



# Gender Pay Gap Report

2019, 2020 and 2021

CORPORATE



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# 1. Introduction

## Executive summary

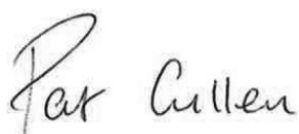
As the world's largest professional body and trade union for nursing staff, the Royal College of Nursing (RCN) is committed to equality of opportunity for our members in their employment and for the people we employ. In 2020, **a study we commissioned** showed that nursing is undervalued in status and pay. While we **fight for fair pay for nursing**, we must ensure we remunerate our people fairly. For that reason, and in fulfilling our commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion, we are continually reviewing our employment policies and approach to ensure they are fair in their design and in practice.

At the time of writing this report, our workforce is 74% female and 26% male. We remain confident that both are paid equally for doing the same work. Our pay structure rewards length of service, so any gender pay gaps we see within a pay grade are directly attributable to how long people have worked here, not their gender.

This report presents the RCN's gender pay gap for the 2019, 2020 and 2021 snapshot dates. When we carried out an equal pay audit in 2010, there was a higher proportion of men in more senior roles, creating a gender pay gap for us, but I'm proud that this proportion has decreased substantially since 2010. Our mean pay gap, which is 0.3%, has reduced by 27% in the last 11 years and the median pay gap, now at 0, by 13.7% since we first reported it in 2017.

As a trade union we are determined to practise what we preach; as a professional body we are committed to setting the highest standards; and so we strive to be an exemplary employer.

I confirm that the data contained within this report is accurate and meets the requirements of the Gender Pay Gap reporting regulations.



Pat Cullen  
General Secretary & Chief Executive

## 2. Summary

### a) The RCN’s gender pay gap

The RCN’s reportable gender pay gap is:

**Table 1**

	2019	2020	2021
Mean pay gap	7.4%	0.3%	0.3%
Median pay gap	8.7%	1.1%	0.0%

*The mean is the sum of all the numbers in the set divided by the amount of numbers in the set. The median is the middle point of a number set, in which half the numbers are above the median and half are below.*

We carried out internal equal pay audits in 2010 and 2016, although the formula for calculating the hourly pay rate that underpins these reportable figures is slightly different from the one we used in our own equal pay audits.

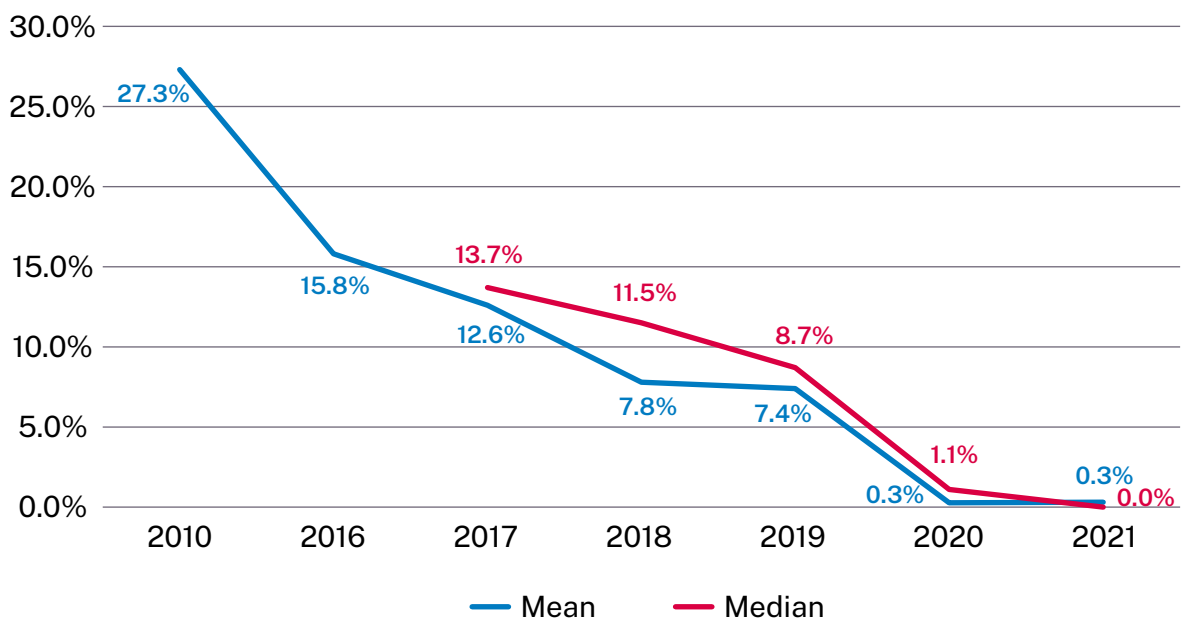
This means that comparison of our 2017-2021 figures with our past equal pay audits is imperfect, although the differences are not significant enough to make comparison invalid.

