

Women's work?

*Benchmarking pay and exploring working patterns for our **governance professionals** in schools and trusts*



Contents

Foreword **2**

Key findings **3**

- Salary benchmarking
- Clerks' reports on pay
- Clerks' feelings on pay
- Most female-dominated profession in education?
- Part-time work dominates
- Career breaks due to caring responsibilities

Discussion **8**

- A celebration of flexible working
- Fair pay for flexible work
- Recruitment and retention
- Governance matters

Recommendations **9**

- For employers
- For self-employed individuals
- For anyone working in governance professional roles

Methodology **10**

- Our survey
- Pay benchmarking

Acknowledgements **12**

Foreword

8 March 2023

This International Women's Day, we're shining a light on the important, yet often hidden, roles of the paid governance professional – positions which are anecdotally filled largely by women.

In light of current pay concerns across the education sector, we looked to explore how the salaries for governance professionals – roles which rarely gain the wider societal attention associated with teachers or school leaders – fare against equivalent roles in comparable sectors.

The National Governance Association's (NGA's) recent identification of a defined career pathway for governance professionals working in schools and academy trusts¹, outlining 3 levels and associated roles and responsibilities, provided a useful framework for us to do this.

According to the NGA's research, the 3 levels that most governance professional roles fall under are:

- **Clerking level:** a role which provides direct support to board meetings and associated tasks, plus advice and support on statutory procedure and practice
- **Governance co-ordinator level:** a role which, as well as the duties of a clerk, involves additional responsibilities relating to the delivery of a governance support service, including line management of clerks
- **Lead governance professional level:** a role which provides strategic leadership of services that support governance across schools with higher levels of complexity and direct accountability

We conducted a salary benchmarking exercise to review how these roles and responsibilities align to those in other sectors, and how their salaries compare.

In addition, we wanted to learn whether these roles are as female dominated as is commonly understood. It's been found that women in Europe are more likely to work part time, have caring responsibilities and take career breaks – and that these are all factors associated with reduced earnings and slower career progression for women, contributing strongly to the gender pay gap². How

relevant are these factors to governance professional roles in schools and trusts?

To find out, we surveyed 1,298 governance professionals to gain a large sample of existing salaries for comparison (1,055 clerks, 100 governance co-ordinators and 143 governance leads). See page 10 for our 'Methodology' and further sample breakdown.

Our benchmarking findings suggest that equivalent roles in other sectors are likely to be paid more, and this sense of being underpaid, and sometimes undervalued, is felt by many of the governance professionals surveyed. We confirmed just how female dominated these governance professional roles are (90% women from our survey data - see our 'Methodology' for a note on gender in this research), and how part-time working dominates. We also discovered that almost a third of all female governance professionals reported having taken a career break due to caring responsibilities.

The flexible-working practices of professionals working in these roles should be celebrated, particularly in a sector which has historically struggled to accommodate flexible working – but only if they're recognised and rewarded appropriately. We highlight current pay disparities and, as you'll see in our recommendations, outline some actions employers and individuals might take to overcome them, to support the ongoing recruitment and retention of talent.

Our hope is that the information in this report becomes a useful step on the journey towards an even stronger sector of professionals who provide such vital support to our schools and trusts.

1. [The NGA. A Career Pathway for Governance Professionals \(2022\)](#)

2. [WTW Europe. Global Gender Wealth Equity Index \(2022\)](#)

Key findings

1 Salaries for paid roles in school and trust governance don't compare favourably with those for equivalent roles in other sectors

Data from our survey on paid roles in school governance has revealed that³

- Clerking roles have a median salary of £25,000
- Governance co-ordinator roles have a median salary of £32,000
- Governance lead roles have a median salary of £42,500

To gain a greater understanding of how salaries for these roles fare more broadly, we sourced salary benchmarking information from XpertHR (see our 'Methodology' for more information).

While it's impossible to find a like-for-like sector to education – because employment in school governance spans trusts (charities), public sector (local authorities) and private sector (private clerking services) – we deemed the local government, public services and not-for-profit sectors to be the closest (when compared to alternatives such as the finance, retail or energy sectors).

