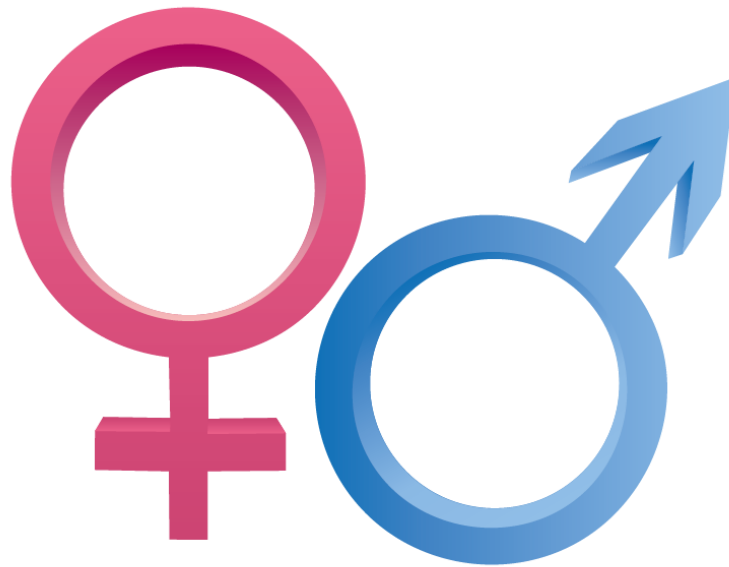


OUR GENDER PAY GAP REPORT

for 5th April 2023



Gender Pay Gap Reporting is a statutory requirement for organisations employing more than 250 people, in line with the UK Government Equality Act 2010 (Gender Pay Gap Information) Regulations 2017. Our data is reported from the snapshot date of 5 April 2023 and is based on a total of 452 Steeper employees (Hugh Steeper Limited).

A message from the Executive Board

In March 2023 the Steeper Group was acquired by Ortho Dev UK Limited, a member of the Eqwal Group. Eqwal are a leading player in the global prosthetics and orthotics market. There have been no changes to the remuneration or benefits offered to employees as a result of this change and the Steeper management team continue to review salary packages to ensure they remain fair and competitive and that all staff are rewarded equally for doing the same work.

We've had another positive year in terms of implementing initiatives and building relationships to continue to keep our pay and conditions of employment non-discriminatory, and although our report demonstrates a gender pay gap, we're dedicated to continuing driving forward the right changes, and taking proactive steps to bridge this gap.

It's important, however, to highlight that the factors contributing to our gender pay gap are not unique to Steeper and reflect wider society and industry trends but we're confident that women and men who carry out the same or like work, or work of equal value are paid equitably.

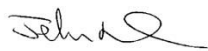
To give some context to this report, understanding and improving our gender balance is an important part of our journey. Reducing our gender pay gap through better gender balance across all levels of the business requires sustained effort and commitment from all levels of the organisation. By implementing these measures, we are reaffirming our dedication to fostering a workplace where all employees are valued, respected, and compensated fairly, regardless of gender.

Over recent years, we have continued to foster a culture where equality of opportunity is available to all our employees. We're also proud to remain a Disability Confident employer and are committed to championing equal rights and opportunities whilst proactively tackling discrimination.

Over the last 4 years we have invested in apprenticeships and management development programmes across the organisation to support career development and advancement of all employees. As part of our efforts to champion future female talent, some women not currently in management positions were invited to attend our leadership programme. Our programme is continuing to run in 2024, and again we are supporting women who are not currently in management positions to attend, to encourage further female representation at this level when the opportunities arise. We'll continue to build relationships with the relevant parties to ensure that throughout all that we do, we encourage our underrepresented groups to join our team, develop their skills, help us close the gap in certain areas and continue to make Steeper a place where all employees can succeed and thrive.



Paul Steeper
CEO



John Midgley
COO/CFO

1. Our data

Steeper's gender pay gap data was collected on 5 April 2023. At the time of this report there were 452 employees within our UK business: 274 men and 178 women.

The above figures represent a decrease in male colleagues by 1 and an increase in female colleagues by 5, from our 2022 published figures.

Our results:

Our Gender Pay analysis shows the difference between the hourly rate of pay of male employees and female employees, expressed as a percentage of the hourly pay rate of the male employees. The gender pay gap is reported on both a mean and median basis.

