

UK Pay Gap Report 2024


Making strides towards a more diverse and inclusive future

As a future facing firm, we place diversity and inclusion at the centre of our culture and at the heart of our business. We are passionate about our people and increasing equity and fairness is one of our key priorities.

In our UK Pay Gap report, we publish our gender, ethnicity and social mobility pay gap data for 2023/2024. Whilst we are pleased to see a narrowing pay gap across important metrics within our employee and employee & partner groups, this year's report presents a mixed picture.

Pay gap reporting does not take into account workforce composition or job roles and changing demographics in our firm have resulted in both a narrowing and widening of pay gap in various areas. Our commitment to being a diverse and inclusive firm is a long-term strategy, and we recognise that this is an ongoing journey. We remain confident that our sustained efforts will contribute to further narrowing the pay gap over time and creating a more equitable workplace.

Diversity and inclusion are not just aspirations for us, they are essential. With a strong pipeline of women rising through the ranks, we are advocates for female leadership. We are proud that our board is comprised of 43% women, and our UK partnership is 37% female – surpassing legal industry averages. These achievements underscore our dedication to creating a workplace that not only meets but exceeds industry standards.



Charles Currier
Senior Partner



Sophie Breuil
Head of DEIB
(Diversity, Equity,
Inclusion & Belonging)

We believe that transparency and accountability are essential to making progress. In addition to mandatory reporting on gender, we are again voluntarily sharing data on our ethnicity pay gap and social mobility pay gap. We are committed to creating sustainable and rewarding futures for our people and we are committed to taking action to create a workplace where everyone, regardless of gender, race and socioeconomic status, can thrive.

As a large, international law firm, we are committed to our future talent. We continue to introduce and nurture initiatives including hybrid and flexible working, mentoring, Time Out and coaching, as well as policies covering caring, menopause, pregnancy, baby loss and more, underscoring our commitment to creating an inclusive culture where our people are not only supported but empowered to thrive in their careers.

We hope you enjoy reading our UK Pay Gap report for 2024, and please get in touch if you have any questions.

Equal Pay vs Pay Gap reporting

Equal Pay is your entitlement to the same wage as someone doing work of equal value to you, the same or broadly similar work as you or work rated as “of equivalent value” by a job evaluation study, regardless of protected characteristics (e.g. gender, race, etc.).

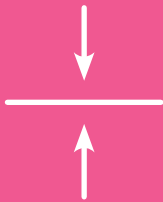
Pay Gap is a broad measure showing the difference between average hourly rates of pay by a protected characteristic, regardless of location, role, seniority, etc. This metric is more an indicator of the demographic profile of an organisation (i.e. more men holding senior positions).

The Pay Gap reporting does not take account of geography, demographics, levels of experience or organisational structures. Any reported gap is a reflection of the composition of the workforce in terms of type of work as well as geography.

Pay Gap data figures provided are as of 4 April 2024. Bonus data relates to the period from 5 April 2023 to 4 April 2024.

This report specifically focuses on measuring Pay Gap data.

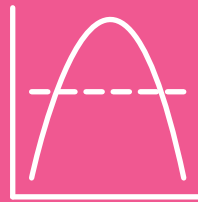
Median vs Mean



Median

The Median is the midpoint of a range of numbers from lowest to highest. It does not matter what the values above or below are. An increase in the Median means that there are now more larger numbers above the previous midpoint than smaller numbers – regardless of their values including outliers.

When we're looking at smaller populations such as our Ethnic Minority population in our Ethnicity pay gaps or Working and Intermediate populations in our Socio-Economic pay gaps, a small change to this demographic, for example an additional 30 employees now included in the population, can quite significantly shift the median.



Mean

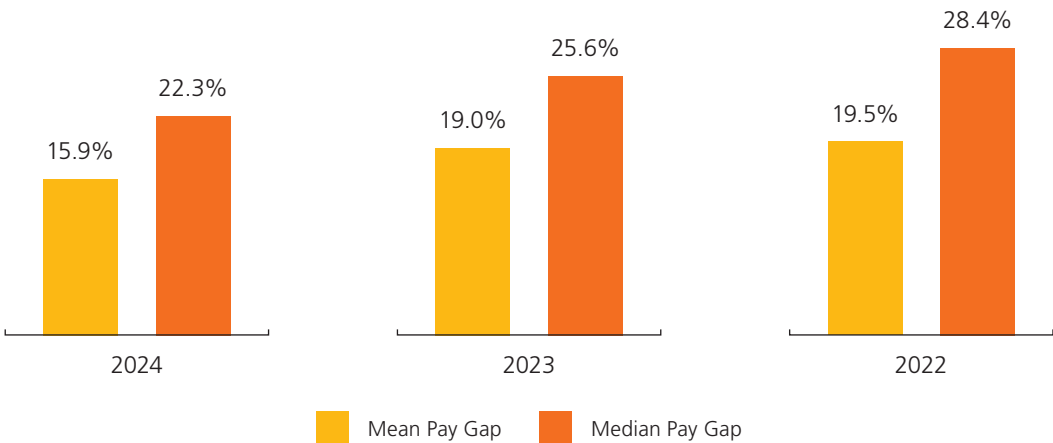
The Mean (usually known as “Average”) is the sum of all values divided by the number of values. Any change in the sum or number of values in a range can impact the Mean. An increase in the Mean means that either there has been an increase in higher numbers, or a decrease in lower numbers – the values matter, and the Mean can be influenced by outliers.