Using our knowledge of the above roles and their responsibilities, we worked with XpertHR to match these role profiles from the NGA's career pathway, to a **job level** based on the seniority and responsibilities of the role, and a **function** which relates to the duties being carried out. We did this for each of the 3 sectors closest to education. To understand the data and workings behind this benchmarking analysis, see the 'Methodology' section of this report.

The **role of clerk** aligned with level 22, function 9 in governance or committee services, which has a median salary of:

- £33,782 in the local government sector
- £33,636 in the public services sector
- £31,620 in the not-for-profit sector

A junior or trainee clerk might align with level 23, function 9 in governance or committee services, which has a median salary of:

- £25,986 in the local government sector
- £26,964 in the public services sector
- £26,658 in the not-for-profit sector

In some exceptional cases, an individual clerk's role might align with level 21 (more on this below).

The **role of governance co-ordinator** aligned with level 21, function 9 in governance or committee services, which has a median salary of:

- £43,856 in the local government sector
- £39,330 in the public services sector
- £37,441 in the not for profit sector

In some cases, this role might develop to match level 20 (more on this below).

The **role of governance lead** aligned with level 20, function 9 (governance or committee services), which has a median salary of:

- £51,515 in the local government sector⁴
- £50,456 in the public services sector
- £42,654 in the not-for-profit sector

In some cases, this role might develop to match level 16, function 9 (governance or committee services), which has a median salary of:

- £60,409 in the local government sector
- £59,564 in the public services sector
- £48,187 in the not-for-profit sector

³. Not everyone submitted a pay scale - this is based on responses where an accurate annual salary was submitted (answers giving annual FTE salaries under the national minimum wage of £18,500 were excluded). We've drawn comparisons between male and female survey respondents only where there were statistically significant data points.

⁴. XpertHR matched to the sub-function group legal services due to small sample size.

	Our survey	Not for profit	Local government	Public services
Clerks	£25,000	L23 £26,658	L23 £25,986	L23 £26,964
		L22 £31,620	L22 £33,782	L22 £33,636
Governance co-ordinators	£32,000	L21 £37,441	L21 £43,856	L21 £39,330
		L20 £42,654	L20 £51,515	L20 £50,456
Governance leads	£42,500	L20 £42,654	L20 £51,515	L20 £50,456
		L16 £48,187	L16 £60,409	L16 £59,564

Table 1: median salaries reported by survey respondents, compared to XpertHR benchmarked salaries for equivalent roles in other sectors.

2 Many clerks report their pay has stagnated, despite growing complexity in their role

We asked all survey respondents to provide us with salary information, and to comment more broadly on pay.

In some cases, survey respondents in clerking roles felt acknowledged and well rewarded in their role.

“ I consider myself to be extremely fortunate that I have worked for the past 7 years in a remarkable school which respects governance and believes in best practice. They know that this costs money and time and are willing to pay for what matters. Expertise is valued by the school, as well as being leading-edge (they are a teaching school) and this extends to my work with the board. The headteacher and chair of governors both attend the local authority governance briefings and observe NGA best practice.

Clerk working part time employed directly by a school, who reported having a service-level agreement (SLA) or contract and feeling ‘well paid’

However, clerking roles were found to have the largest salary discrepancies with other comparable sectors during benchmarking. Clerks were also our survey’s largest group of respondents, so we looked to dig into the pay for this group in more detail.

The governance handbook⁵ notes that high-quality professional clerking is crucial to the effective functioning of the board and that boards should expect to pay an appropriate salary, commensurate with the service they expect their clerk to deliver.

Yet many clerk respondents reported a lack of increase in pay over several years, resulting in real-term pay cuts when accounting for inflation.

Possible reasons for the pay stagnation felt by clerk survey respondents included:

1. A lack of visibility and understanding of governance professional roles within schools and beyond.

“ I have an undergraduate degree and substantial experience – I am not sure that someone that was less qualified could do the role. It’s a role that takes a lot of balancing, self-sufficiency and planning. I have also had to train, and there’s a lot more to the role than just agendas and minutes due to statutory governance changes. It’s also a very important role to the schools. It feels like a role that isn’t as valued as it should be, i.e. it’s thought of as someone simply doing the minutes, not someone with professional qualifications.

