



Ashurst

Pay Gap Report

Australia

2023

Outpacing change

Definitions

Gender pay gap the difference in pay between male and female employees, expressed as a percentage of male pay. Pay, in this context, refers to both Base Salary and Total Remuneration (defined below). The current gap is represented with respect to Median Pay and is based on data as at a snapshot date in March.

Base Salary is guaranteed regular salary, excluding superannuation, overtime, bonuses and other additional payments.

Total Remuneration includes all remuneration including superannuation, overtime, bonuses and other additional payments.

Average / Mean the sum of all the values in a list divided by the number of values.

Median the middle value in a list where the values are listed in numerical order, from lowest to highest.

Quartiles split the distribution of employees into four equal groups, where each group contains a quarter of the data.

Equal pay is the right for men and women to be paid the same for the same, or equivalent work, or work of equal value.

Ashurst has a long history of market-leading progress on Inclusion, Diversity, and Belonging (IDB) and our new strategy provides us with the foundations to continue to innovate and lead the legal profession.

In order to achieve our ambitious diversity targets our strategy will ensure we continue to increase representation of diverse and marginalised groups at all levels across our firm. Increasing the diversity of our partnership remains a priority, as research demonstrates that increased diversity at the leadership level is key to creating a more inclusive culture.

At Ashurst, we are fully committed to achieving gender equality and fostering an inclusive workplace culture. Our dedication to these principles is unwavering, and we strive to address any disparities that may exist, including our gender pay gap.

Our 2023 median gender pay gap shows that progress is possible. While we acknowledge the existence of this gap, we are actively taking steps to narrow it. Our gap based on the current submission to WGEA (in May 2023) has improved as compared to the prior year, by more than 3 percentage points on Median Total Remuneration and by c.2+ percentage points on Median Base Salary.

Increasing representation across our business at every level remains one of our top priorities. In addition to the gender targets that we adopted in 2013 and last revised in 2021, the Board set ambitious targets in 2021 for LGBTI+ representation across our global leadership and ethnicity representation in the UK across our leadership, legal and business services staff and Early Careers.

Through our new 2027 firm strategy and our targeted inclusion, diversity, and belonging strategy, we have implemented a range of initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality and creating a more equitable workplace. These initiatives include targeted recruitment efforts to ensure diversity in hiring, leadership development programs designed to support the advancement of women within our organization, and ongoing training to raise awareness of gender biases and promote inclusivity among all employees.

We are pleased that many of our initiatives are already showing positive improvements. We are proud that our pay gap has decreased year on year, however, we acknowledge that there is more that can be done.

We recognise that the reasons behind pay gaps are complex and see this as just one indicator of the need for continued focus on our diverse and inclusive environment. We won't shy away from further interrogating our pay and other data on our people's experiences to understand the root causes and to intervene to make positive and impactful changes. We know there is more that can be done—and we are taking the steps to get there. We remain committed to fostering an environment where everyone, regardless of gender, has equal opportunities for growth and success and finding new ways to ensure our culture creates a sense of real inclusion and belonging for all our people.

Gender pay gap reporting summary

Our gender pay gap over time

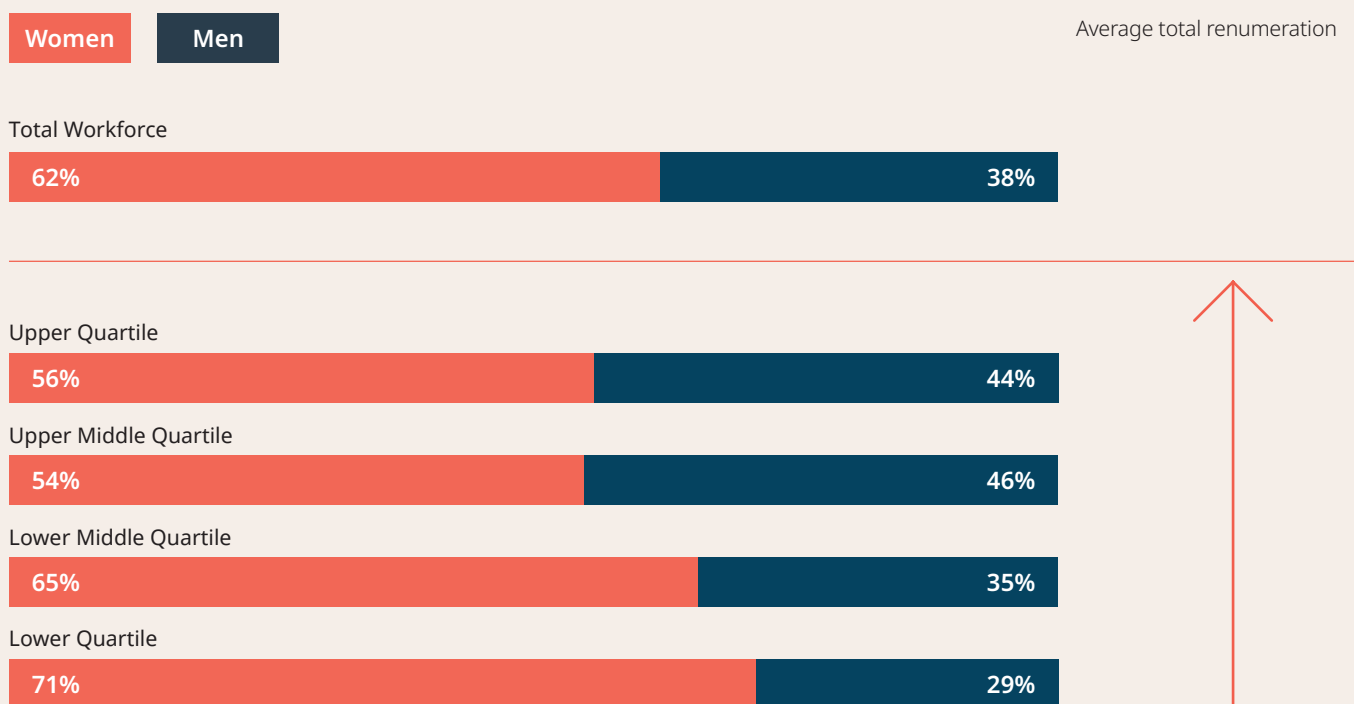
All employees	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23
Median total remuneration	17.0%	16.9%	13.6%
		▼ 0.1%pt on 2020-21	▼ 3.3%pt on 2021-22
Median base salary	15.8%	14.3%	12.0%
		▼ 1.5%pt on 2021-22	▼ 2.3%pt on 2021-22

