

## Title: What is the gender pay gap?

### Description

This lesson will define the gender pay gap (in relation to unequal pay), exploring the reasons why pay inequality has emerged and the extent of the problem in the UK.

Learners are encouraged to explore the potential causes of gender pay inequality, and consider the implications of the gender pay gap for their own futures.

### Age

14-18 (KS4+)

### Aims:

By the end of this lesson learners will:

- Be able to define the gender pay gap and explain the difference between the gender pay gap and unequal pay
- Be able to analyse and critically engage with graphical representations of data
- Understand the extent of gender pay inequality in the UK
- Be aware of the mechanisms by which the gender pay gap emerges

### Curriculum links

## England

### Learning objectives (secondary)

Citizenship | KS4 | the different ways in which a citizen can contribute to the improvement of their community, to include the opportunity to participate actively in community volunteering, as well as other forms of responsible activity

Citizenship | KS4 | diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom and the need for mutual respect and understanding

Geography | KS4/GCSE | Numerical and statistical skills

History | KS4 | understanding of the historical concepts of continuity and change, cause and consequence, similarity and difference, and significance by making connections, drawing contrasts, analysing trends and framing historical questions

SMSC - Moral | | interest in investigating and offering reasoned views about moral and ethical issues and ability to understand and appreciate the viewpoints of others on these issues.'

SMSC - Moral | | ability to recognise the difference between right and wrong and to readily apply this understanding in their own lives, recognise legal boundaries....

Mathematics | Interpret line graphs for time series data

Mathematics | Interpret scatter graphs of bivariate data: recognise correlation

Mathematics | KS3/KS4 | Statistics: construct and interpret appropriate tables, charts, and diagrams, including frequency tables, bar charts, pie charts, and pictograms for categorical data, and vertical line (or bar) charts for ungrouped and grouped numerical data

## Scotland

### Outcome summary

Literacy | Listening and Talking: | LIT 4-04aAs I listen or watch, I can clearly state the purpose and main concerns of a text and make inferences from key statements;

Literacy | Listening and Talking: | LIT 4-04aAs I listen or watch, I can gather, link and use information from different sources and use this for different purposes.

Literacy | Listening and Talking: | LIT 4-09aWhen listening and talking with others for different purposes, I can:communicate detailed information, ideas or opinions;

Health and wellbeing | | HWB 0-09a / HWB 1-09a / HWB 2-09a / HWB 3-09a / HWB 4-09aAs I explore the rights to which I and others are entitled, I am able to exercise these rights appropriately and accept the responsibilities that go with them. I show respect for the rights of others.

Health and wellbeing | | HWB 0-13a / HWB 1-13a / HWB 2-13a / HWB 3-13a / HWB 4-13aThrough contributing my views, time and talents, I play a part in bringing about positive change in my school and wider community.

Religious and moral education | | RME 4-09bI am able to apply my understanding of a range of moral viewpoints, including those which are independent of religion, to specific moral issues and am aware of the diversity of moral viewpoints held in modern Scotland and the wider world.

Social Studies | broaden my understanding of the world by learning about human activities and achievements in the past and present.

Social Studies | develop my understanding of my own values, beliefs and cultures and those of others.

Social Studies | | SOC 4-04aBy studying groups in past societies who experienced inequality, I can explain the reasons for the inequality and evaluate how groups or individuals addressed it.

## Wales

### Learning outcome

Welsh Baccalaureate | KS4 | Participation in a Global Challenge · Identify, consider and form a personal opinion on a global issue, e.g. equality

PSE | | Active citizenship

PSE | | Sustainable development and global citizenship

Geography | KS4/GCSE WJEC | 4.2 Interpret and extract information from different types of graphs. Interpret different graphs to identify patterns and trends.

