

Gender Pay Gap report

2024

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. As we [fight for fair pay for nursing](#), we ensure we remunerate our own people fairly too. For that reason, and in fulfilling our commitments to equity, diversity and inclusion, we are continually reviewing our employment policies and approach to ensure they are fair in their design and in practice.

When the data was taken in April 2024 for this report, our workforce was 72% female and 28% male. We remain confident that both are paid equally for doing the same work. Our pay structure rewards length of service, so gender pay gaps within a pay grade are typically attributable to how long people have worked here.

We recognise that some of our people may not identify as male or female and some people's gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. We acknowledge that some people may feel excluded by the language used here and the binary categories reported on. However, we are required by UK legislation to report in a binary way.

This report presents the RCN's gender pay gap for the April 2024 snapshot date. Our mean pay gap is 1.2%, and the median pay gap is 0.0%.

I confirm that the data contained within this report is accurate and meets the requirements of the gender pay gap reporting regulations.



Professor Nicola Ranger

General Secretary and Chief Executive

2. Summary

a. The RCN's gender pay gap

The RCN's reportable gender pay gap is:

Table 1

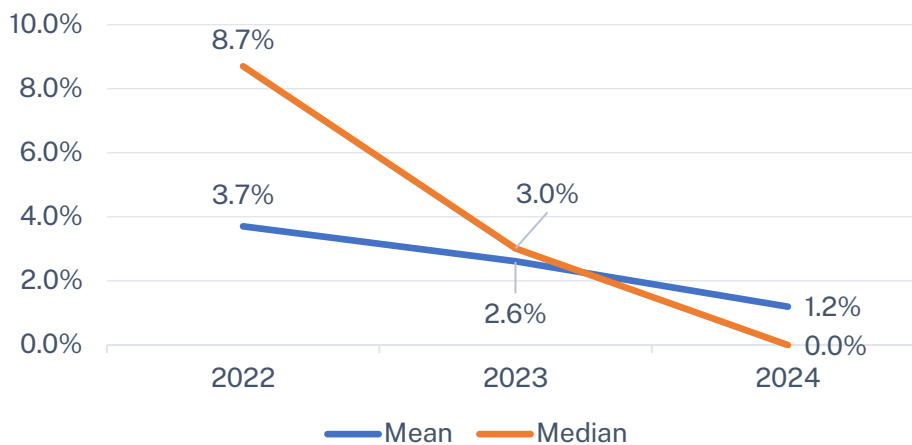
	2024
Mean pay gap	1.2%
Median pay gap	0.0%

The reportable gender pay gap figures for the last 3 years are presented below (Table 2 and Figure 1) for comparison.

