

Gender Pay Gap

Operational vs. Support Services Employees

2023



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Introduction

For this report, the data has been split into two separate groups – one for operational employees and one for Support Services employees.

The six pieces of information about the pay and bonuses of males and females within each group were examined and compared against each other, alongside the overall data used in Buckinghamshire Fire & Rescue Service's annual gender pay gap report.

As merit awards have not been paid since 2019/2020, the only payments qualifying as bonus payments for Support Services employees were honorariums. An honoraria can be considered through the appraisal scheme or, where appropriate, in instances when an employee is asked to undertake part of the duties of a higher graded post or duties outside the scope of their post which are particularly onerous.

Similarly, the only bonus payments remaining for operational employees were long service awards.

As very few of these bonus payments were awarded during the five-year reporting period, the pay gap is skewed and as a result adds no value to the report. For this purpose, it has been excluded.

Therefore, the three pieces of information provided are:

- 1) The mean hourly gender pay gap
- 2) The median hourly gender pay gap
- 3) The quartile pay bands



Terms of reference

The data used in this report is sourced from the HR & Payroll system and based on the snapshot date of 31 March each year from 31 March 2019 to 31 March 2023.

Unlike with the main annual gender pay gap report, sessional (casual) employees are not included in the pay gap calculations.

Operational employees pay data includes employees on Wholetime, day-crewed, flexi contracts, On-Call employees and Apprentice Firefighters including all ranks, from Firefighter to Director level.

Support Services employee pay data includes employees, primarily in back-office roles and range from Apprentices to Director level.

Employees have been separated into these groups based on their primary role. Where an employee is primarily in a support role, but has an additional On-Call contract, the employee is included in the Support Services employee group only. All pay relating to additional roles is included in whichever group the employee's primary role belongs to.



Support Services employees pay gap



Support services employees pay gap

Pay

Appointments for Support Services roles are determined in accordance with local terms and conditions of Buckinghamshire & Milton Keynes Fire Authority Scheme of Conditions of Service for Support Services employees and any other local terms and conditions, which the Authority may, from time to time, adopt in relation to appointments, save where such provisions are amended by a contract of employment.

There are few allowances available, and most of the employees eligible are male.

Unlike with operational employees, there are few promotional/advancement opportunities for Support Services employees. Employees may have the opportunity to advance by changing roles for a higher graded position (usually within different departments, or when a manager leaves the organisation, and they have the relevant skills and experience to apply for the position) or where their own role changes which requires a job evaluation. Succession plans are in place for some key management roles, but such positions are likely to be made available to both internal and external applicants.

Make-up Support Services employees:

	Relevant employees			Full pay relevant employees		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019	43	67	110	43	66	109
2020	54	68	122	51	65	116
2021	55	71	126	53	70	123
2022	54	68	122	54	67	121
2023	57	72	129	55	69	124

The Support Services employee group contained a higher proportion of females to males.



Support Services employees pay gap

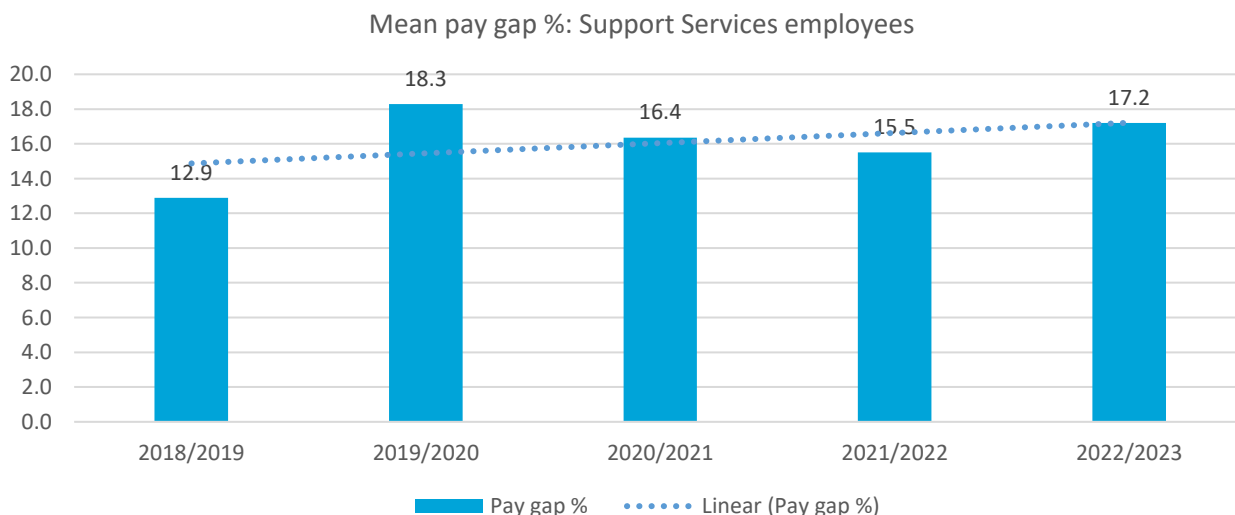
Mean hourly gender pay gap

The below table shows the mean hourly gender pay gap for Support Services employees since 2019.

In 2023 the pay gap was 17.2 per cent, which was an increase of 1.7 per cent from the previous year (2022). The positive 17.2 per cent pay gap means that for every £1 that male employees earned, female employees earned 82.8p.

	Male hourly pay rate £	Female hourly pay rate £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %	For every £1 earned by males, females earn (p)
2019	18.17	15.83	2.34	12.9	87.1
2020	19.10	15.61	3.49	18.3	81.7
2021	19.27	16.12	3.15	16.4	83.6
2022	19.87	16.79	3.08	15.5	84.5
2023	22.90	18.96	3.93	17.2	82.8

By plotting the percentage pay gaps into a chart, the trend-line shows that the gap has been on a gradual upward trend over the last five years.





Support Services employees pay gap

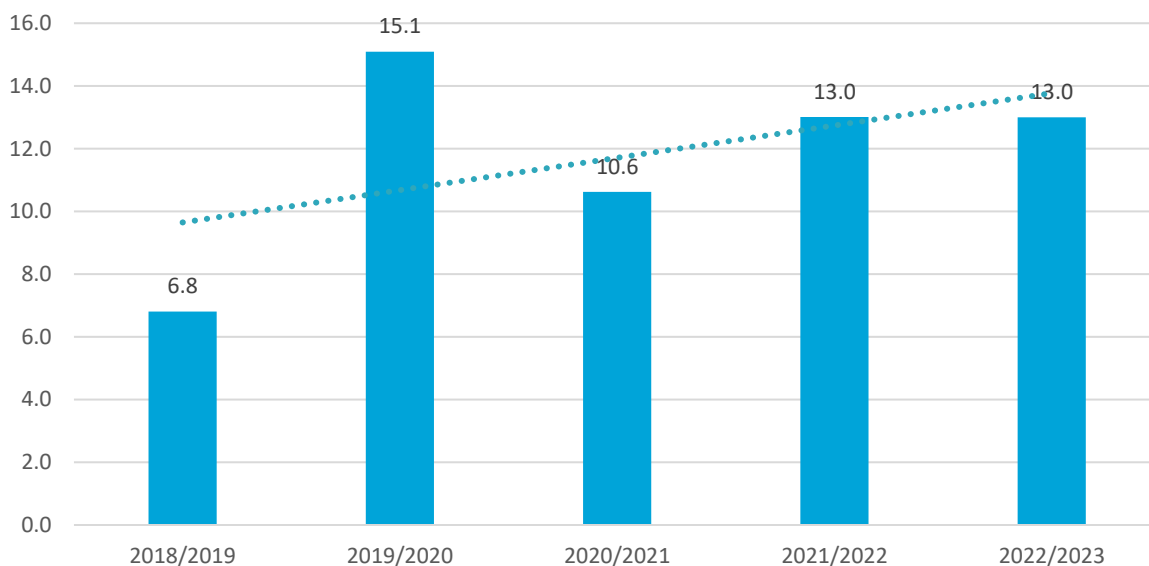
Median hourly gender pay gap

The below table shows median hourly gender pay gap for Support Services employees since 2019.