Gender

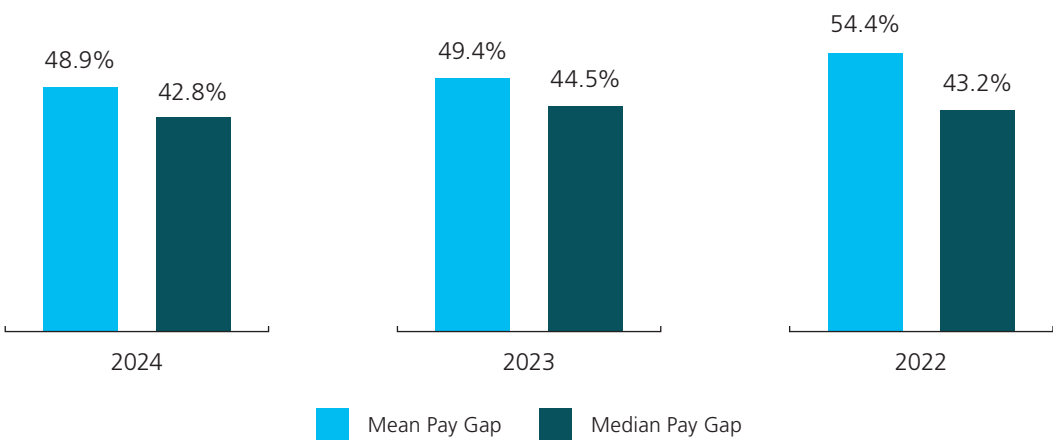
With 43% women on our UK board and 37% women in our UK partnership, our commitment to supporting the advancement of women at all levels across the firm continues to take effect. We are pleased to see a narrowing pay gap across many important metrics, including our “employee” and “employee & partner” pay gaps. While we acknowledge the progress being made, we recognise that there is still a significant journey ahead. We are confident that our sustained efforts will contribute to further narrowing the pay gap and creating a more equitable workplace.

In alignment with the current requirements for gender pay gap reporting, our current methodology is binary and therefore only includes individuals who identify as male or female.

Gender Pay Gap for all employees (excluding partners)



Gender Pay Gap for all employees (including partners)

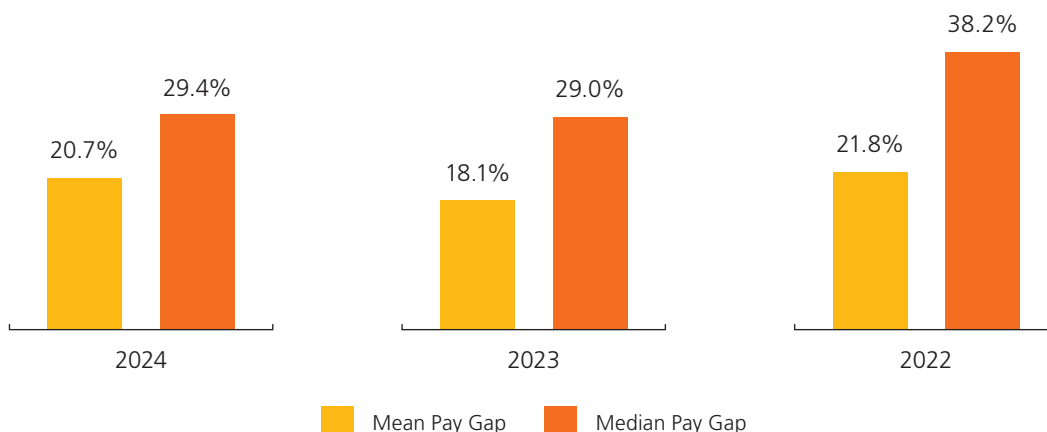


Gender Pay Gap by group

Partners

In 2024, we saw an increase in our gender pay gap for partners. This was the result of a number of junior male partners leaving the partnership which increased the average pay for our male partner population.

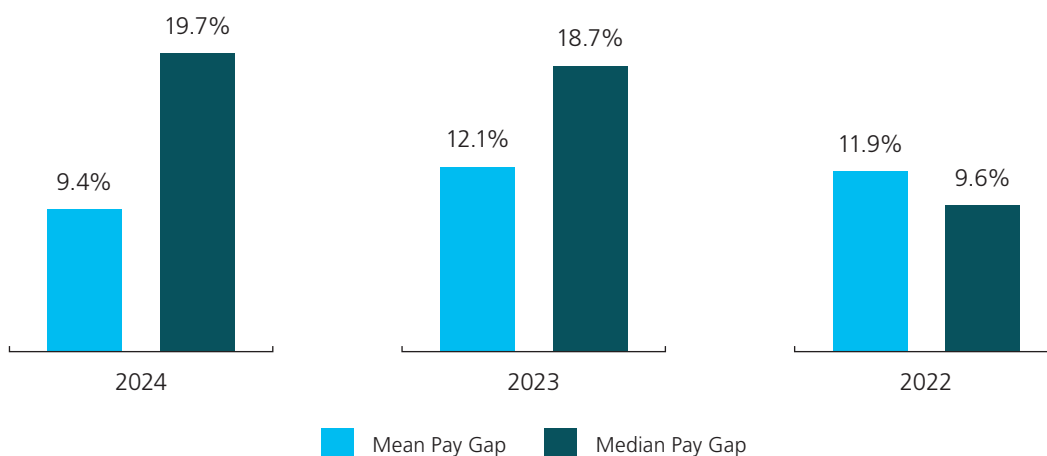
We continue to see our female partner population grow and our female partners progress through the partnership. With a pipeline of talented women rising through the ranks, we remain confident that we will see this pay gap decrease year-on-year.



Fee Earners

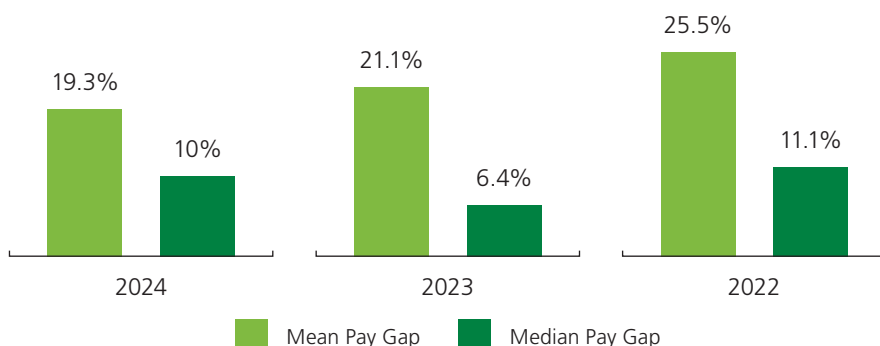
Our fee earner pay gap has been impacted by the significant increase in our male apprentice population, which has more than doubled in the last 12 months. This has increased the proportion of lower paid males and reduced the average hourly rate for fee earning males, resulting in a reduction in the mean pay gap.

If we look solely at our solicitors (lawyers, associates, senior associates and of counsel), our mean pay gap has reduced from 3.6% down to 1.6%, and our median pay gap has reduced from 2% down to 0.8%. This represents positive progress in our fee earning population.