Table 2

	2022	2023	2024
Mean pay gap	3.7%	2.6%	1.2%
Median pay gap	8.7%	3.0%	0.0%

Figure 1: Gender pay gap 2022-2024



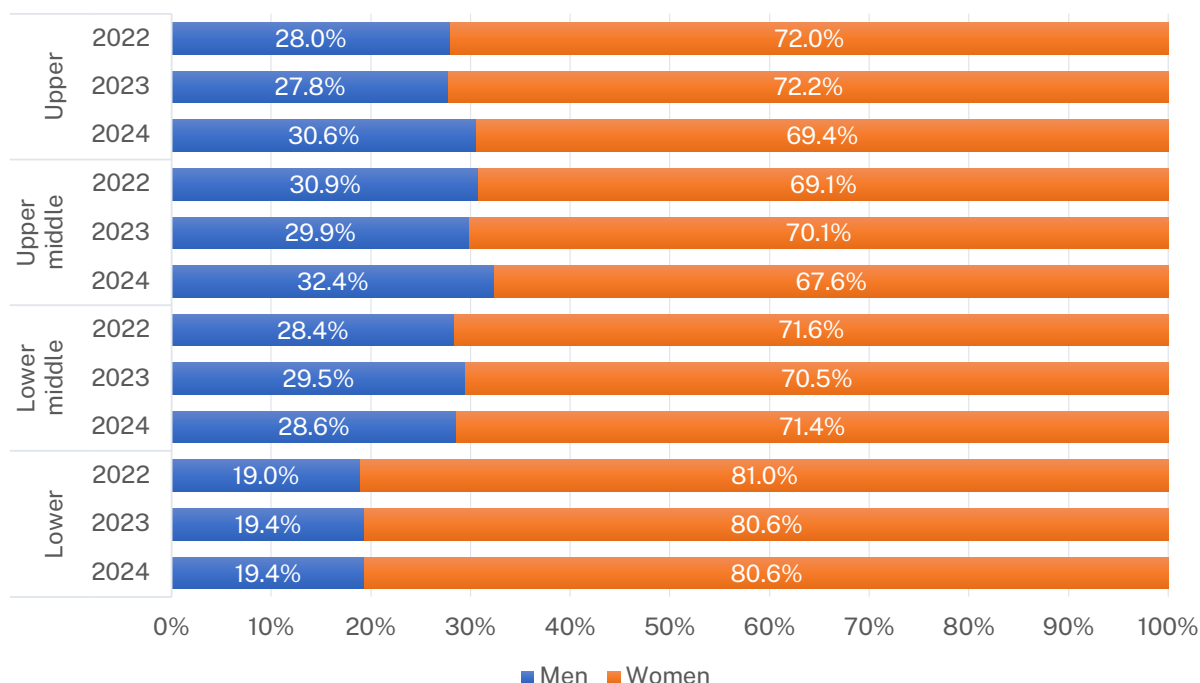
b. Bonuses

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 women¹ in the RCN’s 4 pay quartiles over the last 3 years.

Figure 2: Quartiles trend (by quartile)



The 2024 data reveals that there continues to be a lower proportion of men than women across all 4 pay quartiles. Notably however, there is a lower ratio of men to women in the lowest quartile, and higher ratio in the upper middle quartiles. All the changes we can see between 2022 and 2024 are relatively minor.

¹ We recognise that some of our people may not identify as male or female and some people’s gender identity does not align with the sex they were assigned at birth. We acknowledge that some people may feel excluded by the language used here and the binary categories reported on. However, we are required by UK legislation to report in a binary way.

3. Analysis

The RCN has a graded pay structure with incremental points and with pay progression linked to length of service. All roles are graded using our bespoke job evaluation scheme and each evaluation is carried out by a panel of 2 trained, objective assessors, 1 from the People and Organisational Development team and 1 from our recognised trade unions. When designing the scheme, we engaged independent experts to guarantee that the criteria for job evaluation and grading are fair and unbiased.

The reportable 2024 data reveals the same pattern, as it has for previous years (see Figure 2).

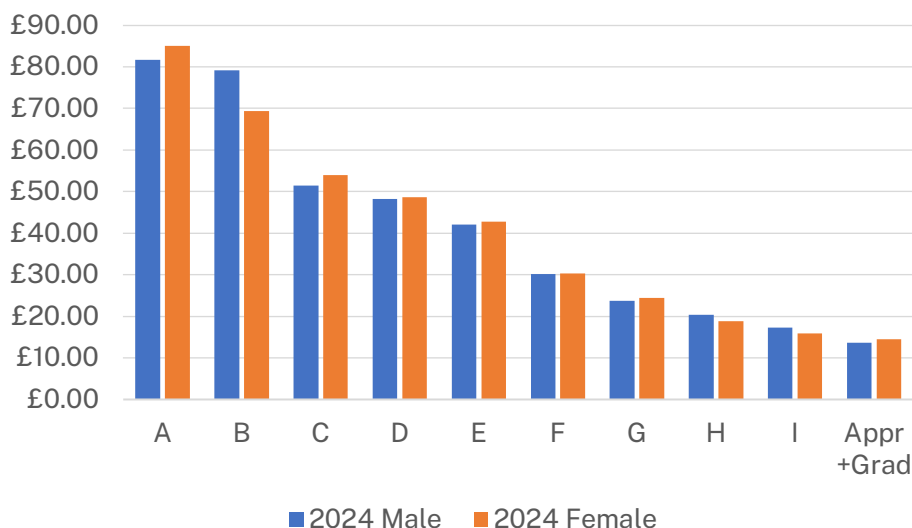
Within grades there will be natural and inevitable differences in the distribution of men and women across the various incremental points. This is because progression through the pay points in the grade is linked to service, so men and women within the same grade will be distributed across the pay points depending on their length of service at the grade.

