



UK Atomic  
Energy  
Authority

# Gender pay gap report 2023



# An introduction from our Chief Executive, **Professor Sir Ian Chapman**



As I said last year, UKAEA is a special organisation with a special mission – to deliver sustainable fusion power and maximise the economic and scientific benefits along that pathway.

United by a common goal, our skilled, experienced and dedicated colleagues are the reason for UKAEA's successes. I am incredibly proud of our achievements – from our experiments on the Joint European Torus (JET), to the establishment of UK Industrial Fusion Solutions Ltd (UKIFS) to lead the delivery of UKAEA's Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme at West Burton in Nottinghamshire; from our ground-breaking research, to our national and international collaborations and partnerships in support of our mission; from our outreach programmes with schools, colleges and universities, to our early careers schemes and coaching and mentoring schemes.

We are an inclusive and multicultural organisation with people from 63 countries where everyone has a voice. We offer a great place to work, with an authentically friendly culture, family-friendly environment, and a healthy work-life balance.

Whilst we've seen a 5% increase in women in STEM roles and a slight increase in the proportion of women in roles which attract a market supplement, a gender pay gap remains. At all levels we have a collective responsibility to narrow our gender pay gap and our commitment to do this in the coming years is reflected in our action plan.

## **WRITTEN STATEMENT**

I confirm that the information contained in this report is accurate and in accordance with the Gender Pay Gap reporting requirements.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ian Chapman'. The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

PROFESSOR SIR IAN CHAPMAN, Chief Executive, UKAEA

# Mission

The UK Atomic Energy Authority's mission is to lead the delivery of sustainable fusion energy and maximise scientific and economic benefit.



# The work we do

The United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) is an executive non-departmental public body of the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

UKAEA is a key contributor to the government's ambitious target of achieving net zero greenhouse gases and believes fusion can be an environmentally responsible part of the world's energy supply in the second half of this century.

UKAEA is responsible for the management of the UK's fusion research programme and has an international reputation for cutting edge science and engineering. Our scientists and engineers work with partners around the globe to develop fusion as a new source of clean energy for tomorrow's power stations. This programme includes the operation of the Mega Amp Spherical Tokamak Upgrade (MAST-U) and ground-breaking research and innovation surrounding the decommissioning and repurposing the Joint European Torus (JET), which for over 40 years was the world's largest magnetic fusion experiment.

Alongside the two fusion machines, we operate world-class facilities such as the Remote Applications in Challenging Environments (RACE) robotics centre, Materials Research Facility (MRF), and Hydrogen-3 Advanced Technology (H3AT) at Culham in Oxfordshire, the Fusion Technology Facility (FTF) at Rotherham in South Yorkshire and the Robotics and AI Collaboration (RAICo) at Whitehaven in Cumbria.

The Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) Programme will design, develop and build, by 2040, a prototype fusion power plant at West Burton in Nottinghamshire. To deliver STEP, UK Industrial Fusion Solutions Ltd (UKIFS) has been formed as a delivery body, and a subsidiary of UKAEA. This body will drive performance at pace and engage with the fusion industry in delivering STEP. We are working hand in hand with the private sector and academia to drive fusion forward towards commercialisation. Our initiatives aim to grow the capability of the UK industry and make the UK a global hub for fusion innovation and a £650m Fusion Futures Programme was launched in 2023 to support this development of the wider UK fusion sector.

Developing the talented, diverse people needed to deliver fusion is key to our mission. The Oxfordshire Advanced Skills (OAS) apprentice training centre opened in 2019 and recently expanded, at Culham Campus, offers high-quality training for apprentice engineers at businesses in the Thames Valley. The Fusion Opportunities in Skills, Training, Education and Research (FOSTER) programme is designed to build on this to create a U.K. fusion skills ecosystem – with international reach – that can train, grow, and develop the fusion generation who will deliver fusion energy to the grid. We know that the contributions of our employees are key to the success of UKAEA, and that it is their demonstration of our organisational values – Committed, Trusted, Innovative, Collaborative – that enables us to achieve our mission.



