



2021 Gender Pay Gap Report

Published March 2022

Introduction

Sight Scotland and Sight Scotland Veterans (previously operating as Royal Blind and Scottish War Blinded) promote the inclusion and empowerment of people with visual impairment, and as such regard equality and fairness in all its respects as something that should be inherent in our service delivery, our staffing and our management and governance.

Sight Scotland is Scotland's largest visual impairment organisation. We care for, educate and employ blind and partially sighted people from across the UK. Our sister charity Sight Scotland Veterans supports anyone who has served in the Armed Forces who has a visual impairment, whether they lost their sight during or after service.

Gender Pay Gap legislation introduced in April 2017 requires any UK organisation employing 250 or more employees to publicly report on its gender pay gap.

The gender pay gap shows the difference in the average pay between men and women in the organisation, irrespective of the position held. This is different from equal pay which deals with the pay differences between men and women who carry out the same jobs, similar jobs or work of equal value.

In order to calculate the gender pay gap, we were required to calculate the mean and median hourly rates as follows:

- **Mean hourly rate** is calculated by adding all hourly rates and dividing this by the number of staff in the group.
- **Median hourly rate** is calculated by lining up all the hourly rates in the group from lowest to highest, and identifying the rate in the middle.

The legislation only covers Sight Scotland, but we chose to analyse and disclose information for Sight Scotland Veterans as well. Figures are reported separately for the two sister charities.

This report fulfils our reporting requirements, provides context around gender pay in both Sight Scotland and Sight Scotland Veterans and sets out what we are doing to address the gender pay gap in the organisation. It should be noted that neither of the charities pays bonuses and therefore the bonus gender pay gap is explored minimally.

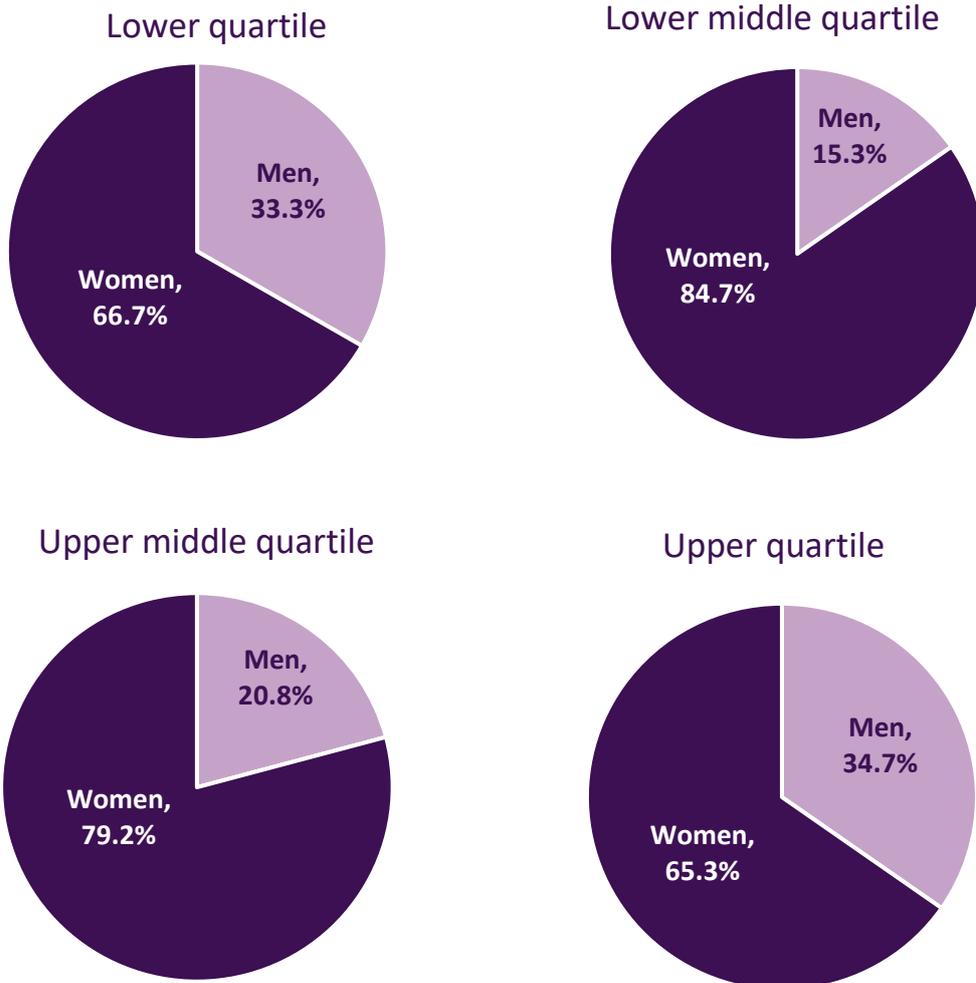
Sight Scotland Gender Pay Gap:

We collected our data on the snapshot date 5 April 2021, when our workforce consisted of 288 full pay relevant employees, out of which 213 (74%) were female and 75 (26%) were male.