Clerk working part time employed by a multi-academy trust, who reported having a service-level agreement (SLA) or contract and feeling ‘underpaid’

2. A lack of awareness in some cases from school governors of the breadth of duties involved in clerking, and clerks’ pay review processes (which can be the responsibility of the governing board).

“ Having worked for 10 years with the school, I had to ask for my salary to be reviewed a couple of years ago and the rate was upped. I checked my letter of appointment and it said my salary would be reviewed every year – I pointed this out, but it isn’t reviewed every year. I think my role falls through the cracks. As a part-time employee, I don’t know if I am missing out on any other work benefits, pension etc., and whether I’m entitled to equipment to help me to do my job.

Clerk working part time employed by a multi-academy trust, who reported being paid per meeting for an unknown amount of hours, and not knowing how well they were paid

5. GOV.UK, [The Governance Handbook and Competency Framework](#)

3. A reported increase in the complexity of the clerking role over time due to an increased frequency of tasks requiring technical and procedural knowledge – such as pupil exclusion and complaint panels, finance reporting and the running of hybrid meetings – resulting in increased hours for the same pay (if paid per meeting).

“ I am paid per meeting at a set rate. This is the set rate for ‘normal’ governors’ meetings. However, when undertaking ‘specialist clerking’ functions, such as clerking for pupil exclusion appeals, staff flexible working appeals, staff disciplinaries, etc., I am still paid at the same rate - although the schools are charged considerably more for such clerking.

Part-time clerk employed by a local authority who reported being paid per meeting and feeling ‘underpaid’

Contract or employment type makes a difference

For context, just over half (53%) of the clerks surveyed reported being on service-level agreements (SLAs), or contracts clearly specifying the number of hours. Of those who weren’t, 59% are paid per meeting and 22% claim for the hours they work. Most of the remainder (11%) tended to be fulfilling clerking duties as part of another full-time role in school, such as personal assistant (PA), office staff, or school business manager (SBM)⁶.

Clerks with an SLA or contract were more likely to report feeling ‘underpaid’ or ‘extremely underpaid’ (57%), than those without (49%).

“ Expectations are high for us to be knowledgeable, available 7 days a week, and in the evenings, even though we’re contracted to work a set number of hours. We’re expected to be 100% flexible, undertake training and manage difficult, challenging situations frequently.

Part-time clerk employed directly by 2 schools, who reported earning £25,000 a year (gross FTE), after stating they felt ‘extremely underpaid’

Of those without an SLA or contract, those paid per meeting were the most likely to report feeling ‘underpaid’ or ‘extremely underpaid’ (54%), compared with those paid hourly (45%) and those for whom clerking fits in as part of another role in school (34%).

Comments in the survey from clerks paid per meeting stated that the hours allocated for a meeting ranged from 5 to 13 hours (with the most common answers being 9 or 10 hours). Some specified how much pay they receive per meeting, which ranged from £50 to £650 (with the most common answers falling between £100 and £150).

Additionally, the clerk respondents employed by a local authority (LA) or equivalent were most likely (61%) to report feeling ‘underpaid’ or ‘extremely underpaid’.

“ The LA has most of the ‘market’, but doesn’t recognise that the high turnover of its clerks is related to pay. Schools would pay direct for extra services, but the LA charge is 3 times my hourly rate!

Part-time clerk employed by an LA, who reported being paid per meeting and feeling ‘extremely underpaid’

3 Clerks are feeling the strain, with over half reporting feeling ‘underpaid’ or ‘extremely underpaid’

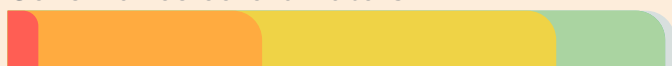
In terms of your salary, do you feel you are:



Clerks



Governance co-ordinators



Governance leads



Graph 1: Online survey conducted 12 to 24 January 2023, base = 1,080 respondents, comprising 865 clerks, 85 governance co-ordinators, 130 governance leads.