	2021	2022	2023
Mean gender pay gap	15.71%	10.03%	9.79%
Median gender pay gap	9.89%	5.45%	3.42%

We're really pleased to see the actions we have been taking over the last 3 years have driven these improvements.

What does our information tell us?

Our industry continues to be male dominated, and we still have a higher proportion of males within our senior positions (for context, 61% of our workforce are males). The underrepresentation of women in senior leadership and manufacturing roles is a global and long-term challenge which we are committed to addressing, but the fact that men currently hold more senior positions within our business is driving our current gender pay gap. We are confident that men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent jobs.

We have actively been working to address this imbalance. Since our last report, we have continued to focus on developing women into more senior roles across the organisation through provision of leadership training. Results demonstrate a 1.5% increase of female employees within the upper quartile (Senior level roles).

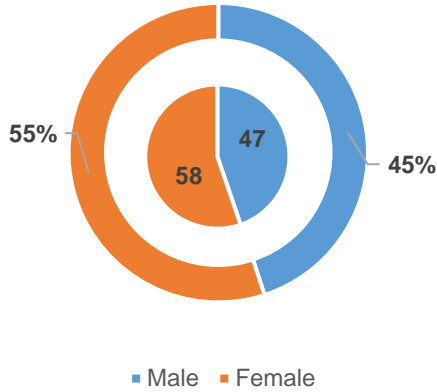
We have also continued to review our approach to flexible working in light of lessons learnt from the Covid-19 pandemic and are supporting hybrid home/office working where practicable to enable our employees to balance their work and home commitments.

Whilst we continue to actively support and raise awareness of flexible working in our business, a higher percentage of our colleagues working part-time continue to be female. We're aware that this is reflected in our data, and we are committed to making further efforts to bring about change in these specific areas.

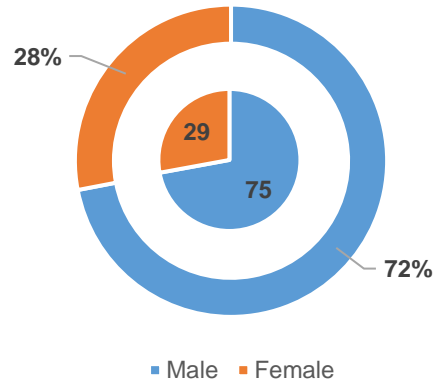
Excluded from our list of full-pay relevant employees, are those on "leave", receiving less than full pay, including for example those on maternity, paternity, shared parental leave and sick leave.

Proportion of men and women in each pay quartile (%)

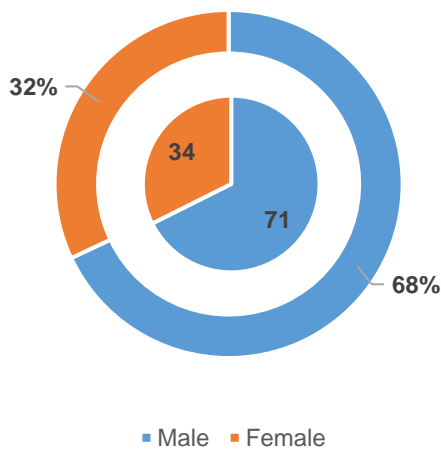
Lower Quartile



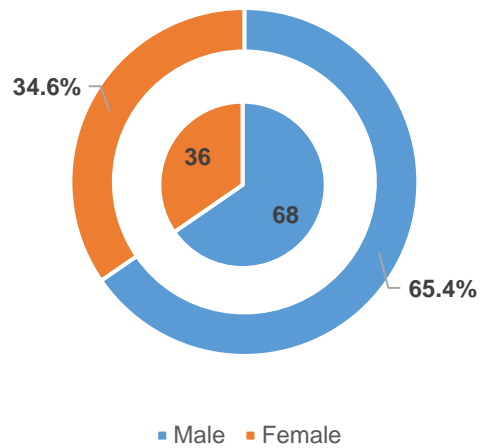
Lower Middle Quartile



Upper Middle Quartile



Upper Quartile



We are mindful of the fact that we are, and always have been a largely male dominated business, particularly within our manufacturing division, and we have worked hard to promote equal opportunities throughout all our recruitment campaigns. The focus of our recruitment campaigns in 2022/23 successfully supported 10 women into entering a career in manufacturing. As we are in a niche industry, many employees enter the sector for the first time when joining our company, and therefore come in as a trainee, apprentice, or graduate level with a development pathway ahead of them to increase salary with skills, knowledge and experience.

