



# Opportunity for all

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Report 2025

# Opportunity for all



United Utilities (UU) is a FTSE100 company delivering essential water and wastewater services to around eight million customers and 200,000 businesses across the North West of England. With more than 7,000 colleagues working across our sites and offices from Crewe to Carlisle, we continue to build an inclusive, supportive and high-performing workplace.

In 2025, we refreshed our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion strategy under the banner of **Opportunity for All**. Our focus on strong leadership, transparent reporting and a culture of belonging is helping us create an environment where every colleague can thrive.

In 2025, we maintained our **fourth place** ranking in the **Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers Index**, the highest-ranked water and utilities company. This achievement builds on a year of recognition, including:

- **Diversity and Inclusion Initiative award** winner – July 2025 Water Industry Awards
- **Outstanding Employer award** winner – July 2025 Water Industry Awards
- **Outstanding Employer Award highly commended** – September 2025 Employer's Excellence Awards (in association with Metro)

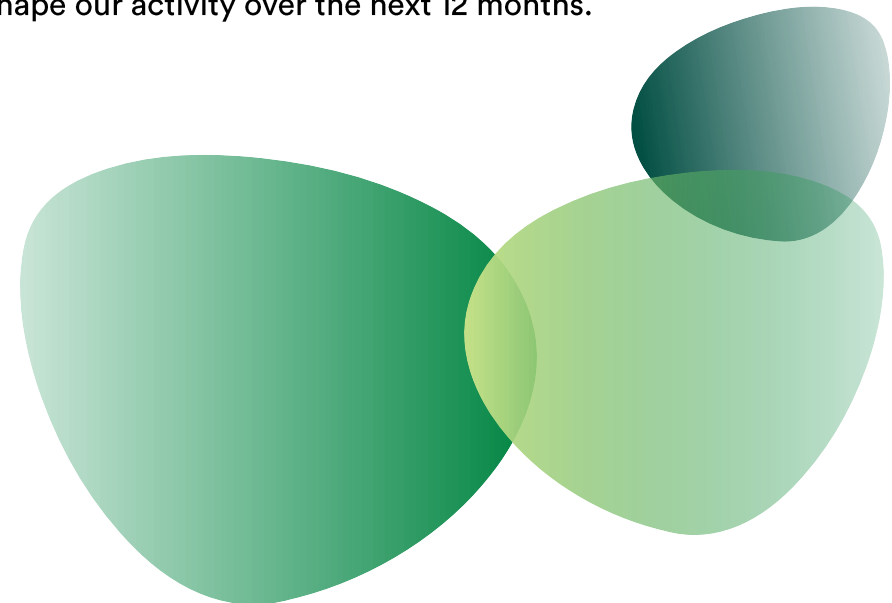
These accolades reflect our continued commitment to fostering a truly inclusive culture.

We were also recognised as an **Accredited Member of the Fair Employment Charter** (Liverpool City Region), demonstrating our commitment to fair, healthy, just and inclusive employment practices.

Our focus on equity and inclusion is reinforced by strong colleague feedback. In our 2025 engagement survey, we achieved a **90% overall engagement score** for inclusion, with **92%** of colleagues agreeing that UU supports diversity and inclusion – both scores well above the UK high performing and utilities sector benchmarks.

We remain committed to improving gender balance across our organisation and the wider sector, with further detail provided in our gender pay gap report (page 11).

Finally, we have strengthened our contribution to the region through enhanced community partnerships and cross-industry collaboration, supporting wider societal progress in diversity and inclusion. This commitment will continue to shape our activity over the next 12 months.