More than half (54%) of clerks surveyed reported feeling they were ‘underpaid’ or ‘extremely underpaid’, with that figure falling to 38% for governance co-ordinators, and 29% for governance leads.

4% of clerks said that they ‘don’t know’ if they’re underpaid. Of the total 10% of male survey respondents, none of them reported ‘not knowing’ if they are underpaid.

Of those survey respondents who said they were ‘underpaid’ or ‘extremely underpaid’, 46% voluntarily left a comment explaining that their workload goes over the allocated time that they’re paid for.

6. While there’s no rule to say a member of school staff can’t also be a clerk (apart from the headteacher and chief executive officer), it can pose questions around conflicts of interest and confidentiality. Individuals doing both must also have separate contracts for each role so time commitments are clearly set out and to ensure their performance for clerking is appraised by the board, not the headteacher.

In comparison, 52% of clerks employed directly by a school reported feeling 'underpaid' or 'extremely underpaid', and 49% of clerks employed by multi-academy trusts (MATs). Self-employed clerks were the most satisfied with their pay, with only 33% of those surveyed reporting feeling 'underpaid' or 'extremely underpaid'. Our findings also revealed that male clerks surveyed were significantly more likely to be self-employed (22%) than female clerks (8%), who were more likely to be employed directly by schools or MATs.

There was a general feeling from respondents who are not setting their own terms, that contracts don't reflect the true nature of the workload involved in the role. A quarter (26%) of all clerks who responded, voluntarily left comments explaining that their workload exceeds the allocated time they're paid for.

“ As a new clerk to the role and education (following being a solicitor) not enough time was given to train for the role and attend meetings/prepare the minutes and everything that goes with it. The hourly rate equates to £10.50, but that's only if you can do the job within the hours set, otherwise of course you are working on your own time and your hourly rate is diluted. For the level of responsibility, professionalism, knowledge and flexibility – the weighted hours of the job some weeks – the hourly rate is not very good at all. So despite loving the job, the issues, the schools and people, I am leaving the role entirely as I cannot give my time for free and afford to live like this.

Part-time clerk employed by an independent clerking company who reported being paid £20,150 on a service-level agreement or contract and feeling 'extremely underpaid'

4 Is this the most female-dominated profession in education?

Women represent about 90% of those working in governance professional roles, according to our research – revealing it to be one of the most female-dominated careers in the education sector and beyond.

This compares, within the education sector, to a predominantly female teaching workforce in England. This was 75.5% as at November 2021 (2021/22), rising to 85.9% in nurseries and primary schools⁷.

The support staff workforce of England is predominantly female, at 89% in November 2021 (2021/22), which is higher than the make-up of teachers⁷.

It's hard to find a more female-dominated role outside of education. Female NHS staff make up 88.6% of the 342,104 nurses and health visitors in England⁸.

What is your sex, as registered at birth?

Clerks

91%

9%

Governance co-ordinators

92%

8%

Governance leads

89%

11%

Graph 2: Online survey conducted 12 to 24 January 2023, base = 1,284 respondents, comprising 1,043 clerks, 99 governance co-ordinators, 142 governance leads. (See 'Methodology' for further information).

Female Male

5 Part-time work dominates for those working in paid school and trust governance roles, compared to national employment data

The majority of the clerks surveyed reported working part time (85%). Nearly half of all governance co-ordinators surveyed (49%), and over a third of governance leads (37%), also reported working part time.

Our survey figures for the proportion of those working part time in paid school and trust governance roles, are much higher than the 23% of working-age people who reported working part time in the UK in 2021⁹. Government figures on full and part-time employment by gender show 36% of women of working age were in part-time employment, and that men were more likely to work full time than women in every ethnic group⁹.