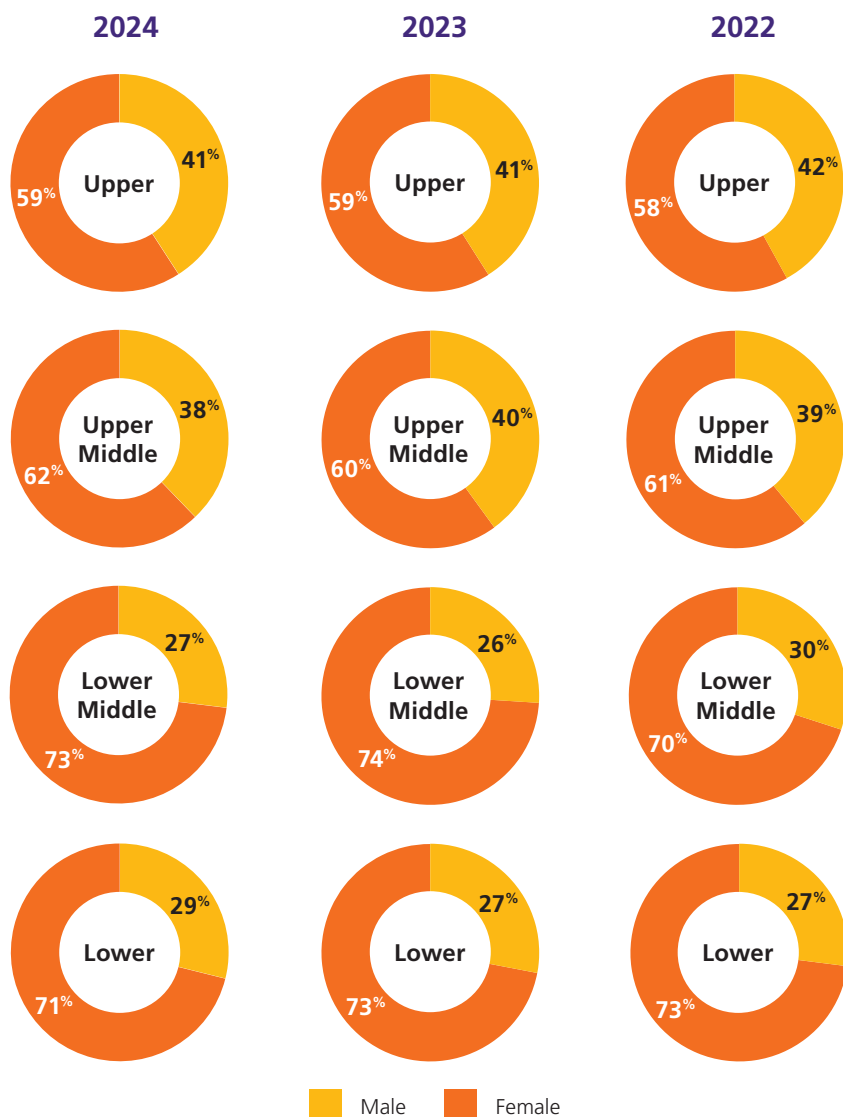
Business Support

Across our business support group, we have seen a decrease in our mean gender pay gap. This is because we have seen an increase in females in senior roles due to internal promotions. The increase in the median pay gap is the result of lower paid males leaving the firm and higher paid males joining the firm.



Gender Pay Quarters – all employees

The quartile distributions divide our employees into four equal groups ranked from highest to lowest levels of pay. Our data shows little change across the four quarters over the past three years. In 2024, we saw an increase in the male population in the lower quarter and an increase in the female population in the upper middle quarter.



43%

women on our Board



37%

women across the UK partnership



65.5%

of trainee solicitors are women



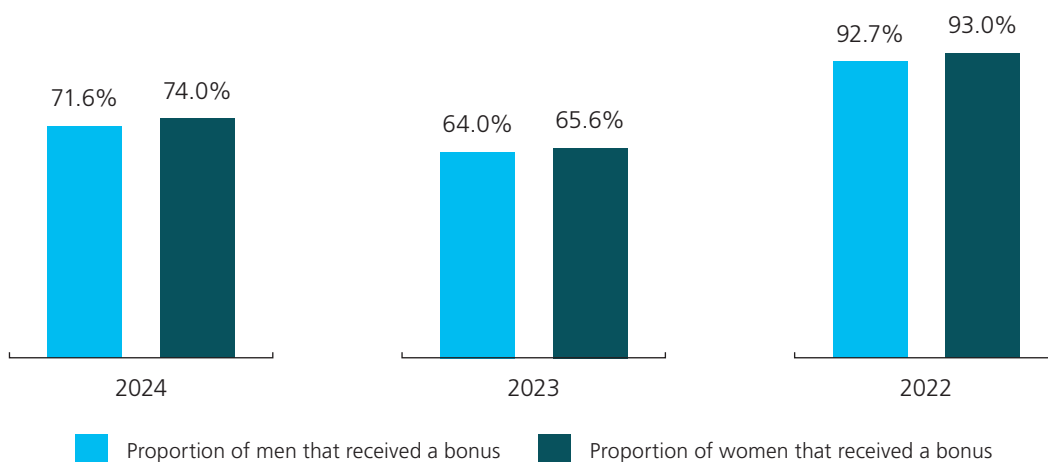
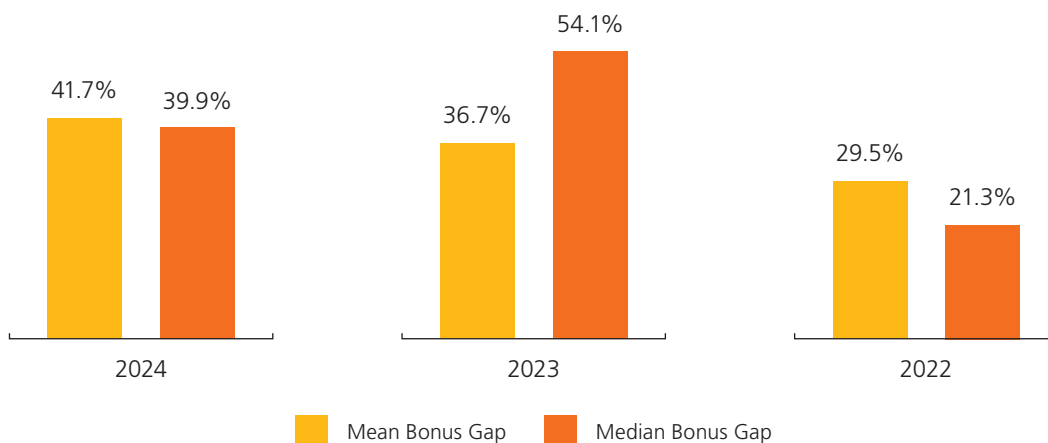
60%

selected for a CMS Law Scholarship were women

Gender Bonus Gap – all employees

In 2024, the firm paid a reduced profit share bonus which resulted in the average bonus values reducing for both males and females. As a result, we saw an uptick in our mean gender bonus gap.