# Opportunity for all



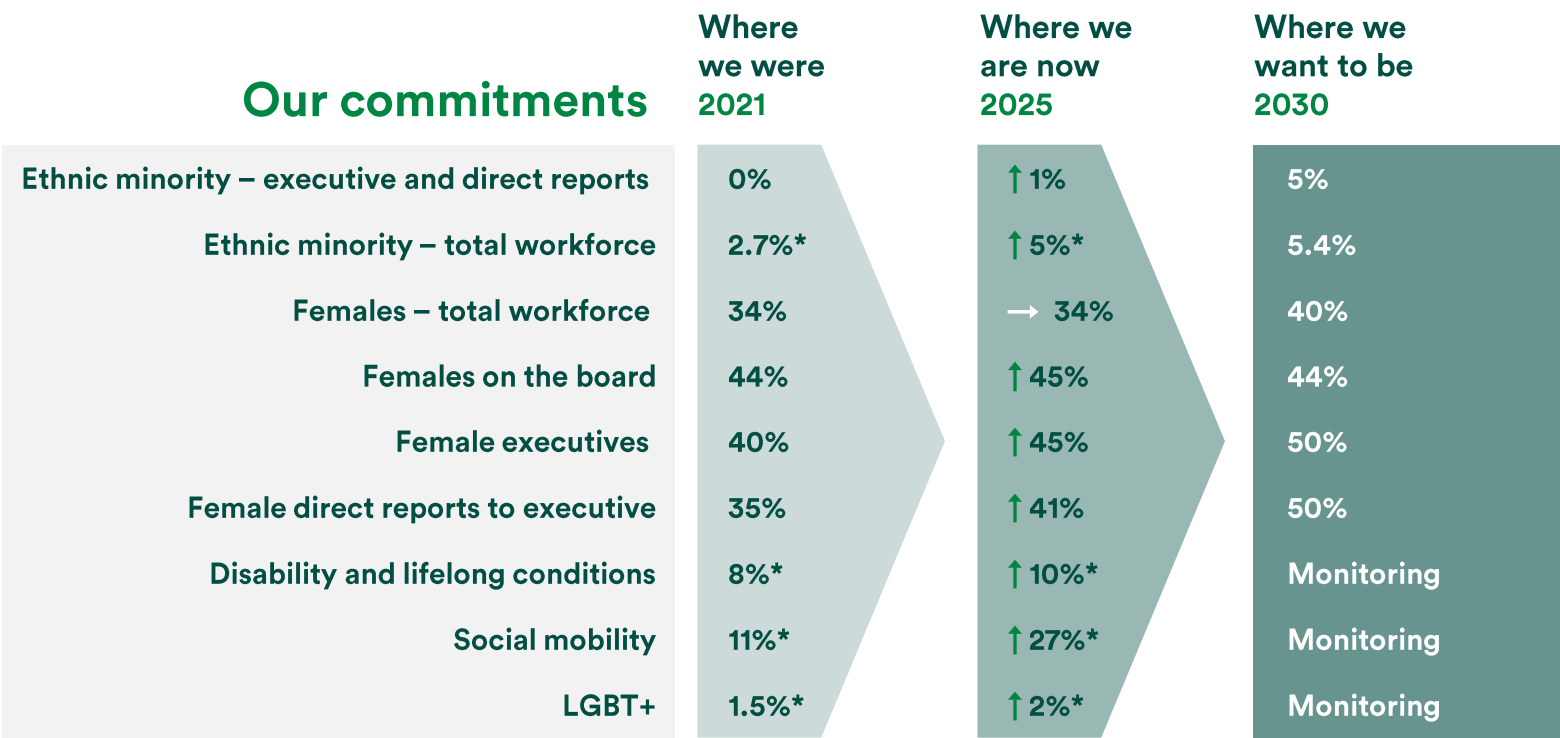
What we've achieved	Page 4
Celebration and recognition	Page 5
Attracting future talent	Page 6
Retention and career progression	Page 7
Supporting everyone	Page 8
Driving inclusion through collaboration	Page 9
Our focus for 2026	Page 10
Gender pay report	Page 11
Gender pay report by business	Page 13
Useful definitions	Page 14



# What we've achieved



In 2021, we started to track our improvement in diversity and inclusion and have continued to make progress, working to positively impact our workforce diversity profile across the company.



\*Of those disclosed

Results from our 2025 colleague engagement survey also reflected the work we have been doing to promote diversity and inclusion.

## Overall colleague engagement score for diversity and inclusion

**90%** Top-scoring category in 2025 and higher than UK and high-performing benchmarks.

**92%** of all colleagues and 95% of women agreed that UU supports equity, diversity and inclusion.

**89%** of all colleagues agreed they can be themselves at work.

**91%** of colleagues told us they were proud to be part of this organisation.

**4.6 rating** on Glassdoor, with over 90% of reviewers saying they would recommend working here to a friend.

**'GLASSDOOR'**

# Celebration and recognition



Through our blend of leadership commitment, inclusive policies, community engagement, training and data-driven improvements, we have continued to build an environment where diversity and inclusion are celebrated. Our ongoing efforts have demonstrated our dedication to creating a workplace where all colleagues are valued and respected, and we are thrilled for that to have been recognised externally during 2025.