In our survey, males only made up 10% of total respondents and were more likely to work full time across each of these 3 governance professional roles,

7. [GOV.UK, School Workforce in England \(2022\)](#)

8. [NHS England, NHS celebrates the vital role hundreds of thousands of women have played in the pandemic \(2021\)](#)

9. [GOV.UK, Full Time and Part Time Employment \(2022\)](#)

than the female respondents. Additionally, men working full time in the most senior role of governance lead, reported earning 9% more on average than women working full time in the same role.

30% of the female clerks surveyed who reported working part time, said they do so due to 'caring responsibilities' related to children and elders – compared to 12% of part-time male clerk respondents. Too few male governance co-ordinators and leads reported working part time in our survey, to allow for reliable comparisons for these roles.

“ Previously, I was a primary school teacher, but I haven't been employed as a teacher since 2018 as the demands of family life are too great with both parents working full time.

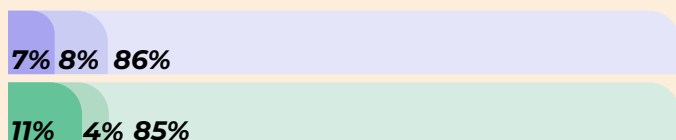
Female clerk working part time and employed by a single academy trust

“ I moved from a full-time professional career role to part-time local work to care for an elderly family member.

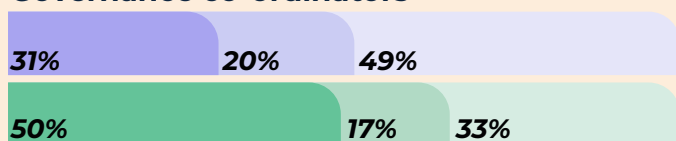
Female clerk working part time and employed by a LA

Do you work full time or part time as a governance professional?

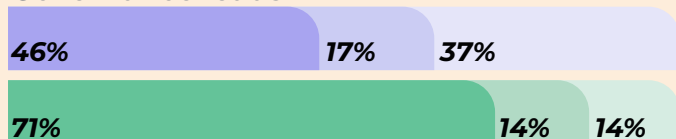
Clerks



Governance co-ordinators



Governance leads



Graphs 3: Online survey conducted 12 to 24 January 2023, base = 1,284 respondents, comprising 1,055 clerks, 92 governance co-ordinators, 137 governance leads. The small number of male respondents who are governance co-ordinators means that gender comparisons for these roles should be generalised with caution. Due to rounding to the nearest whole number, some totals don't equal 100%.

- Female - Full time
- Female - Full time, term time only
- Female - Part time
- Male - Full time
- Male - Full time, term time only
- Male - Part time

6 Almost a third (30%) of all female governance professionals surveyed have taken a career break due to caring responsibilities, compared to only 4% of male governance professionals

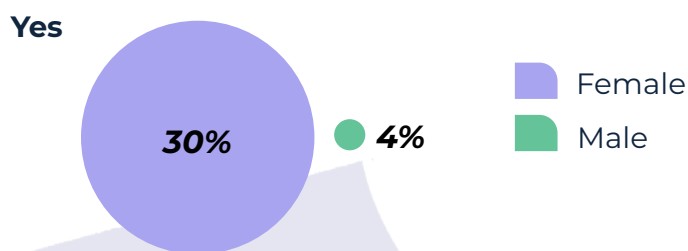
Overall, 28% of clerks reported having taken a career break from their current role or previous paid employment due to caring responsibilities. This figure falls to 27% for governance co-ordinators and 23% for governance leads.

Removing the male survey respondents from the data, showed that almost a third (30%) of all female governance professionals surveyed reported having taken a career break due to caring responsibilities.

Of the 10% of male survey respondents, only 4% reported taking a career break, and all of these individuals are currently working as clerks. No male governance co-ordinators or governance leads reported having taken a career break.

These findings align with those of a 2022 study, which found that 1 in 5 women (19%) have left a job because it was too hard to balance work and care¹⁰. The same study found that nearly 6 out of 10 women (58%) say caring responsibilities have stopped them applying for promotion or a new job.

Have you ever taken a career break from your current role/s, or any other paid employment, due to caring responsibilities?