	Male hourly pay rate £	Female hourly pay rate £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %	For every £1 a males earned, females earned (p)
2019	15.88	14.80	1.08	6.8	93.2
2020	16.90	14.35	2.55	15.1	84.9
2021	17.23	15.40	1.83	10.6	89.4
2022	18.06	15.71	2.35	13.0	87.0
2023	21.01	18.27	2.74	13.0	87.0

Over the last five years, the median hourly pay gap is showing an upward trend for Support Services employees meaning that the gap has been increasing.

Median pay gap %: Support Services employees





Support Services employees pay gap

Quartiles

The following table shows the distribution of full-pay relevant employees across the pay quartiles by gender. Over the five-year period, approximately 35 per cent of all females were in the lower quartile compared to just 4 per cent of males, whilst an average of 31 per cent of all males were in the upper quartile compared to an average of 11 per cent of females.

	Lower		Lower middle		Upper Middle		Upper	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2019	4	23	13	15	14	13	12	15
2020	6	23	13	16	15	14	17	12
2021	6	25	13	18	18	13	16	14
2022	6	24	15	16	17	13	16	14
2023	6	25	13	18	17	14	19	12

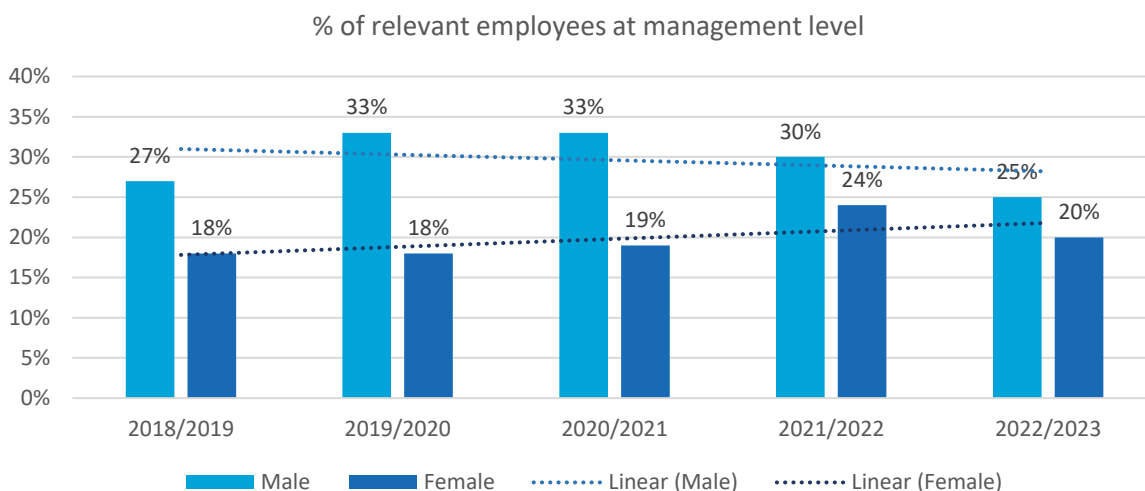


Support Services employees pay gap

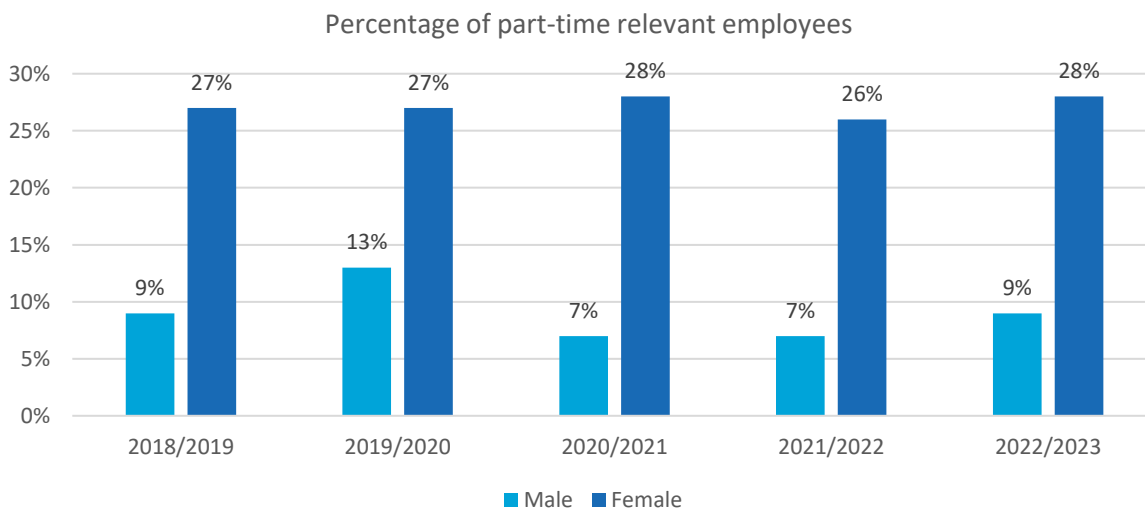
Contributing factors

There are number of factors that may have contributed to the pay gaps between male and female Support Services employees.

Despite there being a higher proportion of females to males, more males hold management level positions (grade J and above) than females. This is beginning to change as seen from the trend lines in the chart below and should eventually help to reduce the gap if the trend continues.



There is a higher percentage of females than males in part-time roles.





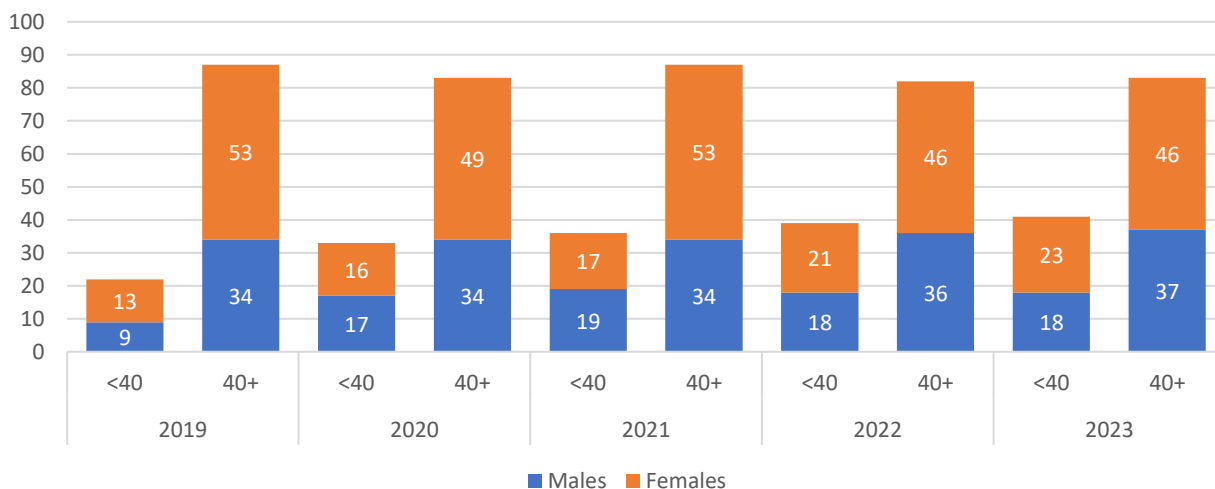
Support Services employees pay gap

Breakdown of employees by gender and age range

Further analysis was carried out by including age ranges to understand whether age plays a part in contributing to the gender pay gap. Full pay relevant employees were categorised into those aged 40 and over and those below the age of 40.