Those historical figures are presented below (Table 2 and Figure 1) for comparison (only the mean pay gap was calculated in our internal equal pay audits).

**Table 2**

	2010	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Mean pay gap	27.3%	15.8%	12.6%	7.8%	7.4%	0.3%	0.3%

**Figure 1: Gender Pay Gap 2010-2021**



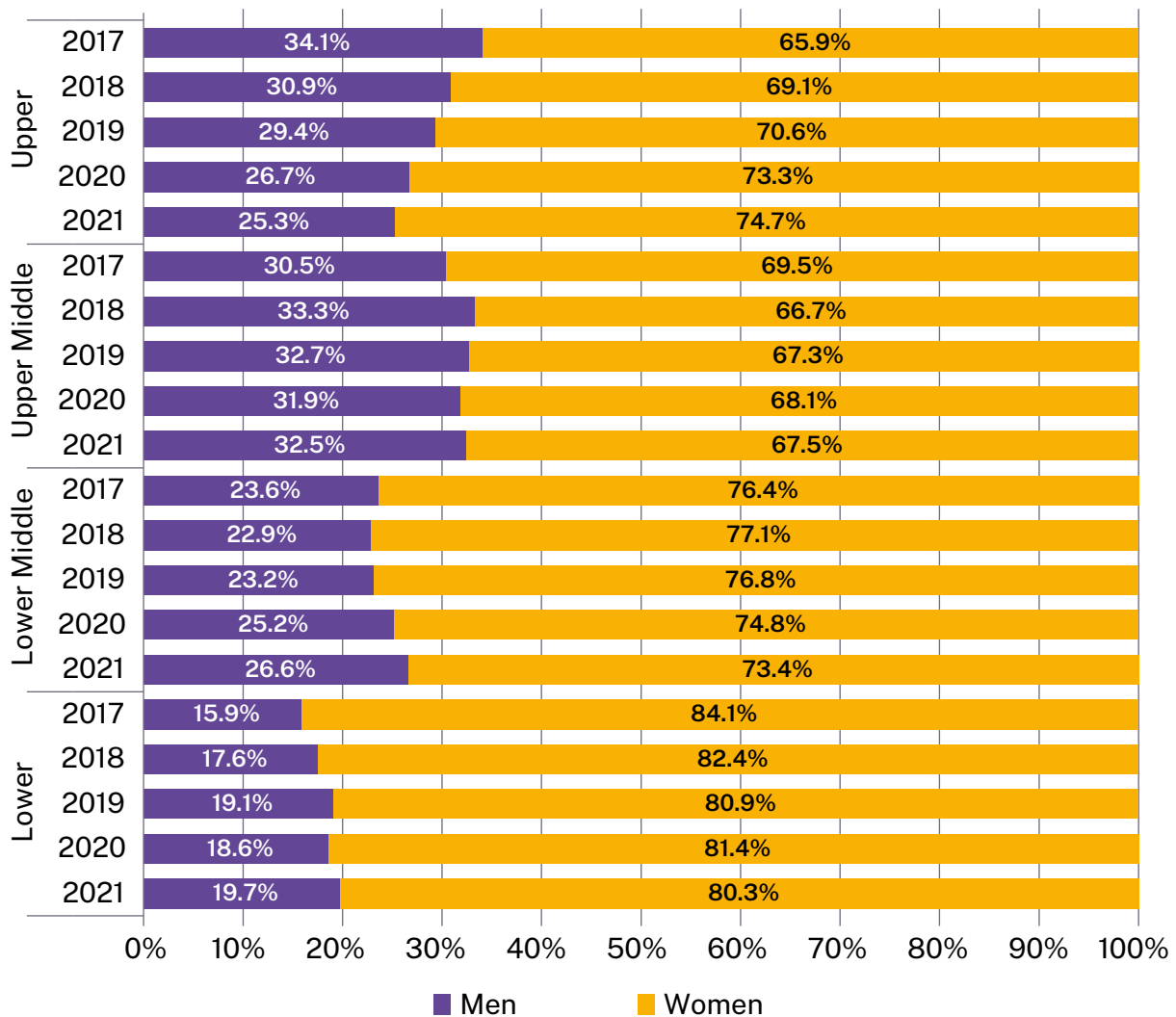
## b) Bonuses

Bonuses are not paid as part of the RCN’s reward package, so there are no reportable figures to include as part of this report.

## c) Pay quartiles

Figure 2 presents the breakdown of men and women in the RCN’s four pay quartiles over the last five years.

**Figure 2: Quartiles Trend (By Quartile)**



The 2021 data reveals that there is a lower proportion of men than women in the upper pay quartile. All the changes we can see between 2017 and 2021 are relatively minor, although the most significant of the changes is the drop in the proportion of men in the upper pay quartile (8.8%).

### 3. Analysis

The RCN has a narrow, graded pay structure with incremental pay points – with pay progression linked to length of service. All roles are graded using our bespoke