Graph 4: Online survey conducted 12 to 24 January 2023, base = 1,083 respondents, comprising 868 clerks, 85 governance co-ordinators, 130 governance leads.

¹⁰ [Ipsos and Business in the Community \(BITC\). Who Cares? Business in the Community & Ipsos research reveals the great workplace divide \(2022\)](#)

Discussion

1. A celebration of flexible working

In many ways, this piece of research indicates the great success of these roles of governance professionals – particularly in a sector that has historically struggled with flexible working. The fact that these roles can be successfully carried out in a part-time capacity and around caring responsibilities, is providing greater opportunities for more talented people to participate in the workforce and add value.

The challenge is how we might encourage people from all walks of life to enter, and remain in, the profession - not just women who are seeking flexibility in their working life. This flexibility is something to be celebrated, but only if this important work is recognised and rewarded appropriately.

2. Fair pay for flexible work

If the pay of governance professional roles within the education sector is to be brought in line with equivalent roles in similar sectors to support recruitment and retention, the following increases (see table 2 below) would need to be applied (these calculations are based on the median salaries reported in our survey, and those from the salary benchmarking exercise).

Gender pay gap

As evidenced by our research, governance professional work is one of the most female-dominated professions in the education sector – and given our knowledge of the gender pay gap across society as a whole, this should focus our attention more keenly on fair salaries for this work.

For organisations with more than 250 employees, addressing pay for governance professionals may also serve to reduce an organisation's gender pay gap.

3. Recruitment and retention

Flexible roles such as these should be appealing and positively help recruitment and retention, however we're seeing challenges in the sector with reports of these positions being hard to fill (which itself comes with a cost).

With the NGA's recent identification of a defined career pathway for governance professionals, there's now an opportunity for real career progression in these roles, linked to training and professional development. Our salary benchmarking work supports our belief that an evidence-based consideration of fair pay could help to facilitate this further. For employers, this means forecasting for higher wages and career development moving forward, and planning budgets accordingly.

4. Governance Matters

We estimate there to be approximately 8 thousand to 10 thousand clerks in England, and up to 650 governance co-ordinators and leads¹¹. These roles matter. The government sets high expectations for the role and function of governance in our education system so that all children receive the education they deserve whatever the circumstance. Our hope is that this research provides a better understanding of the pay, working patterns and working practices of governance professionals, which in turn contributes to a greater understanding of these roles and appreciation of the value and impact of governance across the wider education sector.

It's important that we come together to make sure that the pay for these roles reflects the true nature and importance of the work involved. Championing governance professional roles will only serve to support the best possible educational outcomes for children and young people.

¹¹. There isn't any published data on the number of people working in governance professional roles in England, but this estimate is based on the [number of schools](#) and [academy trusts](#) in England. Many clerks will work for more than one board. Our estimate of governance co-ordinators and governance leads is based on our observation that multi-academy trusts with more than 5 schools tend to have a governance co-ordinator, and those with 10 or more schools tend to have a governance lead.

	Our survey	Not for profit	Local government	Public services	% pay increase to match not-for-profit*
Clerks	£25,000	L23 £26,658	L23 £25,986	L23 £26,964	~7% pay increase
		L22 £31,620	L22 £33,782	L22 £33,636	~26% pay increase
Governance co-ordinators	£32,000	L21 £37,441	L21 £43,856	L21 £39,330	~17% pay increase
		L20 £42,654	L20 £51,515	L20 £50,456	~33% pay increase
Governance leads	£42,500	L20 £42,654	L20 £51,515	L20 £50,456	~0%
		L16 £48,187	L16 £60,409	L16 £59,564	~13%

Table 2: median salaries reported by survey respondents compared to XpertHR benchmarked salaries for equivalent roles in other sectors.

*As compared to the not-for-profit sector. If compared to equivalent roles in local government or public sectors, a pay increase in many cases would be higher still.

