



UK Atomic  
Energy  
Authority

# Gender pay gap report 2024



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



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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 the Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production (STEP) programme at the West Burton power plant 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 65 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 have made some progress in reducing the mean gender pay gap there is still a lot more work to do. I am, however, pleased to report that women continue to apply in high numbers for our roles, they do well at interview and are offered roles at higher or equivalent rates to men, and this paints a positive picture for the future. I am confident that with the introduction of our Gender Pay Gap Panel, our Gender Pay Gap Working Group, and the continued focus on our action plan, we will make the changes we want to see.

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.

**Professor Sir Ian Chapman**  
Chief Executive, UKAEA

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# 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

UKAEA is the UK's national fusion energy research organisation. Our mission is to lead the delivery of sustainable fusion energy and maximise the scientific and economic benefit. We do this by being technical experts, partnering with companies and the international research community. We own UK Industrial Fusion Solutions (UKIFS) on behalf of UK government.

UKAEA is a Public Sector Research Establishment (PSRE) responsible for the delivery of the UK's fusion energy research programmes. It is classed as a non-departmental public body (NDPB) and is sponsored by the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ).

## What we do

We are responsible for the research and delivery of sustainable fusion energy in the UK. UKIFS will lead the delivery of the STEP programme to design and build the UK's first prototype fusion energy plant.

### Build the knowledge base of fusion

- Our technical centres of excellence are the foundation for fusion power plant programmes.
- We operate world-leading facilities.
- We solve challenges across the full lifecycle of fusion, especially integration across disciplines.
- We provide thought-leadership for what will be needed for the widespread use of fusion power.

### Deliver fusion power plants

- We use our skills, facilities and expertise to enable partners to develop fusion power plants.
- We work with major industrial partners in a national programme to deliver the STEP prototype fusion energy power plant.

### Enable the fusion community

- We create fusion 'innovation clusters'.
- We grow a fusion industry.
- We produce skilled people.
- We support the regulation of fusion.
- We look for growth opportunities for fusion technology.
- We establish fusion insurance practices.
- We widely communicate the opportunity of fusion.

Developing the talented, diverse people needed to deliver fusion is key to our mission. We depend on a wide variety of skills and skilled people at UKAEA to deliver our objectives. People are at the heart of every part of our business. Creativity, innovation, energy, and motivation are the driving forces of our success. 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.