job evaluation scheme and those evaluations are carried out by the People & OD team in partnership with our recognised trade union the GMB. When the scheme was designed, we brought in independent expertise to ensure that the criteria against which jobs are evaluated and graded are free of inherent bias and discrimination. All our past equal pay audits have revealed that when pay comparisons are made grade-by-grade (to take account of the principle of equal pay for work of equal value), the pay gap all but disappears.

The reportable 2021 data reveals this same pattern, as it has for the last two years. None of our grades that include more than 25 employees have a gender pay gap of more than 2%.

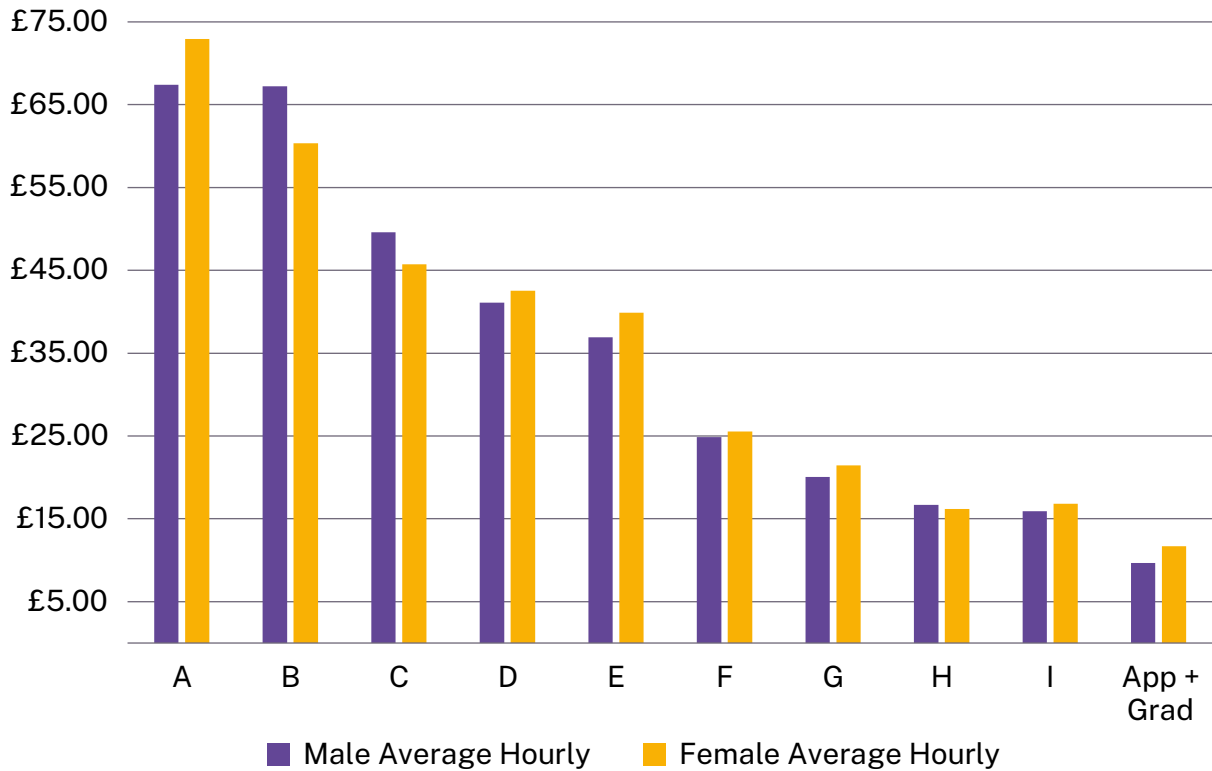
Within grades there will be a natural and inevitable difference in the distribution of men and women across the various incremental points, which accounts for in-grade gender pay gaps. This is because progression through the pay points in the grade is linked to service, so men and women within the same grade will be distributed across the pay points depending on their length of service in the role.

