



Tech Workers Branch

Gender equality survey

A Prospect briefing • January 2025

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Introduction

Since its formation in 2023 the Prospect Tech Workers Branch has heard numerous concerns around the work culture in the tech sector. The aim of this survey was to learn more about members' experiences, with a focus on gender equality. The survey was circulated to branch members at the start of September and closed in October, there were 271 responses. Responses were spread across the sector covering over 170 different employees working for companies such as Amazon, Spotify, Deliveroo, Personio, Skyscanner and Lhasa Ltd. Because of the spread of responses, the survey is a snapshot of the sector rather than an analysis of individual companies.

Executive summary

Gender equality in tech

Women and men have very different experiences of working in the sector, just 58% of women agree that work tasks are fairly distributed compared to 75% of men, 55% of women, compared to 74% of men, agree that project work is assigned based on ability and experience, and a higher proportion of women (56%) than men (22%) agree that men are more likely to be promoted than women.

The ethnicity of women makes a significant difference to perceptions of fairness at work. White British women are more likely than women from any other white background and women from an ethnic minority background to agree that work tasks are fairly distributed (64% compared to 48% and 47% respectively) or project work is fairly distributed (59% compared to 45% and 47% respectively), but less likely to agree that men are more likely to be promoted than women (51% compared to 65.5% and 65% respectively).

A majority of respondents, both women and men, say that their employer has taken action to change the gender balance at work. The three actions that employers are most likely to have taken are establishing a mentoring scheme (30%), changing the recruitment process so that candidates are assessed using objective measures (30%), or increased the number of women interviewed for new posts (21%). But only 14% of respondents say that their employer has set targets to increase the proportion of women at senior management level, and just 11.5% say that targets have been set to increase the number of women in tech roles.

Pay fairness

There is broad agreement by all respondents that the tech sector lacks pay transparency. A majority of respondents (62% of women, 60% of men and 75% of non-binary respondents) say that the pay system is opaque and may be unfair. Respondents are uncertain whether pay outcomes are equally shared by all genders; 23% agree that pay is equally shared, 28% disagree, 23% neither agree or disagree and 26.5% don't know. A higher proportion of women do not agree that pay outcomes are equally shared (42% compared to 16% of men and 30% of non-binary respondents). Similar proportions of white British women and ethnic minority women (46% and 47% respectively) do not agree that pay outcomes are equally shared; this falls to 31% of women from any other white background.

Non-binary respondents are the least likely to either get a bonus (45%) or any other pay incentive (25%). There is little difference in the likelihood of women or men receiving pay progression, a higher proportion of women (62%) than men (54%) receive a bonus

payment and 51% of women and 46% of men get other incentives as part of their pay package.

Survey responses make it clear that employers tend to discourage staff from sharing pay information. There are some examples of good practice, including publishing pay information so it is visible within the company, but respondents are most likely to find out about their colleagues' pay by sharing information in small teams.

Work patterns

Employers in the sector are supportive of flexible working requests. Of those employees that have made a request for some type of flexible arrangement, 81% have been accepted. Both women and men are broadly positive about their employer's family friendly policies, with 59% of women and 61.5% of men giving a positive rating.

About half the respondents are expected to work additional hours. Those in management roles are more likely to be expected to work additional hours than individual contributors, and women are slightly more likely to work additional hours regularly than men. Overall, 63% of managers that are women (all those in a management role) and 56% of managers that are men are contacted outside normal working hours.

Most employers already have policies that allow remote working. A majority of respondents either work from home (47%) or have a hybrid work pattern (41%); even those based in the office can occasionally work from home, however, there is some evidence that 'return to office' policies are conflicting with these arrangements.

Work culture

Although more women are being attracted into the tech sector the survey results show that the industry is still identified with a 'bro' culture. Unprofessional behaviour in work meetings is a particular issue; 37% of women and 41% of men say that work meetings are always well managed, with everyone's viewpoint taken seriously, but 55% of women and 52% of men say this is the case some of the time, and 6.5% of women and 7% of men saying never. Evidence of 'office banter' is widespread; 50.5% of women and 32% of men say that office banter makes them feel uncomfortable some of the time.

Bullying is very common; more than one in four have witnessed gender-based bullying and 18% have been bullied personally. A third of women (35.5%), rising to 47% of ethnic minority women, have been bullied. More than half the respondents in a management role have been bullied or witnessed gender-based bullying.

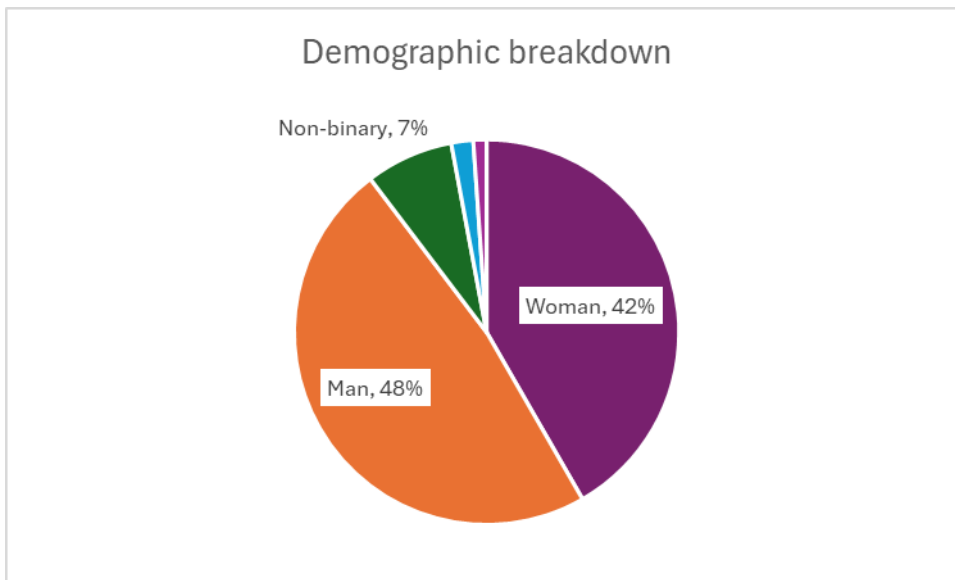
Women are less confident that their employer will take effective action to deter sexual harassment at work, this view is consistent across a number of workforce groups; 45% of women compared to 61% of men and 55% of non-binary respondents; 42% of white British women, 47% of ethnic minority women; 38% of managers that are women and 49% of women that are contributors.

Some of the most powerful comments in the survey are the experiences of work cultures shared by respondents. A majority focus on the sexist and misogynistic attitudes that persist in the sector; this includes an account of a serious sexual assault where no action was taken. A number of respondents highlight inaction by their employer when complaints are made. For many respondents, the industry's acceptance of a male dominated culture has helped to reinforce attitudes within the sector.

Demographic breakdown of survey respondents

The survey was open to all members to respond. There were slightly fewer women (42%) than men (48%) completing the survey, with 7% of respondents identifying as non-binary. The remaining respondents either preferred to self-describe or did not wish to disclose their gender. The composition of respondents varies significantly by different demographic groups.

Three quarters of respondents work in England, 14% in Scotland, 4% in Wales, 1.5% in Northern Ireland, 1.5% describe their work location as UK wide and 3% are based overseas. Women and non-binary respondents are more likely than men to work in England (81% and 80%, compared to 71% men); 21.5% of men are based in Scotland compared to just 3.5% of women. A higher proportion of women work in Wales (6% compared to 3% of men), and 5% of women work overseas compared to just 0.8% of men.



The majority of respondents are individual contributors (72%), with an even split between those that are managers and those that are both individual contributors and managers (14% for both). A slightly higher proportion of women are managers (33% compared to 27% of men), while just 15% of non-binary respondents are managers. A higher proportion of managers that are from an ethnic minority background are women (21% compared to 15% of men).