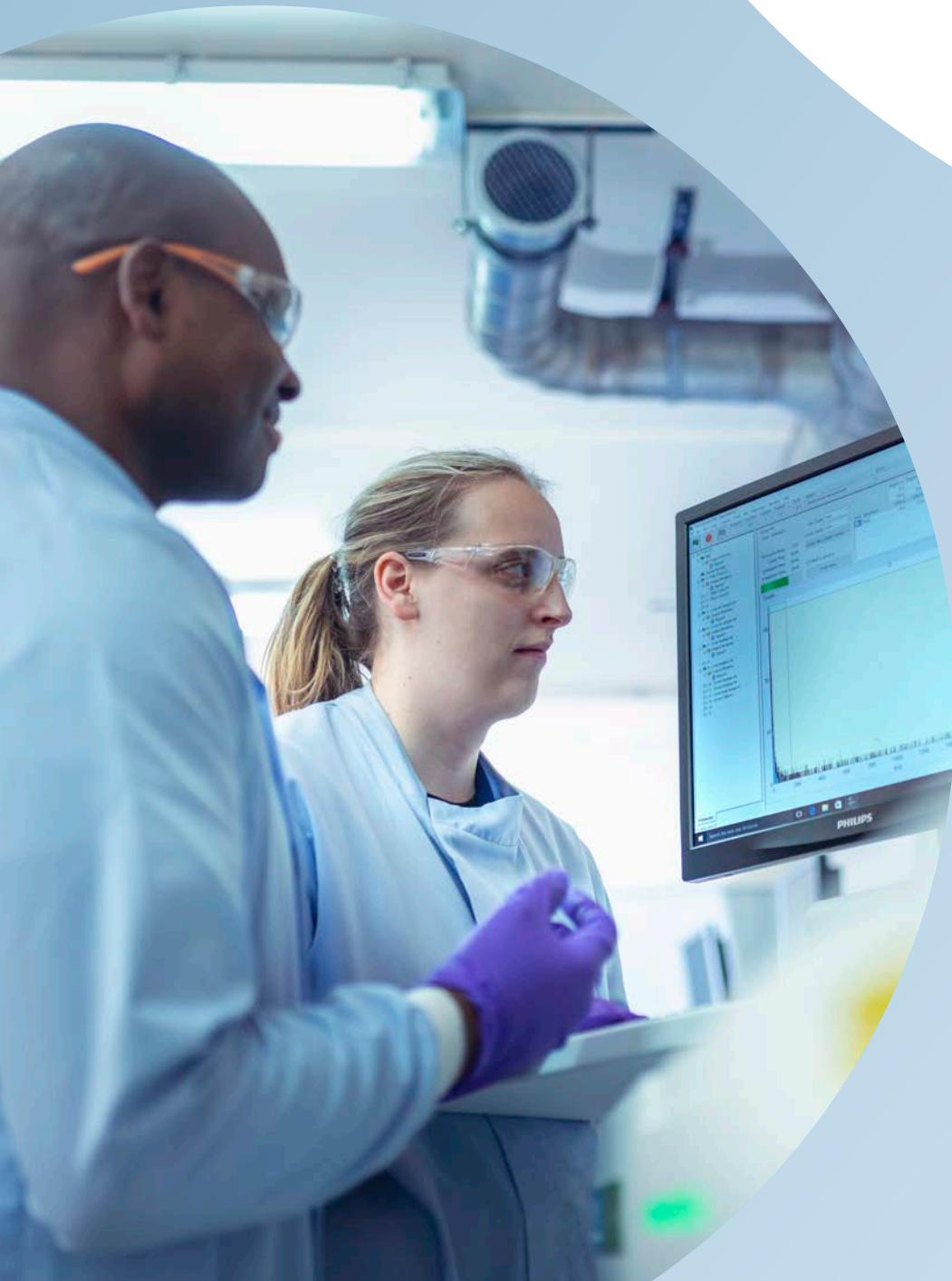
We celebrate the diversity of our staff and are proud of having created a friendly and open environment, where everyone's opinion is valued, and curiosity and questioning is encouraged. We recognise that this requires effective leadership, management skills, resources and constant engagement and effort, and that there is always more we can do.

# 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 2024.

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).





