SWORD
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UK

Sword IT Solutions Ltd Gender Pay Gap Report

2024

Data has been calculated according to the Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017.

We confirm that the data published in this report is accurate.

CONTENTS

Introduction
Driving Sword's success through Inclusion and Equity

Welcome to our latest Gender Pay Gap report for Sword IT Solutions, based on data from April 5th, 2024. Reflecting on our previous reports and our ongoing commitment to a culture which promotes an inclusive future for all, its encouraging to see our progress. Our priority remains the same; to ensure that opportunities and rewards are **available to all**, regardless of background and take daily actions to ensure this is achieved. We want our employees to feel **supported, empowered and be inspired** to do their best work.

We are guided by our core value of **transparency** which ensures we stay accountable to our gender balance goals. Our ongoing commitment to Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion (DE&I) is deeply embedded in our culture and enhances our growth strategy. We are devoted to creating a genuinely inclusive work environment where women can thrive and advance their careers.

In this year's report, we have raised a spotlight on our **Women in Tech Community** and our **Emerging Leaders Program.** We reflect more on the success of both initiatives within this report.

We continue to be inspired by the members of our Women in Tech community who **actively champion the achievements of others, build connection, learning and drive positive change**. Their latest panel discussion was a huge success, showcasing the personal experience of women in our sector, sharing personal insights, their career journeys, challenges they have faced and how they overcame them. The energy within the community shows we can achieve great things when we all come together.

Another highlight over the last 12 months has been the launch of our **Emerging Leaders Program**. Our key focus is to accelerate the potential of future leaders in our business, irrespective of background. Each member of the program has been selected on personal merit and its exciting to see that **80% of our current cohort** are women.

The technology industry continues to face undeniable representation challenges, particularly for women. We continually promote our **Data Academy** through inclusive attraction practices, ensuring we attract a diverse pool of future talent across data, AI and digital transformation. We are proud to have recently seen **three generations of data academy graduates** hosting at a recent event to provide real insight into life at Sword and how to build fulfilling careers.

We recognise that our gender pay gap is predominately a reflection on the gender composition of our workforce and is explained further throughout this report. We still have work to do however our People strategy and targeted initiatives, backed by our Senior Leadership Team, provides a **strong foundation for achieving gender balance.**

We are passionately committed to nurturing a culture of transparency, inclusion and equity, with a strong focus on addressing the gender pay gap. We celebrate diversity and believe in a workplace where everyone at Sword feels deeply respected and valued for their unique contributions. We encourage everyone to share their ideas, celebrate our collective successes, and feel empowered to drive meaningful, positive change. By actively working to close the gender pay gap, we ensure that all employees, regardless of gender, are compensated fairly and have equal opportunities to thrive.

Catherine Froud-Williams
Chief People Officer

Sword 2024 Pay Gap Data

What is the UK Gender Pay Gap Report?

The Gender Pay Gap Reporting (GPGR) legislation requires employers in the UK with 250 or more employees to publish calculations annually showing the pay gap between their employees who identify as men and women. This reporting aims to promote transparency and awareness around gender pay inequalities in the workforce. Reporting our gender pay gap is crucial for identifying and addressing disparities in Sword. By addressing the gender pay gap, we are not only fostering fairness but also driving a culture of inclusivity and respect.

Is it the same as equal pay?

Measuring the gender pay gap is not the same as measuring equal pay. Equal pay is where men and women are paid the same for performing the same role or different work of equal or comparable value. Gender pay gaps are not a comparison of like roles. Instead, they show the difference between the average pay of men and women across organisations, industries and the workforce as a whole. Therefore, a gender pay gap can exist even when men and women are paid equally and fairly for the same work.

Internal equity review, validation and benchmarking

At Sword, we are deeply committed to creating an inclusive and equitable workplace. By leveraging benchmarked data and conducting regular analysis, we ensure our pay practices are fair and competitive. This ongoing evaluation helps us identify gaps and take targeted actions to close them. While our gender pay gap report reveals differences in pay, our benchmarking reviews confirm that our employees are compensated fairly for their specific roles. We use these insights and our performance cycles to track our progress and hold ourselves accountable. This ensures we provide equitable pay and select for promotion based on skills, experience and merit throughout our employees' career, regardless of gender.