The age range of women and men is very similar, 43% of women are under 35, 35% are aged 35 to 44, and 20% aged 45 and over; this compares with 38% of men that are under 35, 32% that are aged 35 to 44, and 30% that are aged 45 and over. Non-binary respondents are on average much younger, 60% are aged under 35, 25% aged 35 to 44, and only 15% are 45 years or older. Although age ranges are similar for men and women, a higher proportion of men have been working in the tech sector for more than 10 years (54% compared to 40%); 37% of women have been working in the sector for 5 years or less compared to 16% of men. Just under a third of non-binary respondents have worked in the sector for up to 5 years and 30% from 6 to 10 years.

Nearly two thirds of respondents are white British (64%), 22% are from any other white background and 12% are from an ethnic minority background. Women are more likely to be from an ethnic minority background (59% and 41% respectively) or from another white background (52% and 42%). Non-binary respondents are more likely to be white British (85% compared to 70% men, 54% women).

A majority of respondents either work from home (47%) or have a hybrid work pattern (41%), even those based in the office can occasionally work from home. There is very little difference between the work patterns of men and women, those that are non-binary are more likely to be homeworkers (65%), none of the non-binary respondents are office based.

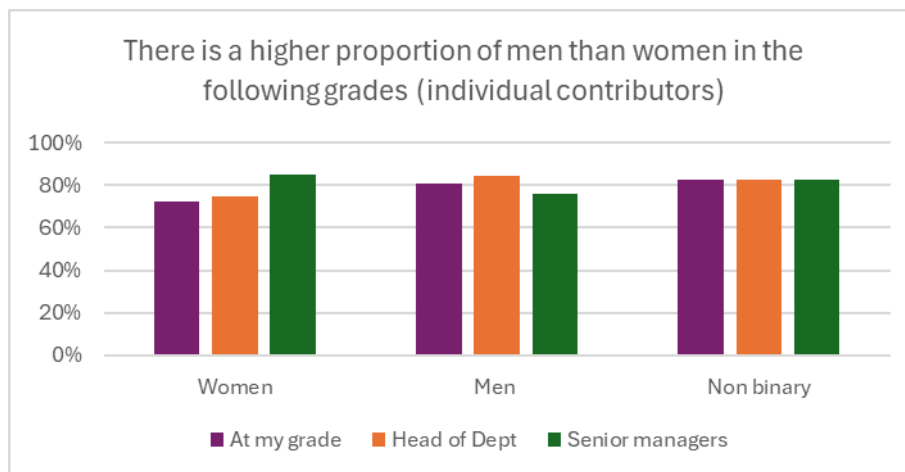
Section 1 - Gender equality at work

The tech industry is seen as male dominated by both those working in the sector¹, and those considering the industry as a possible career choice.² This perception of the industry was broadly shared by survey respondents; 72% say there is a higher proportion of men at their grade, 75% at the level of head of department and 78% at senior management. But there are some differences depending on the job role.

A higher proportion of women that are contributors (72%) than women that are managers (54%) say that men are dominant at their grade; 63% of women that are managers and 75% of women that are contributors say men dominate the head of department role, 83% of women that are managers and 85% of women that are contributors say that men dominate senior management roles.

There is a lot of uncertainty about whether the gender balance that respondents see in their organisation is representative of the industry as a whole; 57% say it is typical but 25% are not sure. Individual contributors are most certain that male dominance is typical, with 60% of both women and men, and 65% of non-binary respondents saying that male dominance in the sector is typical. Managers are least likely to say that their company is typical, just 44% of women and 47% of men have this view. A similar proportion of women who are managers and contributors (47%) say that the gender balance in their company is typical, but 71% of men who are both contributors and managers say that their company is typical.

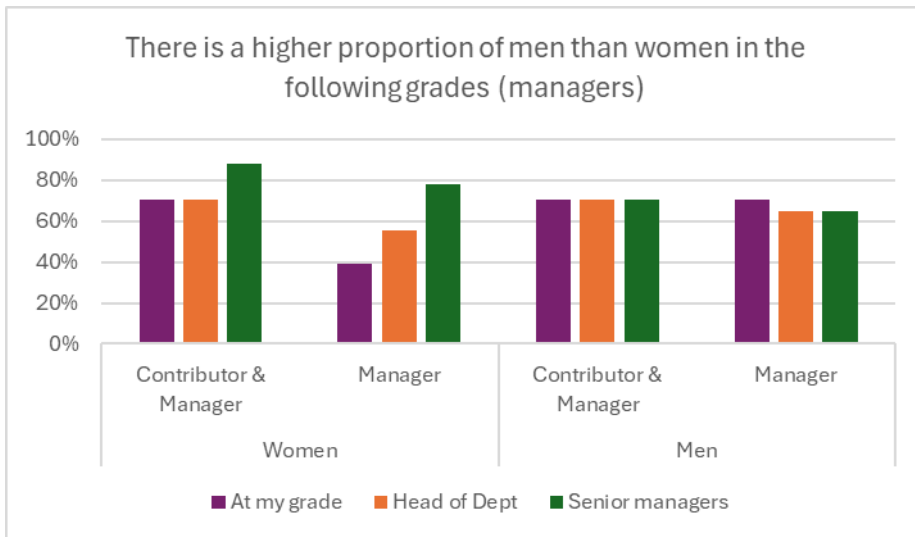
What these results suggest is that a majority of respondents work for companies where men dominate positions at every level of the organisation. Where women are in a management role there is a perception that male dominance is lower at a management level, but even when this is the case men still dominate the senior management positions.



¹ The majority (72%) of women in tech are regularly outnumbered by men in business meetings by at least a 2:1 ratio. 26% of women report being outnumbered by 5:1 or more.

<https://solutions.trustradius.com/buyer-blog/women-in-tech-report/> and [women-in-tech-report.pdf \(pwc.co.uk\)](https://www.pwc.co.uk/women-in-tech-report.pdf)

² Only 27% of female students saying they would consider a career in technology, compared to 61% of males [Business Reporter - Human Resources - Gender equality in the male-dominated tech industry \(business-reporter.co.uk\)](https://www.business-reporter.co.uk/news/business-reporter-human-resources-gender-equality-in-the-male-dominated-tech-industry)