Recommendations

For employers:

- Use annual appraisal meetings for governance professionals at all levels as an opportunity to review and benchmark pay
- Take action to reduce your organisation's gender pay gap by following government guidance on how to effectively address these issues¹²

For self-employed individuals:

- Negotiate hourly rates, and hours assigned to each task, where possible
- Make sure your minimum hourly rate is aligned to a benchmarked permanent equivalent role (see 'Key finding' on salary benchmarking above)

For anyone working in governance professional roles:

- Set a schedule which details expectations for when and how you will be contacted in relation to your work with a board, and agree and communicate this with board members
- Join a union who can help give you a voice and support you in your career. Unions such as GMB, the National Education Union (NEU), UNISON and Unite have all confirmed they're happy to accept membership applications from clerks and governance professionals

“ NGA has, for many years, been at the forefront of providing expert support to governance professionals working in schools and trusts and championing their role. Therefore we welcome this report from GovernorHub, published to coincide with International Women's Day 2023, which brings together two important issues: the work of governance professionals and the gender pay gap that exists in education.

The report encourages those working in the profession and employers to collaborate and take a more informed approach towards recruitment, line management, appraisal, pay and ensuring an entitlement to professional learning. We are delighted that the report uses the career pathway developed and launched by NGA in 2022 as a central point of reference and a way of explaining that this is now a profession with many roles. We believe the pathway can be a game-changer, both for building a stronger

governance professional workforce and for giving the experts who are so vital to governance the credit and support they deserve.

Steve Edmonds, Director of Advice and Guidance, National Governance Association (NGA)

“ NASCC is pleased to see this report which moves the conversation forward from our own report published in February 2020. Working as governance professionals in the education sector, especially schools, we have no union to represent us, no agreed pay structures and therefore no voice. We welcome this report and hope that at the very least when school budgets are set to include pay awards for staff, that our unyielding professional support and deliverance of governance standards should be recognised too.

Sharon Warmington, Director, National Association of School and College Clerks (NASCC)

“ The governance professional role is a fascinating, challenging and diverse job but it is so often not well understood. Trust Governance Professionals welcomes this report as part of the ongoing awareness raising of the role and its importance. We know from Trust Governance Insight our programme which trains and supports governance professionals in academies, that there is a growing understanding in Trusts that good governance professionals will and should command good pay, investment in ongoing professional development, and proper terms and conditions. This sits alongside the evolving career pathway for clerks and governance professionals in Trusts that can be seen in the report. However we recognise that this is a journey and there is more to be done. Thank you to GovernorHub for your championing of this important role.

Emma Perkin, Director, Trust Governance Professionals

¹² [GOV.UK, Actions To Close The Gender Pay Gap \(2017\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/612222/GOV.UK_-_Actions_To_Close_The_Gender_Pay_Gap_(2017).pdf)

Methodology

Our survey

We carried out an online survey in January 2023 that was sent to clerks, governance co-ordinators and governance leads throughout the sector. It was shared with users of GovernorHub but also more widely by the National Association of School and College Clerks (NASCC), the National Governance Association (NGA) and Trust Governance Professionals (TGP).

In total, 1,298 respondents took part in the survey between 12 and 24 January 2023. Of those, 1,055 identified as clerks, 100 as governance co-ordinators and 143 as governance leads.

Clerks responding to the survey represent a variety of employment types (graph 5). Most of those selecting 'other' described having more than one employment type.

Most governance co-ordinator respondents were employed by MATs (71%). 32% come from smaller trusts (1 to 5 schools) and 17% from very large trusts (31+ schools). Most governance lead respondents were also employed by MATs (82%). 28% come from smaller trusts (1 to 5 schools) and 15% from very large trusts (31+ schools).

We asked questions on sex and gender, employment type, working patterns, career breaks, salary and, additionally, whether a respondent's salary was felt to be a fair reflection of the work involved in their role.