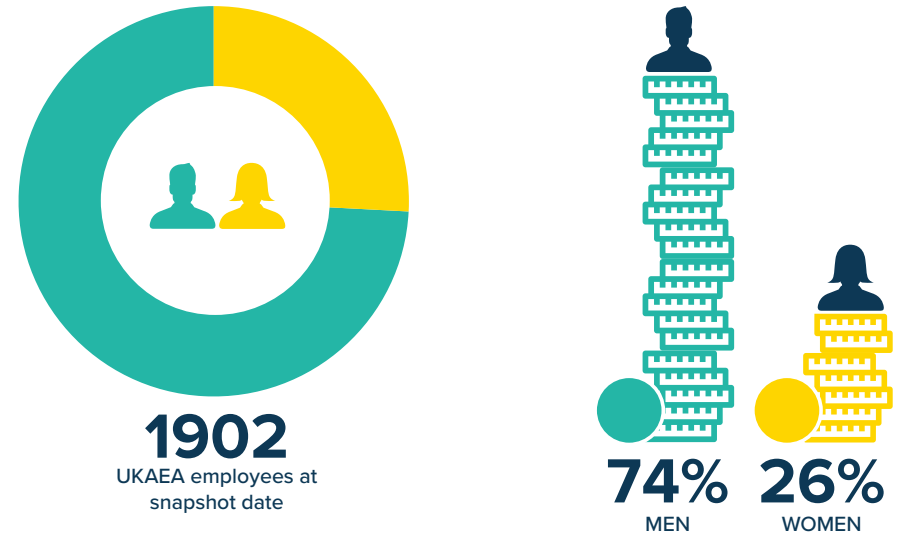
# Key facts

## What is the Gender Pay Gap?

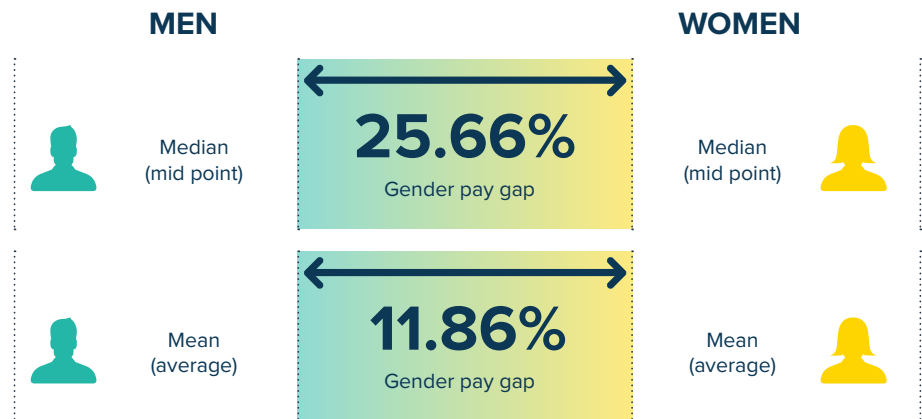
The gender pay gap is a measure that shows the percentage difference in average hourly pay between men and women. Because different jobs are paid differently and the number of women performing these jobs varies, a gender pay gap may exist. This is different from equal pay.

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 2024



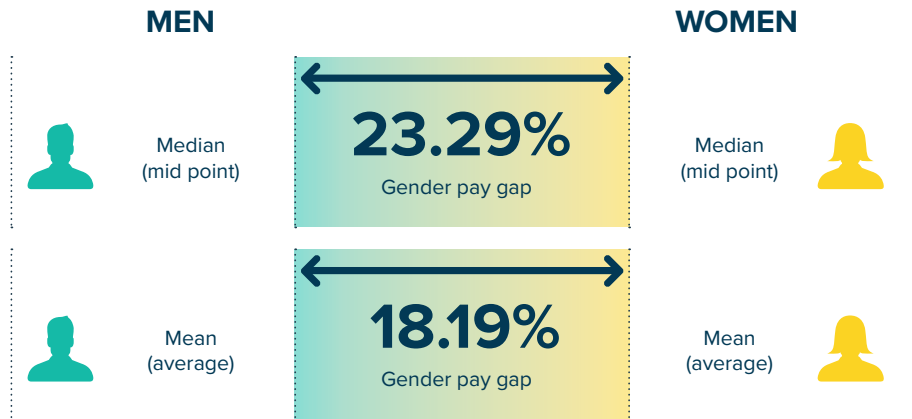
**1902**  
UKAEA employees at  
snapshot date



# 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 2024).



# Key findings

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

Out of 1117 STEM roles, 12% were held by women. This is a decrease from 18% in 2023. Of the 12% of women employed by UKAEA in STEM roles, 35% work in scientific and 65% in engineering roles.

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 14% in 2024 from 12.9% in 2023. 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 increased from 38% to 45%, decreased in the lower middle quarter from 25% to 22% and increased slightly from 18% to 21% in the upper pay quarter.

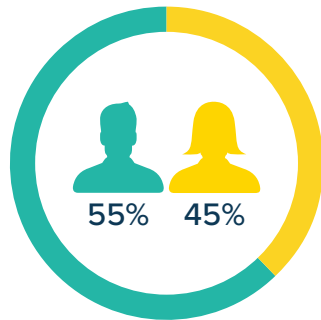
We have recently introduced a STEM returners programme which, in time, will go some way to address the disparity. Women make up roughly 26% of the UK STEM workforce<sup>1</sup> which makes the recruitment and retention of women a key focus for UKAEA.