**Table 3**

Grade	Average male salary 2021 (per hour)	Average female salary 2021 (per hour)	Gender pay gap 2019	Gender pay gap 2020	Gender pay gap 2021	Sample size 2021
A	£67.42	£72.96	-23.90%	5.22%	-7.59%	6
B	£67.21	£60.34	1.85%	5.75%	11.38%	5
C	£49.61	£45.74	0.40%	5.42%	8.47%	22
D	£41.12	£42.55	-1.32%	-4.43%	-3.38%	33
E	£36.90	£39.86	3.10%	0.23%	-7.44%	173
F	£24.88	£25.55	0.67%	-2.66%	-2.62%	291
G	£20.06	£21.45	-4.72%	0.59%	-6.48%	199
H	£16.67	£16.19	4.37%	4.91%	2.91%	170
I	£15.92	£16.8	-2.92%	10.46%	-5.29%	26
Apprentices + graduates	£9.66	£11.67	-3.83%	-13.44%	-17.20%	8

Figure 3 shows the average hourly pay for men and women in each of our pay grades.

**Figure 3: Average hourly pay by grade in 2021**

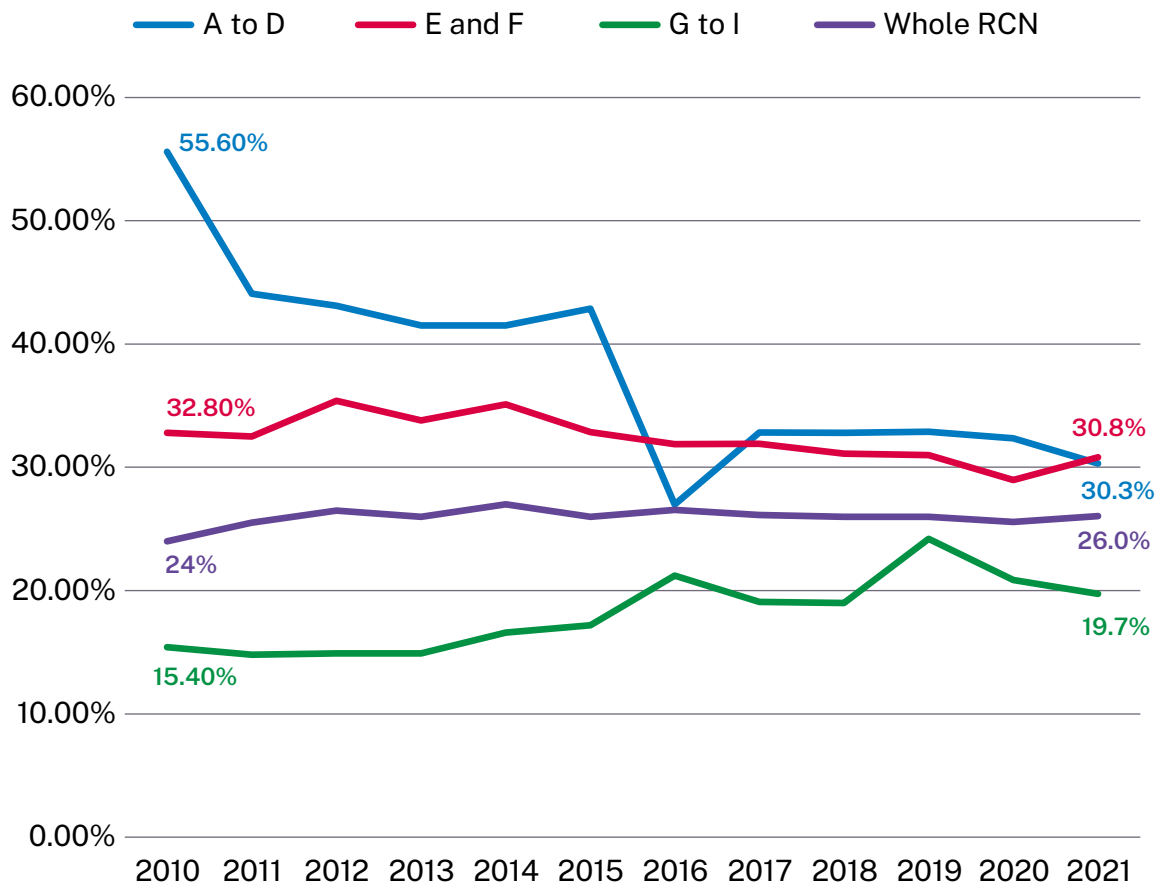


We know that the main driver behind our negligible gender pay gap is not related to the rates of pay for men and women doing similar work; instead, it is caused by the greater proportion of females in more senior roles compared to less senior roles.



