

# Burges Salmon Gender Pay Report 2020



**One of our strategic aims as a firm is to build an inclusive workplace that fosters diversity. We want to ensure our people feel respected and accepted, and that everyone feels they can be themselves at work.**

2020 was an exceptionally busy year for us in terms of our gender actions. We set up our Gender Taskforce, headed up by our senior partner, and consulted firmwide on the gender balance changes our people would like to see. We were pleased that 50% of our partner promotions, 50% of director promotions and 79% of business services promotions were female. In our most recent employee opinion survey we also found that 98% of our people feel we have an open and inclusive culture. We recognise there is still work to do in the delivery of our gender ambition and the firm will retain its focus on this delivery through 2021 and beyond.

COVID-19 has significantly affected our people this year. Whether managing home schooling, living with grown up children, shielding, caring for elderly relatives, tackling loneliness, dealing with bereavement or any other challenges our people have been remarkable in the way they have adapted to the pandemic. We thank them all for their dedication during this time and the care and support we have provided each other to manage and find a way through.

As we navigated through the crisis we knew that it was crucial for us to stay true to our values as a firm. With this in mind for the third year running we have gone beyond statutory requirements in our gender pay gap reporting, choosing to voluntarily report our partner remuneration gap and our combined pay gap for all our people. We published our 2019 gender pay gap report despite there being no legal obligation for us to do so. We are committed to being open and transparent about our position and where we need to improve.

This year we continue to publish voluntarily our ethnicity pay gap, in order to drive forward our objectives on ethnicity. In 2020 our approach was strengthened through the development of an ethnicity action plan.

Whilst we are pleased to have made significant progress this year in closing our mean gender pay gap and significantly increasing the number of women in the top two quartiles of our pay structure, we will be working to reduce the median figure and will continue to ensure gender equality is embedded in our strategic plans as a firm for the foreseeable future.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chris Seaton".

**Chris Seaton**  
Senior Partner and Chair of the Gender Taskforce Group

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert Halton".

**Robert Halton**  
Chief People Officer

## Explaining the gender pay gap

The gender pay gap measures the difference in hourly earnings between men and women within an organisation. It is important to note that this is different to equal pay, which focuses on women and men being paid the same for doing equal work.

Organisations are required to report their:

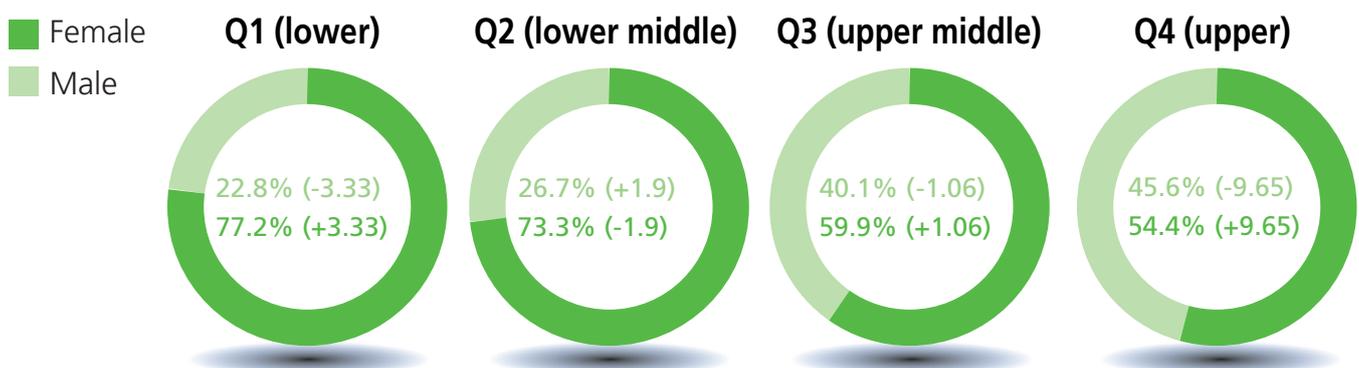
- mean and median gender pay gap;
- distribution of men and women across the organisation divided into four quartiles from lowest to highest pay;
- bonus gender pay gap;
- proportion of men and women receiving a bonus.