<sup>1</sup> STEM Women Whitepaper released June 2024

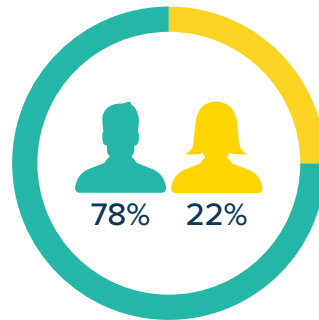


# Pay quarters



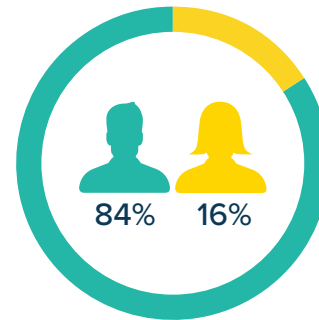
Lower  
**Q1**

Percentage of women in this quarter has **increased** from **38%** in 2023



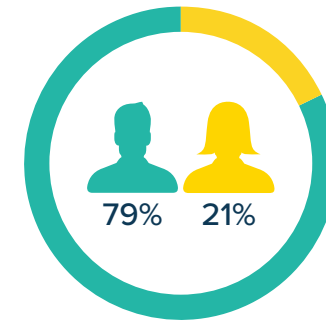
Lower middle  
**Q2**

Percentage of women in this quarter has **decreased** from **25%** in 2023



Upper middle  
**Q3**

Percentage of women in this quarter is the **same** at **16%** in 2023



Upper  
**Q4**

Percentage of women in this quarter has **increased** from **18%** in 2023

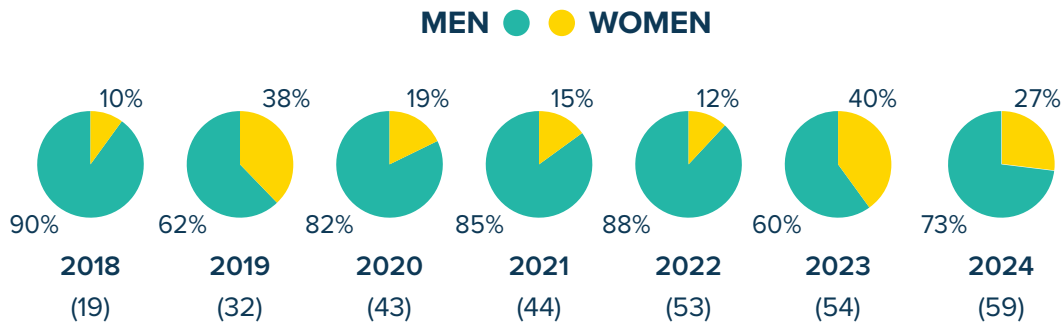
# REFLECTIONS ON ACHIEVEMENTS

Below are some success stories.....

## 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 number of women joining the graduate scheme since 2018.**



( ) = Number recruited into the graduate scheme



# Development and support for women

The UKAEA's 2023 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.

Five groups of women across the organisation participated in peer group coaching cohorts with additional places offered for several networking workshops led by the proactive Womens' Network. Three cohorts of women also benefitted from the Springboard programme.

Furthermore, an online programme has been launched to support women to develop the key skills and knowledge they need to progress in their careers. This initiative was introduced in 2023 and continues.

Over a hundred women have benefitted from these initiatives, with more sessions planned for 2025. UKAEA is also working closely with the Women's Network to highlight the mentoring scheme's value, where women both offer and receiving guidance, including through the

Women in Nuclear mentoring programme. Senior men are also being encouraged to participate to help increase networking opportunities for future applicants and graduate mentees.

Encouragingly, 15 women who attended the Springboard programme have earned promotions. UKAEA will work with the participants over the next few years to understand how these initiatives have supported their personal and career growth.