Table 3

Grade	Average male salary 2024 (per hour)	Average female salary 2024 (per hour)	Gender pay gap 2023	Gender pay gap 2024	Sample size 2024
A	£81.66	£85.08	-5.69%	-4.01%	7
B	£79.22	£69.34	21.11%	14.25%	5
C	£51.47	£53.93	-0.66%	-4.56%	24
D	£48.29	£48.63	-6.18%	-0.70%	43
E	£42.01	£42.73	-6.44%	-1.70%	199
F	£30.14	£30.29	-5.98%	-0.51%	312
G	£23.77	£24.44	-4.15%	-2.76%	223
H	£20.43	£18.89	4.74%	8.15%	168
I	£17.36	£15.87	10.08%	9.36%	22
Apprentices and graduates	£13.69	£14.46	0.00%	-5.36%	6

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

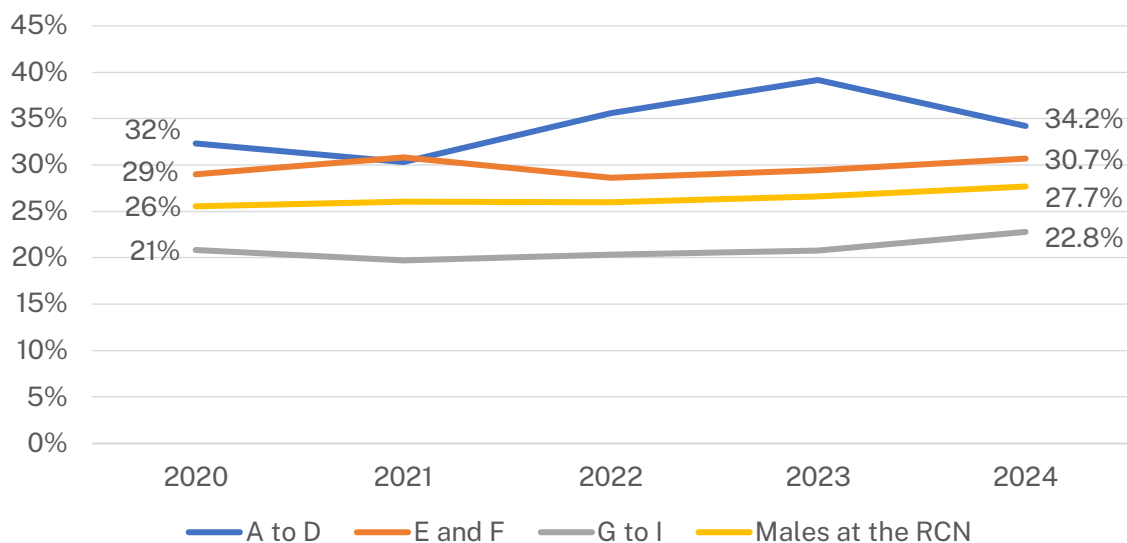
Figure 3: Average hourly pay by grade in 2024



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

Figure 4 shows the percentage of men in each range of grades since 2020. The gender profile in our higher-paid grades (A to D) is becoming more consistent with our overall workforce profile, with an increase in the proportion of women.

Figure 4: Grade profile of male staff



Currently 71% of our managers are women and, although 28% of all RCN employees are male, at the most senior grades the proportion of male employees has historically been much higher. 34% of A-D grades were male in 2024.

The progress that has been made in addressing our gender pay gap since 2010 is primarily attributable to the improving diversity profile at our more senior grades.