In the upper quartile, results show an 8% rise in female employees within this quartile over a 3 year period, demonstrating an increase in female representation at a senior level.

We understand that there is still a way to go in reducing the imbalance within the quartiles and we will continue to focus on career development through training and upskilling. We are, however, confident that men and women are paid equally for doing equivalent jobs.

Bonus gender pay gap

Mean bonus gender pay gap	29.99%
Median bonus gender pay gap	0%

Proportion receiving bonus payments	2023
Male	98%
Female	96%

Steeper joined the Eqwal Group in March 2023, and took the decision to award a one-off bonus to all employees (except those currently serving their notice period, or within their probationary period) in March 2023 to demonstrate gratitude to all employees for their continued hard work and support. This decision increased the proportion of both male and female employees receiving bonuses significantly compared with the prior year.

2. Previous actions – The year in review

Steeper is an independent provider of prosthetic, orthotic and accessible technology products and services, over the years we have formed many partnerships with the NHS in supporting them and our other customers in delivering a high-quality clinical service provision and supply of products. The NHS follow strict rules and regulations when awarding contracts for services and products, and sometimes these contracts already have existing employees undertaking the role. As these employees are protected under the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations (TUPE) employers have a duty to honour existing terms and benefits.

As highlighted in our previous gender pay reports, within our clinical services business (which forms the highest percentage of all our employees), eradicating the gender pay gap is not fully within our business's control because of these protected TUPE rights, as not all providers these employees transfer from offer like for like pay and benefits.

However, we continue to prioritise areas for action in which we could make an impact on reducing any gender pay gap within our business and here we report on our progress and how we are building on our 2023/24 plan to encourage further progress towards our goal of reducing Steeper's gender pay gap.

Reward Structure

Following a review of our reward strategy we are pleased that initiatives put in place are still being well received. These include our dedicated service awards which recognise service and loyalty, and since the implementation of the scheme we have celebrated these milestones with 49% of employees. We also have a retirement award scheme that recognises an employee's length of service at the point they choose to retire.

Our employee engagement platform remains a hive of activity offering employee benefits, discounts, and perks amongst other benefits. Colleagues are encouraged to recognise each other by sending personalised e-cards, and in 2021 the Company launched an instant awards scheme that allows managers to recognise their team with a cash voucher, we added additional voucher options to this scheme mid 2023 – between April 2022 to March 2023 96 employees were awarded vouchers. Our Employee of the Year Awards also recognise and reward employees who have continually demonstrated our core values throughout the year. In 2022 we saw 11 winners receiving awards, 7 of which were female.

Recruitment Processes

All colleagues within Steeper have equal opportunity to progress regardless of gender. Our recruitment process is non gender specific, and we do not have any roles which are reliant on gender. Colleagues are made aware of any vacancies via email alerts and notice boards, and all managers are encouraged to support their colleagues to apply for roles. We operate a Referral Scheme whereby all employees have the opportunity to make a referral for any vacancies and receive a cash reward upon successful placement – since its launch in 2022, 24 employees have been successfully recruited through the referral scheme, 58% of these were females.

Engagement with local colleges and universities

We've also built-up strong relationships with local colleges and universities allowing us to further broaden our talent pool and we're hopeful to continue these relationships going forward. We have supported local colleges with work experience placements over the last year which will help towards increasing knowledge around our sector, and over time, aim to result in increased representation of women in manufacturing roles.

Flexible Working

We have reviewed flexible working arrangements across our business and did not identify any barriers. Flexible working is still a significant part of the way in which Steeper offers benefits to its employees and is one of the key tools used by the business to support wellbeing, and parents / care givers to manage their personal responsibilities whilst providing them an inclusive workplace that offers opportunities to grow and develop their career. We know that women are more likely to have reduced working hours because of caring responsibilities, and so providing this flexibility enables all employees to identify a working pattern that accommodates their caring responsibilities and provides them with the choice to be able to remain in full time employment where possible.