## Inclusive Awards 2025

Secured **fourth place** on the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers list.

**Finalist:** Head of Diversity and Inclusion Award.



## Water Industry Awards 2025

**Winner:** Outstanding Employer of the Year Award.

**Winner:** Diversity and Inclusion Initiative Award.



## Employer's Excellence Awards 2025

**Highly commended:** Outstanding Employer Award.



## Women In Work (WiW) Gender Equity Measures Report 2025

Ranked **Top 100** for the second year running.



## Religious Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (REDI) Index 2025

In the second UK Faith-friendly Workplace Report, the Religious Freedom & Business Foundation listed our website highest scoring for having faith-oriented colleague networks, mentioning religious non-discrimination and linking to additional information.



## Disability Confident Employer

We create a movement of positive change, thinking more openly about disability and acting on improving how we recruit, retain and develop disabled people. We hope to encourage future applicants to think differently about United Utilities as a possible employer.



## Armed Forces Covenant

We have been a Gold member of the Armed Forces Covenant Employer Recognition Scheme since 2013, recognised as an employer that provides exceptional support to the Armed Forces community and Defence, by going above and beyond our Covenant pledges of employer support to members and their families with communication and outreach activities.



# Attracting future talent



Attracting and developing the right talent is essential to delivering our ambitious and bold plans across the North West. We remain focused on bringing people into the sector from a broad range of backgrounds, ensuring our workforce reflects the customers and communities we serve.

Increased focus on outreach by our talent acquisition team has enabled us to adopt new attraction methods within our local communities and unrepresented groups, resulting in strong progress across key priority areas:

### Gender representation

- Women progressing through our recruitment process achieved a **34% offer rate**, compared with **26%** for men, strengthening our pipeline in a traditionally male-dominated industry.

### Under-represented groups

- Application and interview support led to over **450 additional candidates** disclosing a disability
- Greater transparency about our inclusive practices contributed to a **21% increase** in candidates sharing diversity information
- Our partnership with the Department for Work and Pensions delivered **130+ hours** of recruitment support, including coaching, one-to-one guidance and job fairs
- We strengthened inclusive recruitment through collaborations with Pathway Careers, Training and Mentoring (CTM), the Opening Doors campaign with Business in the Community, and People Plus' Social Recruitment Advocacy Group, providing targeted application support, particularly for early-career and apprentice roles.

### Skills for future infrastructure

As we deliver the largest investment programme in a century, securing the skills we need for future infrastructure remains a priority. Our continued status as a **Gold member** of the Armed Forces Employer Recognition Scheme supports this ambition by aligning us with highly skilled individuals who can contribute to our five-year plan. We offer guaranteed interviews for serving personnel and veterans, with additional guidance provided through our Armed Forces Colleague Network. These efforts contributed to an **increase** in armed forces applications in 2025 – equating to more than **1,000 additional candidates**.

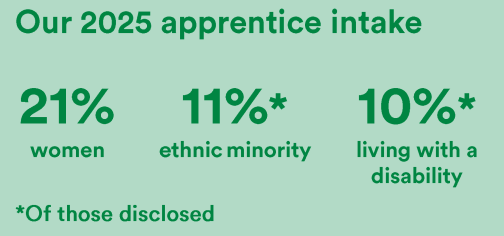
### Inspiring young talent into STEM careers

Our 2025 outreach activity strengthened our pipeline of future talent by engaging young people across the region and **promoting careers in STEM** across our business (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics).

- **International Women’s Day STEM challenge**  
We hosted an event for girls of secondary school age in a “Dragons’ Den” challenge focused on water efficiency and responsible wastewater use, helping students build confidence, creativity and problem-solving skills while exploring STEM careers.
- **Challenge Academy Trust engineering programme**  
Supported pupils from secondary schools through 10-week engineering projects, providing mentoring and access to our STEM Centre to tackle real-world issues and develop research, design and teamwork capabilities.
- **Mentoring support**  
As a key driver of colleague development and a valuable pathway for supporting young people into STEM careers, we promoted mentoring support across the organisation.
- **Pilot work experience programme**  
Launched a new work experience offer for Year 9 and 10 students, giving them early exposure to career options and helping them build core employability skills.