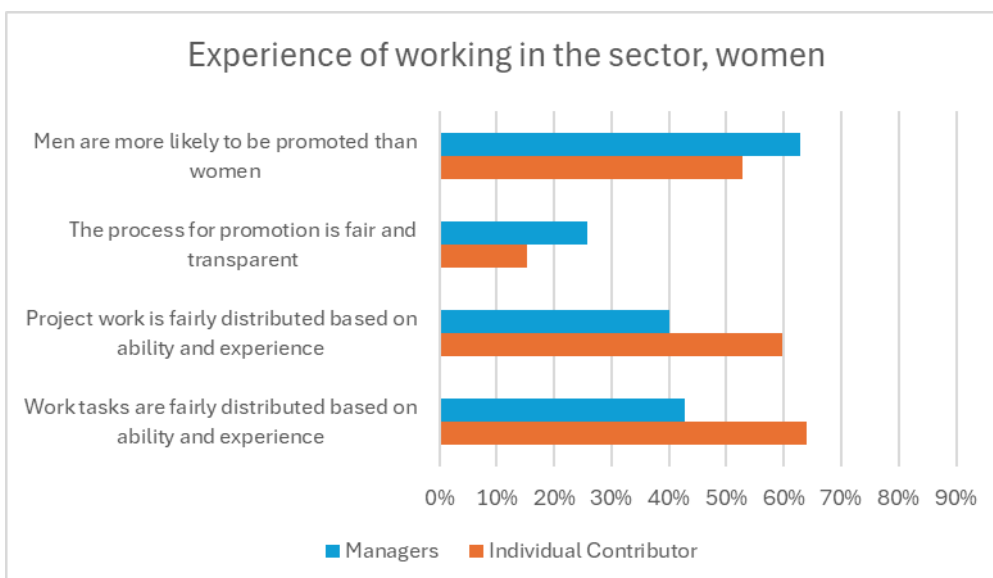


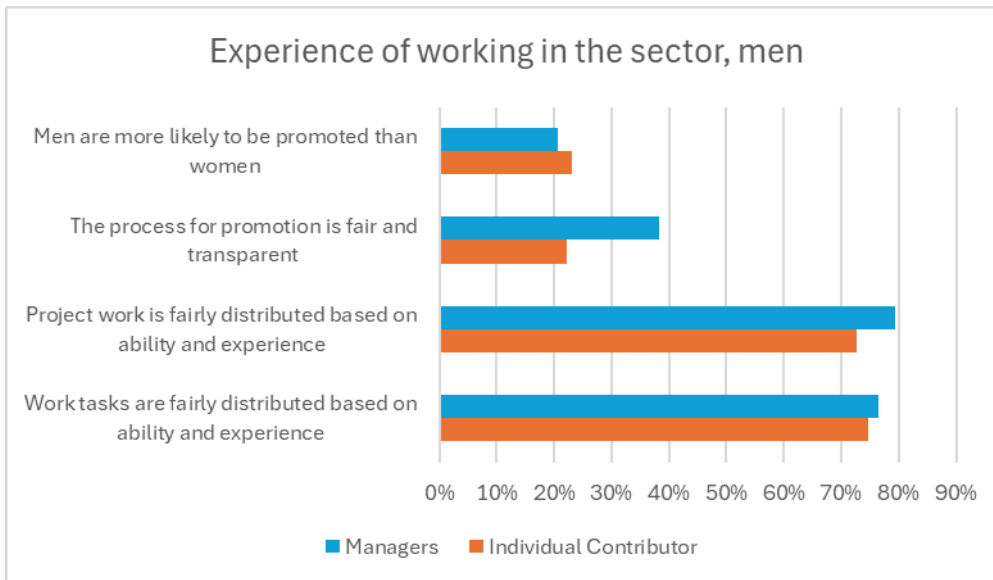
Experience of working in the sector

Women, non-binary people, and men have very different experiences of working in the sector. Women are the least likely to agree that work tasks are fairly distributed, and that project work is assigned based on ability and experience. Just 58% of women agree that work tasks are fairly distributed compared to 75% of men and 80% of non-binary respondents, and 55% of women agree that project work is assigned based on ability and experience, compared to 75% of men and 85% of non-binary respondents.

There is a significant difference between the results for women that are managers (this includes all managers) and individual contributors; just 43% of managers agree that work is fairly distributed compared with 64% of contributors; and 40% of managers agree that project work is fairly distributed compared with 60% of contributors.

There are no significant differences in the responses for men, 77% of managers and 75% of contributors, agree that work is fairly distributed, and 79% of managers and 73% of contributors agree that project work is fairly distributed. An overwhelming majority of non-binary respondents agree that work is fairly distributed (80%) and project is fairly distributed (85%).





A higher proportion of women (56%) than men (22%) agree that men are more likely to be promoted than women. Women that are managers (63%) and individual contributors (53%) agree that men are preferred for promotion, only 21% of men that are managers, 23% of men that are individual contributors, and 20% of non-binary respondents agree that men are more likely to be promoted than women.

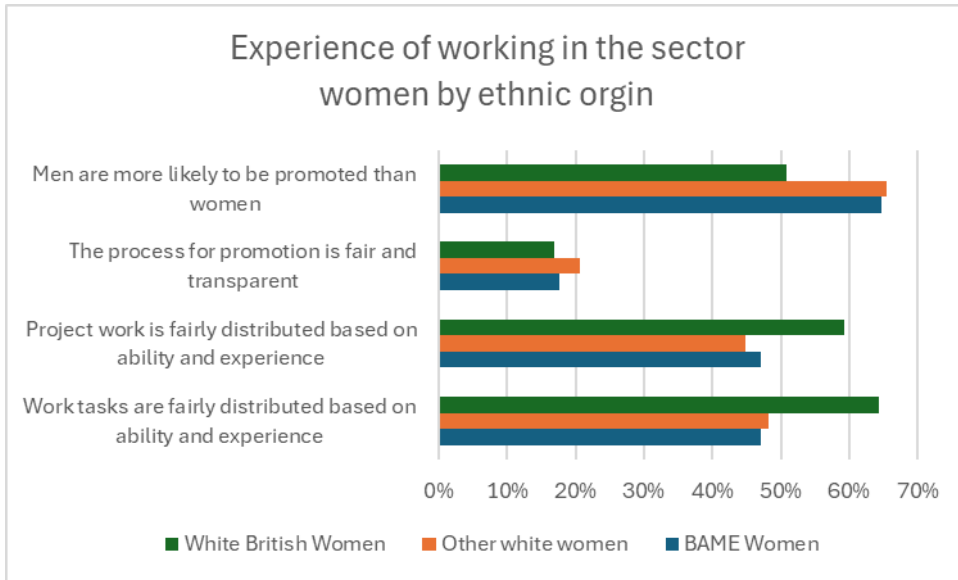
There is more agreement on the lack of transparency that surrounds the process for promotion. Just 18% of women, 27% of men and 30% of non-binary respondents agree that the process for promotion is fair and transparent. More women that are managers (26%) than women that are contributors (15%) agree that the promotion process is fair, and more men that are managers (38%) than men that are contributors (22%).

Women that are white British have a more positive experience of work than women from any other white background or women from an ethnic minority background. A majority of white British women agree that work tasks are fairly distributed (64%) and project work is fairly distributed (59%). Just 48% of women from any other white background say that work is fairly distributed and 45% that project work is fairly distributed. A similar proportion of women from an ethnic minority background say that work is fairly distributed, and project work is fairly distributed (47% for both).

Nearly two thirds of women from any other white background (65.5%) and women from an ethnic minority background (65%) agree that men are more likely to be promoted than men, compared to 51% of white British women. There are very similar views on the process for promotion across all ethnic groups, only 17% of white British women, 21% of women from any other white background and 18% of women from an ethnic minority background agree that promotions are fair and transparent.

The results for men from different ethnic backgrounds are not significantly different when considering work and project allocations. But white British men are more likely to agree that the process for promotion is fair (30% of white British men, 16% of men from any other white background and 23% of men from an ethnic minority background), and ethnic minority men are most likely to agree that men are more likely to be promoted than women (38.5% of ethnic minority men, compared to 22% of white British men, and 16% men from any other white background).

What these results show is that women are more likely than men or non-binary respondents to have experienced unfair work allocations and fewer opportunities for promotion than men. The ethnic origin of women also makes a significant difference to the likelihood of fair treatment. Women from an ethnic minority background and women from any other white background have a less positive experience of work allocations than women that are white British. The results also show that a higher proportion of women that are managers than women that are individual contributors say that they have been overlooked when work is allocated or missed out on a promotion.