Mean and Median gender pay gap	
Mean hourly rate for women: £15.11	Median hourly rate for women: £14.98
Mean hourly rate for men: £16.31	Median hourly rate for men: £15.16
Mean gender pay gap (2021): 7.4%	Median gender pay gap (2021): 1.2%
Mean gender pay gap (2020): 7.5%	Median gender pay gap (2020): - 3.1%

The mean and median gender pay gap figures have been reached using the mechanisms that are set out in the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

Proportion of men and women in each pay quartile:



Sight Scotland do not pay bonuses, and the gender bonus gap is therefore 0%.

As is common within health and social care and education sectors, our employees are primarily female, and women outnumber men in each pay quartile.

Our total staff numbers reduced significantly compared to the previous year due to the closure of our care homes in early 2021 (from 500 to 288 full pay relevant employees). A higher than previously proportion of total staff were excluded from calculations this year due to furlough (additional 13 employees). 85% of colleagues furloughed at the time were female. Others excluded include primarily employees on maternity leave (6 employees).

The **median gender pay gap** shows that women in Sight Scotland are paid 1.2% less than men. In April 2020, our report showed that women were paid 3.1% more than men. This is influenced by the change in the composition of our workforce within the past year.

The **mean gender pay gap** shows that women in Sight Scotland are paid 7.4% less than men, which is similar to the figure reported in the previous year. The mean gender pay gap continues to be much higher than the median, which is influenced by the fact that our Chief Executive and 54% of our Senior Leadership Team were male at the time. If our Chief Executive was female, our Mean gender pay gap would reduce to 3.0%, and our median gender pay gap would be just under 1%.

The ordinary pay used for gender pay gap calculations excludes salary sacrifice schemes, and as such the level of participation in salary sacrifice schemes is worth noting. We operate salary exchange for the following purposes: pensions, childcare vouchers, cycle to work and holiday purchase scheme. There are gender differences in the uptake and level of deductions through salary sacrifice schemes. Our schemes apart from pensions are taken up primarily by female employees (85% of the scheme members are female).

Taking pensions into account, the average level of contributions per person made through salary exchange is slightly higher for female employees compared to male employees, which has an impact on the level of hourly rate reported. Looking at 10 employees with the highest hourly rate, female employees contribute on average 2% more through salary sacrifice compared to male employees in the group.

We also recognise that with our male employees comprising only 26% of the total workforce, even small fluctuations can have a significant impact on our gender pay gap.

Sight Scotland Veterans Gender Pay Gap

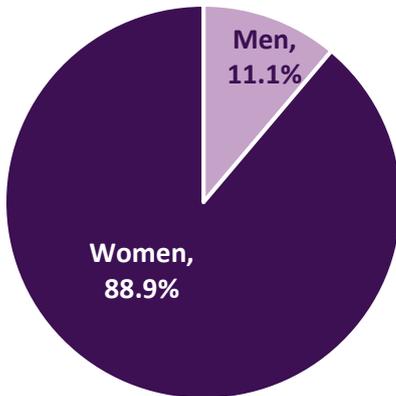
On 5 April 2021 Sight Scotland Veterans workforce consisted of 37 full pay relevant employees, out of which 30 (81%) were female and 7 (19%) were male. It must be noted however that 43 employees were excluded from calculations due to being on furlough (49% of these were female and 51% male), which makes up more than half of all employees. This had a significant impact on our figures reported this year.

Mean and Median gender pay gap	
Mean hourly rate for women: £16.16	Median hourly rate for women: £15.40
Mean hourly rate for men: £15.39	Median hourly rate for men: £15.19
Mean gender pay gap (2021): -5.0%	Median gender pay gap (2021): -1.4%
Mean gender pay gap (2020): -18.5%	Median gender pay gap (2020): -31.7%

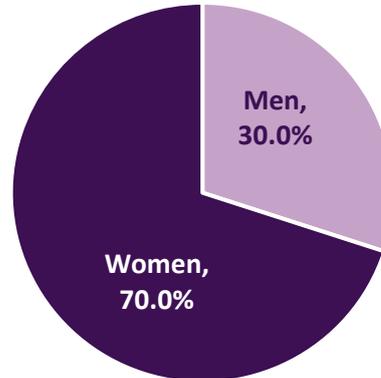
The above figures show that on average in Sight Scotland Veterans women are paid more than men.