In Australia, the Workplace Gender Equality Agency (WGEA) is now publishing organisation-wide median pay gaps - as illustrated above, our organisation-wide median pay gaps have continued to improve. It is also important to note that the existing gaps are considerably reduced when remuneration in comparable / like-for-like roles is observed. We continue to ensure any gaps within similar cohorts are continually monitored and appropriately assessed as part of annual reviews and ongoing audits, among a range of other actions (outlined here). Comparable roles are remunerated within relevant role range and any relative differentiation is attributable to aspects such as varying experience, performance and potential.

At an overall, our median total remuneration gender pay gap is 13.6% and represents a c.3.5 percentage point improvement over prior years.

To better understand the key drivers of our current overall median pay gap, it is important to consider the type and composition of roles that women and men perform and a trend that is largely consistent across industry. While women in our Australia offices represent more than half of all Legal roles, they also comprise a much greater proportion of business services and a majority in Legal Operations – jobs that tend to be concentrated around the low pay quartiles (as noted below).

Gender ratios by pay quartile



The chart above shows the gender composition of all employees by pay quartiles. As illustrated, women constitute a proportionately greater percentage of all employees in the lower quartiles – these quartiles feature the comparatively lower paying legal support and operations roles. The organisation-wide pay gap percentages (noted above) are driven by the pay gaps between these low pay quartile support jobs and the higher paying jobs in the upper quartiles, including legal and consulting jobs.

Disproportionate representation at senior manager and leadership levels can also be a key driver of overall pay gaps - our workforce distribution at these levels is tracking positively toward established targets with Australia reasonably balanced at most senior leadership levels included in the reporting and striving for stronger parity, aided by targeted interventions across the gamut of the talent life cycle.

Actions

Inclusion, Diversity and Belonging (IDB) are firmly anchored in our business strategy. Gender is one of our IDB focus strands as well as a key strategic priority area, We have put in place a number of initiatives to address our pay gap. These are starting to make a difference. We have:

Improved parental policies

We provide a more inclusive, and generous parental leave package for all. Our policy is now gender neutral and our people have access to 26 weeks of parental leave, irrespective of their gender or carer status. Our policy also includes provision for adoption, surrogacy and foster care, as well as miscarriage and infertility treatment. Those returning from parental leave also have access to coaching to assist with their return to work and all fee-earners returning to work receive a reduction in their chargeable hours goals. Since the refresh of our global parental leave offering in July 2022, we have seen an increase in non-birth parents, largely men, taking parental leave. This takes us toward our goal of improved gender equity, and demonstrates that men want to be supported by their workplace to play an active role in the home.

Enhanced automated work allocation system

Work is allocated by independent managers rather than partners which improves perceptions of fairness. We have recently updated this system to allow greater real-time assessment of individual work capacity, align individual career and learning aspirations with work and client opportunities and increase flexibility to allocate and share work across jurisdictions.

Developed Hybrid Working Guidelines

We've provided more flexibility and have rolled out technology to support agile working for all employees globally. The vast majority of our workforce now take advantage of this increased flexibility to enhance their work/life balance.

Promoted Diversity demographic data collection

We encourage employees to disclose their ethnicity, faith, sexual orientation, gender identity, carer status and socio-economic background. Data is used to track trends in the retention, attrition promotion and allocation of work and client opportunities across the various demographics to assess whether interventions are required, identify any negative trends and monitor and track the success of policies aimed at encouraging greater equality and equity.