## Outreach work



The reported 7.2% rise in the number of girls taking GCSE exams in core-STEM subjects is encouraging, translating to 81,872 more students compared to 2022, alongside a 2.5% increase in women taking A Levels in core-STEM subjects in 2023<sup>2</sup>. At UKAEA, we are committed to nurturing this trend through sustained efforts. Each month, we organise school visits for GCSE and A-Level groups, welcoming up to 80 students per visit throughout the academic year. Looking ahead, UKAEA will prioritise visits to all-girls' schools to boost female participation in STEM education.

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

We've also recently partnered with In2Science, a social mobility charity that empowers young people from underrepresented and under-resourced backgrounds with an interest in STEM. Beyond this, UKAEA actively participates in science related festivals, including Goodwood Festival of Speed, IF Oxford Ideas Festival, ATOM Science Festival, Nottingham's Festival of Science and Curiosity and New Scientist Live, amplifying our outreach and inspiring the next generation.

# Inclusive and family-friendly environment

UKAEA strives to be a welcoming and flexible employer. As such, 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 eventually move towards a gender-neutral approach. Significant improvements have been made to the accessibility of information after feedback in a returners survey in 2022/ 2023 included the difficulty of finding information.

To further support employees in managing their work-life balance, UKAEA are in the top 29% of companies who offer generous paid family leave, with contractual shared parental pay now enhanced in line with contractual maternity pay\*. This initiative benefited our employees by allowing them to share parental care in those early months whilst also providing financial security for an extended time.

The COO and two Executive Directors attended a series of four workshops as part of the first cohort of flexible working champions, led by an external expert. This programme sought to convey how and where we work as a key factor affecting trust in organisations, whilst improving retention. At the time of writing a working group is being established, with an associated action plan, led by the COO. The five-year EDI & Wellbeing strategy is due to be published in mid-2025. This contains a detailed plan with a robust evaluation framework to monitor development. It will be used for embedding and measuring progress against the following objectives, each of which includes actions in support of gender and intersectional inclusion:

## OBJECTIVES

- Establish and maintain inclusive attraction and recruitment processes to ensure UKAEA employ the best people who reflect all backgrounds
- Value, retain, support and progress people fairly and equitably, regardless of background
- Prioritise wellbeing and support good mental health in the workplace by developing and delivering a systematic programme of activity
- Achieve universal accessibility & inclusion by design
- Develop approaches to monitor, measure and evaluate inclusion and impact of changes in each division or directorate

# Talent Acquisition

UKAEA's Talent Acquisition team is actively promoting gender diversity in roles through publications such as 'Investing In Women'. The team is working with the Women's Network to refine job adverts, aiming to reduce and, wherever possible, eliminate essential requirements for advertised positions. This approach aligns with recent research<sup>3</sup> indicating that women tend to apply for roles with fewer essential requirements. Where the role is suitable for flexible working, we are ensuring this is highlighted on the advert.

These adverts are gender inclusive, employing consistent language aimed at attracting more women to these STEM roles historically dominated by men.


There are two further initiatives set to boost more women into roles. The STEM Returners project offers opportunities for people returning to STEM roles following a career break, while a collaboration with a 9-2-3 Jobs, a recruitment agency focused on part-time vacancies, aims to enhance access to flexible positions.



<sup>3</sup> Gender differences in response to requirements in job adverts. Research report, March 2022, Government Equality Office and The Behavioural Insights Team.



## Employee Networks



UKAEA has eleven active employee EDI networks including Women's, Parents and Carers, LGBT+ and a Wellbeing group, all sponsored by an Executive Director. The networks feedback on and deliver initiatives and organise workplace events that support the issues and challenges different people face. The groups work exceptionally closely together and deliver high quality work, that often helps to further develop their management and leadership skills and gain pan-organisational insights. Their membership activity also provides exposure to senior people who are valuable sources of learning. UKAEA values the opportunities for sharing information about the many benefits and resources UKAEA has for its staff into every corner of the organisation. The networks and groups also work hard to create opportunities for their members to learn new skills and practice strategies for managing personal well-being. In the past year the network deliverables included:

- a joint parenting buddy system between the Women's and Parenting network
- talks on the importance of networking, how to take care of your career and on benefits of mentoring.

