

Solicitors Regulation Authority 2021 Ethnicity Pay Gap Report

28 April 2022

This report covers the ethnicity pay gap reporting for the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA).

The SRA is the regulatory body for solicitors in England and Wales. We have chosen to voluntarily publish our ethnicity pay gap data for the first time this year, which has been calculated in accordance with government regulations for calculating the gender pay gap.

The disclosure of ethnicity data is voluntary. Our ethnicity pay gap data has been produced based on the 92 per cent of our workforce who have openly disclosed their ethnicity to us; of those, 66 per cent are White and 26 per cent are from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds.¹ [fn1] The pay data for the proportion of staff who have not disclosed their ethnicity (classed as unknown) is not included in calculating the ethnicity pay gap.

At a glance – our 2021 ethnicity pay gap

The ethnicity pay gap is defined as the difference between the mean or median hourly pay rate received by White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background.

The mean pay gap is the difference between hourly earnings for White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background, taking the sum of all hourly rates divided by the total number of staff in each group.

The median pay gap is the difference between the midpoints in the ranges of hourly earnings between White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. It takes all salaries in the sample, in order from lowest to highest, and picks the middle-most salary.

The figures provided in the charts below are based on hourly rates of pay during the monthly pay period ending on 25 April 2021 and bonuses paid in the year up to 5 April 2021.

Difference in pay between White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background

	2021
Mean pay gap	21.5%
Median pay gap	15%

Difference in bonus pay between White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background

	2021
Mean bonus pay gap	46.9%
Median bonus pay gap	16.7%

Proportion of White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background receiving a bonus payment

There are various bonus schemes for different levels throughout the SRA.

Proportion of White staff and staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background in each pay quartile

2021 pay quartiles:

The charts show the ethnicity split when we divide our workforce by ordering hourly rates of pay from highest to lowest and grouping the pay into four equal quartiles.

A quarter of our workforce is from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background. The distribution between the White and Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups improves as we move down the organisation. There is however more work to be done to improve the ethnicity balance in the top quartile.

Understanding the gap

The SRA median ethnicity pay gap of 15 per cent is considerably higher than the UK national median ethnicity pay gap, which is 2.3 per cent (Office for National Statistics, 2019).

There is a significantly higher proportion of White staff compared to staff from Black, Asian and minority ethnic groups in the upper pay quartiles.

There are different bonus schemes operating in the SRA. Variation in bonus percentage and a small number of outliers in the top quartile have contributed to the significant bonus gap, albeit the balance of staff across the SRA receiving a bonus is consistent.

Our work to reduce the ethnicity pay gap

The SRA is fully committed to reducing the ethnicity pay gap. Although we have good ethnic diversity in our workforce, we don't when it comes to diversity in senior positions. That isn't acceptable.

We are committed to improving this. We will carry out a programme of work to better understand the reasons behind the low representation of staff from a Black, Asian and minority ethnic background in senior positions, and what new measures we can take to address the problem. This will include learning from best practice and working with leaders and experts in this area to identify how to successfully increase diversity in senior teams.

Our Board is keen to see improvements in this area. As well as offering insight and inputs on how to reduce the gap, it will be assessing long term progress on this issue.

We continue to be committed to a fully inclusive workplace.

Paul Philip

CEO, Solicitors Regulation Authority

Footnotes

1. In this report we are comparing the White group (including White minority groups) with the Black, Asian and minority groups (made up of the Black, Asian, Mixed and Other groups).