## Gender Pay Gap Regulations

**Gender pay gap regulations require UK employers with more than 250 employees to publish their gender pay gap. This report was prepared using data based on a snapshot date of 5th April 2023.**

The regulations require UKAEA to report on the following:

- Mean and median gender pay gap. This is the percentage difference in the average hourly earnings for men and women irrespective of their role. The hourly earnings must include items specified in the regulations, such as basic pay, various allowances and shift pay.
- Mean and median gender bonus gap. This is based on all bonuses (defined in legislation) paid in the 12 months ending on the snapshot date.
- Proportion of men and women receiving bonus payments in the 12 months ending on the snapshot date.
- Proportion of men and women in each pay quarter (these are defined in legislation and are not based on UKAEA pay bands).

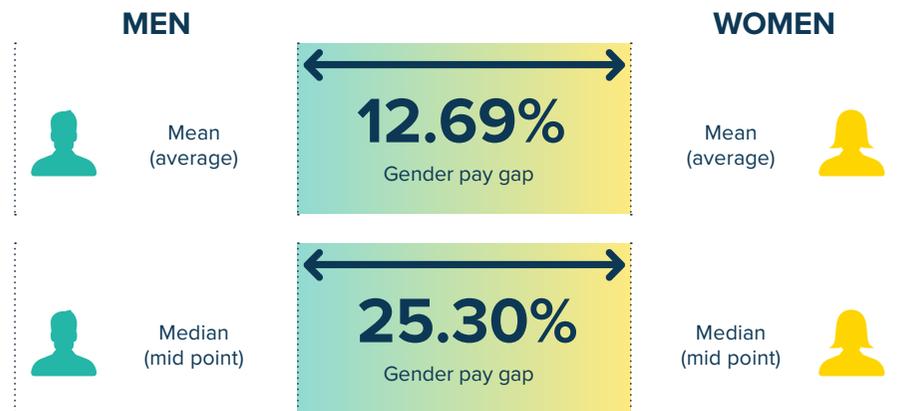
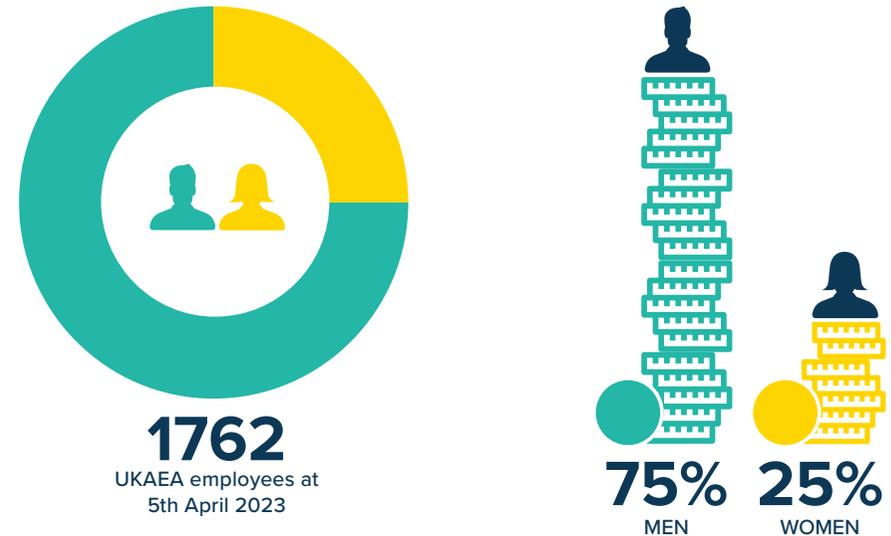
# Key facts

## What is the Gender Pay Gap?

The gender pay gap is a measure that shows the percentage difference in average hourly pay between men and women. Because different jobs are paid differently and the number of women performing these jobs varies, a gender pay gap may exist. This is different from equal pay.

Equal pay compares pay differences between men and women in the same, or similar jobs. The gender pay gap does not show differences in pay for comparable jobs and so is not an indicator of unequal pay. UKAEA uses a recognised job evaluation system as a robust tool for establishing the size of different jobs to ensure that roles are correctly graded.

## UKAEA employees at 5th April 2023



# Key facts

## What is the Gender Bonus Gap?

The gender bonus gap is a measure that shows the percentage difference in average bonus pay between men and women. UKAEA's main bonus scheme is awarded fairly to men and women as a percentage of basic pay, but a gender bonus gap may exist because different jobs are paid differently and the number of women performing these jobs varies.