# 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
2023	<p>An increase in female representation at mid- to upper-grades in underrepresented areas where available talent pools exist.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>Increase female representation in mid-management and senior roles where talent pool indicates this is possible and where women are underrepresented</p> <p>A more diverse talent pool where existing talent pool allows.</p>	31 March 2025	<p><b>Ongoing.</b> Use of specialist job board Investing in Women. Limiting text to avoid putting applicants off with too many non-essential requirements. and attendance at conferences is being monitored for ROI.</p> <p>UKAEA now have a more robust governance structure and Executive issues escalation route in place to ensure the necessary resource to increase the numbers of senior women via widening participation efforts. Leaders will be encouraging their hiring managers to continue attending Women in STEM conferences and to widen their online networks out more specifically to women when they are advertising roles; maintaining the inclusive wording and hiring manager training. Given the limited number of women available in talent pools both locally and across the UK, to allow focus on progress towards the target it is proposed to set an annual incremental target which will increase each year towards the overall 30% target. The percentage target will be determined by the GPG Panel by end of April 2025.</p>
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	<p><b>Ongoing.</b> Significant efforts have been made to make policy documents and guidance more readily available and accessible and FAQ's are being developed. Further cross organisation training in SPL is planned for 2025. The Conditions of Employment Manual and policies are currently undergoing a significant review with TU support. and SPL Policy was reviewed by Working Families in 2024 and is gradually being amended, but it is recognised as a complex area which requires ongoing work.</p>

# Action plan

GPG REPORT	ACTION	IMPACT	DEADLINE	UPDATE
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.	1 April 2026	<b>Ongoing.</b> UKAEA have joined Working Families and have started making use of their resources. Working Families have been supporting with their helpline, resources and tools and this will take time to be widely embedded, understood and utilised. The Parents and Carers network set up a successful buddying scheme and are organising Drop In's to evaluate and gauge how easy access to support is, post changes and improvements.
2023	Building on a successful STEM Returners pilot, roll out the programme with 6 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>Ongoing.</b> Following a successful pilot last year, six vacancies for Returner applicants were advertised and at time of writing one has accepted an offer. Others are shortlisted or are going through the recruitment processes. There is an Executive commitment to continuing with this programme for at least another year.
2023	Targeted line management coaching to improve understanding of gender and race equal pay and gender pay gap issues.	Remove attitudinal barriers and residual unconscious biases from those in the 'squeezed' middle.	31 March 2025	<p>Completed &amp; Ongoing. The first cohort of senior staff completed the "Flex for High Performance" workshops delivered by Working Families in March and the COO is leading a working group to ensure momentum in carrying forward their learning into tangible actions. There is commitment to further developing an overall approach (with a vision) to a flexible and high performing culture, based on a refresh of UKAEA values.</p> <p>UKAEA will continue with the current (2023) actions. This includes further sessions with a new cohort as the organisation builds flexible working, linked to high performance, skills and knowledge. The knowledge gained by managers will help all groups and particularly minority ethnic women, older people and disabled people.</p> <p>Specifically addressing ethnicity pay gaps, a review was undertaken in late 2023 and several staff attended an ethnicity pay gap conference. The learning will be considered in the GPG group along with the other issues reported by minority ethnic staff in 2023. For example, improvements planned for reporting incidents including sexual harassment, racism and religious prejudice at work.</p>



# Action plan

GPG REPORT	ACTION	IMPACT	DEADLINE	UPDATE
2024	Undertake 'deep dives' into the data.	To identify areas in need of more focus and develop actions within those business areas to address.	Ongoing	This will be undertaken on an ongoing basis to enable us to track progress.
2024	Benchmark with other comparable organisations and share data with the GPG panel, working group and leaders.	Discussion and adoption of activity that will result in demonstrable change.	31 March 2026	Learning from other organisations is helpful to understand how we can continue to make progress.
2024	Review the current mandatory learning 'working with the 'Equality Act'.	Ensure our people are sighted on the requirements and organisational implications.	31 March 2026.	It is important to review and refresh our learning to ensure it reflects best practice and legislation.

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