The number of female Support Services employees outweighs that of males, and most Support Services employees are in the age 40 and over bracket, as illustrated in the chart below.

Full pay relevant employees by age range and gender



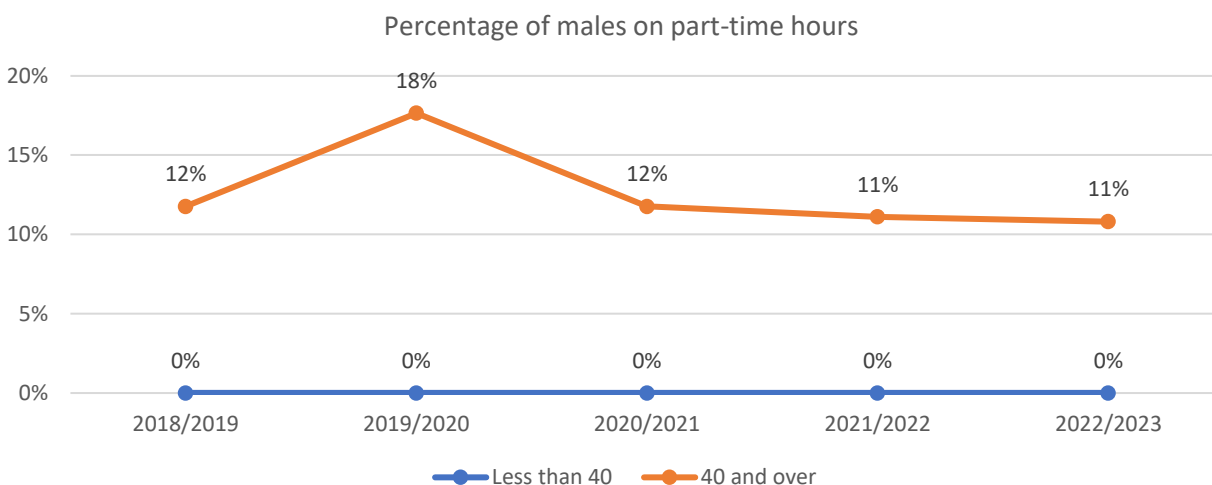
	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
	<40	40+	<40	40+	<40	40+	<40	40+	<40	40+
Full pay relevant males	9	34	17	34	19	34	18	36	18	37
Full pay relevant females	13	53	16	49	17	53	21	46	23	46



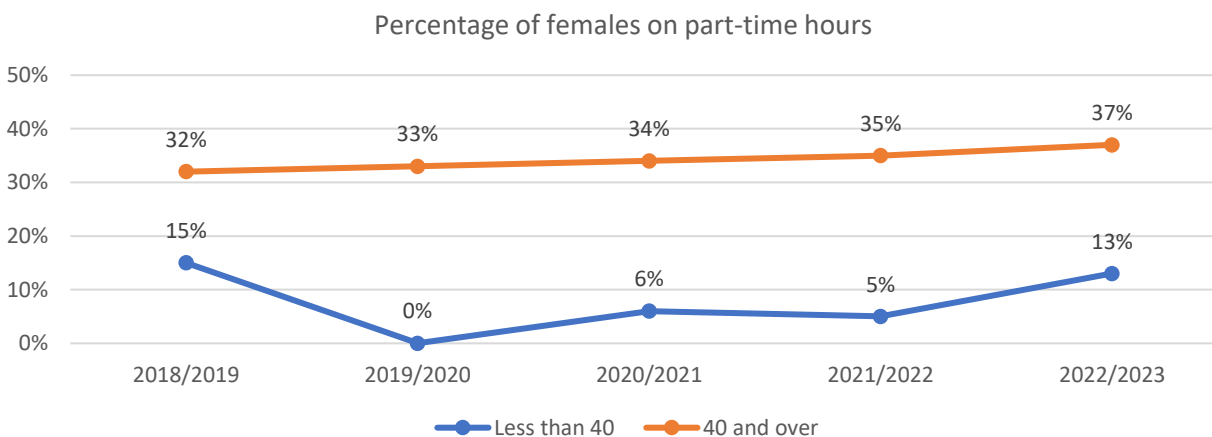
Support Services employees pay gap

Part-time hours by age range

A small percentage of male Support Services employees work part-time hours. Those that do are all aged 40 and over. No males below the age of 40 worked on a part-time basis during the five-year period.



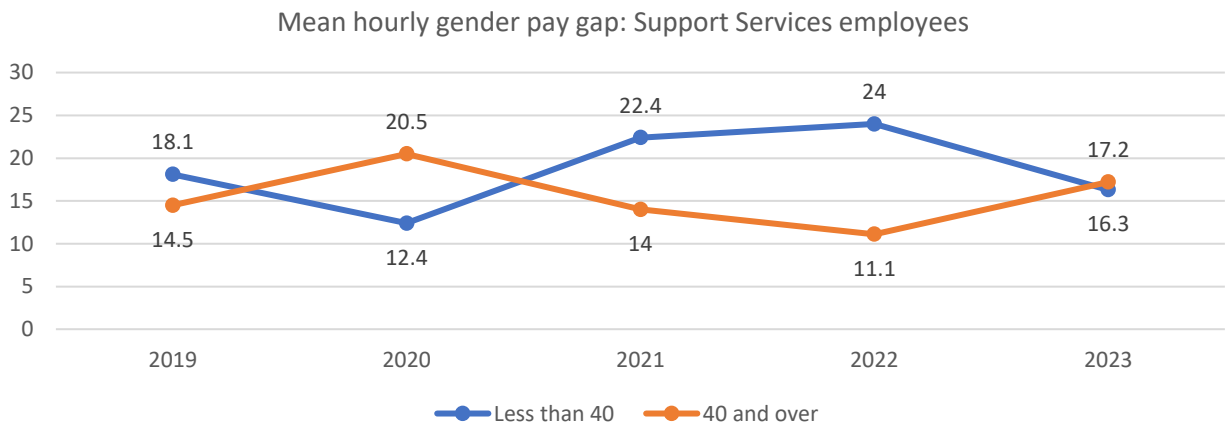
Of the female Support Services employees, those aged 40 and over had the highest percentage of part-time workers, although there were a few below the age of 40. The numbers of those aged 40 and over have increased year-on-year.





