Aspire
Gender Pay Gap Report, 2024

Introduction

Aspire Technology Solutions is committed to fostering a diverse, equitable and inclusive workplace. As one of the UK's leading providers of managed IT, cyber security, and modern workplace solutions headquartered in the North East of England with regional offices in Glasgow, Leeds, and Teesside and a national presence, we recognise the industry-wide challenge of the underrepresentation of women and non-binary individuals in STEM fields that contributes to gender disparities in pay. While our gender pay gap reflects these broader trends, we are actively working to address the issue and drive meaningful change within our organisation and industry.

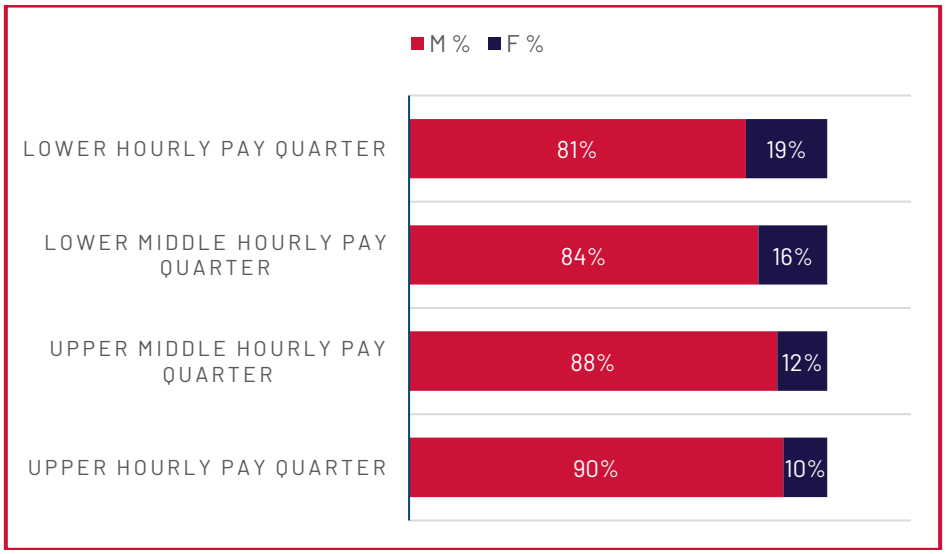
Aspire's gender pay gap results

Our gender pay gap figures are calculated in line with the UK government's gender pay gap reporting requirements. The figures within this report are for the snapshot date of 05 April 2024. Our total number of colleagues was 268 with a split of 85% male and 15% female.

Hourly pay

Aspire's mean gender pay gap was 18.54% and the median gender pay gap was 14.32%.

The proportion of colleagues in each pay quartile according to gender:



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Bonus pay

Aspire's mean gender bonus gap was 59.06% and the median gender bonus gap was 20.83%. *Only a small percentage of Aspire colleagues (who are responsible for decision-making which affects EBITDA performance) have the ability to earn a bonus as part of their overall reward package. This bonus is to incentivise colleagues to achieve the organisational performance required to meet our business objectives. If the required organisational performance is not met, the bonus part of the colleague's reward package is not payable.*

Aspire avoids discretionary or spot bonuses as these are not motivational and we opt to pay competitive base salaries for colleagues which are guaranteed.

Understanding the gap

The gender pay gap in the technology sector is driven by a range of factors, including the underrepresentation of women in senior and technical roles. While we acknowledge that our figures reflect this industry-wide trend, we are committed to tackling these issues through a proactive approach.

Women in leadership

We are proud to have three female colleagues serving in key leadership roles within Aspire: Head of People, Head of Marketing and Head of Operations. Aspire recognises that diverse leadership drives better decision-making and continuous improvement within our organisation.

Aspire's commitment

We are dedicated to making an impact by increasing diversity in terms of not only gender but also race, LGBTQ+ and social mobility. Some of the steps we are taking to encourage underrepresented groups to pursue careers in technology include:

- **Apprenticeships:** Aspire has regular intakes of apprenticeship cohorts, covering technical, product, finance and project management roles. In addition to learning provided by the apprenticeship provider, Aspire have invested in our Essential Skills Programme to help apprentices build communication, organisation, teamwork, and resilience, alongside expert-led technical training from our Microsoft Certified Trainer. Apprenticeships are a key part of our early talent programme for the development of our future talent, allowing apprentices to gain hands-on experience within their functions and access clear career progression pathways as Aspire continues to grow.
- **IT Skills Bootcamps:** We have hosted and sponsored IT Skills Bootcamps designed for anyone aged 19 and over looking to reskill, no prior IT experience is required, just a willingness to learn. Aspire guarantees an interview for all Bootcamp attendees, with many attendees successfully securing apprenticeships with us.
- **Employability initiatives:** Aspire works with social enterprises (many attendees are not in education, employment or training - NEET), charities, schools, colleagues and universities to help develop skills and personal attributes which help individuals gain employment. Some initiatives we have supported and continue to take part in are:
    - *Mock interviews*: Giving those who have not taken part or are underconfident in interviews a good experience with useful feedback for them to take forward.

    - *Meet the employer*: Provide individuals with an overview of Aspire's work and the various entry-level roles available to them.
    - *Visits to Aspire*: We provide an introduction to Aspire, followed by an office tour. We then offer a detailed overview of the different departments, with team members sharing insights into their roles. This gives them a clear understanding of what a career in technology could look like.

- **Work experience:** Every July, we host an engaging work experience week, giving school-age students the opportunity to explore various roles within our industry. This initiative helps inspire the next generation, develop their skills and provide valuable insight into potential career paths.
- **Being a Real Living Wage employer:** Being a Real Living Wage employer helps Aspire attract and retain talent, boosts colleague morale and shows our commitment to fair pay.
- **Inclusive recruitment:** Aspire ensures employment decisions are based on merit and free from unlawful discrimination in selection, terms and job offers.
- **Learning and development:** All Aspire colleagues have access to the Aspire Academy which provides learning opportunities for technical, essential soft skills and training on Aspire systems. Access to any further training follows a consistent and fair approach. Aspire ensures personal development through 1:1s and the Aspiring for Great Performance Framework, assessing needs based on job requirements, promotion needs and personal growth.

Aspire's neuro-inclusion commitment

At Aspire we are proud to be a neuroinclusive organisation. We recognise the value of neurodiverse talent and are committed to an open and supportive culture, where colleagues feel comfortable talking about neurodiversity. This includes:

- Senior leaders, line managers and the People team are formally talking about neurodiversity.
- Awareness programmes on neurodiversity and how all colleagues can play a part in fostering an inclusive culture.
- Providing workplace adjustments to support neurodiverse colleagues as required.
- Supporting colleagues with a personal guide to how they work and communicate best.
- Recruitment processes that accommodate neurodivergent candidates.

Summary

The gender pay gap primarily reflects the overall gender distribution within the organisation, with a higher proportion of males in the workforce, rather than disparities in pay at an individual role level.

Aspire will continue to review our policies, track our progress and implement any meaningful changes. We believe that by taking appropriate action, we can contribute to a more equitable technology sector and ensure that all individuals, regardless of gender, race, LGBTQ+ identity or background, have equal opportunities to succeed.

Contact

If you have any questions regarding Aspire's gender pay gap, please contact people@aspirets.com.

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