

## **South Hampshire College Group (SHCG)**

### **Gender Pay Gap Report 2025**

#### **1. Introduction**

An essential part of creating a more inclusive and equitable workplace is through continued, authentic efforts to close the gender pay gap.

Whilst there has been notable progress over recent years to improve pay disparities between male and female workers, there are still inequities occurring across many industries and professions. Contributing factors include, but are not limited to, occupational stereotyping, unequal access to career progression and unconscious bias in remuneration packages or through decision making in talent and acquisition practices.

Organisations who are able to address the gender pay gap and demonstrate a genuine commitment to creating a more equitable workplace for all employees benefit from increased engagement, improved retention and a positive reputation as an employer of choice.

In recognition of this, SHCG is committed to creating an environment where every individual feels valued and rewarded equitably for their role within the college group. This paper addresses our current position with regards to the reported gender pay gap at SHCG and introduces a number of initiatives which are either in place or are projects planned to take place over the next 12 months with an objective to create better futures for all employees.

#### **2. Gender Pay Gap Report (March 2024)**

Last year, SHCG reported on the Gender Pay Gap review taken from the reference period of March 2024. This report is included as Appendix 1.

The Gender Pay Gap report from 2024 was SHCG's first combined report as a merged group of colleges. The reference period for this report was pay period March 2024 and it's important to note that the organisation was in the middle of a large organisational restructuring programme at that time. Therefore, any salary alignment which was achieved as a result of the restructure will not have been reflected in the data used at that time.

An extract of the report is provided below, however the full report can be found in Appendix 1.

*"The data indicates that SHCG does not have any major issues with respect to gender pay gap and equity at this time, however we do have a gender pay gap. It is of note that whilst 65% of our workforce is female and this gender is represented more frequently at all quartiles of our organisation, gender parity is not achieved across the group largely as males are more likely to be paid more overall in the*

*most senior positions of our organisation. It is important to continue to support gender equity in pay at all levels of the organisation and also to ensure strong career pathways are available for women in particular to non-traditional roles and leadership positions. The data provided along with the interventions outlined further in this report will ensure that the college group maintains a firm focus and commitment to management of gender pay gap matters.”*

### 3. Gender Pay Gap Results at March 2025

The gender pay gap data presented in this report is reflective of the pay period of 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

The total number of employees with relevant pay in the required pay period was 738. This total comprises of 470 (64%) female employees and 268 male employees (36%).

Pay Quartile	Female (Headcount)	Male (Headcount)	Female (%)	Male (%)
Upper Quartile	83	101	45%	(55%
Upper Middle Quartile	121	63	66%	34%
Lower Middle Quartile	133	51	72%	28%
Lower Quartile	133	53	72%	28%

Pay Quartile	Female Mean (£)	Female Median (£)	Male Mean (£)	Male Median (£)	Quartile Mean Pay Gap (%)	Quartile Median Pay Gap (%)
Upper Quartile	25.78	23.40	24.65	22.17	-5%	-6%
Upper Middle Quartile	20.32	20.62	20.28	20.62	0%	0%
Lower Middle Quartile	16.19	16.31	16.36	16.31	1%	0%
Lower Quartile	11.99	11.69	12.04	11.69	0%	0%

**Mean Gender Pay Gap:**

The overall mean gender pay gap from March 2025 is 9%, based on an overall female average hourly rate of £17.76 and a male average hourly rate of £19.55. This is down from 10.6% in 2024.

The Gender Pay Gap Report (PWC July 2025) indicates that the UK gender pay gap has reduced from 11.8% in 2024 to 11.2% in 2025. Based on this recent data, SHCG pay gap is still important to monitor but it is still significantly lower than overall norms (based on 10,701 organisations).

**Median Gender Pay Gap:**

The overall median gender pay gap from March 2025 is 13%, based on a female median pay rate of £18.01 and a male median pay rate of £20.62.

**Comparison to SHCG 2025 results:**

Although there is no notable change to the median gender pay gap between March 2024 and March 2025, the results do show a reduction in the mean gender pay gap. In March 2024 this was reported to be 10.68%, with a reduction to 9% for March 2025.

**Bonus Gender Pay Gap:**

There were no bonus payments made across the group during the relevant pay period, therefore there is no data to present for March 2025.