Support Services employees pay gap

Mean hourly gender pay gap by age range



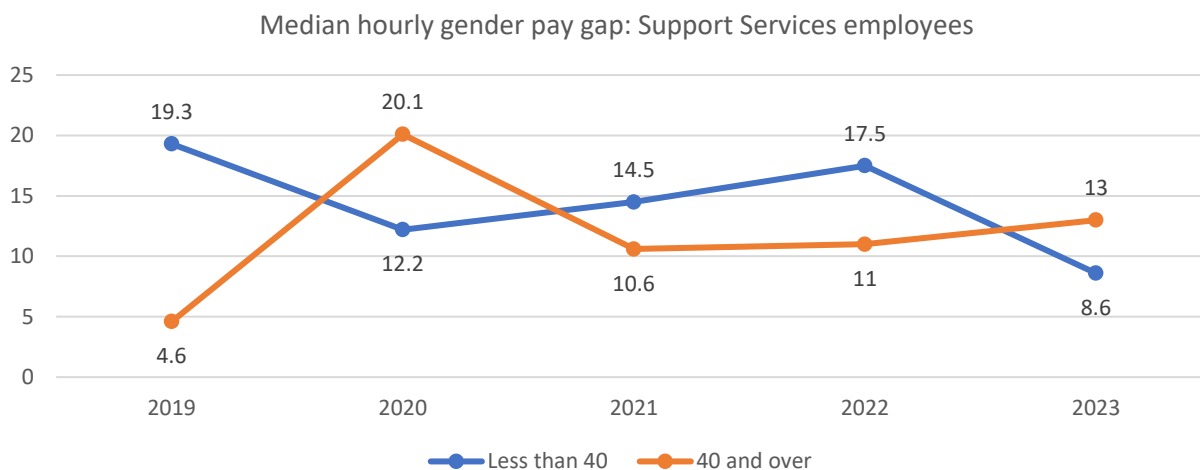
In 2023, the mean hourly gap was at 17.2 per cent for those in the 40 and over age group meaning that females earned 83p for every £1 earned by males.

For the group below the age of 40, females earned 84p for every £1 earned by males, equating to a 16.3 per cent pay gap in 2023.



Support Services employees pay gap

Median hourly pay gap by age range



The median hourly pay gap for the group aged 40 and over increased by 2 per cent in 2023 to 13 per cent, meaning that females earned 87p for every £1 earned by males within that group.

In the group aged below 40 the gap fell from 17.5 per cent to 8.6 per cent in 2023 meaning that females earned 91p for every £1 males within the group.

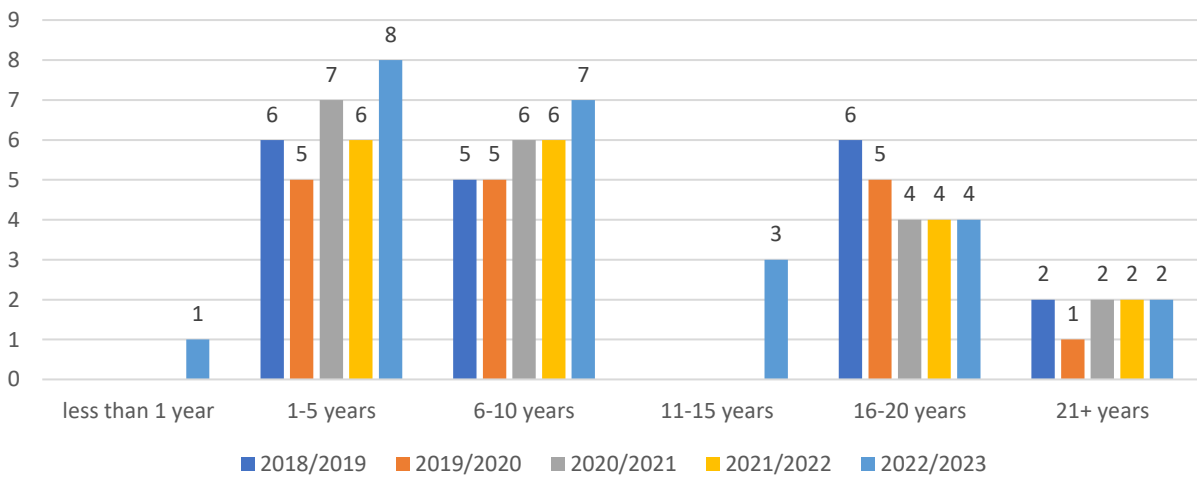


Support Services employees pay gap

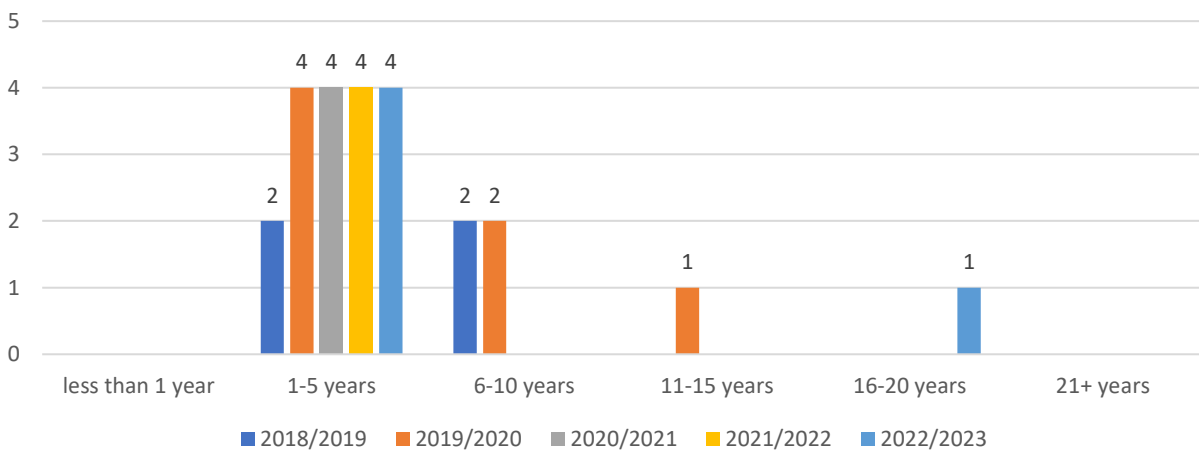
Length of service

Females with one to ten years' and then 16-20 years' service are more likely to work part-time hours. The few males who worked part-time hours had one to five years' service.

