



GENDER PAY GAP REPORT



This report sets out EKC Group's Gender Pay Gap as well as additional data in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. All of this information is published annually. To see previous Gender Pay Gap reports from EKC Group, please visit

<https://www.ekcgroup.ac.uk/group/about-us/public-information/reports/gender-pay-gap-report>.

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FOREWORD



Having joined EKC Group as its Chief People Officer earlier this year, our equality, diversity, and inclusion agenda must be a key priority within our overall people strategy. As a Group we are now a huge anchor employer within the communities that we serve and with more than 1,500 colleagues it is imperative that we truly reflect the diversity of east Kent within our staff base.

As part of our commitment to equality and diversity we will remain heavily focused on addressing our Gender Pay Gap. It isn't something which will happen overnight, but I am personally committed to getting closer to the underlying issues and to taking positive steps to continually improve our position.

As part of our growing people agenda I'm pleased to say that 2021 will see the creation of the first ever People Strategy for EKC Group. Within this strategy we will set out clear plans to deliver on our overall commitment to the creation of a workplace that provides equity of opportunity for everyone, and that embraces and welcomes the differences in all of our people.

This year our mean pay gap has grown slightly, and as a consequence I believe that it is critical we re-focus on our activities and planned actions and consider how we can more actively support the recruitment and career progression of women across our organisation.

We are already making positive steps across our organisation as we have 26 women serving within our Group Leadership team of 49 senior leaders. However, we must do more to reduce our overall Gender Pay Gap and continue to develop and progress the careers of women at all levels within our Group.

As part of our overall commitment to the Equality and Diversity agenda, during the second half of 2021 I will set out a number of key objectives and priorities as part of the wider strategy development activity, and these will be shared with our staff base and key stakeholders.

I'm very proud to play a leading role in ensuring that EKC Group continues to be an employer of choice for everyone within the communities we serve.

Simon Smith
Chief People Officer

UNDERSTANDING THE GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

In order to understand the statistics published within this report, it is important for colleagues and stakeholders to know more about what the Gender Pay Gap is, and what it is not, and for there to be clarity on what the numbers mean. In order to ensure you get the most out of this report we have set out this key information to help explain the reported numbers in more depth.

What is the Gender Pay Gap?

Gender pay reporting legislation was introduced by the Government in 2017. It requires all employers with 250 or more employees to publish statutory calculations every year. This is to show how large the pay gap between male and female employees is.

There are typically six calculations which are required within the figures, and results must be published on both the organisation's website and the Government's online reporting service. The data relates to salaries paid to employees who are considered 'in scope' during the week including 31 March each year for public sector organisations, with 12 months to publish the data. This ensures a 'snapshot' of the data during the same period annually.

How is the Gender Pay Gap calculated?

The Gender Pay Gap is a metric that measures the difference in average hourly pay across all men and women with an organisation. The report will also refer to the mean and median data.

The mean is an arithmetic average of a set of numbers. So, in this case the mean calculation considers basic average hourly pay across all of an organisation's staff members.

The median is the number in the middle of a set of ordered numbers. In this report, the median calculation helps an organisation focus on those staff members in the middle of the pay ranges, thereby reducing the impact of the highest and lowest paid staff. Therefore, it gives a more representative Gender Pay Gap figure which is much more aligned to the majority of the staff population.

The difference between gender pay and equal pay:

A Gender Pay Gap is the difference between average male and average female pay across our organisation, regardless of the nature of work. This means that our gender profile (the number of men or women in specific areas) across the organisation will be a significant driver of any gap.

On the other hand, an Equal Pay Gap refers to an unlawful pay gap between male and female colleagues carrying out the same roles with the same experience and skills.