## Bonuses

Proportion of women and men receiving a bonus (in 12 months ending on 5th April, 2023)



# Key findings

At UKAEA, the mean gender pay gap for 2023 is 12.69% and the median is 25.30%. The gender pay gap in 2022 was 12.2% (mean) and 26.3% (median). The key factors contributing to UKAEA's gender pay gap are:

## **The proportion of women employed in STEM roles at UKAEA remains relatively low.**

Out of 1252 STEM roles, 18% were held by women. Whilst this is an increase from 13% since 2022, it is still falling short of the national average which stands at 26% for women in the core-STEM roles<sup>1</sup>. Of the 18% of women employed by UKAEA in STEM roles, 28% work in scientific and 72% in engineering roles.

## **The low proportion of women in science, technology, and engineering roles which attract a market supplement.**

A large proportion of science, technology and engineering roles at UKAEA offer a market supplement. However, the proportion of women in these roles at UKAEA remains low despite a slight increase in the proportion of women in engineering roles, up to 12.9% in 2023 from

12.4% in 2022. Recent research<sup>2</sup> indicates that 16.5% of engineering roles are filled by women in the UK. It is important to note that market supplements are awarded fairly regardless of gender.

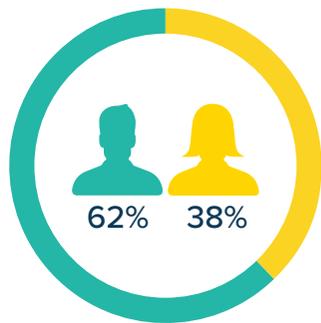
The above factors create an uneven gender distribution across all UKAEA grades. The proportion of women in the lower pay quarter has reduced from 39% to 38%, increased in the lower middle quarter from 23% to 25% but continues to fall to 18% by the upper pay quarter.



<sup>1</sup> WISEcampaign.org.uk

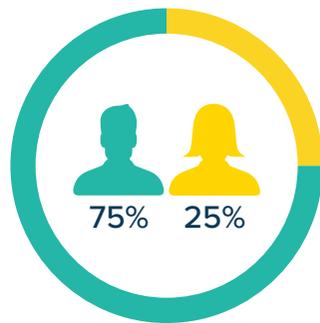
<sup>2</sup> EngineeringUK.com

# Pay quarters



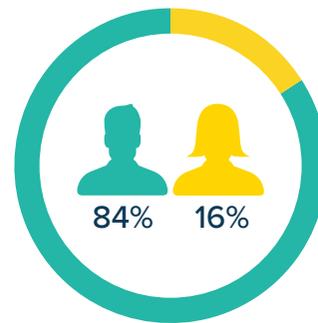
Lower  
**Q1**

Percentage of women has **reduced** from **39%** in 2022



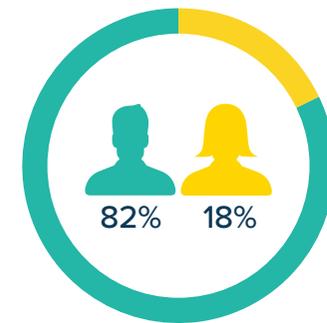
Lower middle  
**Q2**

Percentage of women has **increased** from **23%** in 2022



Upper middle  
**Q3**

Percentage of women has **reduced** from **17%** in 2022



Upper  
**Q4**

Percentage of women has **remained the same** since 2022

# Action plan

UKAEA is proud to have adopted targeted initiatives aimed at fostering inclusivity and fairness, particularly culture, talent acquisition, and learning and development. However, it is acknowledged that despite these efforts, insufficient progress has been made in reducing our gender pay gap. Therefore, new actions have been developed to address the specific factors contributing to this gap. The following action plan outlines our commitment to implementing the necessary steps over the next 12 months.