Please note that in 2022, all employees received an extra bonus as a gesture of appreciation in response to the challenges posed by Covid, significantly narrowing our bonus gap and increasing the number of employees eligible for a bonus that year.



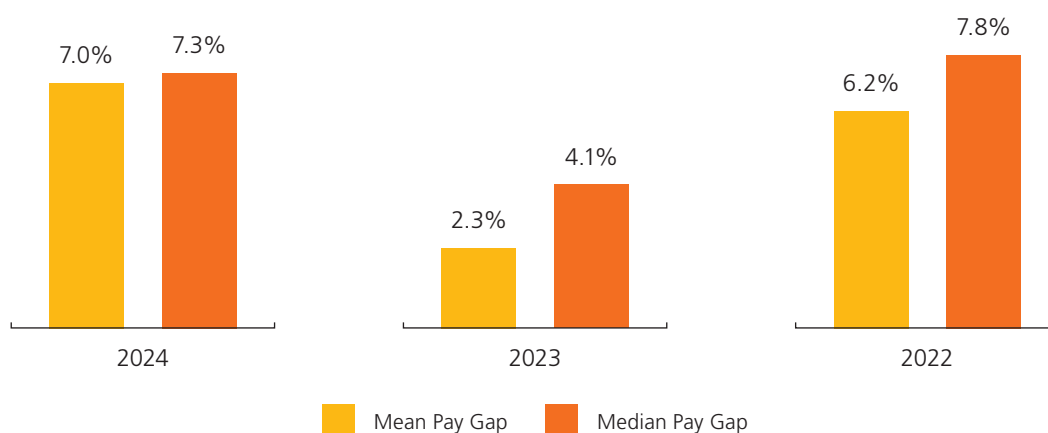
Ethnicity Pay

In line with our commitment to increase the representation of ethnic minority people at all levels in the firm, we are voluntarily reporting our ethnicity pay gap data. These figures are based on 80.3% of people in the UK who have disclosed their ethnicity. Of those, 13.7% identified as an ethnic minority. These numbers have reduced since last year, and small changes to what is already a small population are likely to cause significant changes in pay gaps. Whilst the samples are too small for publication, internally we have taken an intersectional approach and have looked at Pay Gap by various ethnicities.

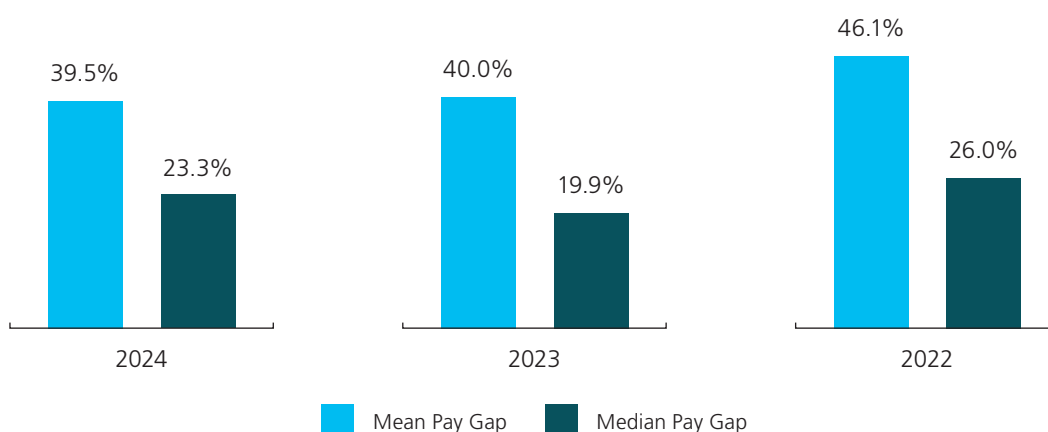
Our current figures reveal an increase in both the mean and median ethnicity pay gaps for all employees as a result in a change in the overall demographic of our ethnic minority population. We have seen some of our senior fee earners from an ethnic minority background leave the firm, many of whom were in the Upper Pay Quartile in the previous years, and most of the ethnic minority people we have hired have been trainees and paralegals. This shift in the overall demographic has resulted in a decrease in the average hourly rate for ethnic minority employees.

We remain dedicated to further narrowing this gap through ongoing initiatives such as mentoring, sponsorship, career development and progression, focus on retention, targeted recruitment, social mobility programmes and more.

Ethnicity Pay Gap for all employees (excluding partners)



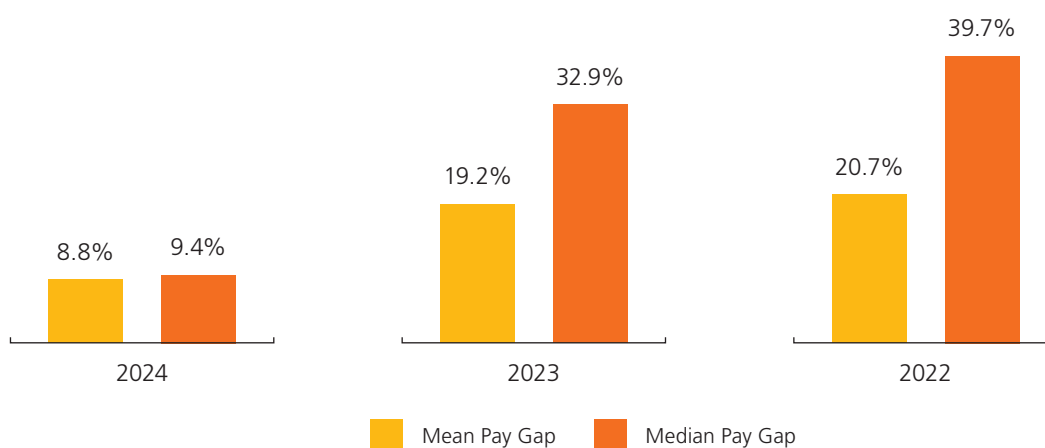
Ethnicity Pay Gap for all employees (including partners)