Note:

To ensure we align with the UK Government statutory Gender Pay Gap Reporting (GPGR) legislation, the data in this report refers to the traditional sex categories of male and female. At Sword, we respect that gender is on a non-binary spectrum, based on self-identification, and our reporting in this manner should not be interpreted as our position on the issue.
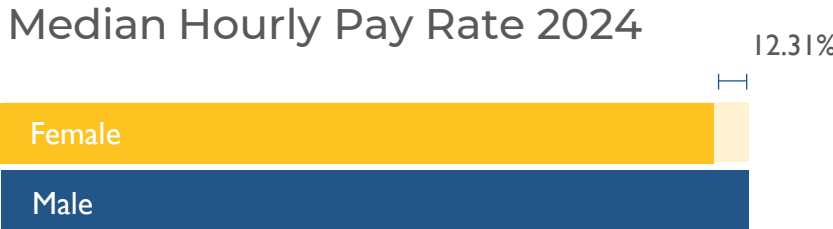
Sword 2024 Pay Gap Data

The average pay for women was **5.60%** less than average pay for men. This is an improvement to our **6.08%** figure from 2023, so it is encouraging to see progress.
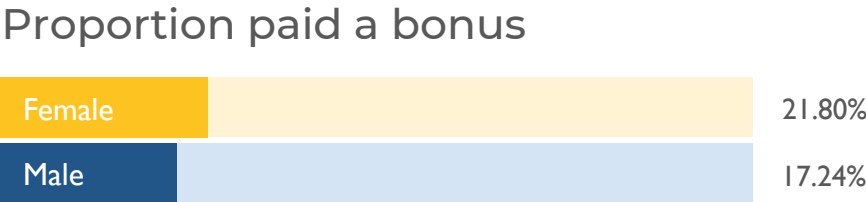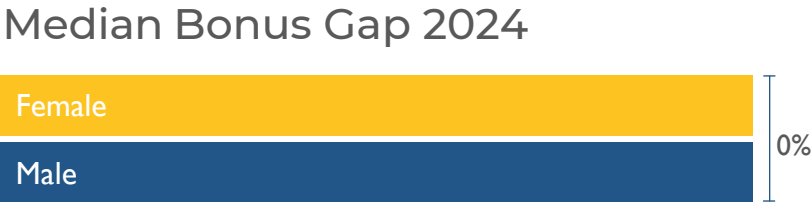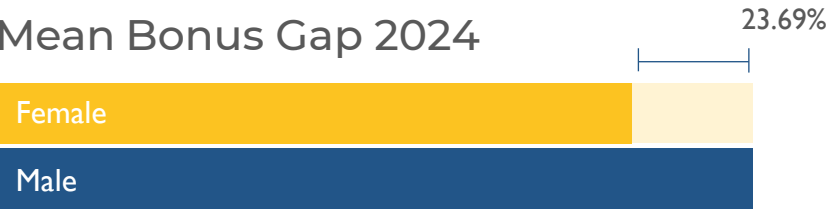
The median hourly pay rate difference highlights that women earned **12.31%** less than their male counterparts.

In line with the last two yeas, we see a higher proportion of women paid a bonus, with a median bonus gap of **0%**. There was a mean bonus gap of **23.69%, improved** from **50.23%** in 2022.
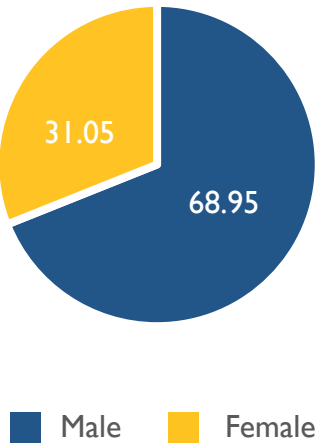
Due to a higher representation of men in our Senior Leadership roles, the gaps are negatively amplified through the Gender Pay Gap Report methodology. This does not reflect unequal bonus pay.