GPG REPORT	ACTION	IMPACT	DEADLINE	UPDATE
2022	Carry out biannual equal pay audits, the results of which will be published.	Ensuring that our staff are confident in the application of our pay arrangements, and that equal pay issues are addressed swiftly should they occur.	31 April 2022	<b>Complete.</b> The 2022/23 pay award and in-flight promotions resolved most identified equal pay issues. A pay adjustment was made for the remaining case.
2022	Carry out further in-depth empirical analysis of the factors contributing to the gender pay gap.	Gain full understanding of all the contributing factors to enable UKAEA to implement further specific steps to address the gap.	31 May 2022	<b>Complete.</b> UKAEA is using a GPG analysis tool to assist with the diagnostic and predictive analysis of UKAEA's GPG. The analysis is being used to plan activity aimed at tackling the factors contributing to UKAEA's GPG.
2022	Provide inclusive sponsorship/ coaching resources for women, ensuring that they are appropriate for all women, including those impacted by intersectionality.	Identify and remove the barriers which are preventing women from progressing their careers to senior positions within UKAEA.	31 May 2022	<b>Complete.</b> UKAEA has a targeted, and aligned, approach to develop the skills and networks needed to progress women's careers, aimed at Levels 1-4, including access to an external coach and piloting online courses with evaluation and measurement stages throughout.
2022	Introduce more proactive recruitment arrangements.	Attract more women to apply for UKAEA's vacant roles.	31 July 2022	<b>Complete.</b> UKAEA is updating the format of its job adverts to attract applications from more women and is now advertising roles in various publications tailored to women. This work will be embedded into UKAEA's recruitment practices.
2022	Increase transparency of pay, recruitment and promotion decisions.	Addressing cognitive bias, improving capability and demonstrating equity.	31 October 2023	<b>Complete.</b> Applicable policies, guidance and pay information have been reviewed and are more accessible. Management dashboards have also been created.

# Action plan

GPG REPORT	ACTION	IMPACT	DEADLINE	UPDATE
2023	An increase in female representation at mid- to upper-grades in underrepresented areas where available talent pools exist.	Increase female representation in mid-management and senior roles where talent pool indicates this is possible and where women are underrepresented.	31 March 2025	<b>New action</b>
2023	Shortlist at least two female applicants, or 30% female applicants, in recruitment campaigns for roles in underrepresented areas at Level 5 and above before undertaking interviews.	More diverse talent pool where existing talent pool allows.	31 March 2025	<b>New action</b>
2023	Review Shared Parental Leave arrangements and develop in-house knowledge to better support colleagues.	Increased understanding and uptake of Shared Parental Leave.	30 January 2025	<b>New action</b>
2023	Externally benchmark UKAEA's flexible working and work-life policies and practices every two years.	Opportunities to create a more welcoming and inclusive environment.	30 April 2025	<b>New action</b>
2023	Building on a successful Returners pilot, roll out the programme with 5 new roles across UKAEA.	Increased diversity via returners applications from women and people from Black Caribbean and African, Pakistani and Bangladeshi backgrounds where possible.	31 March 2025	<b>New action</b>
2023	Targeted line management coaching to improve understanding of gender and race equal pay and gender pay issues.	Remove attitudinal barriers and residual unconscious biases from those in the 'squeezed' middle.	31 March 2025	<b>New action</b>

# REFLECTIONS ON ACHIEVEMENTS

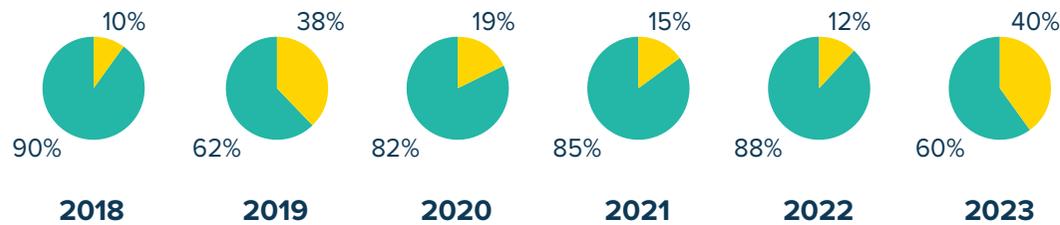
The success stories within UKAEA and positive reflections on proactive initiatives that support the narrowing of gender pay and foster diverse and inclusive culture.

## Early career schemes

It is recognised that attracting women into technical graduate and apprentice roles is challenging. UKAEA's early careers team adopted different practices in the recruitment and selection process in a bid to attract more women to join the early career schemes.

**These efforts contributed to the highest proportion of women joining the graduate scheme since 2018.**

MEN ● WOMEN



# Development and support for women

The UKAEA's 2022 gender pay gap action plan included a commitment to increasing the accessibility of coaching sessions and additional development and support opportunities such as mentoring and training to support the career progression of women. Women across the organisation are participating in group coaching, and additional places have been offered for a one-off networking workshop. Furthermore, an online programme has been launched to support women to develop the key skills and knowledge they need to progress in their careers. In total, approximately 90 women across the organisation have been supported through these initiatives with plans to run further sessions later this year.

