

Disability pay gap

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For the first time, the Office for National Statistics (“ONS”) has analysed pay gaps between disabled and non-disabled employees in the UK using newly reweighted earnings data from the Annual Population Survey. In a report entitled ‘Disability pay gaps in the UK: 2018’, the ONS found that the pay gap for disabled employees was 12.2% in 2018. The median pay for non-disabled employees was £12.11 per hour while for disabled employees it was £10.63 per hour. That mean that for every £1 that a non-disabled employee would earn in 2018, on average a disabled employee would earn 88p.

The following other key points emerge from the ONS report:

- The pay gap differed according to the type of disability. The gap was widest for those with a mental impairment at 18.6%, whilst workers with a physical impairment suffered a gap of 9.7%. Employees with “other impairments” (such as progressive illnesses) suffered the smallest pay gap at 7.4%;
- Disabled workers were under-represented, compared with non-disabled employees, in higher skilled and typically higher paying occupation groups. 21.5% of non-disabled employees held “professional occupations” compared to 16.9% of non-disabled employees;
- London had the largest pay gap at 15.3% and Scotland the narrowest at 8.3%;
- The gap between female disabled and non-disabled employees was narrower than the gap between male disabled and non-disabled employees (10.1% compared with 11.6%).

The statistics demonstrate a clear disparity between the rate of pay of disabled and non-disabled employees. Disabled employees, in particular disabled employees who are working in the capital and/or suffering a mental impairment, are being disadvantaged and employers should take steps to address this imbalance, not only to ensure that they do not fall foul of equalities legislation but to create an inclusive environment that attracts, and retains, hard-working and talented individuals, regardless of any impairments suffered.

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