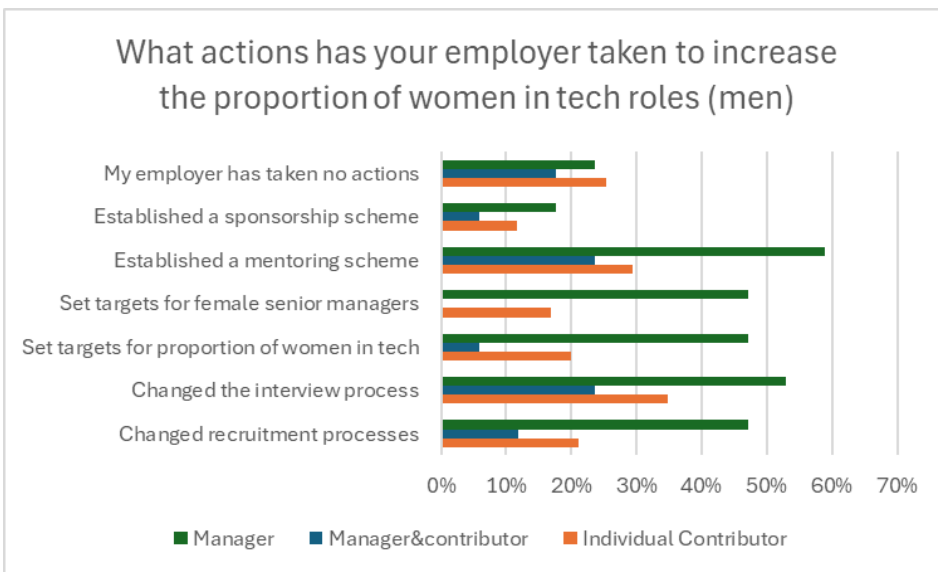
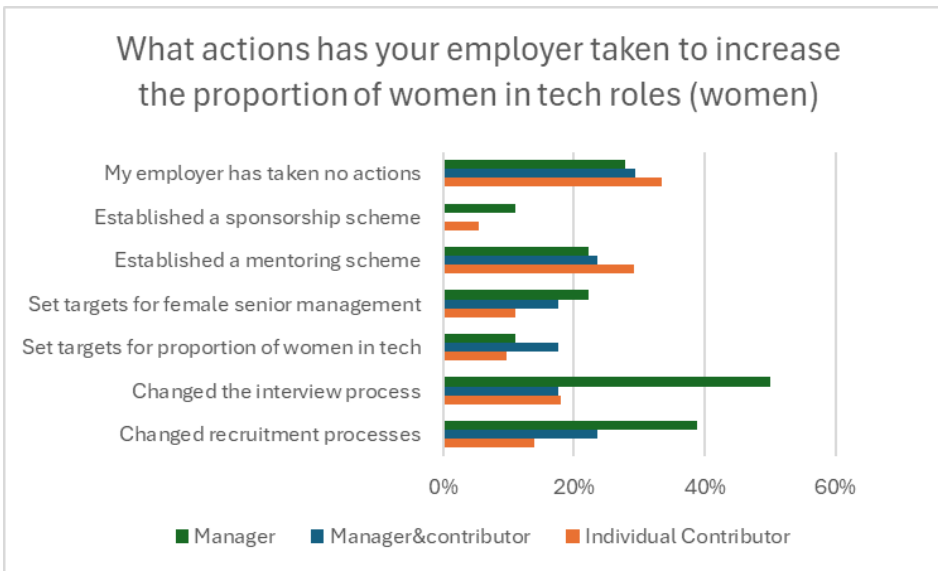


What positive action has your employer taken to address gender inequality?

A majority of respondents say that their employer is taking some action to change the gender balance at work, just 32% of women and 25% of men say that their employer has taken no action.

The three actions that employers are most likely to have taken are establishing a mentoring scheme (30%), changing the recruitment process so that candidates are assessed using objective measures (30%), or increased the number of women interviewed for new posts (21%). Only 14% of respondents say that their employer has set targets to increase the proportion of women at senior management level, and 11.5% of respondents say that targets have been set for the number of women in tech roles. Just 5% say that their employer has established a sponsorship scheme to help women advance their career in the tech sector.

Other actions that employers have adopted include providing positive role models and taking active steps to support women at work, providing training for new starters, establishing a women’s network or other diversity group, taking part in a national scheme like Athena Swan, that promotes more women in professional roles, changing adverts to make work more appealing to women or including women on interview panels.



A higher proportion of men responding to the survey report positive actions taken by their employer. Managers are the most likely to report several actions that have been taken. Nearly 50% of male managers say that recruitment processes have been changed, a mentoring scheme has been established or targets have been set to increase the proportion of women in tech roles and in senior management. A third of male contributors say that the interview process has changed so that more objective measures are used for assessment and just under 30% of male contributors say that their employer has established a mentoring scheme.

Overall, women are less likely to report positive actions taken by their employer. Managers that are women are more likely to report positive actions; 50% say the interview process has been changed, 39% that the recruitment process has changed to include more women in the selection pool, 22% that their employer has established a mentoring scheme, but only 11% say that their employer has set targets for the proportion of women in tech roles and 22% have set targets for senior management roles.

Section 2 - Pay fairness

There is evidence of a large gender pay gap in the tech sector. A report by Diversity in Tech found that 78% of large organisations admitted having a gender pay gap, with women earning up to 28% less than their male colleagues.³ Analysis of gender pay gap returns in 2022, reported by Women in Tech, found that 91% of companies pay men more than women, across the sector men's median hourly pay is 16% higher.⁴ There are many elements to the pay package, the survey looks at progression, bonuses, and incentive payments to see if any of these factors contribute to the pay gap.

The survey found that women, men and non-binary respondents are just as likely to receive incremental pay progression; 30% of women, 29% of men and 30% of non-binary respondents say their role attracts progression, 37% of women, 37% of men and 25% of non-binary respondents say progression is discretionary, and 19% of women, 25% of men and 25% of non-binary respondents do not receive any progression at all.

Managers are more likely than contributors to receive a progression payment. A higher proportion of women (41%) than men (23.5%) that are both a manager and contributor receive progression, this switches around for those that are just managers (47% of men and 33% of women). It is more likely that men that are both a manager and contributor get discretionary progression (47% compared to 35% of women). One in four individual contributors, both women and men, get progression payments, and 39% of women and 36% of men that are contributors get discretionary progression.

Overall, women are more likely than men to receive a bonus payment (62% of women and 54% of men). A higher proportion of managers that are women than those that are men get a bonus, 65% of women that are both a manager and contributor compared to 47% of men, and 78% of managers that are women compared to 44% of managers that are men. A higher proportion of contributors that are men receive a bonus payment than women and non-binary respondents (74% of men, 60% women, 45% non-binary respondents).

For other types of incentive payments that are part of the pay package the gap is much narrower between men and women, 49.5% and 46% respectively. Only 25% of non-binary respondents get other types of incentive payments. There is almost no difference in the likelihood of contributors that are women or men receiving an incentive payment (51% of women and 50.5% of men). A higher proportion of women that are managers (56% compared to 35% of men), and women that are managers and contributors (35% compared to 29% of men), get an incentive payment.

Is the pay system fair?

A majority of respondents (62% of women, 60% of men and 75% of non-binary respondents) say that the pay system is opaque and may be unfair. A similar proportion of white British respondents and ethnic minority respondents (63% for both) say that pay is unfair, this drops to just 50% of respondents from any other white background. A higher proportion of women that are white British or ethnic minority men say that pay is unfair