## The data

### Employee gender pay gap

	2020	2019	2018	+/- change 2019-20
Mean Gender Pay Gap	17.9%	21.6%	21.9%	-3.7%
Median Gender Pay Gap	32.6%	31.3%	33.3%	+1.3%

### Proportion of men and women in each quartile of the pay structure



\*+/- change 2019-20 in brackets

We ensure equal pay for men and women in the same roles. Our employee gender pay gap exists because of the higher percentage of women in our lower and lower middle pay quartiles – for example in our administrative and support roles. We are addressing this through a focus on progression opportunities for those in these lower pay quartiles. In 2020 we promoted a total of 33 people across our business professional and legal support roles, 79% of whom were women.

We are pleased to see our mean gender pay gap reducing year on year. The median figure has increased slightly in 2020 but is still below our 2018 figure. The median figure is sensitive to structural changes within the firm given that our workforce is 60% female. As we have reengineered our secretarial roles into a suite of new client support roles there have been new job opportunities which have mainly been filled by women. We are continuing to work to make these client support roles more attractive to men to even-out the gender balance in our lower and lower middle pay quartiles. It is very encouraging to see an increase in women in our upper middle and upper pay quartiles, with almost a 10% increase in women in the upper quartile.

We have a good gender balance at senior levels amongst our people, with 64% of business professional leaders and 57% of directors and senior associates being female.

## Employee bonus gap

	2020	2019	2018	+/- change 2019-20
Mean Bonus Gap	35.0%	34.0%	35.1%	+1%
Median Bonus Gap	7.1%	8.9%	11.2%	-1.8%

## Proportion of men and women receiving a bonus

(2019 figures shown in brackets)

Men	Women
84% (79%)	82% (82%)

We are pleased to see an almost equal proportion of men and women receiving bonuses at the firm, and this reflects equality in the number of men and women receiving high scores in our review processes and the structure of our firmwide scheme. The bonus gap is calculated using actual bonus amounts with no adjustments for part time working. Our bonuses are paid on a pro rata basis and significantly more of our women work part time than men, explaining the bonus gap that exists.

## Partner remuneration gap

	2020	2019	2018	+/- change 2019-20
Mean Partner Remuneration Gap	20.0%	22.0%	33.0%	-2%
Median Partner Remuneration Gap	29.0%	33.0%	33.0%	-4%

We do not have salaried partners at the firm. All of our partners are owners of our business and we operate a lockstep model which means that our partners' remuneration is determined by the profits of the firm which are distributed equally dependent on their stage within the lockstep. We are pleased to report that our mean partner gap has reduced by 13% since 2018. This reduction represents the progression of an increasing number of female partners through the lockstep. There is no partner bonus gap because partners do not receive a bonus.

## Combined partner and employee pay / remuneration gap

	2020	2019	2018	+/- change 2019-20
Mean Combined Pay/Remuneration Gap	60.0%	61.0%	63.0%	-1%
Median Combined Pay/Remuneration Gap	44.1%	47.0%	47.0%	-2.9%

Our combined pay/remuneration gap includes both employee and partner figures together. When we combine these two groups, our pay gap increases significantly due to the higher number of men in the partnership and the higher levels of remuneration received by partners. We will continue to focus our efforts to increase the number of women within the partnership.

## Ethnicity pay gap and bonus gap

	2020	2019	2018	+/- change 2019-20
Mean Ethnicity Pay Gap	-7.0%	3.2%	6.6%	-10.2%
Median Ethnicity Pay Gap	-7.9%	10.4%	9.6%	-18.3%
Mean Ethnicity Bonus Gap	24.0%	46.3%	14.5%	-22.3%
Median Ethnicity Bonus Gap	0%	0%	0%	0%

We have voluntarily analysed and published our ethnicity pay gap for the third year as we feel it is important to understand the data and be transparent about this in order to help us develop a more diverse workforce.

With 5% of our people classifying themselves as ethnically diverse, minor changes in workforce numbers can cause relatively large fluctuations in the ethnicity pay and bonus gap figures year on year. We are very pleased to see the ethnicity pay gap figures reducing to below zero and we will aim to keep this figure at around 0% where possible. Our mean ethnicity bonus gap has reduced from 46% to 24% which is encouraging however there is still more work to be done in this area.

## What are we doing to address our pay gaps?

### Gender

We know from our statistics that we have a healthy workforce gender split across business services and on the legal side from trainee solicitor up to director level. However, there is less gender balance at partnership level, which is currently around 21% female, and within our client support teams (97% female). Our aim is for our proportion of partner promotions to reflect the gender ratios of our Senior Associates and Directors and we want to encourage more males to join our client support teams. We are closely monitoring our future talent pipeline to improve gender parity in future promotions.