Part-time females by length of service



Part-time males by length of service



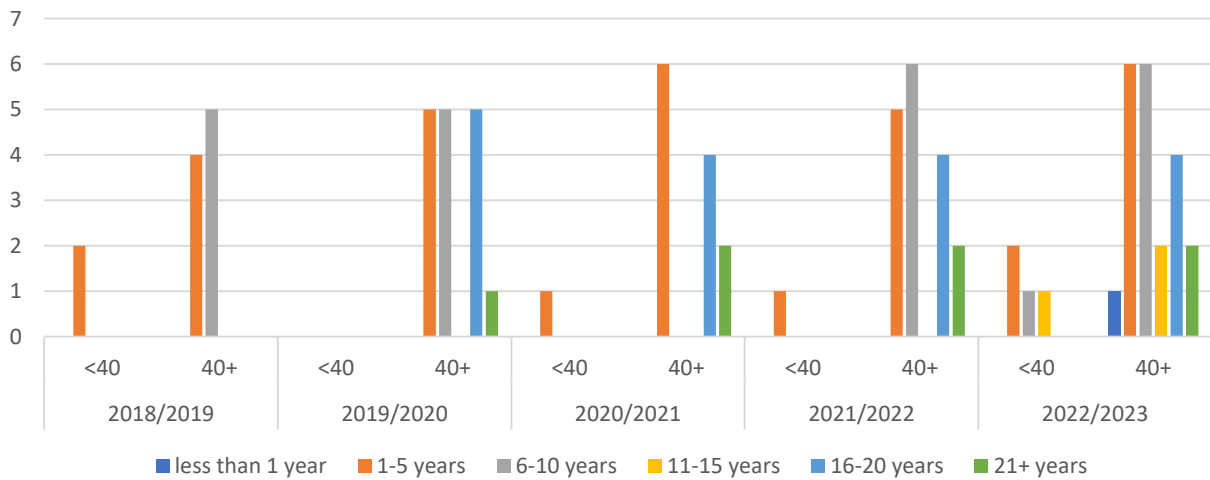


Support Services employees pay gap

Length of service

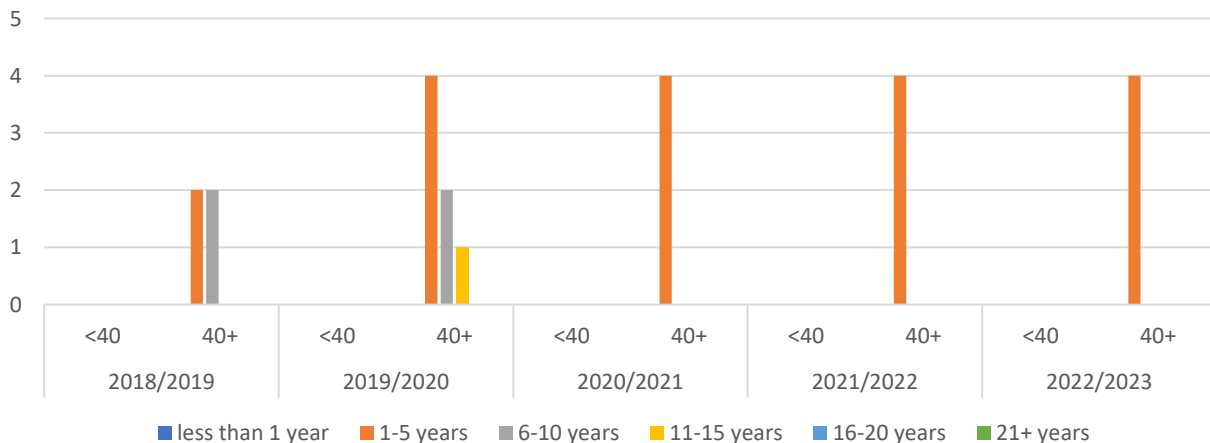
Most part-time workers are females aged 40 or over with one to five years' service, although more females aged below 40 are starting to work fewer hours as seen below from 2022.

Part-time females by age and length of service



The few males who worked part-time hours were all aged 40 and over with mainly between one to five years service.

Part-time males by age and length of service





Operational employees pay gap



Operational employees pay gap

Pay

For the majority of Operational roles, appointments are offered under the National Joint Council for Local Authority Fire and Rescue Services Scheme of Conditions of Service (known as the Grey Book) and any other local terms and conditions, which the Authority may, from time to time, adopt in relation to the appointment, save where such provisions are amended by a contract of employment.

Make-up of operational employees

The operational group contains more males than females, and almost all ranks from Station Commander and above are entirely made up of males.

Females made up approximately 6.0 per cent of the Operational workforce during the five-year period.

	Relevant employees			Full pay relevant employees		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
2019	300	22	322	291	20	311
2020	311	20	331	287	17	304
2021	330	24	354	320	22	342
2022	330	24	354	322	22	344
2023	329	23	352	326	22	348



Operational employees pay gap

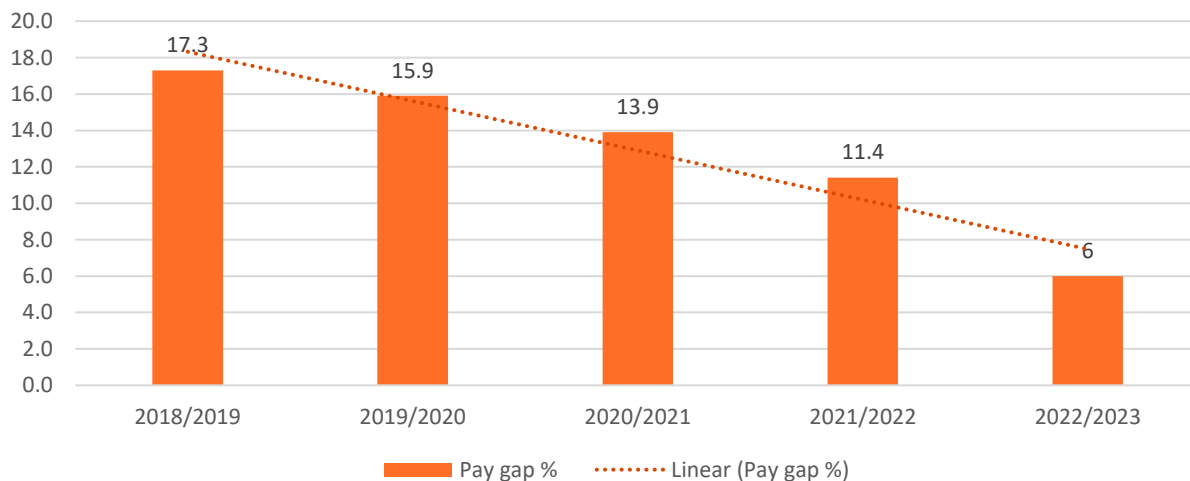
Mean hourly gender pay gap

In 2023, the pay gap was 6.0 per cent, which was 5.4 per cent lower than in 2022. The positive 6 per cent pay gap means that for every £1 that male operational employees earned, female operational employees earned 94p.

	Male hourly pay rate £	Female hourly pay rate £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %	For every £1 earned by males, females earn (p)
2019	18.95	15.67	3.28	17.3	82.7
2020	19.49	16.40	3.09	15.9	84.1
2021	18.74	16.13	2.61	13.9	86.1
2022	19.44	17.22	2.22	11.4	88.6
2023	21.76	20.45	1.31	6.0	94.0

The mean hourly pay gap has been reducing year-on-year since 2019 as seen in the chart below.

Mean hourly pay gap %: Operational employees





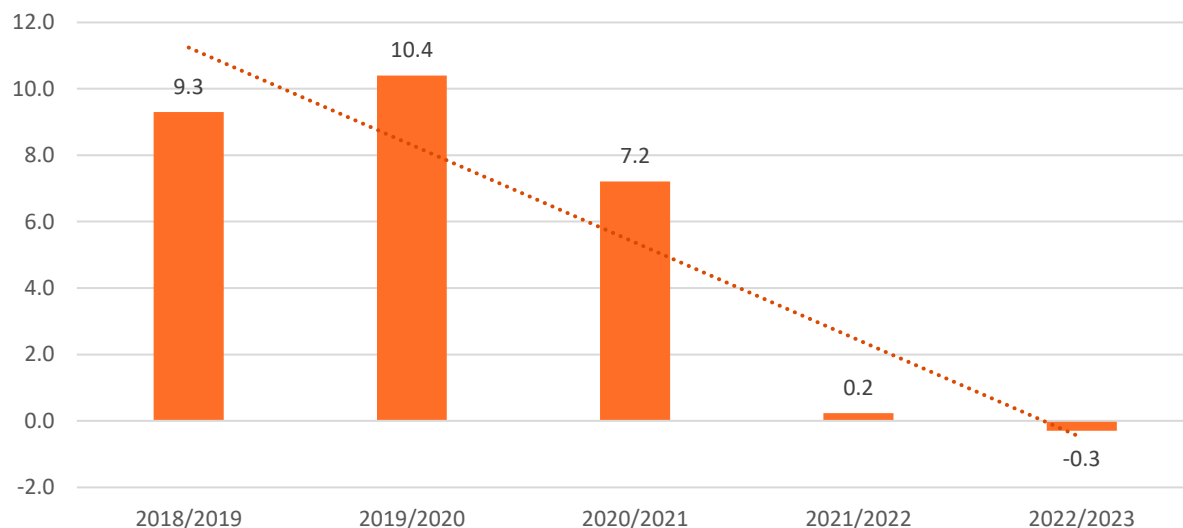
Operational employees pay gap

Median hourly pay gap

The median pay gap for operational employees has been on a steep decline over the five-year period and in 2023 resulted in a negative gap, which means that the pay of females was 0.3 per cent higher than males.