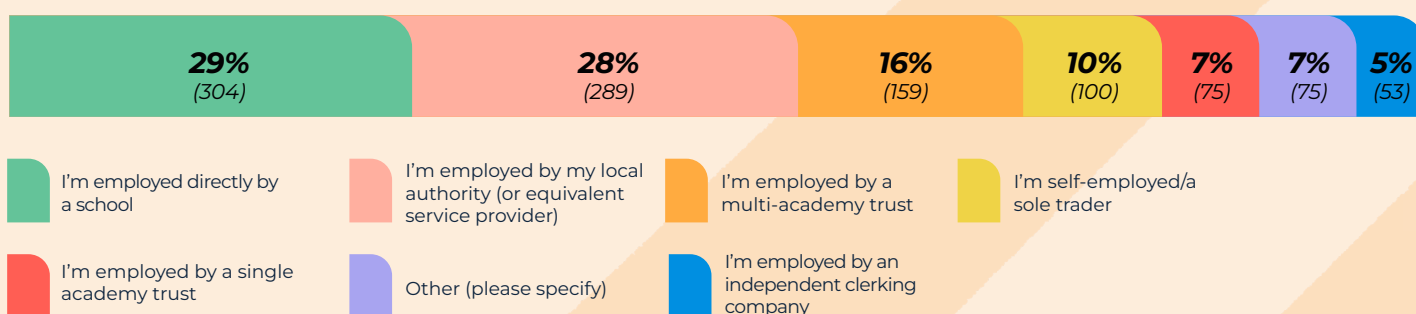
Sex and gender

We asked respondents about their sex as registered at birth, and their gender identity. Gender pay reporting only allows for male and female categories and does not define those terms. 14 respondents who preferred not to give any details were excluded as we weren't able to place in either category. For all other respondents, sex at birth was used in this research for the purpose of comparisons between males and females. This is reflective of gender pay gap reporting.

A note on terminology

We use the term 'gender' to refer to sex-based differences throughout, as this reflects the language used in the government's reporting of gender pay gap data.

Which of the following describes your main employment as a clerk in an average month?



Graph 5: Online survey conducted 12 to 24 January 2023, base = 1,055 clerks.

Pay benchmarking

Salary benchmarking comparisons are based on data collected by XpertHR¹³. In February 2023, we obtained salary benchmarking data from XpertHR for the 3 school governance roles identified in the National Governance Association's (NGA's) career pathway tool: clerk, governance co-ordinator and governance lead.

Using these role profiles from the NGA career pathway, we worked with XpertHR to identify levels which align with each level or role across sectors and shared median salary information for each level from its UK database.

While it's impossible to find a like-for-like sector to education - because employment in school governance spans trusts (charities), public sector (local authorities) and private sector (private clerking services) - we deemed the not-for-profit, public services and local government sectors to be the closest when compared to alternatives such as others such as the finance or energy sectors.

The clerk role was linked to level 22, function 9 (governance or committee services). In some exceptional cases, an individual clerk's role might align with level 21. A junior or trainee clerk might align with level 23, function 9 governance or committee.

The governance co-ordinator role was linked to level 21 and level 20 - depending on role and responsibilities - and function 9 (governance or committee services). The governance lead role was linked to level 20 and level 16.

We used our own survey data to identify a median salary for each career level in the pathway (removing any inaccurate data), which we compared with the median salaries for equivalent roles in other sectors from XpertHR.

¹³Pay benchmarking from [Cendex](#), an XpertHR product. Review the data:

- [View](#) pay benchmarking data in a table format
- [Download](#) a spreadsheet with an overview of job levels and functions
- [View](#) sample role titles for function 9 governance and committee

Cendex, an XpertHR product, gives real-time information and insights about pay trends, so your organisation can build its best reward package – to attract and keep the best talent.

Acknowledgements

We would like to acknowledge the support and feedback from several key voices in the sector during the production of this report, notably the National Association of School and College Clerks and Trust Governance Professionals. We'd also like to thank the National Governance Association for its work in developing a career pathway for governance professionals and its support in compiling the survey questions.

About us

[GovernorHub](#) is the leading provider of governance solutions in England. We support great governance – helping more than 100,000 governors, trustees and governance professionals focus on what matters: making a difference to children and young people in their schools.

We help boards to work better, develop their skills and evidence their efforts, all in one place. Our community of school and trust boards has grown to more than 13,000.

We believe that with the right tools and support all boards can have a meaningful impact