In 2025, we ran the largest recruitment campaign for apprentices and graduates, securing the best talent for the future of our business.

This year we recruited **83 apprentices** and **43 graduates**.



# Retention and career progression



Attracting great people is only the beginning. We are committed to ensuring every colleague can build a fulfilling and long-term career with us. An inclusive culture is central to this, and support must be accessible at every stage of the colleague journey.

## Inclusive training and development

Our bespoke training helps managers and colleagues understand the principles of Opportunity for All, building self-awareness, recognising individual needs and celebrating difference.

With a 58% increase in colleagues disclosing specific learning challenges, we have continued to expand the accessibility of our learning offer, including:

- Increased access to face-to-face training.
- Clear opportunities to share individual requirements and request adaptations—supporting colleagues with neurodiverse needs, hearing impairments, physical disabilities and sight loss.
- An internally developed eLearning platform that meets the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, AA accessibility standards**.
- Ongoing rollout of **text-to-speech** capability across all eLearning content
- One in five colleagues moving to a new role in 2025, with the breadth of opportunity available.

We also continued to build capability through British Sign Language (BSL) training. Since its launch in 2023, **50 colleagues** have now achieved BSL Level 1 qualification, strengthening our ability to support deaf colleagues and customers.



## Supportive people policies

Our people policies are designed to promote dignity, respect and inclusion. Flexible working, family leave, menopause support, transitioning guidance and accessible learning resources help ensure colleagues feel supported throughout their career.

In 2025, we enhanced our family leave provisions by:

- Extending maternity and adoption leave at full pay from **18 weeks to 26 weeks**.
- Increasing paternity leave at full pay from **2 weeks to 4 weeks**.

These improvements reflect our commitment to long-term retention, fairness and supporting colleagues throughout.



# Supporting everyone



Together, our colleague networks foster connection, visibility and community across our organisation.

Our **16 colleague networks** and support groups are a core pillar of our inclusion strategy. Each is supported by two senior executive sponsors and provided with the resources needed to run events, support sessions and awareness campaigns.

These networks provide peer support, raise awareness and champion inclusion across the organisation. Activities include monthly groups focused on menopause, neurodiversity, hearing loss, parent and carer experiences, and bereavement as well as participating in events such as Pride across the region. Our networks also lead cultural and faith celebrations and support colleagues throughout the year, building awareness of times of special importance to colleagues and customers such as Ramadan or Easter.

## Community engagement and visibility

External community participation has expanded further this year with involvement in charity and community events (supporting mental health), plus careers fairs around our region.

## Health and wellbeing support

We strengthened our ongoing menopause support with awareness training, providing personal hygiene products in workplace facilities and discounted hormone testing packages. We continued our strong focus on men's mental health awareness training to minimise potential risks within our sector. Additionally, this year we have worked to normalise men's health within the workplace, discussing prostate cancer and men's mental health frequently, introducing sanitary waste bins in men's toilets at multi-occupancy sites to support colleagues undergoing prostate cancer treatment.





# Driving inclusion through collaboration



**By working across sectors and industries in our region we have elevated the importance of diversity and inclusion in all workplaces.**

## Driving equity across our partners

Many of our partner organisations are progressing their own equity, diversity and inclusion ambitions, and together we are strengthening inclusive practices across the utilities sector.

This year, we brought together partners and supply chain organisations to collaborate on improving inclusion across the region. It is encouraging to see employers from across the water industry working collectively to make the sector an industry of choice – attracting talent from all backgrounds and supporting innovation for the benefit of the North West.

In July, we hosted a Round Table for the UK's top inclusive employers from the Inclusive Top 50 UK Employers list 2024/25. By sharing examples of effective inclusion practice, we have fostered new cross-sector partnerships, including with emergency services organisations, supporting them on their journey in becoming more inclusive.

## Utility skills

We continue to collaborate closely with organisations across the utilities sector to help shape a more inclusive future for our industry. Working alongside partners in water, gas and electricity, we are identifying shared priorities and strengthening our collective approach to improving diversity and inclusion. Together, we are committed to making the utilities sector more attractive to a broader range of talent and ensuring it reflects the communities we serve.