Implemented Coaching and mentoring

We provide our ethnically diverse trainees and apprentices an opportunity to undertake coaching; our small group women's mentoring scheme teams junior women with counsel and partners to discuss topics such as career progression; our Ashurst Black Network provides its network members with routine access to senior black leaders within the firm and our global reverse mentoring programme matches leaders (the mentees) with a mentor with a different perspective, whether it is gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic background, etc.

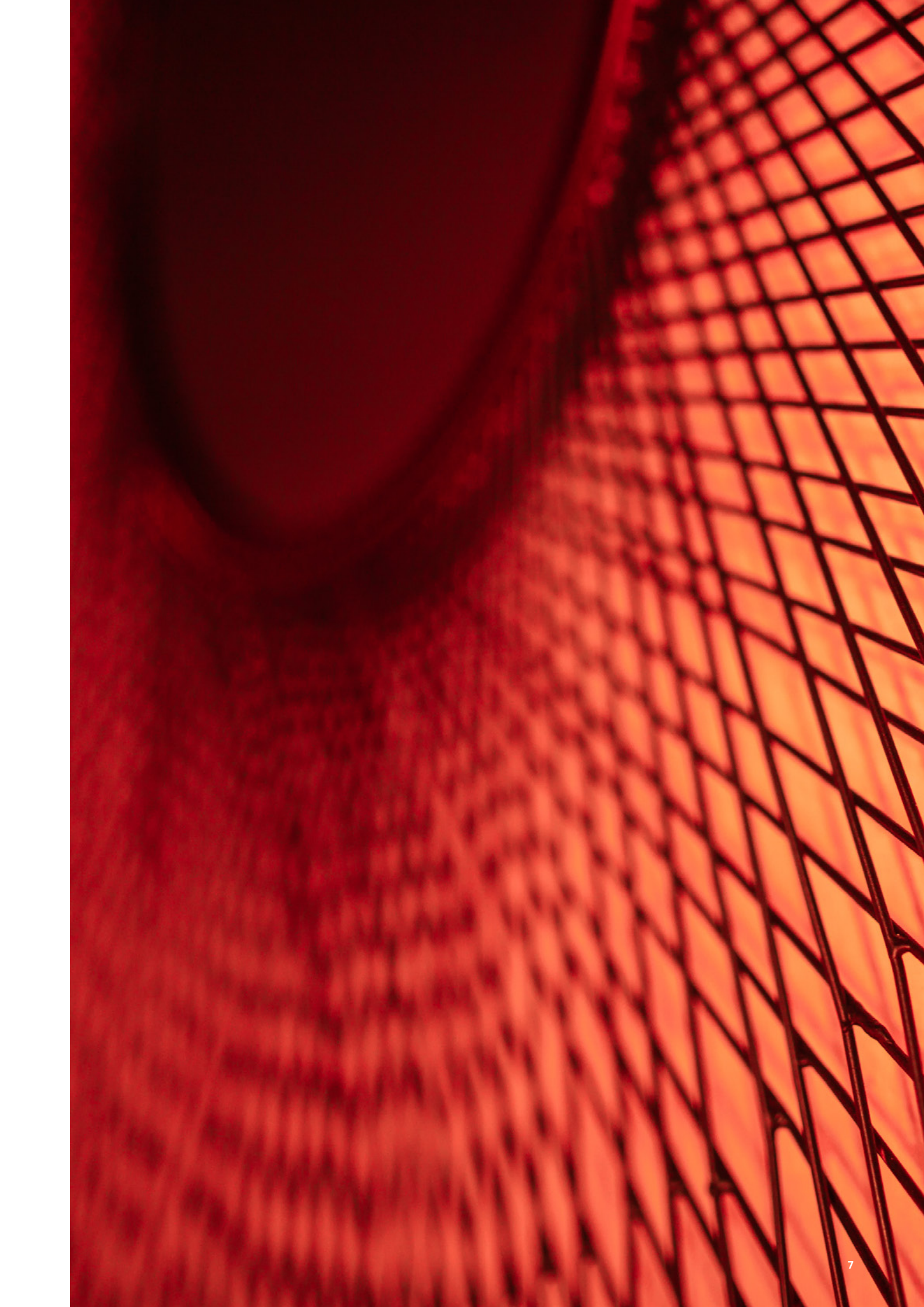
Our Women's Network provides a powerful platform for building supportive networks, and sharing stories and experiences, as well as sponsorship and mentoring opportunities for women. They also work with colleagues including our LGBTI+ network, to ensure all genders receive the help they need to succeed.

Established the Collaborative Growth Sponsorship Programme

A cross-practice sponsorship program aimed at supporting women promoted into the Partnership to thrive and succeed from the outset.

Tracked our progress towards our targets

We introduced representation targets in 2022 that cover gender across the firm at senior leadership level: 40% women, 40% men and 20% flexible (women, men or non-binary persons) As a firm, we are tracking positively towards our gender targets and continuing to make progress, having already exceeded this level of representation with respect to women in leadership roles in Australia. As noted, our governing body has equal representation of both women and men.



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