Ethnicity Pay Gap by group

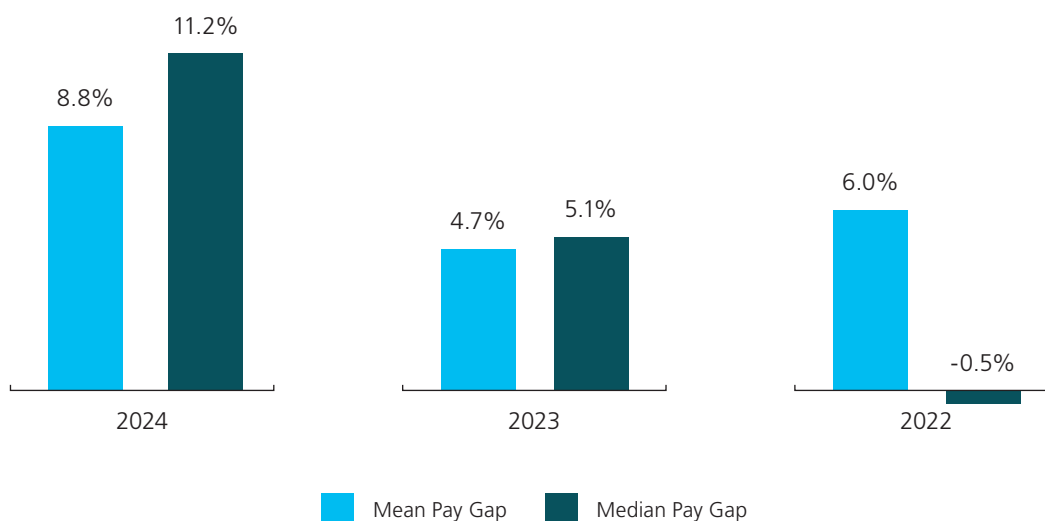
Partners

We are pleased to see our ethnicity partner pay gap shrinking. Our ethnic minority partner population is increasing year-on-year, with more ethnic minority partners advancing in their careers and moving to more senior positions. In 2021, we had 3.5% of our partnership coming from an ethnic minority background, and in 2024 this has increased to 5.4%.



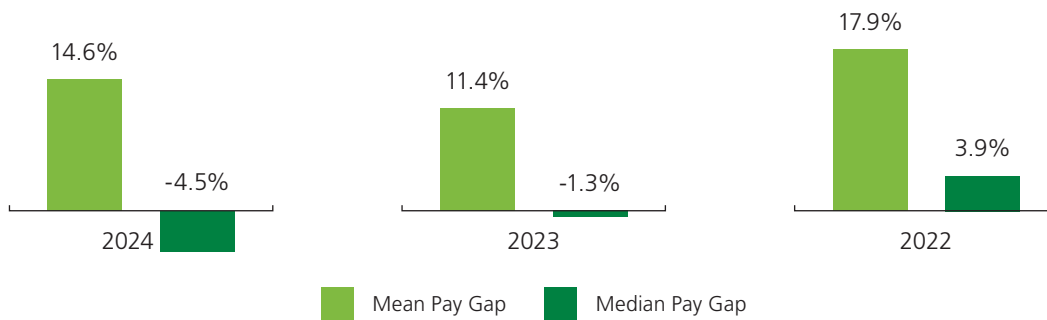
Fee Earners

We have seen an increase in our mean and median ethnic minority pay gap among our fee earners. This is the result of some of our senior ethnic minority fee earners leaving the firm and, separately, we have hired a number of ethnic minority people into more junior roles. This has changed the overall demographic of our ethnic minority fee earner population, which has impacted the mean and median pay gaps this year.



Business Support

We have seen an increase in the mean ethnicity pay gap and a decrease in our median ethnicity pay gap across the business support function. Due to the smaller proportion of ethnic minority employees in our business support group, a slight change to this demographic is all it takes to shift the median. For context, the negative (4.5%) median equates to a difference of 99p in favour of ethnic minority employees.



Ethnicity Pay Quarters – all employees

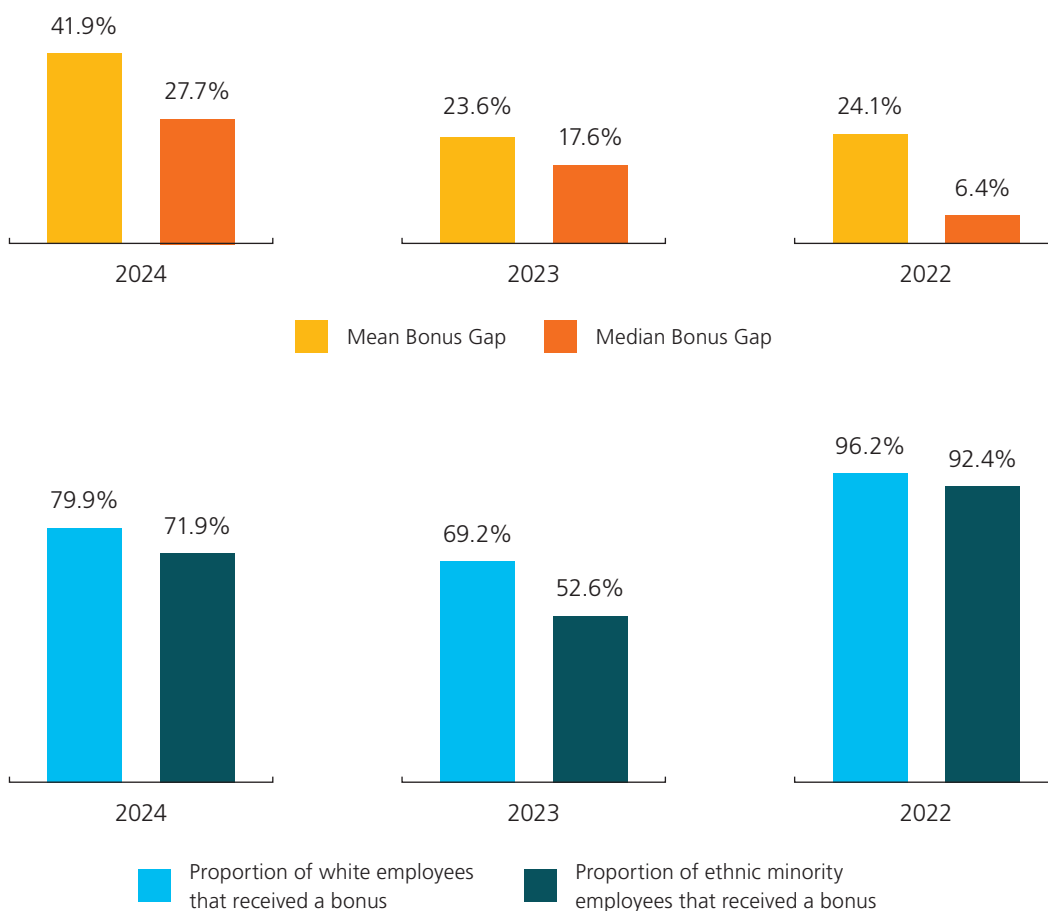
The quartile distributions divide our employees into four equal groups ranked from highest to lowest levels of pay. With 15% of our employee population identifying as an ethnic minority, our pay quarters show a fairly even representation of ethnic minority employees. The most notable change we have seen is the reduction in ethnic minority people in the upper quarter (a 2% difference compared with 2023) and lower middle quarter (a 1% difference compared with 2023).