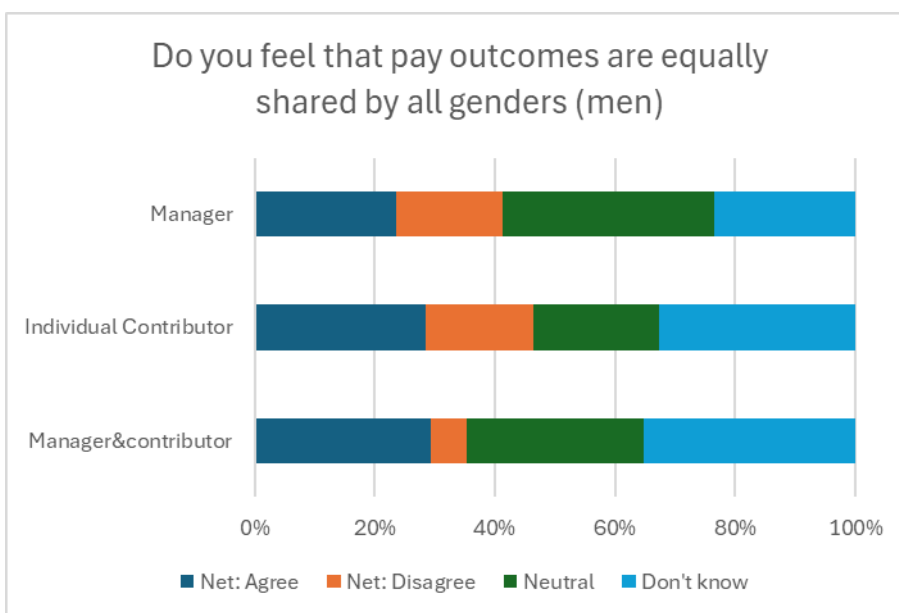
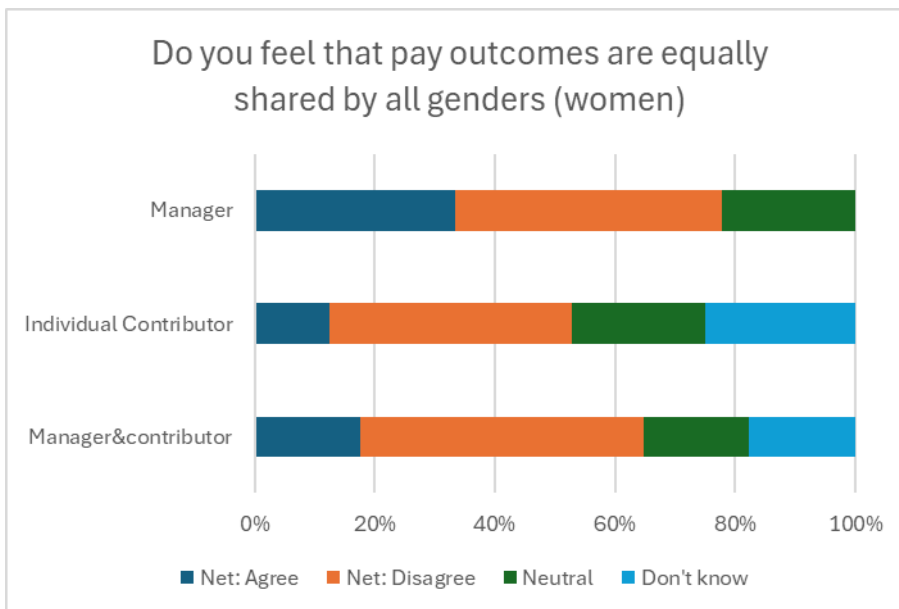
³ [Diversity in Tech | The Gender Pay Gap in Tech - Diversity in Tech](#)

⁴ [The gender pay gap in tech: how do we close it? - Women in Technology](#)

(66% and 71% compared to 61% and 54% respectively). However, a higher proportion of men from any other white background than women say that pay is unfair (56% and 45% respectively).

More men than women that are both a manager and contributor say that pay is unfair (65% of men and 53% of women), this switches around for managers (61% of women and 41% of men).

Respondents are uncertain whether pay outcomes are equally shared by all genders; 23% agree that pay is equally shared, 28% disagree, 23% neither agree or disagree and 26.5% don't know. Women are more certain that pay outcomes are not equally shared (42% of women compared to 30% of non-binary respondents and 16% of men). This difference of view is held for women in all roles. Managers that are women are most likely to agree that pay outcomes are equally shared (33% of women that are managers) however 44% do not agree, which is similar for other roles (47% of women that are managers and contributors and 40% of contributors).



A similar proportion of white British women and ethnic minority women do not agree that pay outcomes are shared equally by all genders (46% and 47% respectively), this falls to just 31% of women from any other white background. More ethnic minority men (31%) than men from any other white background (24%) or white British men (12%) do not feel that pay is shared equally.

Comments about pay

There are 50 comments about pay in the tech sector, 20 by women, 25 by men, 2 from non-binary respondents, and 2 other comments. The most common comments are listed in the table below.

Further information about pay

| | Woman | Man | Other |
|---|-------|-----|-------|
| Not allowed to share pay information/Not transparent | 9 | 9 | 0 |
| Do have a pay structure/respected for new starters | 2 | 4 | 2 |
| Evidence of pay discrepancies | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Women don't get bonus | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Engineering roles tend to be male dominated/higher paid | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Initiatives on pay are performative | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Starter pay is unfair | 2 | 0 | 0 |

Survey comments show that many employers in the sector discourage staff from sharing pay information. Others find that their pay system lacks transparency even where some pay information is provided.

“We are instructed not to share, compare or discuss salary information, which is a dead guarantee that it's unfair. There is no system for progression at all and there are no formal pay bands at all. We are aware that they can't legally enforce the rule about salary information but everyone is too afraid to challenge it.” (female respondent)

“HR are strongly opposed to sharing any median pay data to support pay negotiations and have threatened disciplinary action against those who do. There is discrepancy on pay in role and across gender.” (female respondent)

“It is not only discouraged to internally talk about pay within our organisation, we are told it could be a disciplinary offence.....which is obviously illegal.” (male respondent)

“Our compensation agreements are incredibly opaque, below industry standards, and very difficult to renegotiate, in my experience.” ((female respondent)

There are some examples of good practice, including the publication of pay information so that it is visible within the company. Sharing information in small teams seems to be the most likely way that respondents find out about the pay of their colleagues.

“Our pay band / time in band / working pattern -> pay and bonus mapping is transparent and not dependant on person, so it's really just the promotion process where people are concerned about fairness.” (female respondent)

“All salary bands are published internally and remuneration decided by an independent committee based at mid-market rate.” (male respondent)

“We have pay bands for roles that are public within the company and are respected also for new hires.” (male respondent)

“Although salary bands are not available/transparent, a manager did share this information with my team confidentially. On hearing the banding and knowing where I sit within it, this appeared to me to be very fair and equitable. It appears as though the organisation takes the bands and progression through them quite seriously and there is a framework behind it.” (female respondent)

Several respondents highlight differences between the treatment of men and women that contribute towards the gender pay gap. These include non-payment of bonus payments or men being paid at a higher rate in the same job role. Other factors include job segmentation in engineering roles.

“In particular bonuses and share options are heavily biased towards male employees who dominate senior roles.” (male respondent)

“Women tend to get paid at a slightly higher rate if they are lucky enough to be offered anything close to pay parity because they will never receive a bonus.” (female respondent)

“I am paid less than my male colleagues with the same time since joining, experience and job title.” (female respondent)

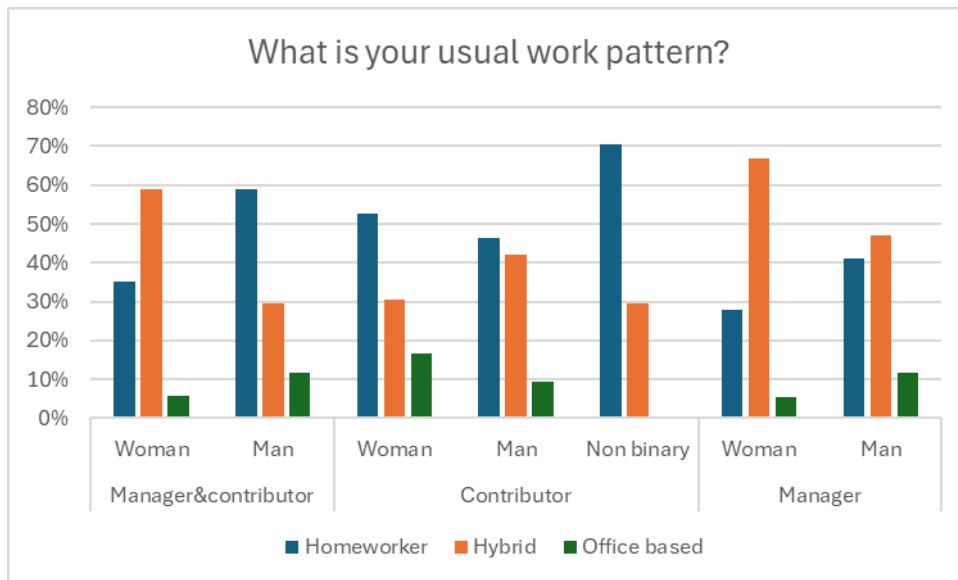
“We have a spreadsheet between the technical staff where we disclose our pay for transparency, and there are major discrepancies within levels and there is a clear bias that women and non-binary individuals are in average paid less for the same role.” (prefer to self-describe)