## Peer-to-peer network collaboration

We continue to strengthen the capability of our colleague networks by connecting members with peers in similar roles across other organisations and industries. These collaborations have helped build confidence, expand learning and enhance problem-solving skills, while enabling colleagues to share best practice and broaden their professional support networks.



## Colleagues are also our customers

In 2025, equity, diversity and inclusion was introduced as a key category within the BS ISO 22458:2022 Consumer Vulnerability accreditation. We were highly commended for demonstrating the strong link between colleague experience and customer experience – recognising that when colleagues are well supported, they are better equipped to deliver high-quality service to customers with additional needs.



# Our focus for 2026



Our **Opportunity for All** strategy sets out a focused plan to strengthen inclusion, diversity and equity across United Utilities and within the communities we serve. Getting inclusion right creates the conditions in which diversity will grow and is sustained. For 2026, our approach centres on the following priority areas.

## Our workplace



### Our colleagues

- Improving access to appropriate health and wellbeing facilities across all sites, for example extending our personal hygiene provisions to include field roles.
- Developing a new Menopause Action Plan aligned with Employment Rights Act 2025, including designing, implementing and monitoring a voluntary action plan.



### Our culture

- Further reducing bias in recruitment and improving fairness in how we attract and assess candidates, including improvements to recruitment training for new managers.
- Strengthening colleague networks to further increase impact and visibility, such as supporting our networks in working more closely together across our growing business and sector overall.



### Our leadership

- Equipping leaders with data and insights to strengthen accountability for inclusion and diversity, such as inclusive decision-making and making better use of AI-enabled technology.

## Our communities



### Opportunity for All across the North West

- Sharing best practice with our external partners to support more inclusive employment opportunities across the region and building social value into the way we deliver our services, including delivering workshops to our supply chain and partners, aiding their own ED&I journeys.



### Sector collaboration

- Greater network collaboration to share expertise and attract new talent into the sector, such as bringing together ED&I managers from other utility companies in our region to share insights and best practice.
- Partnering with specialist organisations to bridge the gap between deprived communities and sustainable employment, including influencing diverse attraction, recruitment and retention into our business and the sector overall.
- Developing solutions to long-term sector skills required in partnership with government and industry bodies, for example working with external agencies and sector groups, to focus on skills pathways, new training routes and social value.

# Gender pay report



### What is the gender pay gap?

The ‘gender pay gap’ is the difference in pay between men and women. It highlights the difference between the average hourly pay for men and women across the workforce, and we summarise this in the statistics shown in this report.

The ‘gender pay gap’ is different to ‘equal pay’, which is a legal requirement to pay men and women the same for work that is of equivalent value.

We have a clear pay and grading framework for all roles in the company, supported by a fair job evaluation methodology, and pay and conditions at each level are standardised. This gives us confidence that gender cannot affect the way pay is set. We also follow other best practices that can help make sure our processes do not discriminate against anyone and that stereotyping does not influence our pay decisions.

### Reporting on our performance

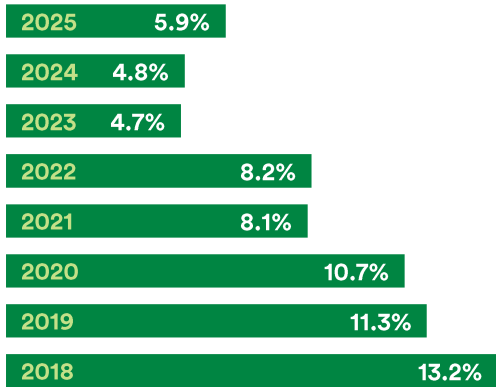
The following statistics relate to gender pay for the whole United Utilities group, as this provides the most meaningful picture of how we operate and how our actions and plans for gender diversity affect the whole company.

Our long-term trend shows a narrowing of both our median and mean pay gaps, but material progress will take time as this depends on the achievement of a more even gender balance across our whole organisation. Despite ongoing efforts to improve female representation at all levels, our workforce remains predominantly male, with women continuing to make up 35% of our workforce.