Proportion of men and women in each pay quartile:

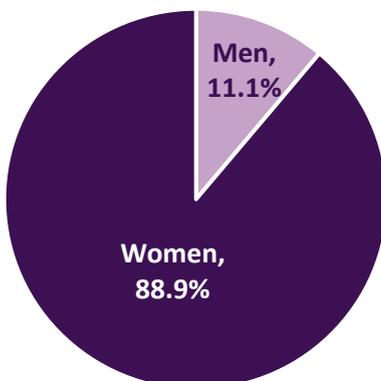
Lower quartile



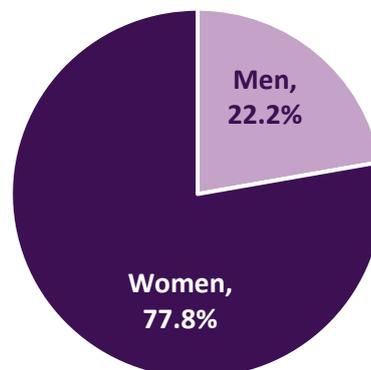
Lower middle quartile



Upper middle quartile



Upper quartile



Sight Scotland Veterans do not pay bonuses, and the gender bonus gap is therefore 0%.

Our staff numbers in Sight Scotland Veterans are very low overall, so even small fluctuations can have a significant impact on our gender pay gap.

It is also worth highlighting that Sight Scotland Veterans does not directly employ any head office staff, these functions are provided by Sight Scotland (this includes the Chief Executive for both charities, Finance, IT, HR, Facilities, and Marketing and Communications).

Overall, for both charities our figures compare favourably to the ONS statistics, which show a national gender pay gap for Scotland (2021) at 10.2% (mean) and 11.6% (median). We are confident that our employees are paid fairly and equally for the same or similar roles, and our equal pay statements are included in our Equality Status Reports.

Actions

Sight Scotland and Sight Scotland Veterans support the fair treatment and reward of all staff irrespective of gender. We have pay and conditions of employment that do not discriminate unlawfully and are free from bias by ensuring that equal pay is in place for like work, work rated as equivalent and work of equal value.

Pay system

We operate a fair and transparent payscale system which ensures that the salary and conditions for each job relate to the title and description of that job and not to any characteristic of the person carrying it out. We are accredited Living Wage employers and pay all our staff the real Living Wage as a minimum. We clearly display salary ranges for any position advertised to ensure transparency and fairness. We regularly monitor staff pay to identify any pay differences and take targeted action where necessary. We have a Remuneration Policy which clearly sets out the rules for determining and reviewing staff pay. The policy and any updates are subject to the Board approval.

Recruitment

We will continue to ensure that our recruitment practices are transparent and fair. We deliver recruitment skills training for all managers, which involves unconscious bias training. We use structured interviews and skills-based assessment tasks and aim to have mixed-sex interview panels where possible to ensure fairness and avoid unconscious bias. We continue exploring how we can attract more men into Sight Scotland to create a more even gender balance – we recognise however that this is a broader challenge in the care and education sectors. As an equal opportunities employer we firmly believe in appointing the best candidate for the role, regardless of their gender or other protected characteristic.

Family friendly support

We offer a wide range of family friendly leave policies, which include enhanced pay for maternity, paternity, adoption and shared parental leave. Our Special Leave policy includes provisions for paid Time off for Dependants and Carers' Leave. We support flexible working, and have approximately 40% of staff who work on a part-time basis. We try to accommodate staff requests for flexible working patterns where we can.

Development opportunities

We recognise that our staff don't all want the same things from their careers, however, we aim to provide everyone with opportunities to be the best they can be and to progress, whether to more senior roles, or other opportunities within the organisation. To support this, we will continue to offer various development opportunities, such as funded professional qualification programmes (e.g. SVQ 3 or QTVI), or other opportunities to develop additional skills, whether through targeted training programmes (e.g. Braille Competency, Leadership Development) or internal personal development options (e.g. through leading a project or a working group). In 2021 we strengthened our central learning and development function to ensure a consistent organisational approach to people development and to enhance support for all our services in their learning and development activity.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum

We will continue operating our staff Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Forum which acts as a reference panel to assess our policies and practices, progress against our equality objectives and to bring forward ideas which will help us improve equality in our employment practice. The Forum meets regularly and considers actions to improve equality in relation to all the protected characteristics, including gender equality.

I confirm that the data reported and the calculations produced are accurate.



Craig Spalding
Chief Executive