“Engineers are paid more, as is the case across the industry, and people of the male sex tend to be greater in number in Engineering roles than people of the female sex.” (male respondent)

“Pay is based on how you behave politically. The ratio of CEO to average pay is utterly disgusting. Layoffs are done based on arbitrary events and to avoid any employment law. The entire company is run of feudal lines.” (male respondent)

Section 3 - Work patterns

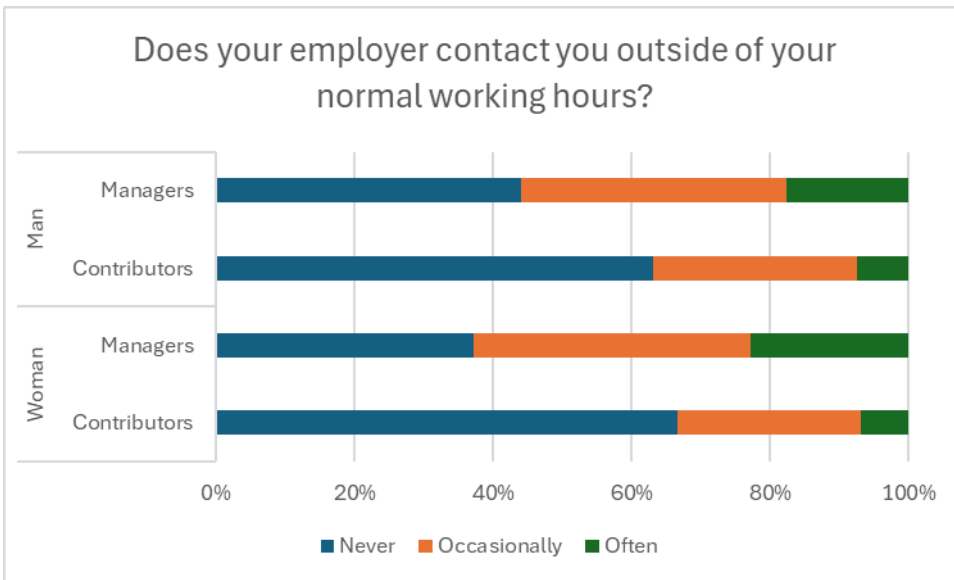
There are no clear work patterns for women or men. Women that are managers are more likely to be hybrid workers, and contributors that are women are more likely to be office based. Men that are both a manager and contributor are more likely to be homeworkers, but managers or individual contributors are just as likely to be hybrid workers or homeworkers. The only clear pattern is that non-binary respondents are most likely to be homeworkers. Whatever the job role respondents are satisfied with their work pattern, 79% of women, 74% of men and 70% of non-binary respondents.



Working additional hours or being contacted outside normal hours

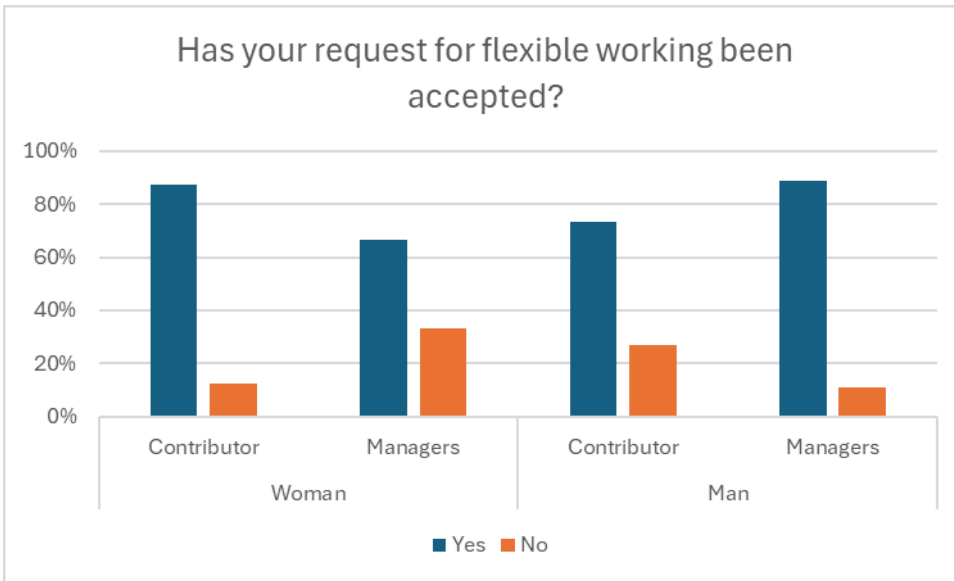
About half the respondents are expected to work additional hours. Those in management roles are more likely to be expected to work additional hours than individual contributors. Women are more likely than men or non-binary respondents to work additional hours regularly (22%, 13% and 10% respectively). The sample size is too small to draw any firm conclusions about whether the work pattern is a factor that affects whether or not someone will be expected to work additional hours.

Managers are more likely to be contacted outside normal working hours than contributors, women that are managers are more likely than men that are managers to be contacted either often or occasionally. Overall, 63% of women that are managers (all those in a management role) and 56% of men that are managers are contacted outside normal working hours, for 23% of women that are managers this is often, compared to 18% of managers that are men. Just 7% of women and men that are contributors are contacted often and less than 30% occasionally. Non-binary respondents are even less likely to be contacted outside normal working hours, just 20% are expected to work additional hours occasionally, 80% never work outside their normal working hours.



Flexible working requests

Overall, employers in the sector are supportive of flexible working requests. Of those that have made a request for some type of flexible arrangement 81% have had them accepted. However, there are some differences depending on the role and the gender of the respondent.



A similar proportion of contributors that are women or men have made a flexible working request, 87.5% of requests by women were accepted compared to 73% of those by men. Very few non-binary respondents made a flexible working request (20%), all requests were accepted. A higher proportion of women that are managers have made a flexible working request, however 33% of these requests have been turned down compared to just 11% of the requests made by men. Both women and men are broadly positive about their employer’s family friendly policies, with 59% of women and 61.5% of men that have made a request for flexible working giving a positive rating. Contributors that are women are more positive than managers that are women (67% and 47% respectively), whereas managers that are men are more positive than contributors that are men (89% and 52% respectively).

In both cases the experience of having requests turned down appears to have impacted the rating score.

For those that have not made a request, men are more positive than women about their employer’s family friendly policies (64% and 44% respectively), managers that are women take the least positive view (25%).

Family friendly policy suggestions

There are 70 comments about changes that would make work more family friendly, 30 by women, 33 by men, 4 by non-binary respondents, and 3 other comments. There are some common issues that are raised by both women and men. What is clear from these responses is that well-crafted family friendly policies will benefit the whole workforce and have broad based support.

Suggested family friendly policies

| | Woman | Man | Other |
|--|-------|-----|-------|
| Remote working | 10 | 5 | 1 |
| Parental pay/leave | 3 | 5 | 0 |
| Reduced hours/compressed hours/flexi-time | 3 | 5 | 0 |
| More supportive of flexible working requests | 4 | 3 | 0 |
| Paternity leave | 2 | 5 | 0 |
| 4-day week | 2 | 4 | 1 |
| Don't know what is available | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| Flexible leave | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Maternity policies | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Caring for elderly | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Childcare | 0 | 2 | 0 |

Most employers already have policies that allow remote working, but there is some evidence that return to the office policies are conflicting with these arrangements.

“My employer recently moved to making all non-remote employees come into the office at least 3 days a week, regardless of business need (previously, employees had flexibility to come in as much or as little as they wanted).” (female respondent)

“We need to move to fully remote working and stop treating people like children.” (male respondent)

“Quote from town hall: return-to-office takes priority over (other worker)’s being at home to support their toddler.” (male respondent)

Arrangements around parental pay or parental leave were also raised by both women and men. Respondents either want clarity on the policy or improvements in parental leave pay.

