

Ethnicity Pay Gap Report 2026

1. Ethnicity Pay Gap

Overview and Statutory Context

The University of Sheffield has produced its fourth annual Ethnicity Pay Gap (EPG) report based on 2026 snapshot data. While publication remains voluntary, the University is committed to transparency as part of its Race Equality Strategy and Action Plan. The University is committed to building a more developed understanding of the Ethnicity Pay Gap data to monitor progress and inform priorities in our Race Equality work.

Headline Pay Gap Findings

Initial analysis for 2026 indicates that pay gaps remain significant for specific ethnic groups:

- **Black Ethnic Group:** This group continues to experience the largest pay gap across the institution (13.2% mean and 14.3% median pay gap), with increases observed in both the mean and median gaps during the 2026 cycle.
- **Mixed Ethnic Group:** The median pay gap for colleagues from mixed backgrounds has increased (9.3%), although the mean gap for this group showed a reduction over the same period (6.3%).
- **Asian and Other Groups:** These groups consistently maintain lower pay gaps compared to Black and Mixed heritage colleagues.

Pay Quartile and Vertical Segregation

The EPG is primarily driven by the distribution of staff across pay grades. The 2026 data reveals a "bottleneck" where BAME¹ representation is highest in lower-to-middle grades and declines in senior roles.

Workforce Composition by Quartile (2026):

- **Lower Quartile:** 21.4% BAME representation (including 11% Asian and 3.9% Black staff).

¹ Language can influence how we perceive and categorise reality. Throughout our work, we use the acronym BAME to stand for people from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic groups within the UK. We are aware of the profound limitations of this term as it groups together a wide range of people and their different lived experiences. As we monitor our progress on the actions, we will check to see if a particular ethnicity or ethnicities within our UK BAME community face distinct challenges that need to be recognised and addressed.

- Lower Middle Quartile: 24.9% BAME representation (the highest proportion across all quartiles), largely driven by Asian and "Other" ethnic groups.
- Upper Middle Quartile: 23% BAME representation.
- Upper Quartile (Senior Roles): 15.3% BAME representation.

Trend Note: While previous years showed growth in senior representation, 2026 has seen a slight decline in BAME representation within the Upper Middle and Upper quartiles.

1.1. Reporting

In April 2023, the government introduced guidance to support employers in calculating and monitoring their ethnicity pay gap. Whilst publication of this data is currently voluntary, the government confirmed in March 2026 that it will introduce mandatory ethnicity and disability pay gap reporting for all employers with 250 or more employees, mirroring the existing gender pay gap reporting framework.

In ethnicity pay gap reporting, the average salary is compared across 5 different ethnicity groups². This report provides the outcomes of our ethnicity pay gap reporting based on 2026 data.

1.1.1. Reporting methodology

The University follows government guidance to calculate its Ethnicity Pay Gap. Information about [how the pay gap is calculated](#) is available on the government web pages.

To gain a clearer understanding of pay equity across our workforce, our reporting presents data across specific ethnic group categories as well as aggregate summary measures. In line with government guidance, analysing pay across granular ethnicity categories—such as Asian, Black, Mixed, and Other ethnic groups—is essential because comparing broad groups in isolation can mask significant nuances and distinct pay disparities experienced by specific communities. At the same time, providing an aggregated summary comparison (comparing White colleagues with ethnic minority groups combined) offers a clear benchmark for evaluating overall organisational trends over time and enabling consistent comparisons across broader institutional and sector datasets.

Combining these detailed breakdowns with high-level summary measures ensures our analysis remains statistically robust while fully informing our targeted Race Equality Action Plan. As we monitor our progress on the actions, we will check to see if a particular ethnicity or ethnicities within our BAME community face distinct challenges that need to be recognised and addressed.

² To note: Our reporting follows government guidance on Ethnicity Pay Gap reporting, with aggregated figures presented in the report to enable comparability across different data collections. More granular data is available in University systems and will be used to inform appropriate measures where needed.

1.1.2. Disclosure rates

The table below shows the number and proportion of our workforce (including casual workers) who have disclosed their ethnicity.

