



DEBATE PACK

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International Women's Day 2020

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Summary

On 5 March 2020 there will be a general debate in the Main Chamber on the subject of International Women's Day. The theme for this year's International Women's Day is #EachforEqual.

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The House of Commons Library prepares a briefing in hard copy and/or online for most non-legislative debates in the Chamber and Westminster Hall other than half-hour debates. Debate Packs are produced quickly after the announcement of parliamentary business. They are intended to provide a summary or overview of the issue being debated and identify relevant briefings and useful documents, including press and parliamentary material. More detailed briefing can be prepared for Members on request to the Library.

1. Background

International Women's Day (IWD), held on 8 March, marks a celebration of the economic, social, cultural and political achievements of women.

The first IWD was held in central Europe in 1911.¹ Since then, IWD has increased in status and is now an official holiday in 27 countries.

Organisations and governments around the world hold events in March to inspire women and celebrate their achievements.

The theme for this year's IWD is '#EachforEqual', described [on the IWD website](#) as denoting individual and collective responsibility for realising gender equality:

The IWD 2020 campaign theme is drawn from a notion of 'Collective Individualism.'

We are all parts of a whole. Our individual actions, conversations, behaviors and mindsets can have an impact on our larger society.

Collectively, we can make change happen. Collectively, we can each help to create a gender equal world

In the UK, a range of events and exhibitions are being held for this year's IWD. A [list](#) is available on the IWD website.

1.1 Gender equality policy

The Minister for Women and Equalities, currently Rt Hon Elizabeth Truss MP, is responsible for policy on women and broader, cross-government equality strategy and legislation. Prior to 2014 the role was split between the Minister for Women and the Minister for Equalities. The Minister is the head of the Government Equalities Office (GEO), which sits within the Cabinet Office.

The [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) is the statutory body responsible for enforcing and monitoring equality law, which prohibits discrimination based on sex.

In Parliament, the [Women and Equalities Select Committee](#), established on 6 July 2015, scrutinises the work of the GEO.

The Scrutiny Unit within Parliament has established a [Gender Equality Policy Hub](#), that publishes gender equality policy maps. The latest policy map (updated January 2020) is available [here](#) and provides a useful overview of policy, legislation and publications relating to gender equality.

The key GEO policy documents are [Gender equality at every stage: a roadmap for change](#) and [The Gender Equality Monitor: tracking progress on gender equality](#), both published in July 2019.

¹ [About International Women's Day](#), International Women's Day website [accessed 4 March 2020]

1.2 Library publications

The House of Commons and House of Lords libraries have published a range of briefings on gender equality:

- [Women and the economy](#), Commons Briefing papers SN06838, 4 March 2020
- [Women in Parliament and Government](#), 25 February 2020
- [Women: Facilities in Public Buildings](#), Lords Library notes LLN-2020-0056, 11 February 2020
- [Increases in the State Pension age for women born in the 1950s](#), Commons Briefing papers CBP-7405, 22 January 2020
- [Gender Pay Gap](#), Commons Briefing papers SN07068, January 2020
- [Women Members of Parliament: Background Paper](#), Commons Briefing papers SN06652, 18 December 2020
- [Lifting the Barrier: Gender Equality Legislation 1919](#), Lords Library notes LLN-2019-0154, 13 December 2019
- [Women's Mental Health](#), Commons Debate packs CDP-2019-0213, 30 September 2019
- [Women in the Criminal Justice System](#), Lords Library notes LLN-2019-0095, 18 July 2019
- [Global Gender Equality and Health](#), Lords Library notes LLN-2019-0074, 12 June 2019

2. Media

2.1 Press releases

[Companies Commit to Hardwire Gender Parity into the Future of Work](#)

World Economic Forum

23 January 2020

[News story: New data on gender pay gap in medicine](#)

Department of Health and Social Care

29 March 2019

2.2 Articles and blogs

[Backlash as students give International Women's Day a trans rebrand](#)

Times

03.02.2020

[Women's State Pension Age: Calls to Enshrine UN Law To 'End Discrimination'](#)

Each Other

03.03.2020

[It's time for feminist men to start practising what they preach and do 'women's work'](#)

Independent

02 March 2020

[Arresting women for 'violence'](#)

Howard League for Penal Reform.