	Male hourly pay rate £	Female hourly pay rate £	Pay gap £	Pay gap %	For every £1 earned by males, females earn (p)
2019	16.60	15.06	1.54	9.3	90.7
2020	17.88	16.02	1.86	10.4	89.6
2021	16.80	15.58	1.22	7.3	92.7
2022	17.75	16.95	0.80	4.5	95.5
2023	19.56	19.61	-0.05	-0.3	100.3

Median hourly pay gap %: Operational employees





Operational employees pay gap

Quartiles

	Lower		Lower middle		Upper Middle		Upper	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
2019	73	5	69	9	74	3	75	2
2020	71	5	69	7	71	5	76	0
2021	77	8	80	6	80	6	83	2
2022	81	5	79	7	79	7	83	3
2023	82	5	81	6	79	8	84	3

The above table shows the distribution of males and females across the quartiles.

Over the five-year period, the highest number (35 per cent) of all female operational employees was in the lower middle quartile, whilst only 11.7 per cent was in the upper quartile.

Operational males were evenly distributed among the quartiles, although there were fractionally fewer in the lower quartile. The highest number (an average of 25.9 per cent) of males were in the upper quartile.

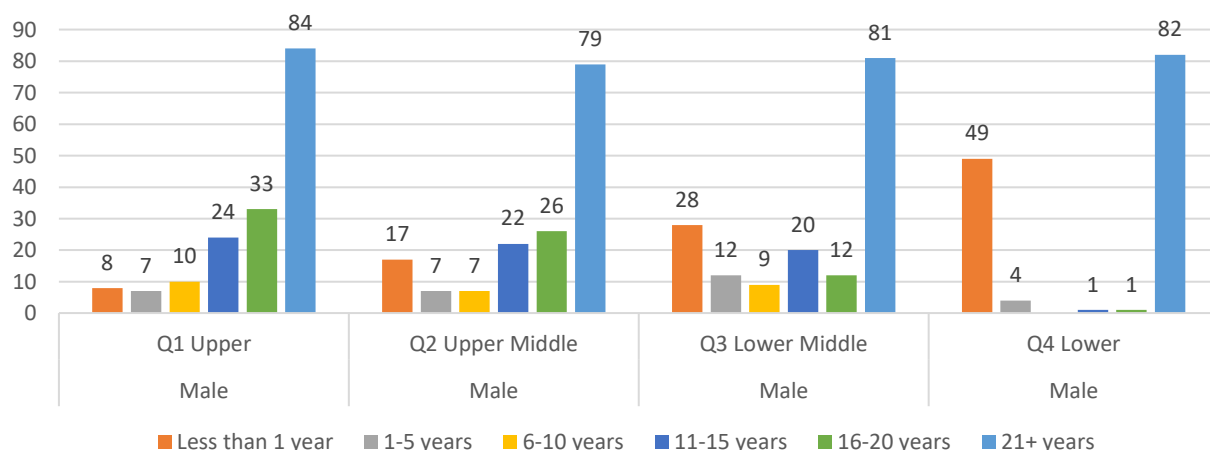


Operational employees pay gap

Quartiles continued

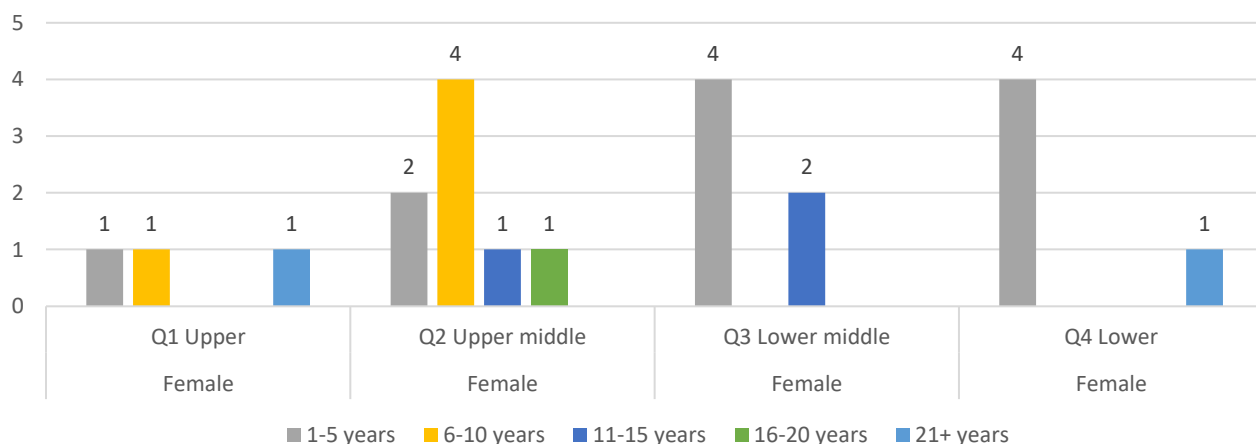
The following charts compare the distribution of operational males and females across the quartiles by length of service in 2023.

Quartile distribution: Operational males by length of service



Most operational males with less than one year of service featured in the lower quartile, as most joined as apprentices and had yet to acquire the training, skills and knowledge to enable them to become eligible to apply for temporary promotions.

Quartile distribution: Operational females by length of service





Operational employees pay gap

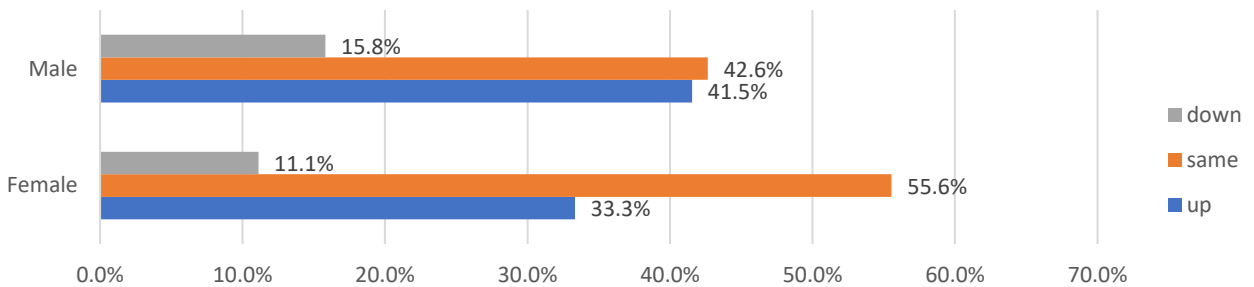
Contributing factors

There are several reasons why the hourly pay gap between operational males and females may have reduced.

- There are fractionally more females in the upper middle and upper quartiles
- The number of female operational employees has increased slightly over the years

Unlike with Support Services employees, operational employees are more likely to move between quartiles due to temporary promotions and as they develop into more senior roles. In 2023 fewer moved down, compared to 2022, which may be due to substantive promotions.