Table 1: Disclosure rates by ethnicity group

	2025		2026	
Ethnicity Group	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Asian or Asian British	1235	12.5%	1021	11.8%
Black, black British, or Caribbean background	235	2.4%	193	2.1%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	254	2.6%	213	2.5%
Other ethnic group	230	2.3%	213	2.5%
White	7226	72.9%	6346	73.5%
Not disclosed	732	7.4%	652	7.6%
Total	9912	100%	8628	100%

1.2. Ethnicity Pay Quartiles

Pay quartiles show a breakdown of the percentage of individuals of specific ethnicity groups by pay quartile – where the workforce is split into equal quarters according to level of pay.

The review of our ethnicity pay gap quartiles broadly shows the highest representation of BAME colleagues in the lower middle quartile and declining representation in the upper pay quartiles (see Chart 1 and Table 2).

For context, at the University the pay quartiles broadly equate to the following grades:

- Lower = below 5.6
- Lower middle = between 5.6 and 7.3
- Upper middle = between 7.3 and 8.4
- Upper = above 8.4

Looking at the changes over time, we can observe a continued trend of increased BAME representation in the lower middle quartile. Whilst previous years also showed increased representation in the upper middle and upper quartiles, in 2026 we observe a decline in both (see Chart 2).

Chart 1: Ethnicity Pay Quartiles - 2026



Chart 2: Ethnicity Pay Quartiles - Trends 2023 - 2026

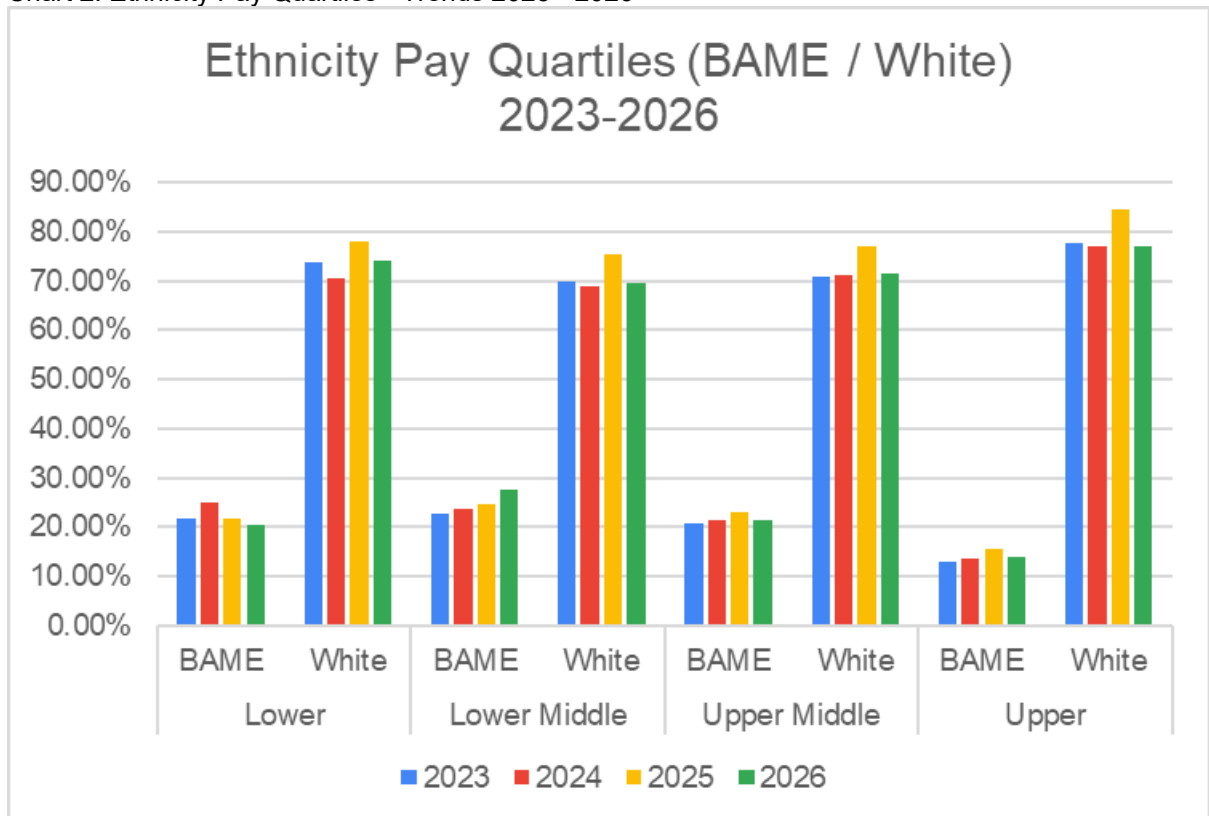
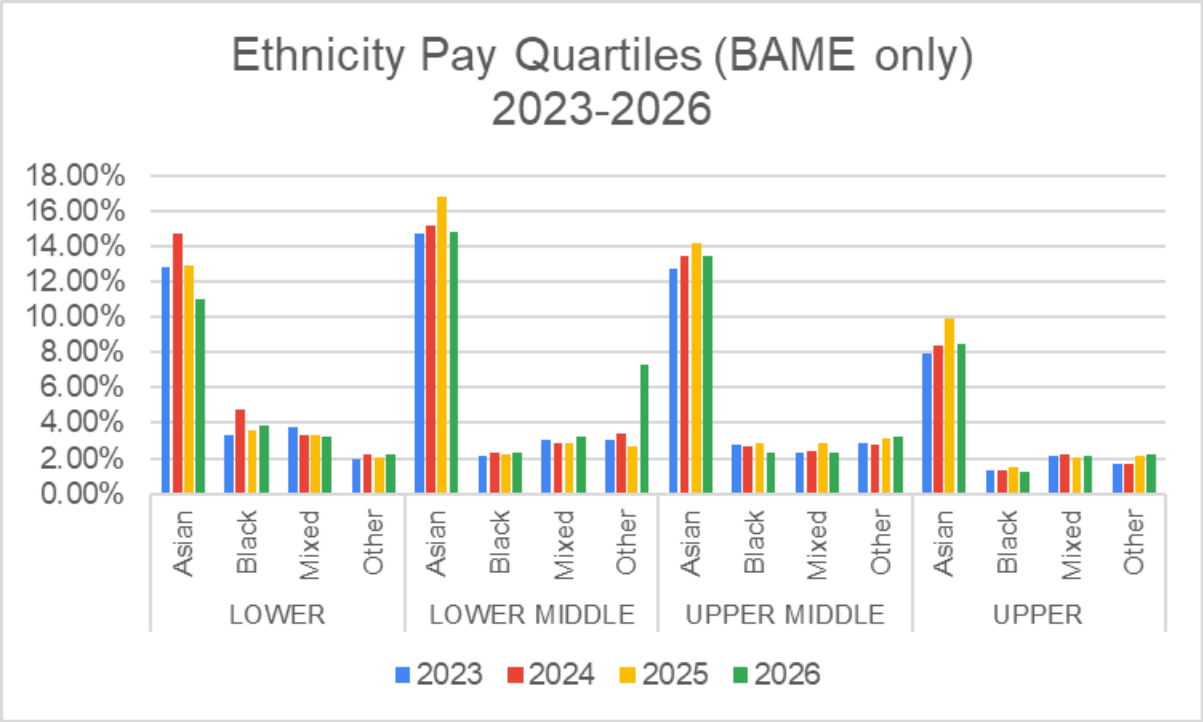


Table 2: Ethnicity Pay quartiles - 2025 and 2026

University				
Pay Quartile and Ethnicity	2025		2026	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
LOWER				
Asian or Asian British	301	12.0%	287	11.0%
Black, black British, or Caribbean background	83	3.3%	101	3.9%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	78	3.1%	83	3.2%
Other ethnic group	48	1.9%	56	2.2%
White ethnic group	1841	73.7%	1933	74.2%
LOWER MIDDLE				
Asian or Asian British	419	16.0%	311	14.8%
Black, black British, or Caribbean background	57	2.2%	49	2.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	70	2.7%	67	3.2%
Other ethnic group	69	2.6%	153	7.3%
White ethnic group	1818	69.2%	1462	69.7%
UPPER MIDDLE				
Asian or Asian British	292	12.6%	331	13.5%
Black, black British, or Caribbean background	61	2.6%	57	2.3%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	61	2.6%	57	2.3%
Other ethnic group	65	2.8%	78	3.2%
White ethnic group	1684	72.4%	1746	71.5%
UPPER				
Asian or Asian British	223	9.0%	191	8.5%
Black, black British, or Caribbean background	34	1.4%	26	1.2%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	46	1.9%	48	2.1%
Other ethnic group	49	2.0%	49	2.2%
White ethnic group	1885	76.4%	1739	77.0%