% Composition of female vs male

Mean Hourly Pay Rate 2024

5.60%

| Female |
| Male |

Median Hourly Pay Rate 2024

12.31%

| Female |
| Male |

Mean Bonus Gap 2024

23.69%

| Female |
| Male |

Median Bonus Gap 2024

0%

| Female |
| Male |

Proportion paid a bonus

| Female | 21.80% |
| Male | 17.24% |

31.05
68.95

■ Male ■ Female

Our results stand out positively when compared to UK industry benchmarks
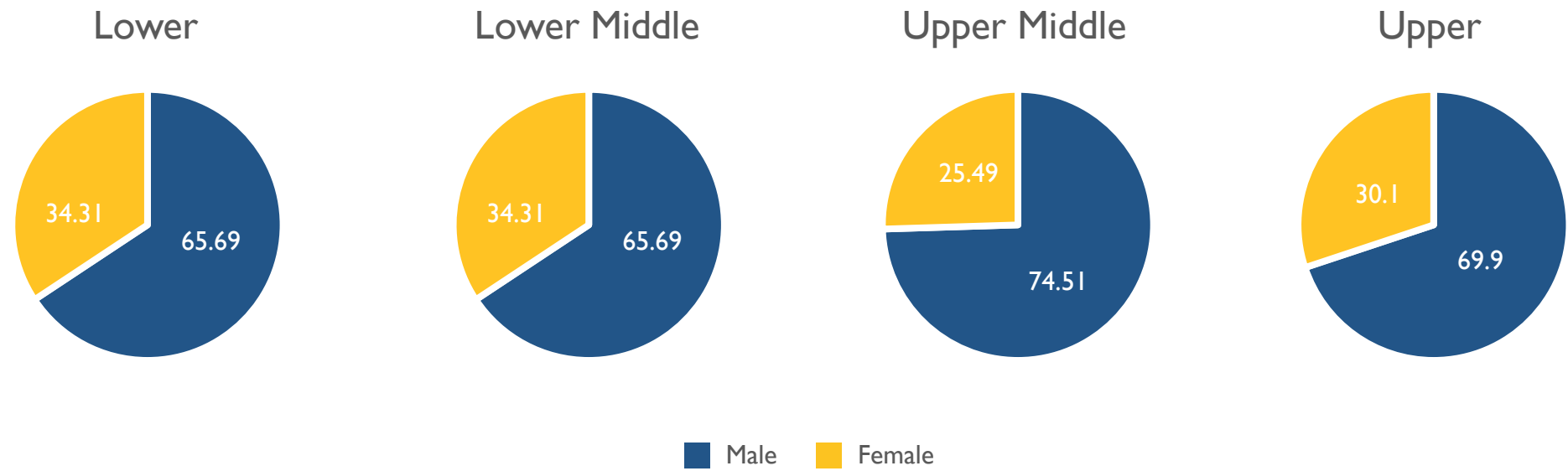
Pay Quartiles

% Proportions of male and female employees who were in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands as at 5th April 2024:

Lower — Female 34.31, Male 65.69
Lower Middle — Female 34.31, Male 65.69
Upper Middle — Female 25.49, Male 74.51
Upper — Female 30.1, Male 69.9

■ Male ■ Female

We have seen an improvement this year with more women moving into the **Upper quartile; 30.1%** in 2024 v's **26.72%** in 2023

Analysing Sword's Gender Pay Gap
Guided by our Core Value of Transparency

Why is there a gap?

Sword, similar to the wider tech sector, faces considerable obstacles in attaining gender diversity. The industry struggles to attract more women due to a limited talent pool and a longstanding male dominance. Bridging the pay gap necessitates a collective effort, including enhancing the representation of women in senior positions, promoting early education, and involving broader policy makers.

Historical male dominance has led to more men in higher-paid senior technical and leadership roles at Sword, amplifying the pay gap in bonus pay. However, in the past two years, we've seen more women in Senior Leadership positions, a reduced average pay gap, and more women in the upper quartile. Additionally, more women than men received bonuses, showing our commitment to recognising and rewarding talent.

Early conversations and Industry Initiatives

We are excited to see more young people than ever interested in Technology, Cyber and AI. To nurture this interest, we partner with educational institutions and industry partners, offering outreach, learning and internship opportunities.

