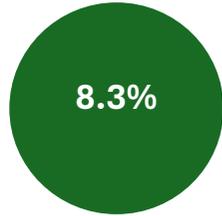


University of Sussex Disability Pay Gap Report 2026

Summary
 Our mean disability pay gap for 2025 is 16.6%, a 0.6% decrease compared to the previous year. The median disability pay gap has also decreased by 5.2% this year to 8.3%.

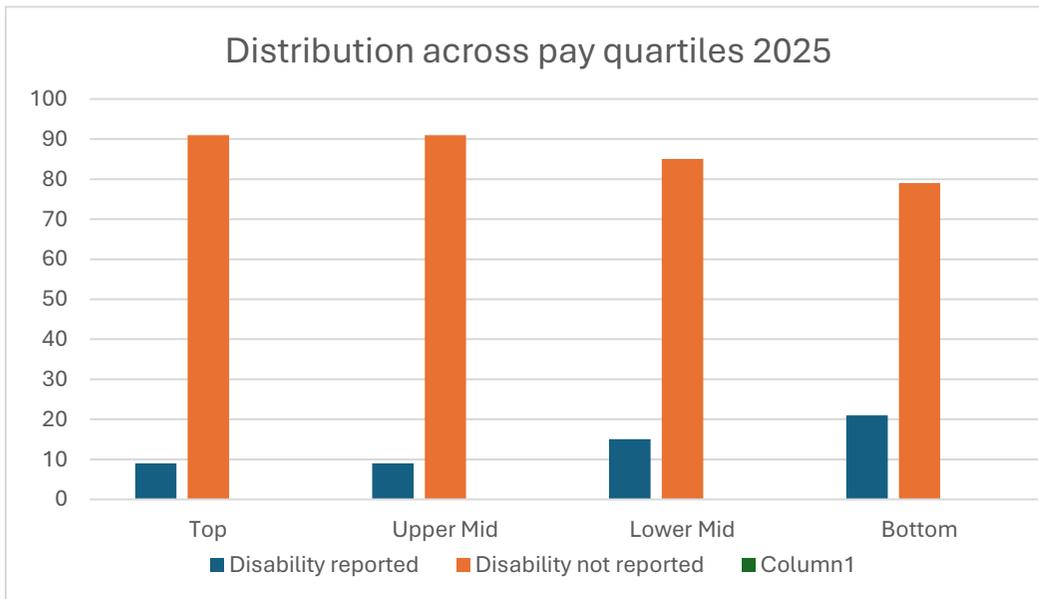


Mean Disability Pay Gap



Median Disability Pay Gap

Population	Academic	Professional Services	Total
Disability reported	226	290	516
Disability not reported	1775	1513	3288
All Staff	2001	1803	3804



Summary

Our mean disability pay gap for 2025 is 16.6%, a decrease of 0.6 percentage points compared to the previous year. The median disability pay gap has also decreased this year by 5.2 percentage points to 8.3%.

The mean disability pay gap in the academic staff group decreased slightly to 11.6%, while in Professional Services it increased to 14.7%, a rise of 2.0 percentage points. The median disability pay gap for academic staff decreased to 15.1%, a reduction of 1.1 percentage points, while the median for Professional Services increased to 10.0%, a rise of 3.2 percentage points.

What drives our Disability Pay Gap?

The key driver of our disability pay gap continues to be the demographic profile of our workforce and the distribution of disabled staff across pay grades. Disability declaration rates have increased again this year, and while this is a positive indicator of trust and openness, it also highlights structural imbalances in representation that contribute directly to the pay gap.