28 February 2020.

[Women released from prison nearly three times less likely to be in employment on release than men](#)

Prison Reform Trust

17 February 2020

[Torture experts raise fears over mentally ill women in Scottish jails](#)

Times

11 October 2019

[Defeat for women in state pension age challenge](#)

BBC News

3 October 2019

[UK statement on gender at HDIM 2019](#)

UK Delegation to the OSCE

20 September 2019

[What the government is planning on gender equality](#)

People Management

05 August 2019

['Her potential, our future', Baroness Sugg speech at Women Deliver](#)

Department for International Development

3 June 2019

[I thought the main issue in women's sports was equal pay. I was wrong](#)

Guardian

09.05.2019

[Why doesn't prison work for women?](#)

BBC News

29 September 2018

3. Parliamentary Business

3.1 Ministerial statements

[Diversity in Public Appointments](#)

27 June 2019 | HLWS1634

[Female Offender Strategy- First Anniversary](#)

27 June 2019 | HCWS1662

[The importance of strengthening female offenders' family and other relationships to prevent reoffending and reduce intergenerational crime](#)

18 June 2019 | HCWS1631

[Violence against Women and Girls](#)

08 March 2016 | HLWS576

3.2 Debates

[Gender Pay Gap](#)

31 October 2019 | House of Lords | 800 cc1004-1006

[Gender Pay Gap](#)

17 October 2019 | House of Commons | 666 cc441-443

[Female Offender Strategy: One Year On](#)

24 July 2019 | House of Commons | 663 cc 612WH-636WH

[Workplace Gender Equality](#)

11 July 2019 | House of Commons | 663 cc339-440

[Maternity Discrimination](#)

11 July 2019 | House of Commons | 663 cc441-442

[Gender Bias: Employment](#)

11 July 2019 | House of Commons | 663 cc436-437

[Global Gender Equality](#)

17 June 2019 | House of Lords | 798 cc658-96

[House of Lords: Gender Equality](#)

06 June 2019 | House of Lords | 798 cc171-173

[Gender Pay Gap](#)

25 April 2019 | House of Commons | 658 cc873-874

[Gender Equality and Rights in the Workplace](#)

06 March 2019 | House of Lords | 796 cc603-605

3.3 Parliamentary questions

[Gender Pay Gap](#)

23 Jan 2020 | 670 c411

Asked by: Helen Hayes

Samira Ahmed's successful pay discrimination claim against the BBC will have far-reaching implications for other women working at the BBC who will now see their gender pay gap addressed. Samira Ahmed was only able to bring her claim because she knew what male colleagues were earning. What are the Government going to do to assist women employees of the 1.3 million small and medium-sized enterprises who are currently reliant on chance to discover whether they are subject to pay discrimination, because there is no gender pay reporting requirement?

Answered by: Victoria Atkins | **Department:** Women and Equalities

I hope the hon. Member will understand that I cannot comment on individual cases, but I met BBC executives this week to discuss their overall approach to equal pay and the gender pay gap. I take the point about smaller businesses. We have been very clear that we need to gather data over several years to see how the approach is working—whether we are asking the right questions and whether there are other questions to be asked. We very much hope and expect that the approach to larger businesses will trickle down to smaller businesses, particularly with regard to action plans.

[Equal Pay](#)

05 Nov 2019 | HL534

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to ensure that companies publish their action plans for closing the gender pay gap.

Answering member: Baroness Williams of Trafford | **Department:** Women and Equalities

The Gender Pay Gap among all employees in the UK continues to decline, currently at a record low of 17.3%.

This year, mandatory reporting regulations have seen over 10,000 employers report their gender pay gap for the second time, with around half of all employers in-scope of the regulations publishing action plans.

To close the gap entirely we need a much wider cultural change, which can't be imposed from above. We strongly encourage all employers to publish action plans, prompting discussions about the drivers of the pay gap in their organisations. To support employers, we have published advice on how to diagnose their gaps and develop an effective action plan, alongside evidence-based guidance on practical actions they can take to close the gap. We actively disseminate this guidance to employers throughout the year to ensure they have the information they need to create an action plan.

This position is kept under review. If we do not think that employers are making enough progress, we will act.

[Government Departments: Equal Pay](#)

04 Nov 2019 | 7686

Asked by: Mary Glendon

To ask the Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office, whether each Department has set a target for the elimination of the gender pay gap in their workforce; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Simon Hart | **Department:** Cabinet Office

In 2017, the Government introduced world-leading legislation that made it statutory for organisations with 250 or more employees to report annually on their gender pay gap. Government departments are covered by the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 which came into force on 31 March 2017. These regulations underpin the Public Sector Equality Duty and require the relevant organisations to publish their gender pay gap data by 30 March annually.