## Resources

- [Slideshow](#) (plus access to the internet to show embedded videos)
- [Cut-outs of company names](#) - plus, tablets/mobile devices and access to the internet to look up companies' gender pay gap (if this is used as a follow-up idea in class)

## LESSON STEPS

### Starter/stimulus/warm-up (15 minutes)

**Review** the findings of lesson one. **Remind** the learners of what was covered in the previous lesson:

- Equal pay for equal work has been a legal right for over 50 years, but women are still routinely paid less for equivalent work
- Individuals, trade unions, campaigners, politicians and changing economic and social conditions all played a role in driving forward the UK's legislation and progress towards equal pay
- Evaluating the "value" of jobs that are categorically different in character is a difficult process that has previously resulted in men's work being deemed more valuable than women's

**Introduce** the topic of today's lesson - the gender pay gap, which learners will find out is actually different to equal pay, although the issues are related.

Split the learners into 4 groups. **Ask** the learners to each quickly draw a picture of the following people without conferring - one per group (allow 2 minutes):

1. Pilot
2. Receptionist
3. Nurse
4. Scientist

Once the learners are complete, **ask** them to show their drawings to one another. Ask some questions about what their drawings look like: How old are they? What gender are they? What race are they? What else have we inferred about what someone doing this job would look or be like? **Ask** why they think the people in these jobs look like this - is it based on seeing people looking like this in these jobs in real-life or on TV, newspapers, etc?

**Explain** that the students have made assumptions about who does what work.

**Ask** the learners what other jobs they consider as being "women's" jobs and "men's" jobs? Why? Use a whiteboard to note down jobs considered male/female.

Some examples/starters below - (e.g. who do you think is more likely to be a professor?)

| <u>“Men’s” jobs</u>  | <u>“Women’s” jobs</u>   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engineer</li><li>• Doctor</li><li>• Lawyer/judge</li><li>• Scientist</li><li>• Headteacher</li><li>• Professor</li><li>• Pilot</li><li>• Prime minister</li><li>• Police officer</li><li>• Firefighter</li><li>• CEO</li><li>• Electrician</li><li>• Plumber</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nurse</li><li>• Receptionist</li><li>• Secretary/personal assistant</li><li>• Primary school teacher</li><li>• Air travel assistant</li><li>• Care worker</li><li>• Childminder</li><li>• Nursery teacher</li><li>• Stay-at-home parent</li><li>• Beautician/hairdresser</li><li>• Social worker</li><li>• Sewing machinist</li></ul> |

**Ask** the learners to analyse if there are any trends in the types of jobs we expect men/women to do (e.g. Are they considered valuable or important to society? How well-paid are these jobs?).

**Ask** the learners to consider the recent discussions about careworkers (e.g. social care, nurses) during the Covid-19 crisis - are we finally recognising that roles deemed as women’s work are of immense value to society?

**Ask** the learners how this discussion has made them feel about their future job prospects?

### Main activity (15 minutes)

**Show** learners slides 5 & 6 - read out some of the quotes.

**Explain** that:

- women make up the majority of low-paid workers in the UK<sup>1</sup> - 62% of jobs paying less the Real Living Wage are done by women
- only 2% of FTSE 250 CEOs (the heads of the 250 biggest companies in the UK) are women<sup>2</sup>
- in 2019, there were more men called Steve than there were women CEOs in the FTSE 100<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> IHS Markit (2019) [Living Wage Research for KPMG: 2019 Report](#)

<sup>2</sup> Business Leader (2020) [Discover the female FTSE 100 CEOs of 2020](#)

<sup>3</sup> Institute of Chartered Accountants in England and Wales (2019) [More Steves than women are FTSE 100 CEOs](#)

- even among those who have made it to the top, there is pay inequality: the highest-paid male CEO earns almost 90% more than the highest-paid female CEO<sup>4</sup>

**Show** The Guardian's [explainer video](#) on the gender pay gap (slide 7).

**Show** the calculation on slide 8. **Define** the "gender pay gap": the gender pay gap is measured by calculating the difference between men's and women's average earnings across an organisation or across the labour market (if looking at the pay gap for an entire country), expressed as a percentage of men's earnings. There are different figures available as the measure can be calculated using mean or median pay.