Our goal is to build a diverse and inclusive pipeline of future tech professionals who will drive innovation and positive change. By fostering these relationships, we are paving the way for a more diverse and equitable future in our industry.

Through hands-on experiences, workshops and real-world applications, we show students the exciting possibilities of a career with Sword, irrespective of background of gender. Our Graduate Data Academy continues to successfully attract and develop the careers of local graduates, continually building our skilled workforce to deliver exceptional results for our customers through data, AI and digital transformation.

Looking Ahead

To build on our positive momentum for change, we continue to develop our key strategic areas to minimise the gender pay gap. We listen to our employees, adapt, build trust, and lead with empathy to support their needs and aspirations.

For Sword to succeed and grow, we must continue to attract and retain exceptional talent who support each other within diverse teams and communities. Our initiatives are a long-term commitment and it will take time to evolve the composition of our workforce however we are excited to see how these actions deliver results in future years.

Communities and Emerging Leaders Program: Personal Insights

Sword Communities - Spotlight on Women in Tech

Sword's communities play a vital role in enabling our employees to connect beyond their regular teams. They are essential in offering opportunities to contribute and make a positive impact on future generations, bringing energy and inspirational ideas to attract and retain diverse talent into Sword.

Our Women in Tech inclusive community have established a network focussed on women and their allies, fostering belonging and providing learning, networking, STEM initiatives and future career support. It provides a supportive network that empowers our women to thrive, share knowledge, and inspire future generations, ultimately driving our industry forward. The community have organised numerous events promoting diversity, social impact and inclusion and continue to be a driving force in championing achievements of women within Sword.

What I love most about our Women in Tech group at Sword is the collective power of everyday champions, men and women who bring diverse expertise and lived experiences.

We not just talking about change-we are driving it through intentional conversations, collaborations, hiring, mentorship, and increased representation in technical roles across the organisation.

**Keisha Beasley
Sword Women in Tech Member**

Sword Emerging Leaders Program

The aim of this program is to cultivate leadership talent at Sword by fast-tracking the growth of individuals who possess the ability, ambition, and drive to contribute to Sword's success. We select participants from diverse disciplines and teams who are eager to enhance their knowledge and personal skills, enabling them to realise their full potential within Sword.

It's encouraging to observe the rapid success and skills development fostered by the program among its participants. Although the initiative is inclusive and welcomes anyone with the appropriate ability, drive, and skill set, it's particularly exciting to note that women make up 80% of the current participants.

Being a part of Sword's Emerging Leaders Program has surpassed my expectations. I'm embracing the opportunity to learn new skills, challenge myself and learn to lead with purpose.

Its about developing my ability to see the big picture, strategically plan and anticipate future challenges, and make informed decisions as part of our growth journey.

I hope to inspire others, drive change and make a meaningful impact in our organisation and wider Sword community.

**Rois Taylor
Emerging Leaders Program Member**

Looking ahead – Our Commitment to Closing the Gap

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Pay Transparency

A top priority within our leadership team is to ensure a continual focus on **benchmarking** and **validation of pay** to **ensure equity** and open reporting.

Leadership Development

Invest in **talent development, upskilling and promotion,** with additional emphasis on internal development through our **Emerging Leaders program.**

Supportive Communities

Development of our **"Women in Tech" Community** to provide peer support, **visible and inspirational role models** and be advocates for gender diversity through providing a platform for women to share their experiences, challenge barriers and **celebrate success.**
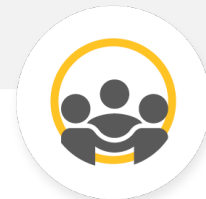
Family Friendly Arrangements

Do all we can to **remove both physical and cultural barriers** for all, including regular review of family friendly benefits and ensuring we encourage everyone to have the option to **work flexibly where possible.**

Diverse hiring and addressing bias

Expand the pool of exceptional female talent by implementing inclusive recruitment methods, widening our social media reach and providing **unconscious bias training** to ensure fair processes.

Industry Investment

Encourage more women to pursue tech, cyber and AI careers through industry and educational **targeted outreach** programs **to strengthen the future pipeline of women in Sword.**

Catherine Froud-Williams
Chief People Officer
CFroud-Williams

Kevin Moreton
Chief Executive Officer
KMoreton