Ethnicity Bonus Gap – all employees

We have seen an increase in our median bonus pay gap due to the significant number of trainees and paralegals from an ethnic minority background, and the large majority of our business services ethnic minority population sitting within the two lower pay quarters. Pay is lower in these roles and therefore the bonus is lower – and this was further impacted by the firm awarding a reduced profit share in 2024.

Adopting a strategic, long-term perspective, we anticipate these talented professionals progressing through the ranks and assuming more senior positions, increasing their bonus eligibility, and ultimately playing a key role in narrowing the bonus pay gap.



Race at Work Charter

CMS was the first law firm to commit to the Race at Work Charter (BITC initiative)



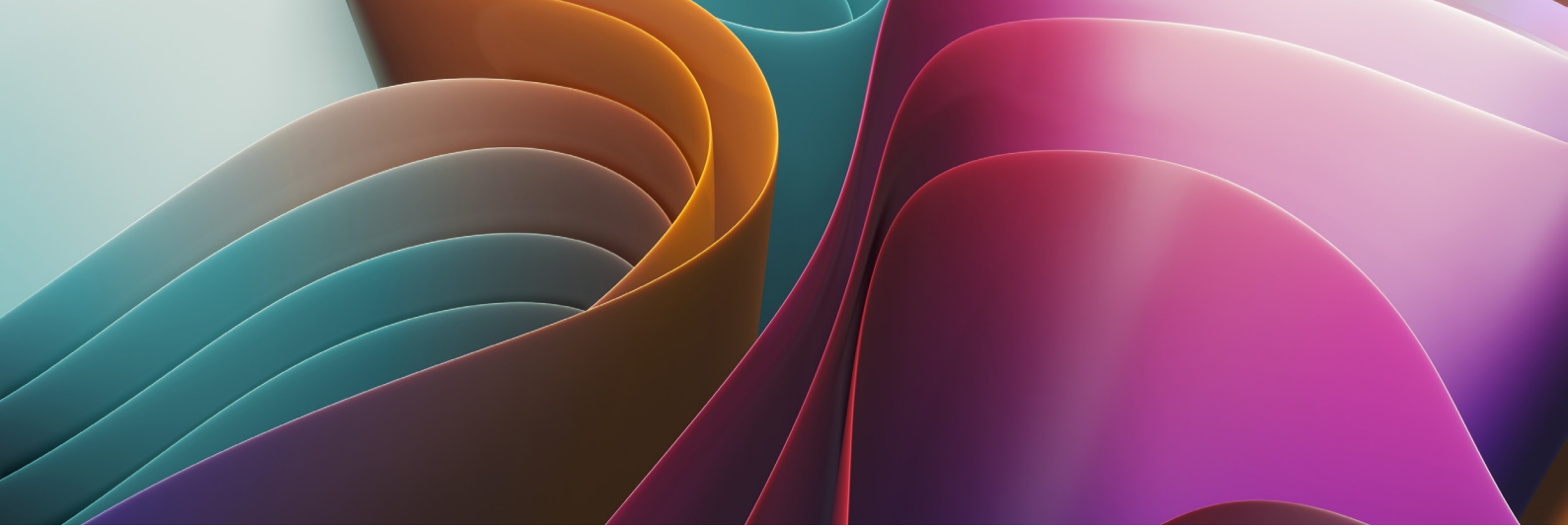
Race Fairness Commitment

CMS is a signatory of the Race Fairness Commitment



Social Mobility Employer Index 2024

CMS recognised as a top employer for advancing social mobility for the eighth year running



Social Mobility

We firmly believe in making a career in law accessible to all. Aligned with The Social Mobility Commission’s guidelines, we assessed socio-economic backgrounds based on parental occupation at age 14, categorising them into three groups: Professional, Intermediate, and Working.

Changes to our demographics have resulted in changes to our pay gaps. In our fee earning population, our intake of apprentices and trainees from both professional and intermediate backgrounds is causing the average hourly rates for these two demographics to reduce. In our business support population, we’ve seen higher paid individuals from the intermediate category leave the firm and the intermediate employees we’ve hired are in more junior low paid roles, which is causing the intermediate pay to reduce.

Combination of our Employee & Partner populations

	CMS 2024 (all employees including partners)	CMS 2023 (all employees including partners)	Industry Benchmark*
Population disclosing their Parental Occupation	67.4%	70.1%	
Professional	67.5%	68.7%	59%
Intermediate	9.5%	9.0%	18%
Working	23.1%	22.3%	23%

*Provided by The Social Mobility Commission, specifically for the Legal Sector within Professional and Financial Services.

