

Sharp Business Systems UK: Gender Pay Gap Reporting

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Introduction

We are in the fifth year of reporting our gender pay gap and welcome the opportunity to be transparent about how we pay and treat our employees. All companies with a total workforce of over 250 people are required by law to calculate and disclose their gender pay gap. This means showing the difference between the average earnings of men and women throughout our organisation and across all roles. This does not involve us publishing individual employee's data. The information below provides a snapshot of Sharp employees' pay on 5th April 2021.

Gender Pay – our 2021 reported figures

| | SHARP 2020/21 | SHARP 2019/20 | SHARP 2018/19 | SHARP 2017/18 |
|----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| Mean Pay Gap | 18% | 20% | 26% | 25% |
| Median Pay Gap | 20% | 19% | 26% | 19% |

What is the proportion of men and women in each quarter of our payroll?

On 5th April 2021 the Sharp Business Systems (SBS) UK total workforce was 519 people of which **76% were men** and **24% were women**.

| | Men | Women |
|-----------------------|------------|--------------|
| Upper quartile | 89% | 11% |
| Upper middle quartile | 80% | 20% |
| Lower middle quartile | 90% | 10% |
| Lower Quartile | 58% | 42% |

Bonus information

For employees that are eligible for commission and performance-based bonuses, 74% are men (compared to 52% last year) and the proportion of women receiving a bonus including commission is 26% (compared to 44% last year).

- The mean bonus pay difference between men and women is 71% lower for women (compared with 73% last year).
- The median bonus pay difference between men and women is 87% lower for women (compared with 73% last year).

Bonus includes commission and performance-based bonuses.

Understanding the Gap

We have been working hard to reduce the gender pay gap at Sharp Business Systems UK (SBS), making significant progress with our 'POWER' strategy launched in 2017, which we have outlined below. We are proud of the progress we have made so far to openly challenge our gender pay gap and the reasons behind it. We recognise that we still have more work to do and remain confident that our strategy will deliver long term results in the closing of the gap.

Despite our strong drive to attract female applicants to new vacancies, we continued to attract mainly men for engineering, sales, and senior administration roles, and this remains a wider challenge for our industry which traditionally attracts more men than women.

We have been successful in attracting and selecting females into the roles of HR Director, Communications Partner, People Business Partner, Credit Controller, People Team Administrator, Business Development Executive and Administration Officer during the reporting period.

We continue to have several high performing saleswomen, however as they make up less than 5% of our sales team, it is the male employees who earn most of the commission that we pay out as an organisation. Over the years, we have inherited a high male to female salesperson ratio with pre-determined commission structures due to business acquisitions. There has been an 18% reduction in females who earn commission compared to the previous reporting year, this is due to five females leaving the business who earned commission.

Our strategy and 2020/21 progress

We continue to work on our strategy that aims to improve our gender pay gap, and to make SBS UK a place where more women want to work and progress their career.

After extensive analysis in 2017 we developed a strategy that tackles what we consider to be the main areas where we can improve our gender balance – we call this our 'POWER' strategy and it has five workstreams. Below is an update on our progress in each of the workstreams:

Pay Gap - At Sharp Business Systems UK we aim to reduce our pay gap by at least 5% year on year. Overall, from the start of reporting in 2017, our gender pay gap has reduced by 11% (from 29% to 18%) meaning that we are on track over the long term to hit our goal.

Our gender pay gap improved by 2% from 2019/20 to 2020/21.

We recognise that our mean and median bonus difference between men and women is lower for women, and we are committed to reducing the gap. In 2022, we are committing to conduct a full pay and reward review to develop a pay structure and reward strategy to support in closing the gap.

Our women - All our female employees will be recognised and offered leadership training, with a career plan to enable them to be their best.

Springboard

In 2019 we launched our first Sharp Springboard women-only development programme. The award-winning Springboard programme is designed for women from all backgrounds, ages, and stages of their lives, and allows women to enhance their own skills and abilities, challenge barriers while building confidence, assertiveness, and a positive self-image.

Having invested in running this programme in house, with 18 of our female employees attending the four-day workshops and completing in depth workbooks over a six-month period in 2018/19, we were due to launch our second in house Springboard programme in spring 2020, however due to the impact of the pandemic we had to place this on pause.

We are committing to reconvening the second springboard programme face to face in 2022 following the lifting of government restrictions.

Rising Stars

In the reporting year 2020/2021, we saw 15 females graduate from our Rising Stars programme. The Rising Stars programme provides participants with the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge, whilst working towards achieving a Team Leader/Supervisor Level 3 Apprenticeship, which includes the Level 3 Diploma in the Principles of Management and Leadership through the Chartered Management Institute (CMI). Of the females that graduated during this period, 47% achieved a Distinction grade and 53% achieved a Merit grade.

As part of the two graduation ceremonies, we offered awards for Learning, Partnering, and Achieving in line with our Sharp cultural pillars. At both graduation ceremonies, two female employees won the Achieving awards due to obtaining the highest marks on their graduation sessions.

Furthermore, a female colleague won one of the Learning awards, which was awarded to the delegate who had shown the most personal growth on their Rising Stars journey, demonstrating a consistent willingness to develop their skills, actively seeking new challenges, and stepping out of their comfort zone.

We also launched a new cohort for our Rising Stars programme for aspirational junior employees in 2020/21 and 33% of this new cohort are female employees.

Managers Essentials

We have developed and are implementing a Managers Essential Programme to give our people managers the right process, tools, and training so they are able to inspire and manage their teams effectively. We anticipate twenty-six females' managers attending this programme.

Working environment - We will offer flexible working and strive to provide a family friendly benefits package to enable women and men to balance their career and home life.

Due to the on-going pandemic, the majority of our employee have been home working in line with government guidance. We are currently trialling a hybrid and agile flexible working policy to promote more flexible working as we return to the workplace post pandemic.

Entry - grass roots - We will target females when hiring apprentices and trainees to combat the low proportion of women within Sharp Business Systems UK.

Our female apprentices continue to excel in their roles and provide a strong base for succession plans in key areas of the business including finance and furniture. The apprentices, who we took in the finance and furniture departments, have now been offered permanent roles with some progressing into other areas of the business.

We continue to work hard to attract female apprentices into engineering roles, which make up over half of our work force, and this continues to be an area of focus with us working alongside local schools to inform and attract female applicants into an engineering career.

We are in partnership with South Essex College and working closely with the college, mentoring students, and promoting our industry to female students.

Recruitment - We will partner with organisations promoting women in industry and strive to shortlist at least one woman (meeting the role criteria) every time we hire.

We continue to run all adverts through gender coding to ensure that the language used doesn't unfairly discourage men or women. Recruitment has been limited during this period due to the on-going pandemic, but we are delighted that we have recruited three senior females into the business during this difficult period.

I confirm the information published above is accurate.



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