Quartiles changes 2022 vs 2023

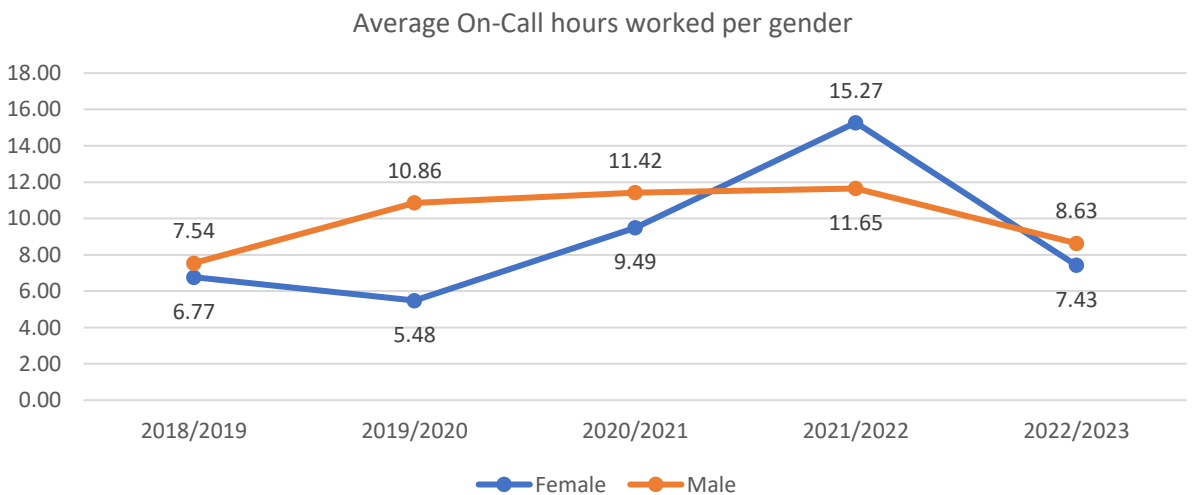
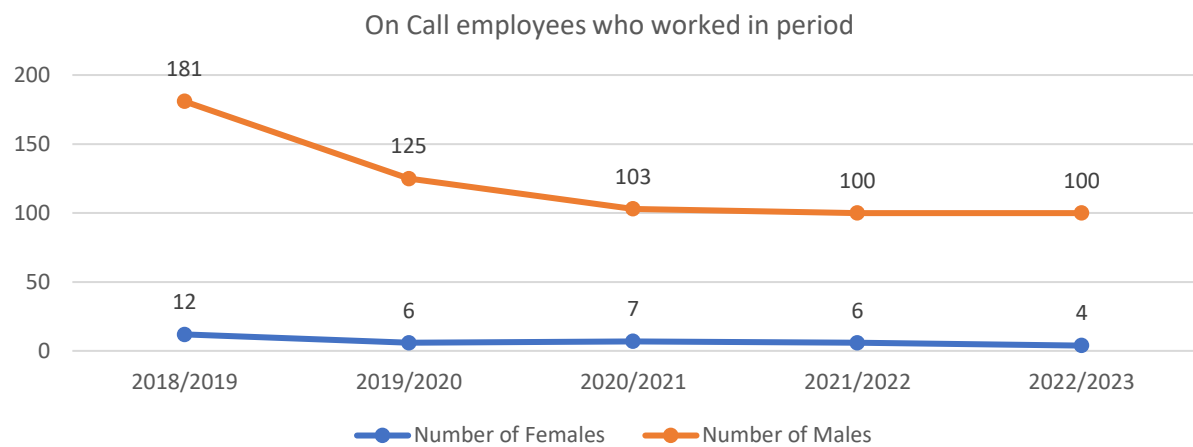




Operational employees pay gap

Contributing factors continued

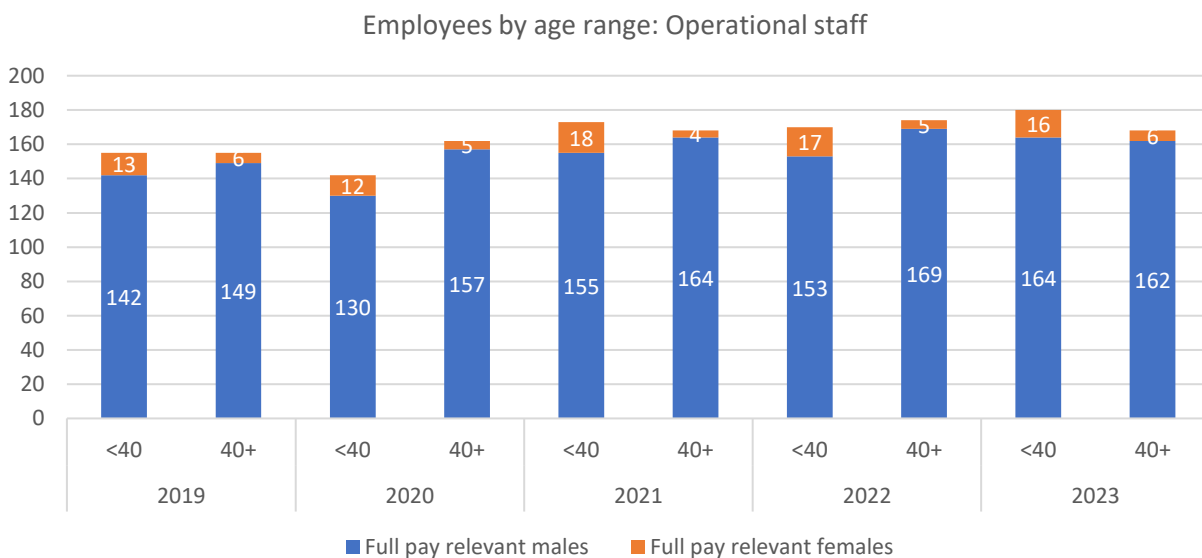
- Whilst the numbers of On-Call employees who worked during the period has reduced for both males and females, males saw a bigger reduction
- Females in On-Call roles are working more hours overall





Operational employees pay gap

Numbers of full pay relevant employees age range



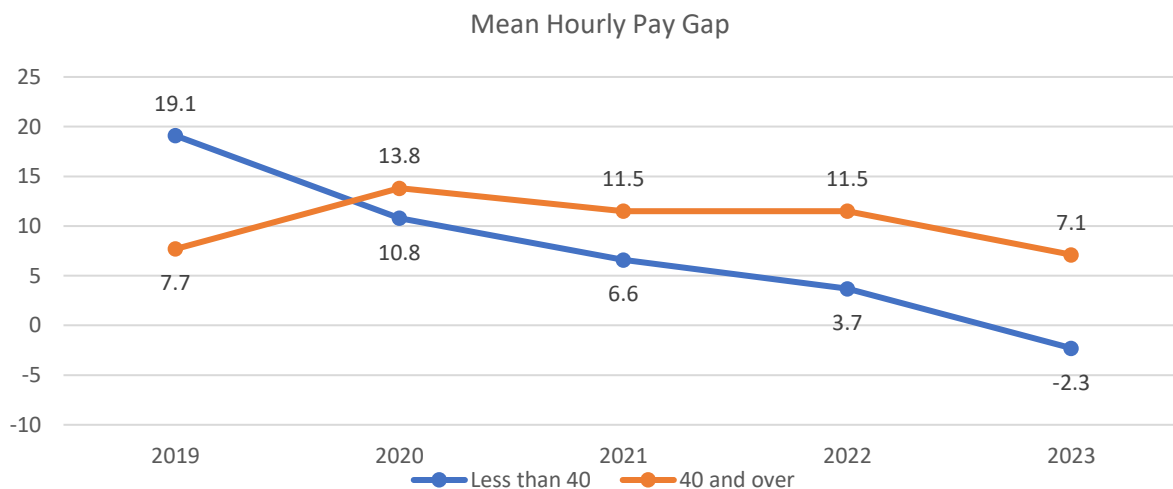
Of the few operational females, two thirds are generally below the age of 40.