Social Mobility Pay Gap for all employees (excluding partners)

Working vs Professional

	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	25.0%	35.0%
2023	29.0%	33.6%

Intermediate vs Professional

	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	18.6%	26.8%
2023	14.7%	16.3%

Working vs Intermediate

	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	7.8%	9.3%
2023	16.8%	22.3%

Social Mobility Pay Gap for all employees (including partners)

Working vs Professional

	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	36.4%	48.0%
2023	33.1%	49.7%

Intermediate vs Professional

	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	23.7%	36.5%
2023	21.7%	23.8%

Working vs Intermediate

	Mean pay gap	Median pay gap
2024	16.7%	18.1%
2023	14.6%	34.0%

National statistic socio-economic classification (NSSEC)

Career Overview	Typical Job	Socio-Economic Category
Modern professional and traditional professional occupations	Teacher, nurse, physiotherapist, social worker, musician, police officer (sergeant or above), software designer, accountant, solicitor, medical practitioner, scientist, civil / mechanical engineer.	Professional
Senior, middle or junior managers or administrators	Finance manager, chief executive, large business owner, office manager, retail manager, bank manager, restaurant manager, warehouse manager.	Professional
Clerical and intermediate occupations	Secretary, personal assistant, call centre agent, clerical worker, nursery nurse.	Intermediate
Small business owners	Who employed less than 25 people such as: corner shop owners, small plumbing companies, retail shop owner, single restaurant or cafe owner, taxi owner, garage owner.	Intermediate
Technical and craft occupations	Motor mechanic, plumber, printer, electrician, gardener, train driver.	Working Class
Routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations	Postal worker, machine operative, security guard, caretaker, farm worker, catering assistant, sales assistant, HGV driver, cleaner, porter, packer, labourer, waiter/waitress, bar staff.	Working Class
Long-term unemployed	(Claimed Jobseeker's Allowance or earlier unemployment benefit for more than a year).	Working Class
Self Employed / Freelance		Exclude
Other	Retired, this question does not apply to me, I don't know	Exclude
Prefer not to say		Exclude

- 
CMS Connect
 Our Work Experience week helps students from under-represented backgrounds gain early access to the profession.
- 
CMS Law Scholarships
 Our CMS Law Scholarships programme supports students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to make a career in law more accessible. In 2024, we welcomed **10** talented individuals onto the programme.
- 
CMS Solicitor Apprenticeship:
 Designed for those who wish to qualify as a solicitor but don't want to go to university, or who don't have the means to, this six-year programme combines learning on the job, studying for a law degree and being paid a salary.
- 
Social Mobility Employer Index 2024
 CMS recognised as a top employer for advancing social mobility for the eighth year running.

Our commitment

As a global, future-facing law firm, diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging are not just aspirations for us; they are an imperative. Our vision is to create a diverse and inclusive environment with a strong sense of belonging, in which everyone has equal opportunities for growth and advancement.

To support us in delivering on this vision we are developing a refreshed Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) Strategy, articulated around three pillars: Attraction & Recruitment, Development & Progression, and Culture of Inclusion.

Governance will play a greater role in our new strategy, promoting clarity of ownership, creating greater accountability and including delivery and reporting mechanisms.

Finally, impact measurement will be central to our refreshed approach to DEIB and the use of KPIs and metrics will help us measure the effectiveness of our interventions and ensure we focus on what delivers tangible change.

The DEIB Strategy will be supported by underpinning action plans focused on specific locations or under-represented communities.

Staff Demographics and Targets:



Diversity and Inclusion Targets

- In order to accelerate change and increase representation in senior roles, CMS adopted diversity targets for Females and Ethnic Minorities in 2022, focusing on UK fee-earners in the first instance. Targets were agreed at Practice Group level to be contextual and relevant to each team as opposed to being 'flat' targets for the wider firm; this way we hope to see progress across all teams rather than in pockets of the firm only. We partner with an external provider to capture data and help analyse and understand data at three critical stages: attrition, recruitment and promotion.
- The firm will also be introducing 'Inclusion Targets' for the first time in 2025. These will work hand-in-hand with our Diversity Targets to help create long-term culture change. These targets were developed based on feedback from our first Staff Engagement Survey and are focused around strengthening an inclusive culture, within which all colleagues feel valued, included and able to thrive.
- We have an established and transparent reporting regime with a significant number of major clients, setting out the diversity of the team engaging with each client.



Shaping Inclusive Cultures

During 2024 we launched our 'Shaping an inclusive culture' training, aimed at all Partners globally and Business Support leaders. The training covers topics including discrimination, bullying and harassment, focusing on educating people about non-inclusive behaviours and providing clear channels for speaking up. It covers how discrimination and harassment can occur at work and includes practical scenarios, focusing on how to help create a positive workplace culture and embed long-term behavioural change. We are delighted to share that 96% of the target cohort have completed the training thus far.



Practice Group DEIB Committees

Practice Group Leaders and Partners have established dedicated DEIB Committees to lead on the implementation of DEIB in their respective Practice Groups, enabling them to drive forward locally tailored interventions to improve diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging. With the support of their HR Business Partner, Head of Practice, Strategy and Operations, and the Head of DEIB, the committees identify areas of focus and develop action plans that can be fully integrated into their wider People Strategy.

During 2024, we reviewed and refreshed our Practice Group DEIB Committees to maximise impact and support the Practice Groups in meeting their targets. This included developing 'Terms of Reference' to give greater clarity on structure, roles and responsibilities as well as on the support that will be provided centrally and share guidance on setting up and running the Committees. We hope to see greater representation across all Practice Group sub-teams which will contribute to increased local impact. The DEIB team will also provide on-demand training to better equip Committee members on the topic of DEIB and will run quarterly Committee Chairs meetings to share lessons learnt.



Employee Networks Review

In 2025, we will be launching a review of our Employee Networks to ensure we are maximising impact and engagement. The DEIB team and key stakeholders will be partnering with our Employee Network to assess the impact of the Networks, including purpose, mission, objectives, governance, structure, impact measurements, training, and support.



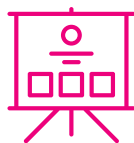
Ethnicity Insight Sessions

At CMS, we aim to cultivate an environment where all colleagues are supported and feel included. The firm has run focus groups and interviews, gathering insights into the experiences of our Ethnic Minority colleagues in the UK that will help inform our strategies and action plans going forward.



Race Reverse Mentoring

The goal of the Race Reverse Mentoring programme is to bridge the gaps in understanding between different ethnic groups. Senior leaders are matched with Mentors from underrepresented ethnic groups, gaining insights that challenge assumptions and promote cultural awareness. Joining the programme fosters inclusion, empathy, and diversity within CMS.



Race Fluency Training

Between May and October 2023, key colleagues across the HR function took part in a Race Fluency learning programme, helping build their confidence, and equipping them to practically apply their learning in their day-to-day interactions with the business.