UKAEA will work with the participants over the next few years to understand how their participation in these programmes has helped to develop them and their careers.



## Outreach work



It is encouraging that the number of girls taking GCSE exams in core-STEM subjects has risen to 7.2%, which equates to 81,872 more students compared to 2022. Additionally, there was a 2.5% increase in women taking A Levels in core-STEM subjects in 2023<sup>3</sup>. At UKAEA we have maintained ongoing efforts to support this trend. We organise monthly school visits for GCSE and A-Level groups, accommodating up to 80 students per visit throughout the academic year. Moving forward, the UKAEA team will prioritise visits to all girls' schools to further encourage and support female participation in STEM education.

<sup>3</sup> WISEcampaign.org.uk



During British Science Week, UKAEA visited a local school, and hosted four schools on site across the week. UKAEA also conducted live-streams outreach sessions to a total of five schools, with an all-women presenting team.

UKAEA has participated in many science festivals, including Goodwood Festival of Speed; IF Oxford Ideas Festival; ATOM Science Festival; Festival of Science and Curiosity, Nottinghamshire; New Scientist Live.



# Inclusive and family-friendly environment

UKAEA strives to be a welcoming and flexible employer therefore, we have committed to joining the Working Families Index and benchmarking our practices against other employers. In particular, the Parents' Network is championing suggested changes to policies to enable UKAEA to move towards a gender neutral approach.

To further support employees in managing their work-life balance, UKAEA offers generous paid family leave, with contractual shared parental pay now enhanced in line with contractual maternity pay. This initiative benefited our employees allowing them to share parental care in those early months whilst also providing financial security for an extended time.

As part of the 2022 gender pay gap action plan, UKAEA engaged with 70 employees returning from family leave to provide valuable insights. Some of the feedback is shared in this report and actions were taken to address highlighted issues, such as making policies more accessible and easier to understand. The employee networks have prioritised their top five issues and these have been integrated into the five-year EDI & Wellbeing strategy which is due in early 2025.

“

'I have recently returned to work from.....shared parental leave. I wanted to share with you that UKAEA's decision.....to extend shared parental pay....up to 24 weeks full pay has had an enormous positive impact for my life both personal and professional. This practice is extremely rare in industry, and we should be very vocal about such an incredible benefit, both externally but also internally; I was one of the very first employees to take advantage of this change'.

'The general culture in UKAEA is very supportive of those going on long-term leave'

'UKAEA culture is generally positive towards parental leave'

'The arrangements at UKAEA are very good and inclusive, it is very clear every effort is made to make the process easy and transparent'

'The transition from maternity leave to a career break was really easy and I was well supported in doing so'

'Being able to return to work before having to navigate nurseries made the transition back into work much smoother and less daunting for me. Seeing my husband bond with our daughter during that time was absolutely priceless; he enjoyed his three months with her and took so much away from the experience. He also found it gave him a much better understanding of the invisible workload that faces many stay at home parents, Overall, this experience had a huge positive impact on us as a family unit and is one I'm so glad we did'

”

# Talent Acquisition

UKAEA's Talent Acquisition team is actively promoting gender diversity in roles through publications like 'Investing In Women'. The team is working towards reducing and, wherever possible, eliminating essential requirements for advertised positions. This approach aligns with recent research<sup>4</sup> indicating that women tend to apply for roles with fewer essential requirements.

These adverts are gender inclusive, employing consistent language aimed at attracting more women to these STEM roles historically dominated by men. The talent team has implemented an anonymous application sifting process to mitigate unconscious bias in recruitment.



<sup>4</sup> <https://www.bi.team/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/Gender-differences-in-response-to-requirements-in-job-adverts-March-2022.pdf>

## Employee Networks

UKAEA is home to many active employee networks. The Women's Network arranges workplace events that champion women, featuring successful programmes such as "Find Your Mentor," as well as celebrations for International Women's Day and events with guest speakers. These activities focus on highlighting the benefits of mentoring schemes, empowerment in STEM industries, effective communication, and strategies for managing personal well-being.



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Find out more  
[www.gov.uk/ukaea](http://www.gov.uk/ukaea)

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