Figure 4 shows the percentage of men in each range of grades since 2010. The gender profile in our higher-paid grades (A to D) is becoming more consistent with our overall workforce profile, where the proportion of women is increasing towards the overall workforce profile.

**Figure 4: Grade profile of male staff**



Currently 70.5% of our managers are women and, although 26% of all RCN employees are male, at the most senior grades the proportion of male employees has historically been much higher. It is 30.8% this year, although it was as high as 55.6% in 2009/10.

The progress we have made in addressing our gender pay gap since 2010 is primarily attributable to the improving diversity profile of our more senior grades.

## 4. What have we done already?

### Developed our evidence base

For a number of years we have routinely reported on:

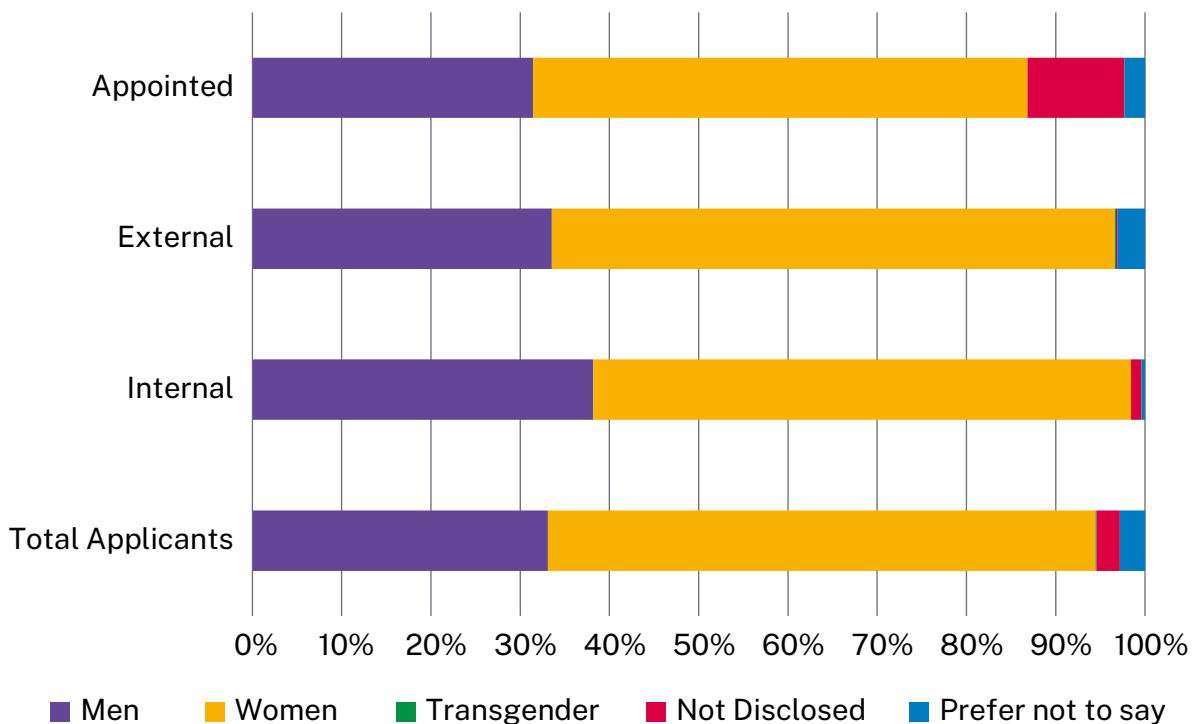
- a) the proportion of men and women progressing through the various stages of our recruitment and selection process
- b) the number of women and men in each pay grade.