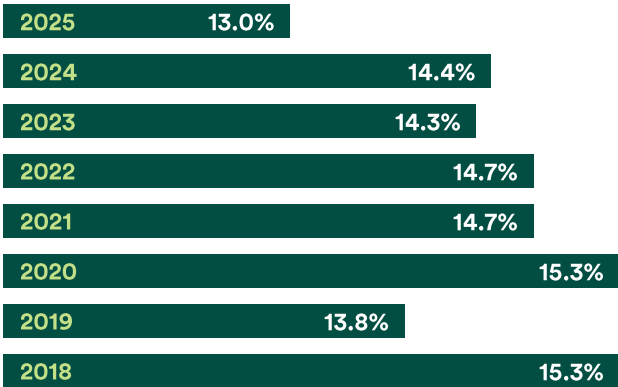
Over the past year, we have increased our recruitment of operational and technical roles to support the delivery of our growing capital programme. With these types of roles continuing to attract significantly more male than female applicants, the result has been more men in these typically higher paid specialist and senior levels. These recruitment activities, alongside the appointment of a male into our Chief Operating Officer role to lead and deliver our operational strategy, are the main factors that have resulted in an increase to our mean pay gap.

Whilst our median pay gap remains higher than we would like, it has improved since last year and is now at its lowest level since we started reporting, due to a small but positive rebalancing in the percentages of females in our ‘Lower’ and ‘Lower middle’ quartiles as shown on the chart on the right.

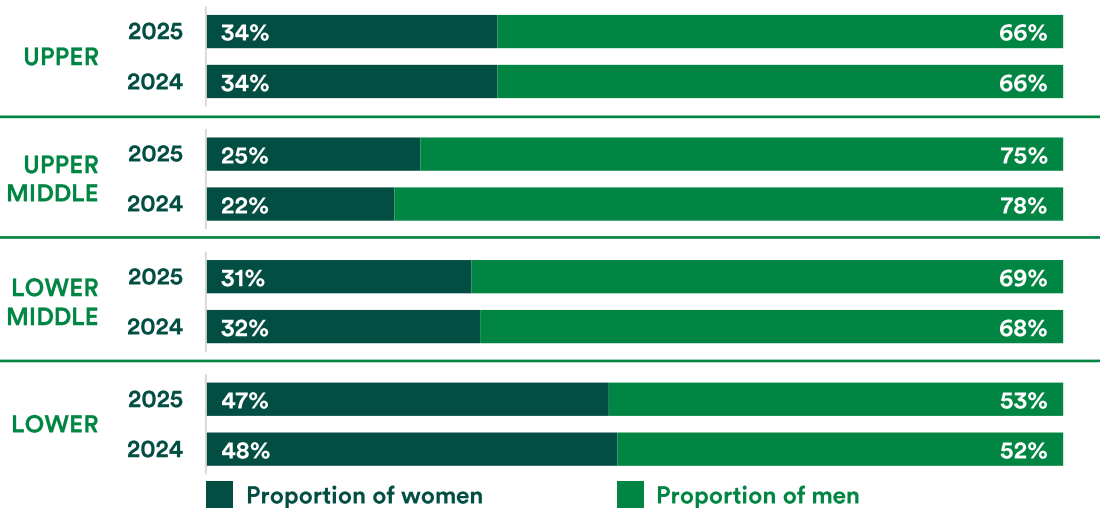
### Our mean gender pay gap over time



### Our median gender pay gap over time



### Percentage of women and men overall in each quartile of the pay range (figures for 2025 and 2024)



# Gender pay report



## Our gender bonus gap

Colleagues at all levels within the organisation are eligible for our bonus scheme, with the same performance measures of success applying.

Bonuses are calculated using the actual salary that a colleague earns, so bonuses for part-time workers are based on their part-time earnings. The vast majority (85%) of our part-time workers are female, so this affects the bonus gap calculation, which does not take into account how many hours colleagues work.

