

## Firms using gender pay gap reporting to drive positive change

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2 **Mandatory gender pay gap reporting** (for firms with at least 250 employees) has enabled **law firms** to be transparent about how they can support women solicitors in their careers.

4 Law Society of England and Wales President Lubna Shuja said: “There is no requirement for smaller firms to publish data, but we urge all firms **to publish gender pay gap data to promote gender pay equality and remove structural barriers.**”

6 “The figures show we must continue to press ahead with initiatives and action plans that will reduce the pay gap and create lasting change in our profession.

8 **“Women currently make up over 60% of new entrants to our profession,** but only 35% of partners. A figure that has only increased 0.3% over recent years.

10 “Our analysis of the national gender pay gap service of some of the largest 50 UK law firms for 2021/2022 showed **the median pay gap was 28%.** Yet for most firms this did not include partner pay which would have increased the overall gender pay gap further.

14 **“Women’s barriers to progression are further compounded by traditional male-oriented promotion structures, a lack of development opportunities due to the unfair allocation of work and the lack of support around maternity leave, return to work, flexible working and shared parental leave.”**

16 There are, however, positive signs of progress with some firms leading the way and moving away from simply meeting the minimum reporting requirements to provide a clearer picture and way forward.

18 **Including all partners’ pay (equity and non-equity) for increased transparency, taking action to ensure the gender diversity of newly appointed partners, and including robust narratives and detailed action plans to address the gaps identified** are just some of the actions being taken by the profession to address the gender pay gap.

22 Lubna Shuja concluded: “We encourage firms to **consider collecting additional information on disability, ethnicity, and LGBTQ+ pay gaps** to provide a more comprehensive view of their organisation and allow them to **address the intersectional inequalities** faced by their staff.

26 “In this centenary year since the first women solicitors were admitted in England and Wales, we are pushing for the sector to make real, lasting change so that everyone feels valued, respected and safe in the workplace and has equal opportunities to thrive in a career they are passionate about.

28 “I continue to urge our members to commit to our **Women in Law Pledge,** which seeks to achieve gender equality in the senior ranks of the profession and amongst those with a leadership role.

30 “To meet our aspiration for gender balance at all levels across the legal profession, **signatories publicly commit to tackling the gender pay gap and other inequalities** that women solicitors continue to face today.

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## Summary

### Problem:

- Women currently make up over 60% of new entrants to our profession BUT the median pay gap was 28% in law firms.
- (address) the intersectional inequalities

### Cause:

traditional male-oriented promotion structures, a lack of development opportunities due to the unfair allocation of work and the lack of support around maternity leave, return to work, flexible working and shared parental leave

### Solutions:

- **Mandatory** gender pay gap reporting = to publish gender pay gap data to promote gender pay equality and remove structural barriers.

### Not Mandatory :

- Including all partners' pay (equity and non-equity) for increased transparency, taking action to ensure the gender diversity of newly appointed partners, and including robust narratives and detailed action plans to address the gaps identified
- consider collecting additional information on disability, ethnicity, and LGBTQ+ pay gaps
- Women in Law Pledge = signatories publicly commit to tackling the gender pay gap and other inequalities

## Commentary

**Title:** *Firms using gender pay gap reporting to drive positive change*

issue = mandatory reporting = shaming = is it efficient? No punishment

**Quotes and statements (from the article)** = solutions: LINE 18-20 "**taking action** to ensure the gender diversity of newly appointed partners, and including **robust narratives** and **detailed action plans** to address the gaps identified" + LINE 30: "**signatories publicly commit** to tackling the gender pay gap and other inequalities"

---→ not specific about the required actions. This text defeats its own purpose by highlighting the lack of efficient and convincing measures to tackle gender pay gap. This issue seems impervious to any solutions. + Self-imposed rules by the profession itself.

--→ "no requirement for smaller firms (with less than 250 employees)", LINE : 1 and 3

**General topic/ issue: Gender pay gap** = discrimination against female lawyers

--→ other causes / other solutions?

-→ should quotas be introduced?

**What is not said:** if mandatory reporting has proved efficient or not. Is coercion and legal action the best route to achieve gender pay equality?