	2019		2020		2021		2022		2023	
	<40	40+	<40	40+	<40	40+	<40	40+	<40	40+
Full pay relevant males	142	149	130	157	155	164	153	169	164	162
Full pay relevant females	13	6	12	5	18	4	17	5	16	6



Operational employees pay gap

Mean hourly pay gap by age range



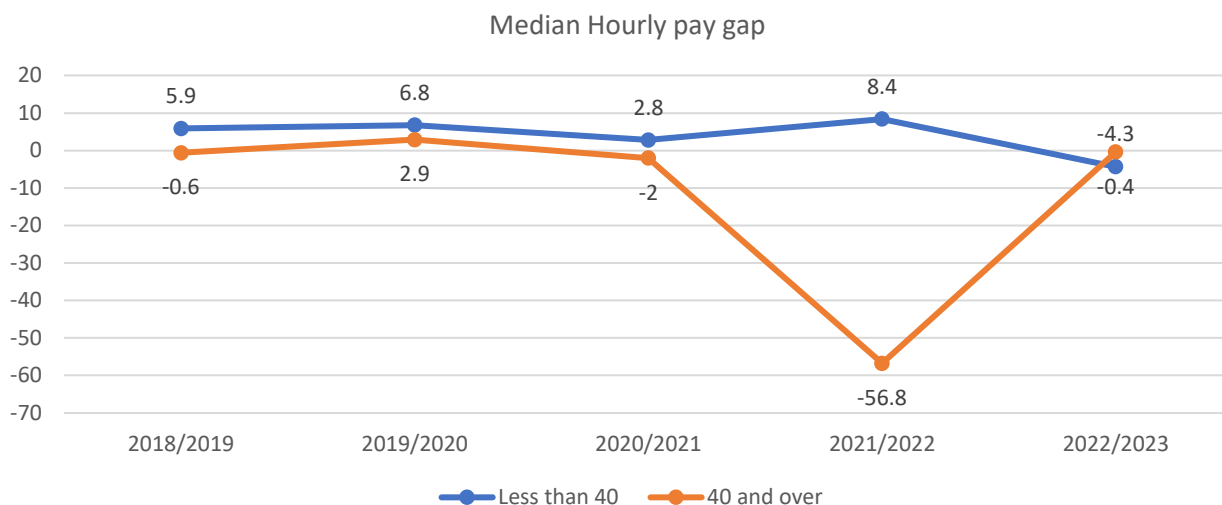
The mean hourly pay gap has fallen steadily year-on-year for those in the group below the age of 40, to the point where it became a negative pay gap in 2023. This means that females earned more than males and for every £1 a female earned, males earned 97.7p.

Those in the group aged 40 and above have seen the size of the gap fall although at a slower rate than the other group. In 2023, for every £1 earned by males, females earned 92.9p.

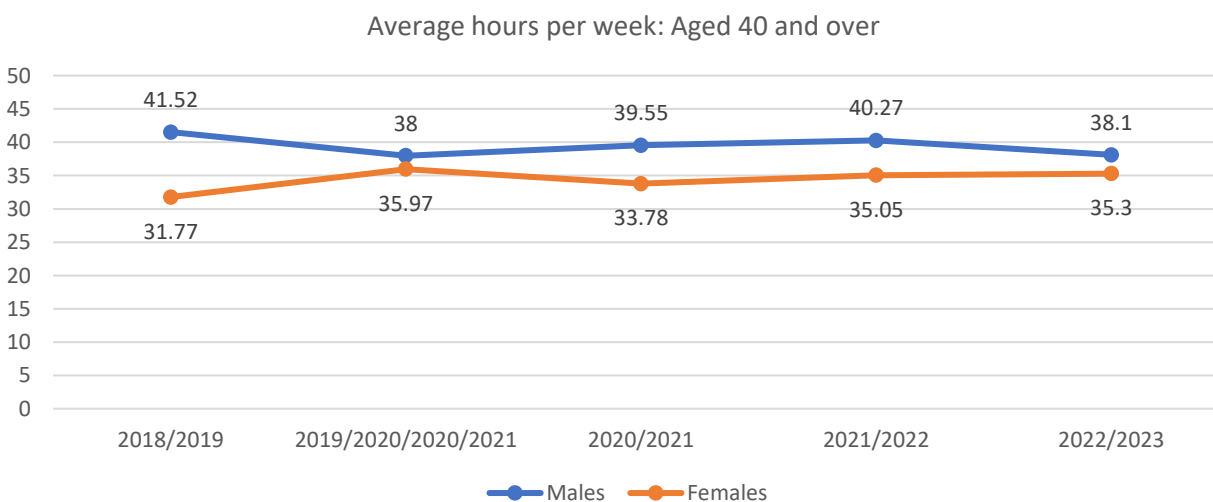


Operational employees pay gap

Median hourly pay gap by age range



From 2021 there has been a negative pay gap for females aged 40 and over which means that females earned more than males. The negative gap increased considerably during 2022. It is important to note that this was during the coronavirus pandemic period which would have contributed towards this. Females were also starting to increase their weekly hours with more On-Call and/or bank hours, as illustrated below.





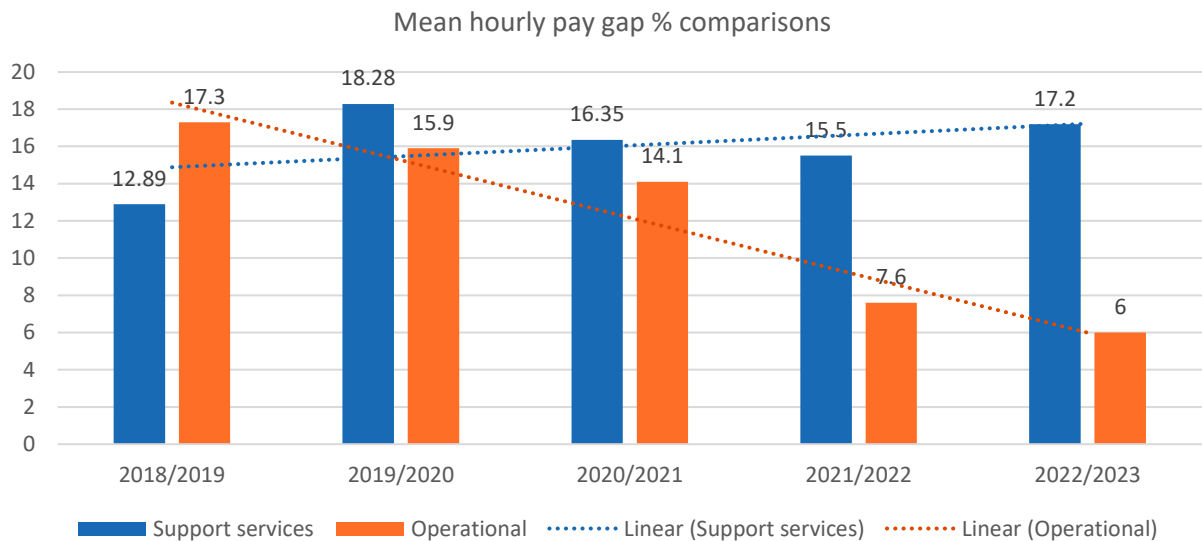
Operational vs. Support Services employees



Operational vs. Support Services employees

Hourly pay gap comparisons

The following chart shows the mean (top chart) and median (bottom chart) hourly pay gap comparisons between Operational and Support Services employees.



Both the mean and median hourly pay gaps have reduced significantly for operational employees, whilst Support Services employees have seen a steady increase of both the mean and median hourly pay gaps.