4. What have we done already?

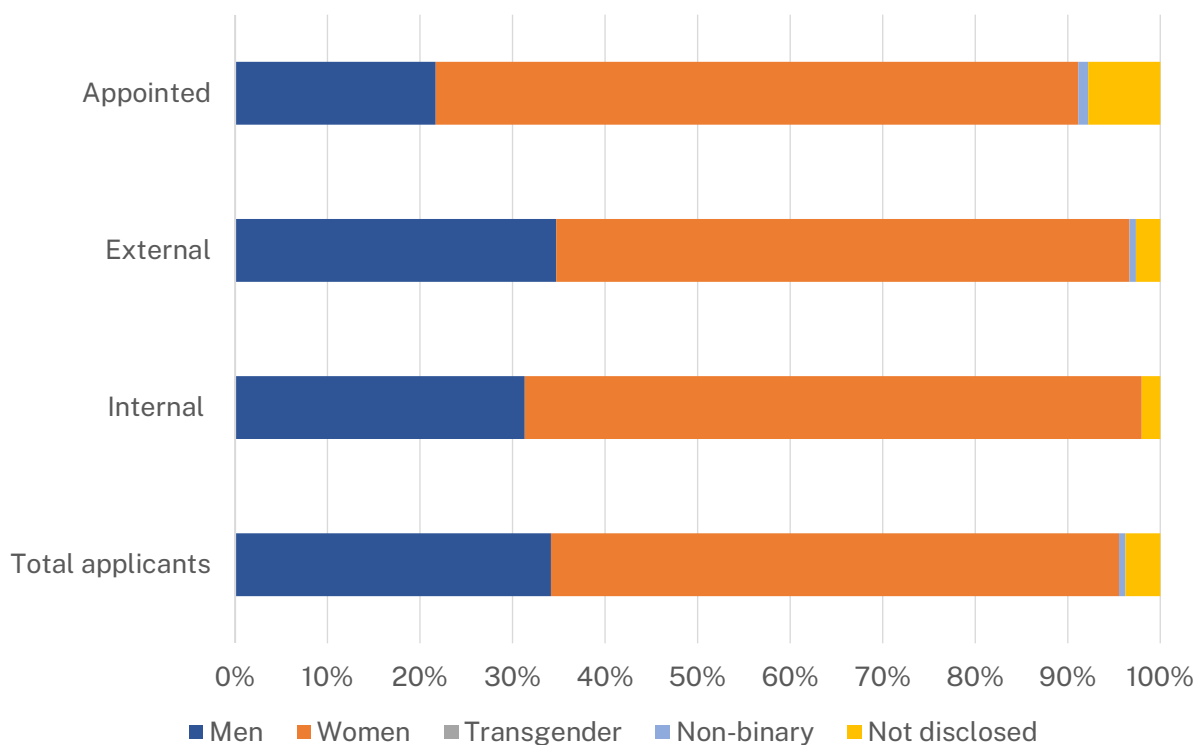
1. Developed our evidence base

We continue to routinely report on:

- a) the numbers of men and women, and proportion of men and women who apply for jobs and are appointed
- b) the numbers of men and women who apply externally compared to internally.

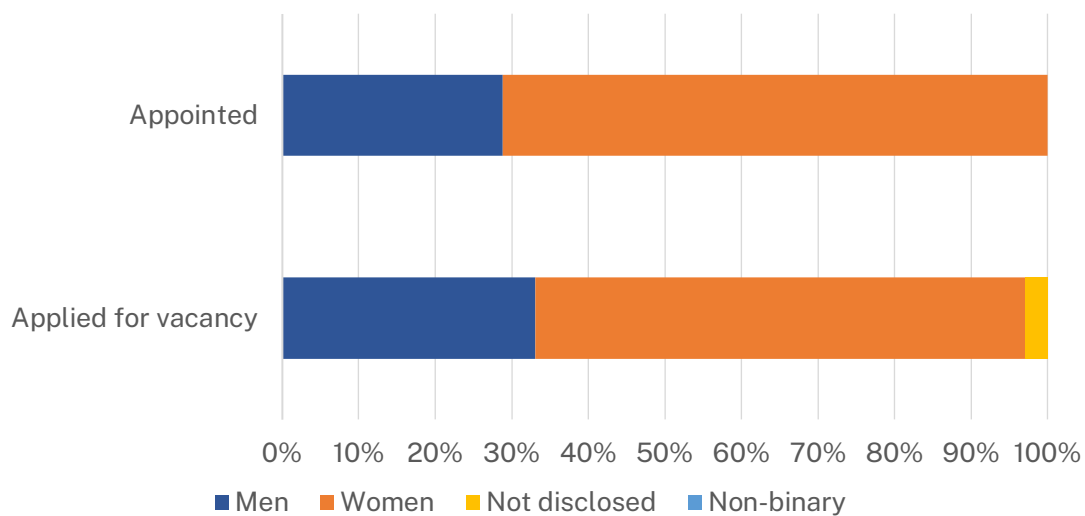
In 2024, 34% of our job applicants were men, but the proportion of appointments was 22% men and 69% women, broadly consistent with our overall workforce profile. The picture is similar for both internal and external job applicants (Figure 5).

Figure 5: Percentage of applicants by gender identity in 2024



We also committed to measuring the internal movement of men and women who apply for posts and are successful (Figure 6). In 2024, 33% of employees who applied for vacancies were men. The proportion of those appointed who were men was 29%, consistent with our overall workforce profile.

Figure 6: Percentage of internal staff applying for and appointed to posts in 2024 by gender identity



We are committed to continuing to measure the following metrics.