**Note** that the UK's (median) gender pay gap nationally is 17.3% - which means that women on average earn 17% less than men.<sup>5</sup>

**Ask** the students to explain how this is different to equal pay, the concept discussed in the previous last lesson. **Explain** that equal pay refers to men and women being paid the same for the same work, or work of equal value, and has been a legal requirement since 1970.

**Point out** that there are also other pay gaps - in the UK, ethnic minorities earn around 10% less on average than white workers. There are also disparities within this, with Bangladeshi workers earning 20% less than white workers.<sup>6</sup> The disability pay gap currently stands at 15.5%, meaning that disabled workers on average earn around £3,000 less per year than non-disabled workers.<sup>7</sup>

**Explain** that, since 2018, companies with over 250 employees have been mandated by the Government to publicly report their gender pay and bonus gaps.

**Show** learners some examples of what we've found out about some of our biggest companies.<sup>8</sup> **Ask** the learners what roles they might expect to see men and women doing in these companies - what would they expect to see if they walked into their offices/buildings?

**Show** the graph showing the trend in average gender pay and bonus gaps since reporting began in 2017 (slide 13).<sup>9</sup> **Ask** the learners to explain what the

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<sup>4</sup> Business Leader (2020) [Discover the female FTSE 100 CEOs of 2020](#)

<sup>5</sup> Office for National Statistics (2019) [Gender pay gap in the UK: 2019](#)

<sup>6</sup> The Independent (2019) [Ethnic minorities in UK earn 10% less than white workers, Bank of England research shows](#)

BBC News (2019) [Chinese ethnic group biggest earners in the UK](#)

<sup>7</sup> Trades Union Congress (2019) [Disability Pay Gap Day: disabled people work 2 months of the year for free, says TUC](#)

<sup>8</sup> Gender pay and bonus statistics refer to the mean figures from 2019-20 Government reporting data, [analysed by The Equality Trust](#). Source: [Gov.uk gender pay gap service](#)

<sup>9</sup> These data refer to the yearly average of the mean bonus gaps for reporting companies across the three years of company reporting.

The Equality Trust (2020) [UK gender pay gap reporting 2017-2020: patterns and progress](#)

graph shows - while the GPG is decreasing at a rate of 0.1% each year, the bonus gap has soared (by 179%).

**Ask** whether this graph suggests that these companies are doing enough to challenge gender pay inequality. Do they think that, at this rate, it will be more equal by the time they are in work? **Mention** that, at the rate shown in this table (a decrease of 0.1% per year), the gender pay gap will not be at zero until 2,162.

**Show** the OECD's global data on the gender pay gap, and highlight the UK's position in comparison to other similar countries and the OECD average (slide 14).

### Final plenary (15 minutes)

**Ask** the learners in open plenary to give some reasons why women earn so much less than men.

**Discuss** the following drivers of the gender pay gap:

- Childcare penalty - when families have children the women take time off work to raise the family, might return to work in part-time roles to manage childcare responsibilities OR might experience direct discrimination from employers who suspect that women won't be able to handle an "important" job if they have children.
- Unpaid work - prevailing stereotypes mean that women still do around 10 hours more domestic and care work a week than men (e.g. cooking, cleaning, looking after children and elderly/disabled relatives), leaving them with less time for paid work.<sup>10</sup> Part-time work tends to be lower paid, and it is rare for companies to offer part-time roles at a senior level.
- Gendered segregation of work/sectors - for instance, linking back to the initial exercise where we saw that some occupations are historically considered as male/female work. Why are these sectors valued less highly - is it because the jobs are lower skilled, easier or not as important, or is it because they are traditionally considered "female"?
- Lack of progression to senior roles - there are no sectors where women hold the majority of top jobs in Britain. With so few women in management/senior positions, it's no wonder the gender pay gap is so huge.
- Lack of confidence (as a result of social/cultural factors) - women don't see themselves in senior roles within a company, or might not go into certain sectors (e.g. engineering, law). Women might be less likely to put themselves forward for promotions, pay rises or negotiate a higher salary when starting a new role.