- Numbers reporting a disability have continued to rise, increasing from 498 staff in 2024 to 516 in 2025. This increase is reflected across the University, with disabled staff now representing 14 per cent of the workforce, up from 13 per cent the previous year and from 6% in 2020.
- Professional Services (PS) continues to see higher levels of disability disclosure than the academic staff group. In 2025, 290 PS staff reported a disability compared with 226 academic staff. This pattern affects the overall disability pay gap because PS roles are more concentrated in lower-graded posts, where disabled staff are disproportionately represented.
- The distribution of disabled staff across pay quartiles shows continued under-representation at senior levels. In 2025, 9 per cent of those in the top pay quartile reported a disability, compared with 21 per cent in the lowest quartile. This year's increases in the top and bottom quartiles (each rising by one percentage point from 2024) indicate some movement, but the overall pattern remains one of lower representation at higher pay levels.
- Within the academic staff group, the disability pay gap narrowed slightly. The mean disability pay gap fell marginally from 11.7 per cent to 11.6 per cent, and the median decreased from 16.2 per cent to 15.1 per cent. These changes are influenced by small shifts in representation, with disabled academic staff remaining under-represented in higher-paid academic roles.
- In Professional Services, the disability pay gap widened. The mean disability pay gap increased from 12.7 per cent to 14.7 per cent, and the median rose from 6.8 per cent to 10.0 per cent. This reflects higher concentrations of disabled staff in lower-graded PS roles and limited progress in increasing representation in the upper pay quartiles. While disability disclosure has risen in PS overall, this growth continues to be weighted toward lower-paid posts.

Representation patterns across quartiles remain a central factor. Although increases in disabled staff in the highest quartile are welcome, they have not kept pace with rises in lower quartiles. As a result, the University continues to see structural clustering of disabled staff in lower-paid roles, which maintains an upward pressure on the overall disability pay gap.

How Are We Reducing Our Disability Pay Gap?

We remain committed to reducing our disability pay gap and creating a working environment where disabled staff can thrive. The Disability, Equality and Inclusion Steering Group continues to oversee and refine the actions that support this work, building on progress made in previous years and ensuring that

our approach is informed by evidence, staff feedback and best practice. As part of this commitment, we are focusing on improving representation at all levels of the University and addressing the structural barriers that contribute to pay inequality.

Recruitment and Inclusive Hiring

- We continue to strengthen fair and accessible recruitment processes, ensuring that disabled applicants and employees experience inclusive practice from the first point of contact.
- Work is ongoing to support search agencies in understanding and meet our expectations on inclusive recruitment.
- The introduction of the new digital HR system will provide better quality workforce data, enabling us to identify barriers earlier and take more targeted action.

Progression, Development and Career Pathways

- Promotion, job evaluation and pay review processes continue to be strengthened, with clearer criteria and guidance for staff and managers.
- Our Workplace Adjustments Toolkit remains central to improving everyday accessibility. Work continues through the Workplace Adjustments Working Group to embed the toolkit and enhance its use across all departments.
- Leaver surveys and staff feedback help us better understand the factors influencing retention and progression for disabled colleagues.

Leadership and Talent Development

- In 2025–26, we are launching a new Leadership Development Programme for disabled staff across the university, designed to provide career advancement support. This programme complements our wider development offer and forms part of a broader positive action- approach to addressing under-representation at senior grades.

Representation, Data and Inclusive Culture

- We continue to encourage staff to update their equalities information through MyView so that we can better understand representation and tailor interventions.
- Equality monitoring of Council, Senate and other leadership groups supports action plans to address underrepresentation of disabled staff in decision-making- spaces.
- Completion rates for mandatory and recommended EDI training, including Disability Awareness, continue to be monitored, with a sustained focus on improving compliance and embedding inclusive practice.
- The identity based mentoring scheme remains -under review to ensure its effectiveness and accessibility.

- Revised and strengthened equality analysis processes support more consistent consideration of disability inclusion across policies, practices and change projects.

Together, these actions form a coordinated programme of work aimed at improving the representation, experience and progression of disabled staff across the University and, over time, reducing our disability pay gap

Note One: Disability pay gap only reports on full pay relevant employees and is a snapshot taken on 31 March 2025.

Note Two: Pay quartiles - Staff are ordered from highest to lowest paid based on the hourly pay rate used in the pay gap calculations. The data set is then divided equally into four.