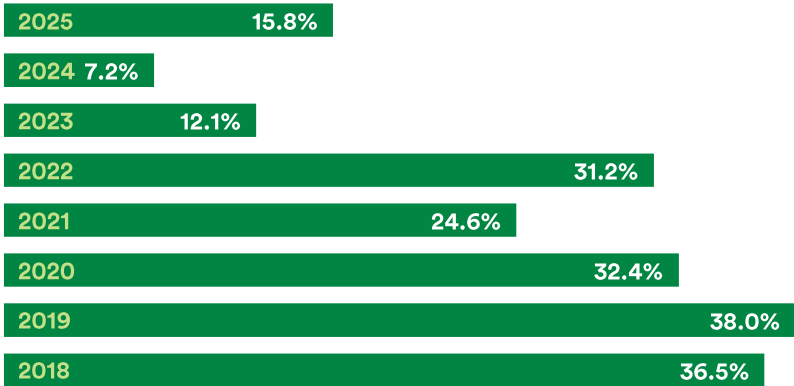
Our gender bonus gap statistics fluctuate each year due to the volatility of incentive pay-outs from year to year. This is particularly relevant at a senior level where variable pay makes up a greater proportion of overall pay.

Due to the large volume of recruitment over the last 12 months, the proportion of men and women receiving a bonus for the calculations has reduced due to there being a three-month bonus eligibility period.

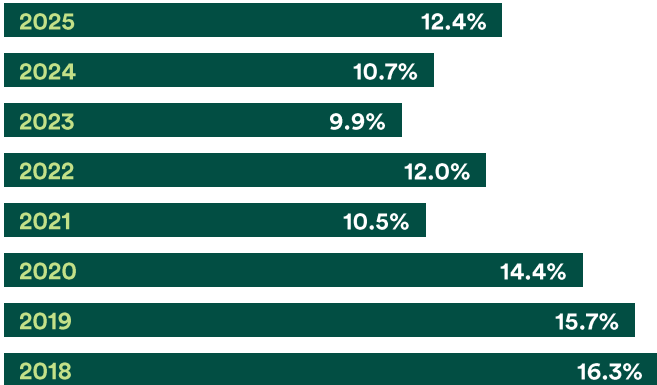
## Proportion of women and men receiving a bonus

Women	Men
91%	89%

## Our mean gender bonus gap over time



## Our median gender bonus gap over time



## Main reasons for our gender pay and bonus gaps

- We continue to have greater representation of women in lower-graded and lower-paid customer service and support roles, and less female representation in more senior and higher-paid operational/technical roles.
- Many of our operational/technical roles receive additional payments because the working hours required can be uncertain and disruptive to home/family life, and currently, around 80% of colleagues undertaking roles which demand these antisocial working premiums are men. This is a long-standing, industry-wide issue which is also influenced by the fact that fewer women than men take up careers in STEM subjects. But we're working hard to attract more women into these type of roles via our early career programmes (apprentice and graduate schemes) and through the education and outreach activities we deliver in our communities. Our ongoing efforts to improve operational resilience and our use of technology may enable us to make changes to working practices meaning that working in operational/technical roles is less disruptive and more appealing to a more diverse pool of applicants.
- Low attrition rates across the organisation which mean it is likely to take a long time for our overall gender balance to improve.

We are committed to improving our gender pay gaps but recognise it will take time and will require a shift change in our gender balance at all levels of our organisation. It will also be challenging going forward in the context of an increasing demand for people with project management, commercial and engineering skills to enable the delivery of our ambitious capital programme over the next five years, with men continuing to make up the majority of applicants for these roles.

Our long-term plan and targets shown on page 4 will help us achieve our goals.



# Gender pay report by business: statutory declaration



Within the United Utilities Group PLC group of companies there are two wholly-owned subsidiary companies that employ staff. Most of our colleagues are employed by United Utilities Water Limited (our main water and wastewater services business). A small number of colleagues are employed by United Utilities PLC. By law, companies in the UK that have more than 250 colleagues must produce a report which includes information on their gender pay gap. Our detailed report shows the data for the United Utilities Group PLC, and on pages 11 to 12 we also show the data for United Utilities Water Limited. This data is for the snapshot date 5 April 2025.