Part of our commitment in our 2018 Gender Pay Gap Report was to begin measuring:

- the numbers of men and women who apply for jobs and the number who are successful
- the numbers of men and women who apply externally compared to internally.

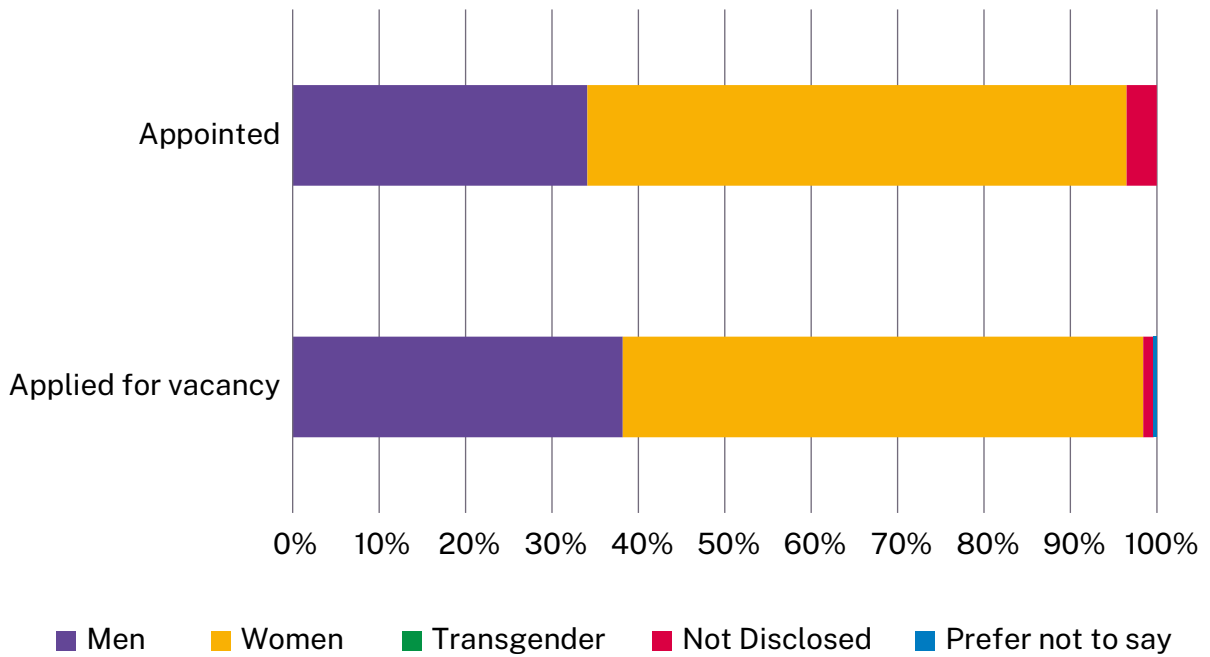
33% of our job applicants are men, but the proportion of successful applications is 31% men and 55% women (14% chose not to disclose their gender), consistent with our overall workforce profile. The picture is similar for both internal and external job applicants.

**Figure 5**



We also committed to measuring the internal movement of men and women who apply for posts and the number of successful applicants (Figure 6). 38% of the people who applied for a vacancy were men. The proportion of those people successfully appointed who were men was 34%.

Figure 6



The other metrics we committed to begin measuring were:

**The proportion of women and men who return to work after maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave to resume their original jobs**

In the last 12 months, 97% of our employees who have taken maternity, paternity, adoption, or shared parental leave have returned to their original jobs.

**Separate gender pay gap figures for full-time and part-time employees**

Analysis of this year’s data shows very small gaps across all groups apart from the median for part-time employees.