“Better and also simpler to understand policies around pay for maternity, paternity, and shared parental leave.” (female respondent)

“Be more forthcoming about paternal leave policies – right now the documentation is quite hard to find. (female respondent)

“Parental leave pay equivalent to maternity pay.” (female respondent)

There are similar requests for more flexibility around working hours by either allowing compressed hours, an ability to change core hours, adoption of flexi-time or a variation of start and finish times. Several respondents suggest the introduction of a four day week.

“Allow employees to shift their working hours earlier or later or take longer lunch breaks which are compensated for in other parts of the day.” (female respondent)

“Actual flexible working, “core hours” of 10-4 mean you work 8-4, 9-5 or 10-6. Not exactly conducive to modern life or families.” (male respondent)

“Compressed hours for new parents.” (male respondent)

Several respondents are either unsure what arrangements are in place or would like greater clarity around what is available.

“Better advertising and awareness of these policies and how to apply them.” (female respondent)

Requests for improved paternity leave policies are more likely to be made by male respondents.

“Long term paternity leave for fathers - current offer is not much better than legal minimum.” (male respondent)

Other issues include maternity policies, caring policies, childcare support and more flexible leave arrangements.

“Include elder care in policies - families are not just partners/spouses and offspring! Define families to include elders e.g. parents of employees” (female respondent)

“Help for colleagues with children e.g. partnerships with local nurseries would be a huge help. I returned to the UK from Germany and company creches were the norm.” (male respondent)

Section 4 – Work culture

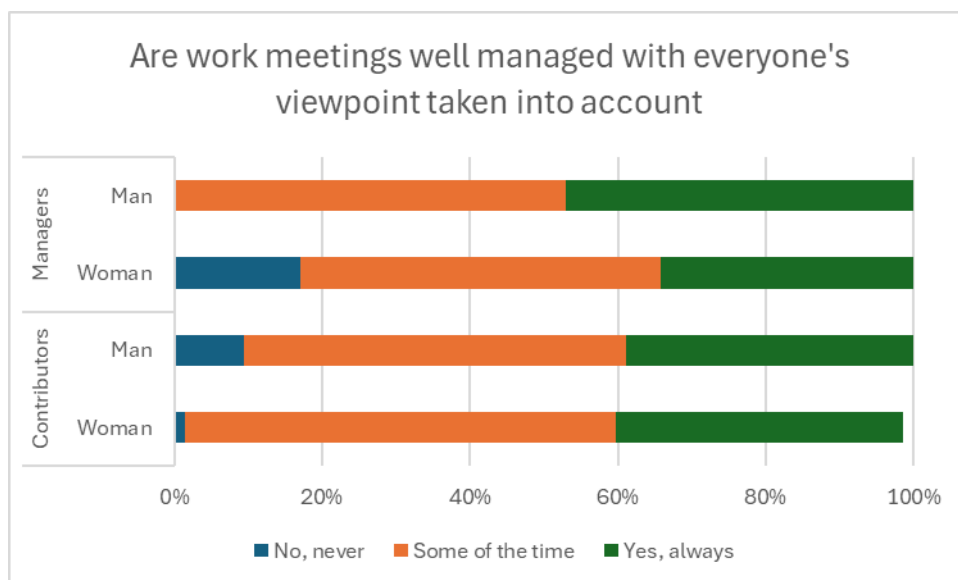
Although more women and non-binary people are being attracted to the tech sector the industry is still identified with a ‘bro’ culture. Recent research by the Fawcett Society found that 72% of women in tech roles have experienced at least one form of sexism at work, which includes sexist ‘banter’ (22%) and questioning of skills and abilities (20%).⁵ A survey by PWC found just 39% of women feel that their manager listens to them, compared to 47% of men.⁶ The survey sought respondents’ views on the workplace culture.

Both women and men have very similar perceptions of workplace interactions; 51% of women and 49% men say that conversations about work with colleagues are always professional, 48% of both women and men say some of the time; an even higher proportion of non-binary respondents say that conversations are always professional (60%).

White British women (58%) and women from any other white background (67%) are more likely than ethnic minority women (41%) to say that conversations are always professional, but white British men (48%) and men from any other white background (48%) are less likely to say that conversations are always professional than ethnic minority men (54%).

Unprofessional behaviour in work meetings is a particular issue; 37% of women, 41% of men and 40% of nonbinary respondents say that work meetings are always well managed with everyone’s viewpoint taken seriously, but 55% of women, 52% of men and 60% of non-binary respondents say some of the time, and 6.5% of women and 7% of men say never. Women that are managers and men that are contributors (17% of women in a management role and 9.5% of men that are contributors) are most likely to say that meetings are never well managed.

Women from ethnic minority backgrounds are least likely to agree that all views are taken into account during workplace meetings than white British women or women from any other white background (23.5%, 44% and 31% respectively).



⁵ [Toxic ‘Tech Bros’: 1 in 5 men believe women are less suited to tech roles - Virgin Media O2](#)

⁶ [HR Magazine - Women less likely than men to be heard by managers](#)

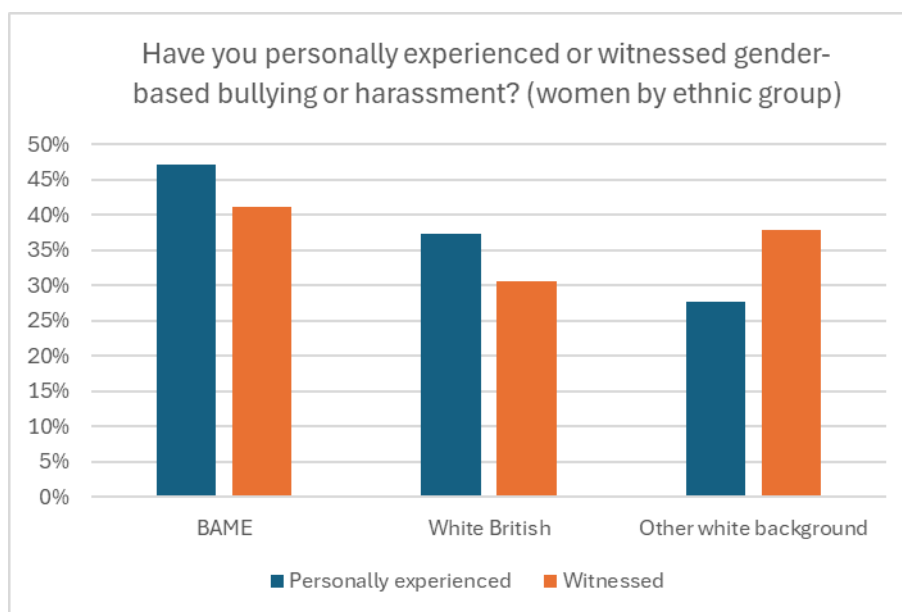
Evidence of ‘office banter’ is widespread; 50.5% of women, 32% of men and 40% of non-binary respondents say that office banter makes them feel uncomfortable some of the time. There are a small number of respondents that feel uncomfortable all of the time, 5% of men, 2% of women and 10% of non-binary respondents.

A similar proportion of women from different ethnic backgrounds say that they are never made to feel uncomfortable by office banter (ethnic minority women 47%, white British women 46% and 45% women from any other white background), but 12% of ethnic minority women feel uncomfortable all of the time, whereas there were no women that are white British or from any other white background that always feel uncomfortable.

Women that are managers are more likely to experience unacceptable banter some of the time (61% of women that are managers and 53% of women that are both a manager and contributor). Working from home only provides a limited refuge from these types of behaviours, 44% of women that work from home and 58% of women with a hybrid work pattern have to confront uncomfortable office banter. Just under half of the respondents working in an office have experienced unwelcome ‘office banter’ some of the time, 54% of men and 40% of women.