Embedding inclusivity

- Focused on ethical leadership and individual accountability, our 'Diversity & Inclusion' training is mandatory for all staff.
- Our 'Inclusive Leadership' training is offered to partners across the firm and followed by monthly nudges to embed long-term behavioural change.
- Our 'Leading High Performing Hybrid Teams' series is targeted at managers and comprised of six modules including one dedicated to leading inclusive teams and one focused on mental health.
- We operate a blind work allocation scheme across the whole business, so every lawyer can access every piece of work as it comes into the firm, thereby matchmaking tasks with talent.



Recruitment

- To ensure that we attract greater diversity at all levels and that our processes are not biased, we monitor the demographics of applicants and how they progress through the various stages of our recruitment process.
- Our work experience week, 'CMS Connect' (formerly PRIME), helps students from under-represented backgrounds gain early access to the profession.
- Our 'CMS Law Scholarships' programme supports students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds to make a career in law more accessible.
- Our 'Solicitor Apprenticeship' is designed for those who wish to qualify as a solicitor but don't want to go to university, or who don't have the means to. The six-year programme combines learning on the job, studying for a law degree and being paid a salary.
- Our 'Insights' programme provides university students who are interested in a career in law, a two-week introduction into life at a future facing global law firm. The programme's blend of practical work experience, skills sessions, trainee shadowing, and networking builds knowledge and contacts in equal measure.



Contextual Recruitment

- Implementation of RARE Contextual Recruitment System (CRS) which considers the context in which someone's academic results are achieved. The CRS produces two outputs: Social Mobility flags to measure disadvantage and a Performance Index (PI) to measure outperformance compared to students at the same school. The contextual data can then be used to screen candidates who otherwise may not have been seen, based on their Social Mobility flags and/or their Performance Index.



Social Mobility Network

- The Social Mobility Network provides a platform for employees and Partners to focus on social mobility issues and to ensure that it is at the heart of CMS's DEIB Strategy, supporting the firm with its wider Corporate Responsibility, recruitment and career development activities.
- For the eighth year running, we have been recognised by the Social Mobility Employer Index 2024 as a top employer for advancing social mobility.
- We are a founding member of PRIME, an alliance of law firms across the UK, committed to improving access to the legal profession through work experience programmes.
- To make a career in law more accessible to aspiring lawyers, we award up to ten scholarships each year, paying £3000 towards each year of their law degree.
- To help facilitate social mobility and ensure that we tap into talent, wherever it might be located in the UK, we run the CMS Scholarship scheme on a national scale and reach out to students beyond the communities local to our offices.



Development and progression

- We appraise against technical ability and defined behaviours which are rooted in our values. That appraisal plus market information determines salary levels.
- Our 'Senior Associate Development Scheme' ensures that we have strong representation of diverse candidates in the pipeline of senior associates progressing to partnership. When considering partner candidates, we ensure as much as possible that there is diverse and balanced representation on the interviewing panel.
- Our reverse mentoring initiative focuses on ethnicity, with board members being reverse mentored by ethnic minority colleagues.
- Our 'Secretarial Apprenticeship' programme enables our secretarial population to gain a recognised qualification.
- We offer mentoring at all levels to support talent development.



Making Work + Family Work

- We provide a generous and supportive package for new parents (including adoptive), partners and foster carers including enhanced pay, greater flexibility and the ability to take extended leave. Coaching in the run-up to, and, in returning to work, is provided, and in monitoring performance we make specific allowance for the periods immediately before and after leave. All our policies and benefits are accessible to same sex couples.
- During 2024, we further improved our family leave offering an increased paternity leave and a new Foster Care Policy. This included running open sessions on Shared Parental Leave to improve its profile in collaboration with the Women's and Family's Networks, and input into the 'This is my family' stories to build awareness of our family leave policies.
- We ran a workshop in September with colleagues who had returned from family leave (maternity, paternity and SPL), including HRBP and HR Ops teams, and IT. This enabled us to share our current processes and seek lived experience of preparing to go on leave, being on leave and returning to work to help us improve them further. There were a number of excellent practical suggestions on HR processes, based on returners experiences, with a particular focus on manager/partner/team engagement on returning. The HR Ops team has been working hard to implement tactical changes informed by these discussions.
- We partner with My Family Care to provide a wide range of in-person and digital products to help our employees manage their work and family challenges, such as back-up child-care and elder-care, education, advice and guidance. As part of our carers policy, we offer paid carers leave of up to five days. Our Carers Passport scheme helps carers speak to their line managers about their role as carers, articulate the challenges they face, and agree how they can best be supported. We are also members of Carers UK, which provides resources and support to carers in the workplace as well as their managers.
- We have gained accreditation under the Carer Confident Bench scheme, the first law firm to have received accreditation.
- Our domestic abuse policy aids in helping to create an environment where our people feel safe to talk and disclose experiences and seek help. We work with charity SafeLives to provide training for our Wellbeing Ambassadors and HR teams and lead a firm-wide awareness session.
- We have signed up to the 'Pregnancy and Parenting at Work' programme, in partnership with Tommy's. The programme provides support to colleagues going through or supporting any pregnancy journey – including complications, premature birth, baby loss and fertility treatment.



Wellbeing

- CMS was one of the first law firms to sign up to the 'Mindful Business Charter'. We have established a number of internal channels to support our people's mental health.
- Our 'Time Out, No Questions Asked' programme offers our people the opportunity to take one month of unpaid leave per year (on top of their standard annual leave), no questions asked.
- We have wellbeing ambassadors located in all UK offices, who have an interest and understanding of common mental health problems and factors affecting mental health. All have completed mental health awareness training and are available to talk to and support colleagues who would like someone to talk to. Some have received additional training in alcohol awareness, domestic abuse and suicide awareness.
- We host regular wellbeing seminars to support our people's wellbeing and mental health, with topics ranging from 'Combatting addictive behaviours' to 'The many faces of anxiety'.
- We work with Onebright Efficacy to provide psychological support to our people. This confidential support service covers a wide variety of topics relating to depression, anxiety, panic attacks, performance anxiety, low self-esteem, OCD, excessive worry, relationship problems, anger, public speaking, chronic fatigue and more.
- Our menopause policy supports those experiencing menopause and those supporting them.
- We've teamed up with Peppy, a digital health app that offers confidential and personalised support in three separate areas: menopause, fertility and men's health.



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