- **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 12 months following the April 2024 snapshot, 95% of our employees who have taken maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave have returned to their original jobs.

- **The proportion of women and men still in post a year after returning to work from maternity, paternity, adoption or shared parental leave.**

In 2024, the data on those employees is as follows:

Table 4

Leave Type	Number of employees	Still in post one year after return	Notes
Maternity	35	100%	All remained in their original roles
Paternity	5	100%	All remained in their original roles
Adoption	0	-	No requests in the reporting period
Shared parental leave	2	100%	All remained in their original roles

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

The proportion of men and women who work flexibly is shown in Table 5.

Table 5

	Men	Women	All staff
Working flexibly	67%	74%	72%

Across the organisation the pattern of take-up of flexible working options is reasonably consistent for both men and women (Figures 7a and 7b). Almost all roles are advertised as flexible, although flexible working is generally less common at our more senior grades (A to D).

Figure 7a: Percentage of men working flexibly

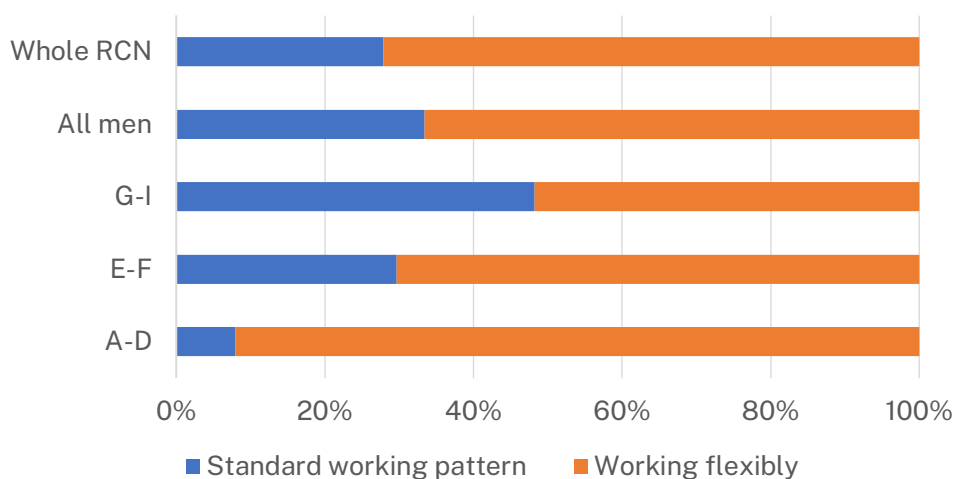
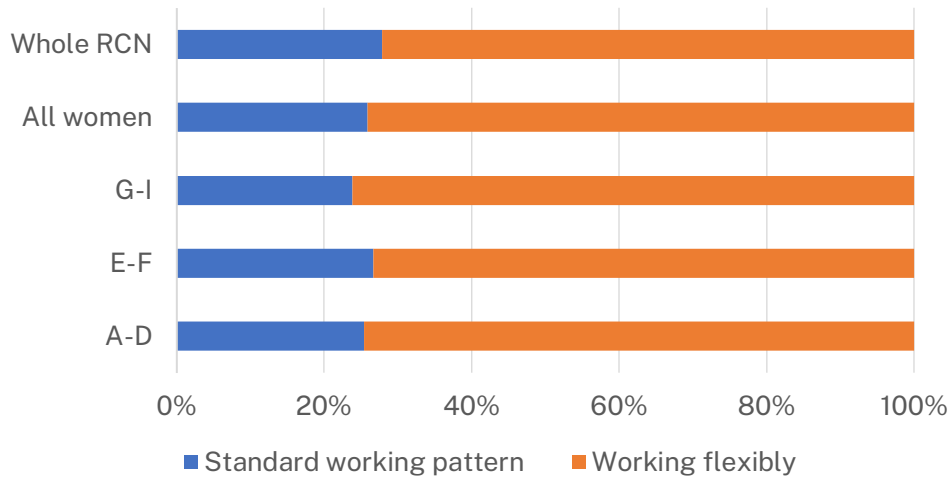


Figure 7b: Percentage of women working flexibly

- **The number of successful flexible working requests by gender.**

In 2024, 90% of men and 95% of women had their requests for flexible working accepted. We will continue to monitor flexible working by gender as we recognise that men are proportionately less likely to apply for flexible working than women.

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 people policies and procedures.