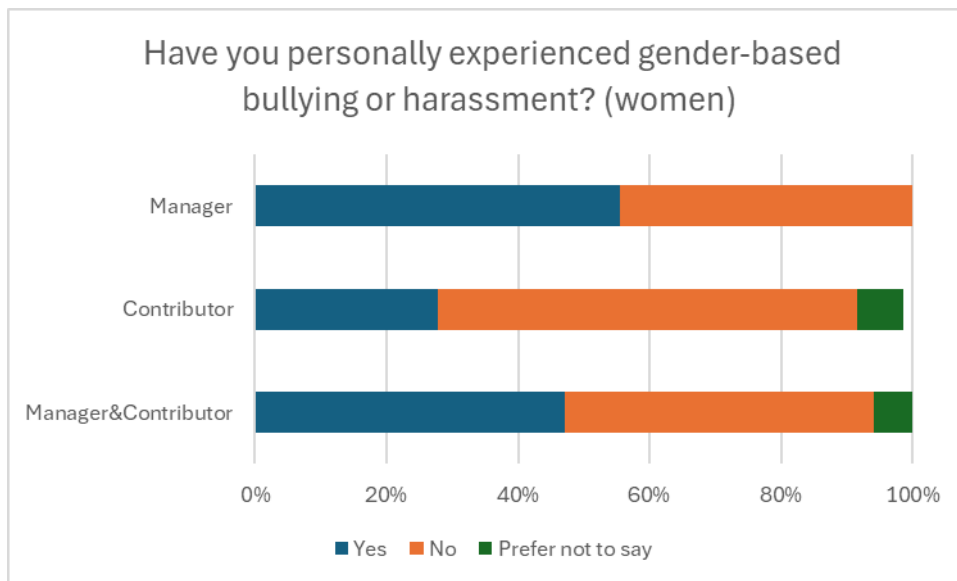
Gender-based bullying

Bullying is very common in the sector. More than one in four respondents have witnessed gender-based bullying and 18% have been bullied personally, a third of women (35.5%) have personally been bullied. More than half the women in a management role have been bullied or witnessed gender-based bullying, just over one in four contributors that are women have been bullied or witnessed bullying (28% experienced and 26% witnessed). The age of the respondent does not appear to be a significant factor when determining the likelihood of someone being bullied, but the sample size is too small to draw firm conclusions. More ethnic minority women have experienced or witnessed gender based bullying; 47% of ethnic minority women have personally experienced and 41% have witnessed bullying, compared to 37% and 30.5% of white British women and 28% and 38% of women from any other white background.



Women are less confident than men that their employer will take effective action to deter sexual harassment at work; 45% of women are confident that action will be taken compared to 61.5% of men and 55% of non-binary respondents. Ethnic minority respondents, both women and men, have less confidence than white British respondents and respondents from any other white background that their employer will take effective action to deter sexual harassment at work; 41% of ethnic minority women and 31% of ethnic minority men are not confident, compared to 32% of white British women and 12% of white British men, and 21% of women from any other white background, and 20% of men from any other white background.

Managers that are women are less confident (38%) than contributors that women (49%) that action will be taken, but male managers are more confident than male contributors that action will be taken (73.5% and 57% respectively).



Gender equality in tech, final comments

Respondents were invited to provide any final comments, including actions taken by their employer to address gender inequality in tech. There were 56 comments, 30 from women, 19 from men, 4 non-binary and 3 other comments.

Final comments on gender equality in tech

| | Woman | Man | Other |
|--|-------|-----|-------|
| Misogyny is rife in sector | 21 | 6 | 3 |
| It is still a male dominated sector | 2 | 6 | 0 |
| Checkbox attitude to gender equality | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Lack of visibility of non-binary/Trans issues | 1 | | 2 |
| Account should be taken of gender coded language | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Job segmentation in the sector | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Gender pay gap in organisation | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| On-call payment | 0 | 1 | 1 |

A majority of the comments focus on the sexism and misogynistic attitudes that still dominate the sector. This includes an account of a serious sexual assault where no action was taken.

"I was sexually assaulted at work. I reported it to my manager, but the guilty party works for a client organisation. He minimised what happened, reduced my responsibilities, effectively demoting me, and told me both "some men are just a bit clumsy when flirting" and "don't do anything that would jeopardise our contract". I had bruises, torn clothes, and was in obvious distress. It was made clear I am not the one they care about." (female respondent)

A number of respondents highlight the lack of action taken by their employer when complaints are made.

"It's all lip service. I won an employment tribunal judgment confirming whistleblowing and sex discrimination against my employer and things got much worse." (female respondent)

"Raising issues about bullying is a nonstarter - you'd be seen as a weakling to be bullied. Raising issues about harassment is asking to be on HR's and leadership's shit lists - you can forget about any prospect of progression and will likely be managed out of the company. This is based on first-hand experience not hearsay." (female respondent)

"I did not witness it, but female colleagues I have reason to trust, have described gender-based discrimination against themselves, that they reported it, and that nothing was done beyond a "slap on the wrist". (male respondent)

A more serious complaint is that employers attempt to cover up allegations of sexual harassment or blame the women making a complaint.

"My employer has a long record of not challenging bullying by senior managers or those favoured by them. In the past it has favoured paying victims off, not that generously, and insisted they sign NDAs." (male respondent)

"Anecdotal evidence of things you have experience are easily dismissed by senior management. For example: if highlighting that people are talking over one another or speaking disparagingly about exclusively female colleagues, you'll often be told you're "framing the problem wrong" or that "competitive cultures are a positive thing" or "you need to work on your positivity"." (female respondent)

"In my previous workplace, I was the only woman in my team and conversations were not appropriate. They frequently commented on what I was wearing and made inappropriate jokes (which were meant to be banter). My manager said he would listen out for it and stop it when he heard it but nothing ever happened." (female respondent)

Respondents also highlight the way in which women are not taken seriously by their employer.

"Gender inequality in tech is rampant and most orgs I have worked for like to use buzz words and simply say they are fair, whilst making zero changes to support women." (female respondent)

"I think harassment isn't such an issue as female employees' viewpoints not being given as much weight as males during meetings and males tending to be hired to the head of department." (female respondent)

“My current employer certainly talks the talk about Women in Tech but have allowed a misogynist free reign to criticise and undermine the initiatives, without punishing the offender, in the name of “Free Speech” (male respondent)

Underlying many of the comments is that male dominance in Tech sector is tolerated as the industry’s norm.

“Industry in which you are the tech worker matters. I’m in a construction/engineering firm. It’s full of late middle-aged men who find the ideal of women knowing more than them scary and react accordingly.” (male respondent)

“Some teams are 100% straight white men, and this is treated like a feature, not a bug.” (female respondent)

“You get a situation where the field is SO unbalanced that there stops being any harassment or risk of it because it’s like a monastery where they’ve almost forgotten women exist at all.” (female respondent)

“My big gripe, as a male coming from another industry, is that tech is very “gendered” in roles. You see that the tech staff “prefer” to employ women to be PMs and BAs and steer women into these roles; I think there is gatekeeping, both around the more technical roles being “male” and the “softer skilled, less techy” roles being female. This angers me... I think if we want to tackle getting women into tech, we also need to tackle gendering of roles in tech.” (male respondent)

The absence of policies to support non-binary and trans workers is raised by non-binary respondents.

“Lack of visibility of non-binary individuals in tech, I feel like I’m the only person I know that is trans in the industry around me. Plenty gay folk, that’s very visible, just not a lot of trans/gnc folk.” (non-binary respondent)

“While the policies for many things at my employer are good, they’re severely lacking in support for transgender people. For example I had to take three months off for surgery and was expected to use my normal sick leave allowance followed by statutory sick pay for an essential medical procedure, while parents can get up to 6 months off at full pay followed by several more months of reduced pay. In general it feels deeply unfair that companies aren’t required to do more to support trans people as they do for anyone else who has to take extended periods of leave due to their gender.” (non-binary respondent)