**Table 4**

		Male salary (per hour)	Female salary (per hour)	Gender pay gap 2021	Sample size
Mean pay gap	Full-time	26.19	26.25	-0.2%	653 213 men 440 women
	Part-time	26.42	26.64	-0.8%	276 29 men 247 women
Median pay gap	Full-time	24.54	24.54	0.0%	653 213 men 440 women
	Part-time	25.05	24.54	2.1%	276 29 men 247 women

### The proportion of women and men still in post a year after a return to work from maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave

In the past twelve months the data on those employees is as follows:

**Table 5**

Leave type	Number of employees	Still in post one year after return	Notes
Maternity	27	97%	Two people (7.4%) not in their original role as they had both gained promotion to a more senior role. One person (3.7%) had been seconded to a different role at a higher grade and subsequently returned to their substantive role.
Paternity	1	100%	One person, remained in original role.
Adoption	0	-	No requests for adoption leave in the reporting period.
Shared parental leave	2	100%	Two people returned to their original roles.

**The proportion of women who work part-time and flexibly compared to men, and at what level such arrangements are found**

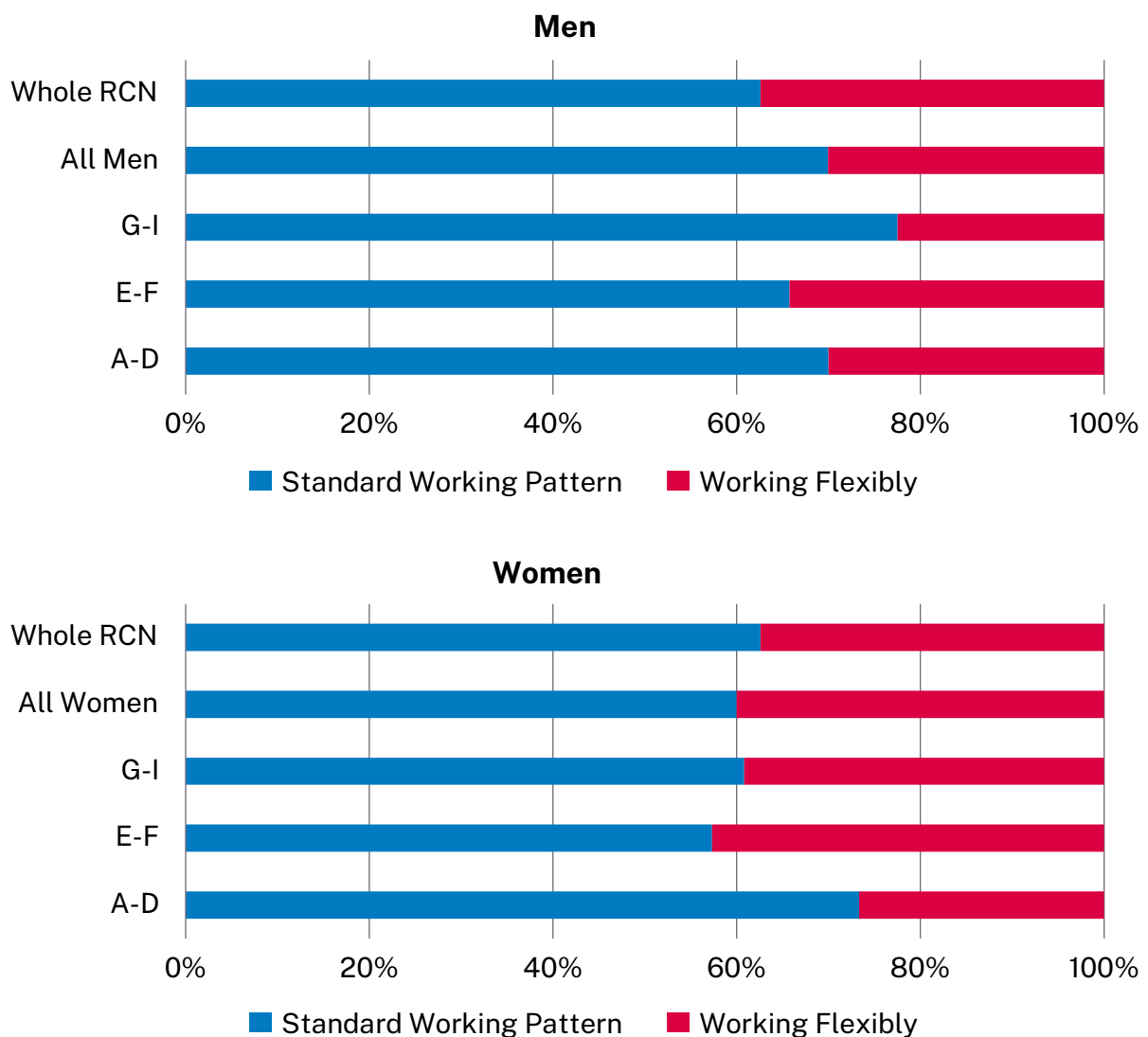
The proportion of men and women who work part-time or flexibly is shown in Table 6.