**We confirm that the information on our gender pay gap in this report is accurate.**

People Director

## Headcount

Business	Headcount (as at 5 April 2025)	Description
United Utilities Group PLC	6,625	Group company consisting of all colleagues within United Utilities
United Utilities Water Limited	6,487	Regulated water and wastewater services business

## Hourly gender pay gap

Business	Median		Mean	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
United Utilities Group PLC	13.0%	14.4%	5.9%	4.8%
United Utilities Water Limited	13.3%	14.8%	6.7%	8.5%

## Gender bonus gap

Business	Median		Mean	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
United Utilities Group PLC	12.4%	10.7%	15.8%	7.2%
United Utilities Water Limited	12.7%	11.5%	22.7%	15.3%

## Proportion of colleagues who received a bonus

Business	Women		Men	
	2025	2024	2025	2024
United Utilities Group PLC	91.0%	93.7%	89.1%	93.7%
United Utilities Water Limited	90.7%	93.5%	88.9%	93.6%

## Proportion of women and men in each quartile of the pay distribution

Business	Lower				Lower middle				Upper middle				Upper			
	Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men		Women		Men	
	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024	2025	2024
United Utilities Group PLC	46.9%	47.9%	53.1%	52.1%	30.9%	31.9%	69.1%	68.1%	24.6%	22.0%	75.4%	78.0%	34.4%	34.2%	65.6%	65.8%
United Utilities Water Limited	46.8%	50.0%	53.2%	50.0%	30.5%	29.6%	69.5%	70.4%	24.1%	22.9%	75.9%	77.1%	33.8%	31.5%	66.2%	68.5%

# Useful definitions



## ED&I

ED&I stands for equity, diversity and inclusion.

## Equality and equity

Equality means everyone is given the same resources or Opportunity. Equity is a concept of fairness that means making adjustments in recognition of those that have different needs.

## Diversity

Diversity is understanding that each person is unique – embracing people's differences, including their beliefs, abilities, preferences, backgrounds, values, and identities.

## Inclusion

Inclusion is an extension of equity and diversity. It means that all people, without exception, have the right to be included, respected, and appreciated as valuable members of the community.

## Ethnicity

A broader concept than race which includes or combines nationality, citizenship, race, colour, language, ancestry, religion, and customs of dress or eating.

## Ethnic minority

Refers to racial and ethnic groups that make up a small proportion of the population of a particular country or group. Minority ethnic groups vary in each country.

## AMP8

AMP8 is our eighth Asset Management Period – these are five-year plans, used by our regulators to ensure that water companies plan and execute their investment strategies effectively.

## Under-represented group

Refers to a population of people who are insufficiently or inadequately represented compared to their actual proportion of the general population.

## LGBT+

LGBT+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender, with the + encompassing any sexual orientations or gender identities that do not correspond to heterosexuality.

## STEM

STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, a term used to group together these academic disciplines.

## BS ISO 22458:2022 Consumer Vulnerability accreditation

A standard to provide businesses with best practice guidance on how to identify and support consumers in vulnerable situations, helping them to design and deliver fair, flexible and inclusive services that improve outcomes and minimize harm for those who are vulnerable.

## Gender pay gap

The difference between the mean or the median hourly rates of pay for men and for women in April 2025. This figure is expressed as a percentage of the pay for men.

## Gender bonus gap

The difference between the mean or the median values of bonus pay for men and for women over the 12 months before April 2025. This is expressed as a percentage of the bonus paid to men.

## Proportion of employees who receive a bonus

The percentage of men and women who received a bonus during the 12 months before April 2025.

## Median

The median is a comparison of the 'middle' hourly pay rate or bonus payment for a woman (if all hourly pay amounts were sorted from low to high) and the 'middle' hourly pay rate or bonus payment for a man (if they were sorted in the same way). The median pay gap is less affected by 'outlier' hourly pay rates (that is, very high or very low pay rates) than the mean pay gap.

## Mean

The mean is a comparison of the average hourly pay rate or bonus payment for a woman and the average hourly pay rate or bonus payment for a man.

## Pay quartiles

Pay quartiles are worked out by splitting the whole workforce into four equal-sized bands based on hourly pay rates, from lowest to highest. The percentage of men and women in each of those four bands is then calculated.

## Basic pay

Basic pay is an employee's standard hourly rate of pay. It includes salary and work-based allowances (such as any premium they earn for working shifts, standby and call-out payments), bonus payments and recognition awards. It does not include payments for overtime, redundancy or termination of employment payments (sometimes referred to as severance payments), or benefits-in-kind.





**United Utilities Group PLC**

Haweswater House  
Lingley Mere Business Park  
Lingley Green Avenue  
Great Sankey  
Warrington  
WA5 3LP

[unitedutilities.com/corporate](https://unitedutilities.com/corporate)



**Water for the North West**