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<sup>10</sup> Office for National Statistics (2016) [Women shoulder the responsibility of 'unpaid work'](#)

- Unequal pay is also a contributing factor to the gender pay gap - women are often paid less, even in the same or equivalent roles. This discrimination can be a result of bias by the person responsible for deciding pay (i.e. conscious or unconscious sexism). Science has shown that our cultural biases tend to underrate women's performance, while overrating men's (and the same exists for self-assessment - men rate themselves more highly than in reality, while women rate themselves lower).

Things that don't drive the gender pay gap:

- Education or intelligence - these days, women in the UK are more highly educated than men, yet male graduates go on to earn much more than their female counterparts<sup>11</sup>. Men are less likely than women to go to British universities, more likely to drop out and those who complete their course are less likely to get a good degree.<sup>12</sup> Girls outperform boys in attainment at school at primary and secondary level.<sup>13</sup>
- Capability or work ethic - there is no evidence to suggest that women aren't as good at their jobs, or don't work as hard as men. These ideas are relics of the past, when women were locked out from many aspects of ordinary life (voting, working, making decisions) because they were believed to be incapable - some people still believe these sexist ideas.

Finally, **ask** learners to go to the [link](#) shown on the final slide (or hand out [paper forms](#)) and fill in a short feedback form on how they found the lesson today.

## Follow-up ideas

### Read

- [Equal Pay Day 2019: As of today, we're all effectively working for free](#) (Stylist)
- [Analysis of company equal pay reporting 2017-2020](#) (The Equality Trust)

### Watch

- [UK gender inequality explained with cereal](#) (Live Magazine)
- [Three gender pay gap myths explained](#) (The Guardian)
- [What you need to know about the gender pay gap](#) (Financial Times)
- [Why are women paid less than men?](#) (The Economist)

### Listen

- [The Real Gender Pay Gap](#) (BBC Radio 4)

### Take action

<sup>11</sup> Higher Education Policy Institute (2020) [Mind the gap: gender differences in higher education](#)

<sup>12</sup> The Guardian (2016) [UK's university gender gap is a national scandal, says thinktank](#)

<sup>13</sup> The Guardian (2019) [Gap in academic skills of girls and boys widens, show Sats](#)

- Learners can be split into groups and asked to produce a campaign artefact: a poster/banner, a leaflet, or a short piece to camera to explain the gender pay gap and why it exists.

## Homework

Ask the learners to look up the gender pay and bonus gaps at the [following companies](#) (cut these out and give out one per learner), using the [Government's gender pay gap portal](#).

Learners are to answer the following questions:

- What were the company's gender pay gap and gender bonus gaps across the three years of reporting?
- Did they report this year (2019/20)?
- Comment on the direction of travel/progress over the past three years of gender pay reporting. To what extent has the company made positive progress on closing pay/bonus gaps during this time?
- Using The Equality Trust's [online calculator](#), find out how much a woman earning £25,000 per year at your chosen company could stand to lose over her lifetime, as a result of the gender pay gap. What day in the year do women effectively "stop earning"?
- Based on what you know (or can find out) about the company and the work it does, why do you think the gender pay/bonus gap is the figure it is?
- Has this exercise changed your perception of the company? How?

Where appropriate, learners may be encouraged to start a conversation with their parents about the gender pay gap at their workplace, showing them the details of their company if they aren't aware of them, and asking them what they plan to do at work to raise/challenge this. Please note: if a high proportion of children within the lesson are likely to have parents out of work, do not suggest this activity.

We also welcome larger schools with more than 250 members of staff (e.g. those who are part of multi-academy trusts), to share and encourage students' reflections on the schools' gender pay gap and what that means.