We also consult our various staff networks (Access and Inclusion, LGBTQ+, Neurodivergent, Race and Culture, Women's and Working Families) and involve our staff support groups (Cancer Support and Working Carers Support) when making policy changes.

We carry out comprehensive equality impact assessments on any changes or new policies to identify the impact and ensure, as far as we can, that no groups with protected characteristics 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. This includes undertaking an unconscious bias online learning module.

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

Managers, like all staff, are required to regularly complete online learning in equality, diversity and inclusion. This offer is supplemented by workshops exploring the theme more broadly, as well as more targeted learning opportunities, for example focusing on menopause, pregnancy and parenting at work.

4. Supported working families

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. We provide transitional support for those going on and returning from long-term family leave to help support a successful and sustained return to work.

We actively support our Working Families Network and Working Carers Support Group, and provide education to all staff around the challenges, and potential solutions, that working parents and carers face. Our Working Families Network holds monthly meetings for members to come together to discuss their experiences and learn from one another. The network provides a safe space for them to discuss any worries and seek peer support, catering for family members whose children may have additional needs, for single parents and for different stages of a child's life.

In 2024, we launched a new provision for our staff – access to [Tommy's](#) midwives and resources. Designed to support our staff on the journey to becoming and in being a parent, we've also made an e-learning module available to everyone focused on pregnancy and parenting at work. This explores the pregnancy journey, pregnancy and fertility complications, baby loss, and the realities faced by new parents, including returning to work and breastfeeding at work.

5. Made the most of flexible working and supported hybrid working

We actively empower our people to do their best work, to be able to balance the demands of work and home. We are a diverse organisation and understand everyone has different needs and many of our employees (72% of them at the end of 2024 as referenced in Table 5) enjoy flexible working, enabling them to deliver results whilst having a good work-life balance.

Unlike the statutory provisions, our policy on flexible working allows everyone to apply from day 1 of their employment and doesn't limit how often a request can be made so that our people can ensure work works for them when life changes. Our job advertisements highlight our commitment to flexible and hybrid working, inviting applicants to speak to the recruiting manager to find out more.

Hybrid working is an important and highly valued part of our employee experience and employer value proposition.

6. Encouraged career and talent development

We hold learning and development events through webinars and/or locally across our offices to support our people with childcare and other caring arrangements to be able to take part.

Where possible, we avoid running long development events that can create problems for part-time people, people with childcare and other caring responsibilities. We're also mindful of which days of the week to schedule in-person learning activities to limit the need for our people to travel at the weekend.

We invite job-sharing proposals from employees and offer flexibility in job hours, working time and location as far as we can in all our job roles.

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

Our recruitment and selection process uses anonymous shortlisting. Shortlisters do not see job applicants' names or other identifying information to reduce the impact of conscious or unconscious bias influencing a hiring manager's decision about whether to progress an application.

We use panel interviews and multiple assessments to support robust, objective, criteria-based decision making.

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

7. Minimised negative impact from pay systems

We operate 1 transparent pay system.

We undertake job evaluation to objectively assess the demands of each job, and our job evaluation criteria has 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, including our anonymous staff surveys throughout the year (that we call “pulse checks”), which include questions about reward.

For difficult-to-fill vacancies we provide a robust business case approach to requests for a starting salary above the bottom of the grade and the application of our recruitment premium.

We periodically 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 2024, we introduced a menopause policy, which was developed with staff and in consultation with representatives from our recognised trade unions. The policy aims to support colleagues throughout their menopause transition and to educate, inform and raise awareness of the impact of menopause transition. Given the profile of our workforce, this was important for the RCN and is supplemented by learning opportunities for all staff and a bespoke session specifically for our line managers.

Menopause support is available through the Unum Help@hand service. Employees can call and request a menopause specialism specific GP.

The People and Organisational Development team continues to deliver learning and development in the form of menopause awareness workshops for all staff and menopause awareness training for managers.

In partnership with our Women’s Network, regular menopause cafés have been set up to enable people to come together to discuss menopause in an accessible, respectful and confidential way.

Our Women’s Network continues to provide 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

Our [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Statement](#) 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?

We recognise our gender pay gap reduced slightly this year. However, given turnover and internal movement, it is inevitable that it will move again over time.

Whilst our gender pay gap is low compared to the national average, it's important that we do not become complacent. We need to make even greater progress in balancing the male/female workforce profile across our various grades.

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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