**Table 6**

	Men	Women	All staff
Part-time	11%	89%	30%
Working flexibly	21%	79%	37%

Across the organisation the pattern of take-up of flexible working options is reasonably consistent for both men and women (Figure 7). Flexible working is generally less common in our more senior grades (A to D).

**Figure 7**



### **1) The number of successful flexible working requests by gender**

In the last year, 97% of men and 98% of women had their requests for flexible working accepted. For both men and women, 81% of the applications for flexible working were accepted with some agreed amendments to the originally requested working pattern.

### **2) Ensured related policies and practices are up to date**

We operate a structured policy review schedule and work in close partnership with our recognised trade unions when reviewing our policies and procedures.

We also consult our various staff networks (LGBTQ+, Race and Culture, Access and Inclusion and Women's network) when making policy changes.

We carry out comprehensive equality impact assessments on any changes to ensure that no groups are disproportionately affected.

We ensure that all policy changes are clearly and comprehensively communicated.

### **3) Trained and supported line managers**

We provide recruitment and selection training to ensure fair, non-discriminatory, consistent processes are followed.

We also provide support to managers when policies change to ensure they are implemented fairly, consistently, and effectively.

### **4) Managed family-friendly leave successfully**

We go further than the legal family-friendly rights and actively encourage the use of these rights to all employees. We have equalised our occupational shared parental pay with our occupational maternity pay, and we provide transitional support for those going on and returning from long-term parental leave to help support a successful and sustained return to work.

### **5) Made the most of flexible working**

We actively encourage the use of flexible working across the organisation and offer a range of flexible working opportunities to support all our working parents.

## 6) Encouraged and reviewed career and talent development

We endeavour to arrange learning and development events through webinars and/or locally to support our people with child and other care arrangements.

Where possible, we avoid running long development events that can create problems for people with child and other care responsibilities.

We invite job-sharing proposals from employees and offer flexibility in job hours, working time and location.

Our job descriptions, person specifications and recruitment adverts are always gender neutral.

In the recruitment and selection process, we use panel interviews and multiple assessments to support robust, objective, criteria-based decision-making.

Our recruitment and selection criteria includes a competency-based model that has improved career development pathways for our people.

## 7) Minimised negative impact from pay systems

We operate one transparent pay system for all employees.

We undertake job evaluation to objectively assess the demands of each job, and our job evaluation criteria have been independently assessed to ensure there is no inherent discrimination in the factors against which we evaluate our roles.

We ensure that our people have clear channels to communicate any suggestions or concerns.

We routinely review all aspects of pay to ensure that all parts of our organisation are operating fairly and consistently.

## 8) Supporting women in our workforce

In 2020, our Women's Staff Network launched, providing a space for colleagues to connect, share experiences and access peer support. The network is consulted on new and revised people policies and hosts regular organisation-wide events to raise awareness and educate others on relevant issues.

## 9) RCN Group Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement

In 2021 we launched a new *Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement* which focuses on our ambition to be a world-class champion of equality, diversity, inclusion and human rights, and sets out how we aim to achieve this as an employer.

## 5. What more will we do?

To further address our gender gap, we will need to make even greater progress in balancing the male/female workforce profile across our various grades. To achieve this, we will continue to promote the availability of flexible working and we will closely monitor how the post-pandemic model of work impacts our people. We recognise that change takes time, and so we will allow more time for the measures taken in recent years to have greater effect.



The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes  
excellence in practice and shapes health policies

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