OUR GENDER PAY GAP AND HOW IT HAS CHANGED SINCE LAST YEAR

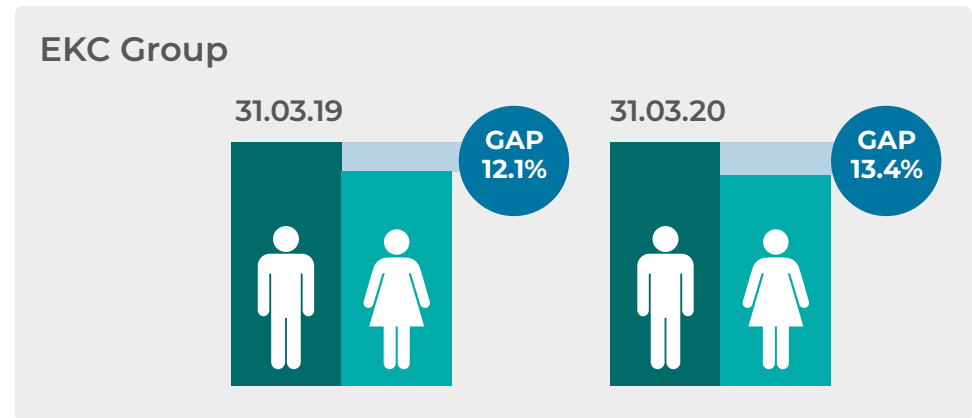
EKC Group's Gender Pay Gap is expressed through two key metrics. These are our 'median' hourly rate of pay and our 'mean' hourly rate of pay.

This year's figures show a slight overall increase in both the median and mean calculations. This means our overall Gender Pay Gap has grown in comparison to last year's figures. These results are clearly contrary to the level of commitment to reducing and ultimately eliminating this gap within the EKC Group.

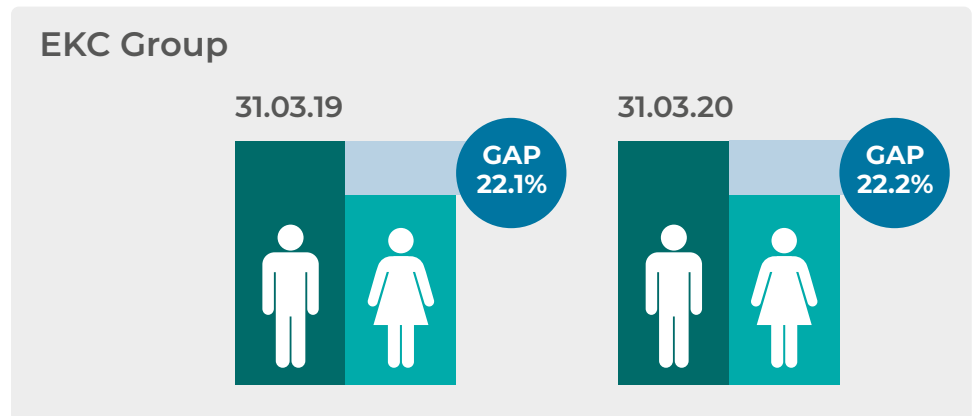
We have conducted extensive investigations to identify the root cause of our overall gap and it is clear to us that our results are not directly linked to an isolated event or to significant re-structuring and that there have been positive increases in the proportion of females paid in our Upper Quartile.

Instead, our data tells us that we have seen an increase in the overall proportion of female employees paid in our Lower Quartiles, meaning that we have had a proportionately larger number of women working in our lower paid positions and joining the Group in lower paid roles. Whilst we are seeing positive results in attracting more women into our organisation, these results clearly highlight the importance of our Action Plan in driving career progression for females within the Group to ensure our gender profile is more balanced.

Mean Hourly Rate of Pay



Median Hourly Rate of Pay



OUR GENDER PAY GAP ACTION PLAN

There is a clear moral and social imperative to eliminating our Gender Pay Gap, and as part of the introduction of our People Strategy our equality and diversity action plan will be a key element of our overall strategic plan, and as part of our specific agenda to close the Gender Pay Gap we will be taking action which helps to nurture an environment in which more women have the opportunity to progress and develop their careers. Within this we are seeking to embed a range of commitments which focus on the following key areas of activity:



Staff development;



Career progression pathways;



Flexible working practice and environment;



Enhanced people intelligence.