- In 2020, 50% of our partner **promotions** were female and our highest ever proportion of women were appointed to director level (56%).
- We know that we have work to do to improve gender balance within our partnership. We have established a **Gender Taskforce** who are delivering a 13 point **gender action plan** comprising initiatives that will support female talent into leadership. We recently launched our Gender Balance Network '**BBalanced**'. Together these groups will play an important role in achieving our gender goals throughout the firm.

- We have expanded our **Career Focus Training** to improve transparency of career development opportunities for our people at all levels, equipping them with the necessary skills and knowledge to take ownership of their career.
- We have improved support for our working parents and carers including **coaching**, establishing a **parents and carers network** and providing **training for Partners** on how to support members of their team who are parents. We have implemented a new **family leave support framework** to ensure our people receive the support they need before, during and after family leave. The framework includes improved communications, manager training, and both group and individual coaching sessions to help people return to work with confidence.
- Family Matters is our **parents and carers network** which provides information, advice and support to working parents and carers. In 2020 we are increasing network activity, providing more opportunities for our people to collaboratively share experiences and practical ideas.
- We have worked with the Law Society on their **Women in Leadership in Law study** and we have collaborated with Thomson Reuters as part of their **Transforming Women's Leadership in the Law** programme, exploring factors that may be contributing to the loss of female talent in the legal sector and the steps needed to address this.
- We are founder signatories of the **Women in Business Charter** which calls for businesses to commit to promoting gender equality in the workplace through seven goals, including promoting flexible and part-time working, increasing the number of women at senior levels and progression of lower paid and lower skilled female people.
- All of our people complete regular mandatory **Diversity and Inclusion training** and we have delivered **unconscious bias training** to our board members, senior managers and partners. During 2021 we will be rolling this out more widely. We recognise that such training must be supported by inclusive practices and we are taking steps to review our policies and processes to minimise the impacts of unconscious bias.
- We partner with the **Womens Work Lab (WWL)**, a community collaboration that supports unemployed mums, aged 25+ and receiving benefits, to become work ready. The mums face challenges including domestic abuse, lone parenting and children with Special Educational Needs or home displacement. We provide funding to WWL and in 2020 provided a work placement for one of the mums, providing meaningful work experience in both our legal and business services side.

## Ethnicity

Our aim is for our workforce to better reflect the communities in which we operate.

- We are signatories of the **Race at Work Charter** and the **Race Fairness Commitment** illustrating our commitment to fairness at work for people of all ethnic backgrounds. These frameworks have supported the development of a diversity and inclusion focused **Ethnicity Action Plan** currently being delivered within the firm.
- We use **Rare Contextual Recruitment System** for graduate and apprentice recruitment. This allows us to consider applicants' achievements in the context in which those achievements were gained, taking into consideration several socioeconomic factors including postcode, school quality, and eligibility for free school meals. We have seen the benefits of Rare on the diversity of our trainee intakes, which are currently 22% BAME.

- In 2019 we implemented a **blind recruitment policy** for our apprentice and graduate recruitment, supporting our commitment to ensuring that our recruitment processes are fair and inclusive.
- Our internal BAME network, **BCultured**, works alongside the firm's diversity and inclusion group to inform, advise and advance BAME matters within Burges Salmon. The network has made a real difference to BAME inclusion both within the firm and in the wider community. They have engaged the wider firm, raising awareness through a fantastic programme of events and campaigns including Black History month and an allyship for anti-racism campaign. In addition, members have been central to the firm's outreach work with schools and universities, providing access to positive role models and raising aspirations of young people. The network's progress was recognised at the UK Legal Diversity Awards in November 2019, where they were shortlisted for '**Outstanding BAME Network**'.
- We have supported Bristol City Council on the development of '**Stepping Up**', a diversity leadership programme for future leaders in Bristol, developing a talent pipeline that more meaningfully reflects our population and community. We were recognised in the 'Stepping Up Diversity Champion' Award 2019 and 2020 for our support of the Stepping Up Programme.
- Our trainee solicitors and apprentices come from a wide range of backgrounds; our current intakes are 22% BAME. We are **apprenticeship** 'trailblazers' and were involved in the development of the new legal apprenticeship standards, including the Level 7 qualification which allows individuals to qualify without having previously obtained a degree. We have taken on four legal apprentices each year since the launch of our programme in 2016 and expect our first cohort to qualify in 2023. We launched an apprenticeship scheme for business professionals in 2019, which we expect to open up other professional careers within the firm.