring decisions are consistently monitored by senior leaders. We will continue to use recognised compensation surveys such as Willis Towers Watson (WTW) to align pay bands to market norms and track movement over time.

c. Expand inclusion group programmes

Together with our People Team, our colleague-led Inclusion Group will continue to grow and shape the culture of Higgs. We will support the expansion of resource groups, awareness events and peer networks, ensuring all voices are heard. We will invest in leadership sponsorship of these groups so that inclusion is woven into every department and practice area.

d. Measure and report transparently

We will publish an annual inclusion and pay equity report alongside our statutory gender pay figures. We will track representation, progression and pay equity data quarterly and share progress with our Board. This transparency will ensure accountability and allow us to adjust our approach if progress stalls.

e. Embed inclusive culture firmwide

Inclusion will remain central to how we recruit, reward and retain our people. We will strengthen unconscious bias training, continue to promote flexible working arrangements, and build wellbeing initiatives that allow everyone to thrive. These actions reflect our CLEAR values and will help ensure that Higgs remains a place where careers flourish and differences are celebrated.

A portrait of Nick Taylor, CEO of Higgs LLP, wearing glasses and a blue suit jacket. The image is overlaid with a semi-transparent blue filter.

“I confirm that the data and narrative in this report are accurate to the best of my knowledge and reflect our firm’s values and commitment under the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.”

NICK TAYLOR
CEO, HIGGS LLP