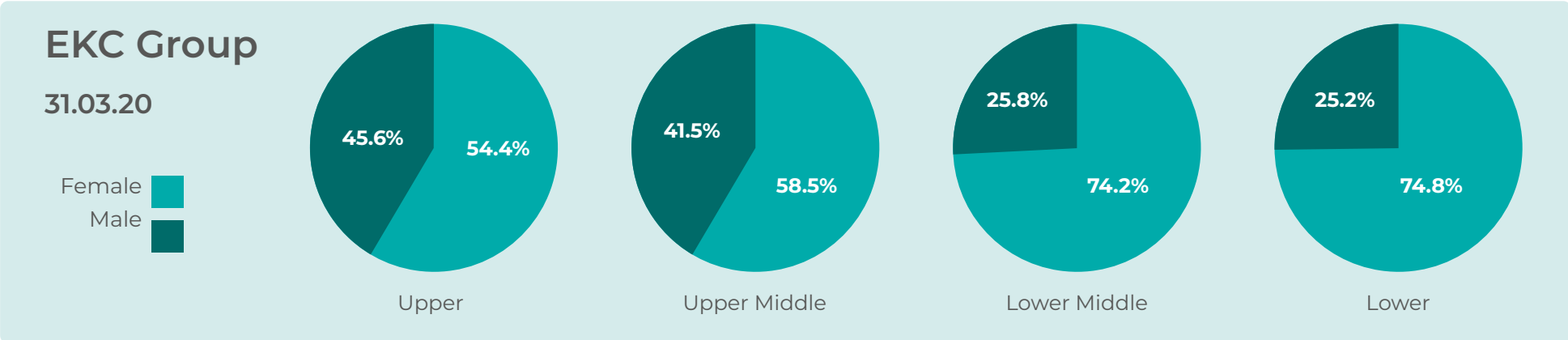
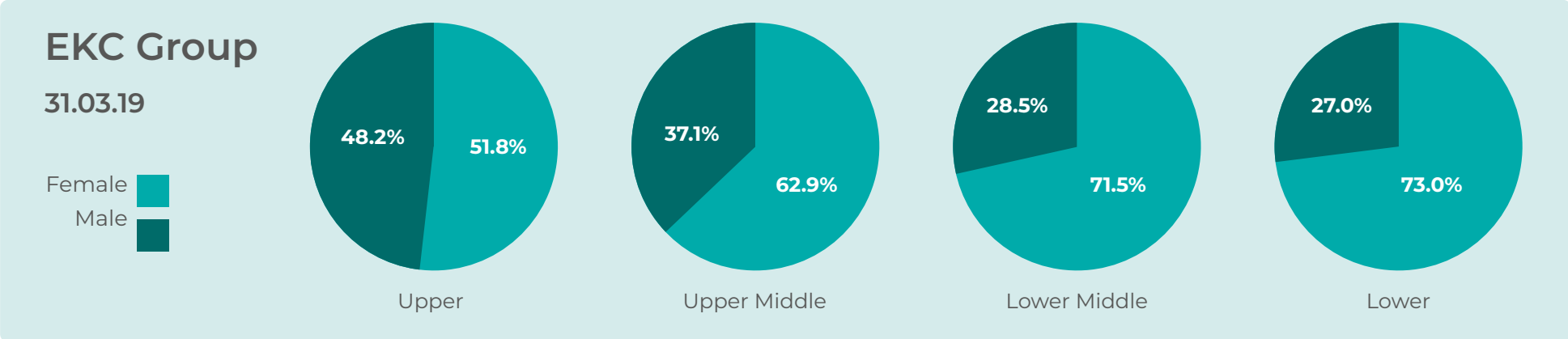
Specifically, we will set out to;

- Support the continual development of our people, our managers, and our leaders across the group, encouraging greater ambition and career progression opportunities from within our internal talent pool.
- Provide specific development interventions, including external coaching, mentoring, and networking for our female talent to support more females in progressing their careers within the Group.

- Create greater focus on robust succession planning, and the identification of talent at all levels of our organisation.
- Create broader career paths for all roles within the Group to encourage talent mobility in support of filling any identified succession gaps and technical subject matter expert positions that are currently single points of dependency.
- Continue to promote and encourage flexible and home working, irrespective of seniority or the type of position held.
- Create a talent attraction strategy and growing our employer brand presence both in our local communities and further afield to encourage the attraction and recruitment of the best talent.
- Introduce more opportunities for the Senior Management Team to regularly review and discuss our equality data, creating a greater sense of responsibility and accountability across our entire organisation.

We will also continue to develop our day-to-day practices and will build on the good progress made in developing our recruitment methods, regularly reviewing our internal policies and procedures as well as the planned delivery of mandated unconscious bias and general equality training and development content for all of our line managers and staff.

Proportion of males and females in each pay quartile





EKC Group
Broadstairs College,
Ramsgate Road,
Broadstairs,
Kent CT10 1PN

ekcgroup.ac.uk