Whilst the comparison of the BAME group, as compared to the white ethnicity group, provides important context for our analysis, it is also important to understand the distribution of ethnic groups in more detail. To more clearly show this, chart 3 shows the quartile proportions excluding the white group.

Chart 3: Percentage of individuals within each ethnicity group (excluding the white ethnicity group) by pay quartile 2023-2026:



1.3. Ethnicity Pay Gaps

The ethnicity pay gap shows the difference between the average (mean or median) earnings of individuals in each ethnicity group, across the whole workforce, expressed as a percentage of the earnings of the individuals within the white ethnicity group.

Table 3: Mean and Median Ethnicity Pay Gaps 2023 - 2026

Ethnicity Pay Gap Snapshot	Legislative Snapshot							
	MEAN %				MEDIAN %			
YEAR	2026	2025	2024	2023	2026	2025	2024	2023
Asian or Asian British	3.6%	6.3%	9.2%	8.5%	2.8%	7.1%	7.4%	4.4%
Black, black British, or Caribbean background	13.2%	10.5%	17.9%	12.2%	14.3%	7.1%	12.2%	4.4%
Mixed or multiple ethnic groups	6.3%	8.8%	8.8%	10.3%	9.3%	7.2%	7.4%	5.2%
Other ethnic group	1.4%	2.1%	6.8%	-8.1%	0.0%	0.0%	7.4%	2.7%

Note: gap calculated against white ethnicity group
Observations from the University Ethnicity Pay Gap:

- The University's Ethnicity Pay Gap is highest for colleagues from 'Black' backgrounds. Both, the median and mean, pay gaps have fluctuated over time and more analysis is needed to understand these fluctuations.
- The mean and median pay gap has been trending down for Asian colleagues since 2024.
- Colleagues from mixed / multiple ethnic backgrounds have seen a decrease over time in the mean pay gap, but a slight increase in the median pay gap.
- For the 'other' ethnic group the pay gap has been small (0% for the median pay gap and 1.4% for the mean pay gap) this year.

1.4. Ethnicity Bonus Gap

The ethnicity bonus gap shows the difference between the average (mean or median) bonus received by individuals within each ethnicity group across the whole workforce, compared with the white ethnicity group. A positive bonus gap shows that individuals within the white ethnicity group have received, on average, a higher bonus value than individuals within the other ethnicity group. Our bonus gap figures for 2025-2026 are based on bonus, incentive and recognition payments from our standard reward schemes paid from April to March.

Table 4: Mean and Median Bonus Gaps

	Mean			Median		
	2025-2026	2024-2025	2023-2024	2025-2026	2024-2025	2023-2024
Ethnicity Bonus Gap	-66.3%	-37.0%	-34.8%	0%	16.7%	0%

Table 5: Proportion of workforce by ethnicity group who received a bonus award

Ethnicity Group	Proportion receiving bonus (as % of total ethnicity group)		
	2025-26	2024-25	2023-24
BAME	19.8%	18.1%	17.4%
White	33.1%	29.8%	33.3%

We know from the gender bonus gap data, that the overall bonus gap data is not useful or reliable as the extreme positive or negative pay gaps are an effect of calculating a single bonus gap figure from a combination of very different bonus schemes. The bonus gaps for separate schemes have not been calculated due to the small data sizes in some of the schemes. The proportion data is more useful, showing us that the white group proportionally receives more bonus payments than any other group.

We hope that as we continue to understand our ethnicity pay gap data annually, we will gain a better understanding of the data to be able to inform any actions we need to take.