**4. SHCG Commitment to Gender Pay Equity**

The South Hampshire College Group remains committed to making further progress towards gender pay equity and this report outlines the key initiatives that are currently underway to support progression of this. Several of these initiatives were identified in the 2024 Gender Pay Gap report and can be considered delivered or in progress.

**Initiative 1 - Job Evaluation Tool**

The first initiative noted within this paper is the implementation of a robust job evaluation tool. In April 2025, we initiated discussions with Pilat to implement the Gauge Job Evaluation system. This tool enables SHCG to impartially evaluate job roles to determine the appropriate salary banding associated with the remit and responsibilities of each position.

The benefit of introducing this system is that both conscious and unconscious bias are avoided when evaluating the required remuneration for a role.

To date, circa 25 roles have been evaluated in the Gauge system and we will continue to carry out assessments on the remaining positions in the college group. Once all the data is input into the

system, we will proceed with a moderation process and identify any roles which present a risk in terms of inequality of pay. We anticipate this project to be complete by December 2025.

### **Initiative 2 – Salary Assessment Tool**

Once a job role has been accurately sized using the Pilat Gauge system, the next step will be ensuring that we have a suitable tool in place to assess which spinal point an individual should be placed on within a pay band.

The Pilat Gauge system evaluates the job role but not individuals within that job role. Concurrently to the introduction of the job evaluation tool, SHCG has developed in consultation with our union representatives a Salary Assessment tool. This tool assesses an individual based on items including qualifications, teaching experience and industry exposure. Equivalent measures are used for assessing support based roles, which are more relevant to a non-academic job role. This tool will mitigate risk of gender bias when assessing an individual's placement within a salary band, as this will work on a points based system based on objective measures.

The tool is currently being trialed with the participation of four academic employees, which will be reviewed following conclusion of the trial with intention to launch a finalised process in January 2026.

### **Initiative 3 – Profiling Women of Success**

As part of our Gender Pay Gap programme of work, we are planning a celebration with a number of female colleagues who are either in leadership roles, and/or who are undertaking roles that have traditionally been male dominated. For delivery in early/mid-March 2026, the celebration will combine International Women's Day 2026 (8 March) and our plans for an event to "Profile Women of Success".

### **Initiative 4 – Mitigating Gender Bias in Recruitment**

We have continued to ensure all hiring managers complete safer recruitment training. This training equips hiring managers with awareness of how to make fair, objective and transparent decisions through the recruitment process. The training is completed online via The Education Training Foundation (ETF), which covers the key legislation and principles of safer recruitment in the FE and Skills sector.

Additionally, it is internal practice to ensure there is a mix of genders (wherever possible) within the recruitment panel when interviewing for positions to further mitigate unconscious bias in the selection process.

The new Human Resource Information Recruitment system will provide additional rigor and standardisation for candidate assessment again reducing the risk of conscious or unconscious gender bias.

## **Initiative 5 – Flexible and Agile Working Practices**

This academic year we have started reviewing internal agile working practices, in conjunction with our current Flexible Working Policy, in recognition of the need to create flexibility in our working environment to support a diverse workforce. This project will provide an internal framework to guide managers in supporting their teams to access equal opportunities for career progression, professional development and a satisfactory work v life balance.

### **5. Next year 2025/26**

Over the next academic year, SHCG will also be exploring the following areas with a view to positively impacting the gender pay gap.

#### Promotion for women and girls to consider "non traditional" careers

- Currently only 17% of all SHCG apprentices are women or girls. Work has already commenced with a very successful event for Women in Construction held in early 2025 at the Civil Engineering Training Centre which promoted roles in construction and engineering to aspiring females.
- In 2025 in collaboration with our curriculum teams, we will explore opportunities to inspire the next generation of future professionals and employees through our student body. This will include the promotion of STEM roles and encouragement of collaboration between different professional disciplines such as construction and hairdressing, to break down gender bias and provide opportunities for exposure to new talents.
- Leadership Pathways
- We will continue with investment into upskilling our current and next generation leaders within SHCG through our Leading Better Futures programme. This internal training opportunity provides opportunity for both female and male employees to upskill in their leadership development ready for succession planning and career progression.
- Recruitment
- Through further optimisation of the internal HRIS (iConnect) we will embed automated mechanisms to support a gender neutral recruitment process. iConnect's integration with Veritone enables the system to automatically identify potentially gender biased words and indicate whether an advert is more likely aimed at a female audience, a male audience, or uses gender neutral wording.