Each year, in addition to reporting the figures required by the legislation each department publishes a stand alone report outlining the reasons that contribute to their gender pay gap and the action plans aimed at

reducing it. At present there is no set date by which gender pay gaps will be eliminated and it is acknowledged that it will take many years.

Individual departmental gender pay gap reports are available on gov.uk.

[Gender: Equality](#)

04 Nov 2019 | 7182

Asked by: Angela Crawley

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the Government Equalities Office's Gender Equality Roadmap, published in July 2019, what the terms of reference are for the review.

Answering member: Victoria Atkins | **Department:** Women and Equalities

We do not plan to do one single review of the Gender Equality Roadmap and, therefore, there are no terms of reference. Instead, we are constantly working across government to monitor progress against commitments made in the Roadmap. Next year, we will publish our one year on progress report. We will also publish the second release of our annual Gender Equality Monitor; we continue to engage with stakeholders on this, to understand which measures are most important and as we develop a more interactive tool.

[Exercise: Gender](#)

28 Oct 2019 | 4314

Asked by: Julie Elliott

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what assessment his Department has made of the effect of any differential in the level of exercise by girls and boys on the number of each gender who pursue sporting careers.

Answering member: Nigel Adams | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

Government wants everyone, regardless of their background to feel able to participate, engage and work in the sport and physical activity sector.

The Active Lives Children and Young People Survey shows that there remains a significant gender gap in physical activity levels for boys and girls, and that girls are less likely to enjoy or feel confident about participating in sport and physical activity. We are working with the Department for Education and the Department of Health and Social Care to address this through the School Sport and Activity Action Plan.

Government is also working closely with Sport England to ensure that the sporting workforce is strong, dynamic and representative of the wider population.

[Equal Pay](#)

07 Oct 2019 | HL18021

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans, if any, they have to identify the cause of the gender pay gap.

Answering member: Baroness Williams of Trafford | **Department:** Women and Equalities

The Government introduced ground-breaking regulations in 2017 requiring large employers to publish gender pay gap data.

We recognise that reporting is just the start; we are committed to ensuring that the UK is an international leader on gender equality research.

This year, we published the Case for Change, an in-depth analysis of how economic gender inequalities develop across people's lives. In this, we highlight research we published in 2018, led by the University of Manchester, that identified four key drivers of the UK Gender Pay Gap:

Occupational segregation - the types of jobs that women tend to do are less well paid than the types of jobs men do.

Industrial segregation - the sectors of the economy that women tend to work in are less well paid than the sectors that men work in.

Differences in the ways men and women participate in the labour market - women tend to spend more years out of the labour market undertaking unpaid care work than men, and tend to have fewer years of full-time work experience.

Other factors that cannot be explained by the data we have, but could include discrimination, harassment, preferences and choices.

To address these drivers, we published the Gender Equality Roadmap in July, setting out the Government's vision and actions to address the persistent gendered barriers people face across their lives. Furthermore, our new annual Gender Equality Monitor brings together 24 indicators on gender equality from all areas of life to help us better measure progress over time.

We are also running two research programmes, Women and Gender Equality and Gender and Behavioural Insights, to develop the evidence base on gender equality in the workplace. Findings from this research is being used to identify practical actions for employers and organisations to support women's progression in the workplace and reduce their gender pay gap.

[Higher Education: Equal Pay](#)

08 Aug 2019 | 281105

Asked by: Morgan, Stephen

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what estimate he has made of the gender pay gap in higher education (a) at Portsmouth University and (b) in the UK.

Answering member: Joseph Johnson | **Department:** Department for Education

Since April 2017, employers with more than 250 staff are required by law to annually report gender pay gap information. All of the gender pay gap data published by organisations, including the University of Portsmouth, is available on the government's reporting website: <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/>.

It is crucial that employers use their gender pay gap data to identify the barriers to women's recruitment and progression and take action to break down those barriers. The government has published advice for employers on how to diagnose their gaps and develop an action plan, alongside evidence-based guidance on practical actions they can take to close the gap.

The higher education (HE) sector has been proactive in taking action to address the gender pay gap and the government is supportive of this work. We have seen considerable progress in the number of women in leadership positions in HE, for example, the increase in female vice-chancellors. This is largely down to the dedicated efforts by the sector to improve the progression of women, through programmes such as the Aurora development programme and the world-renowned Athena Swan Charter. I also look forward to the findings of the Independent Review of the Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers, led by Professor Julia Buckingham, which we expect to see published in September.

[Equal Pay](#)

23 Jul 2019 | 263102

Asked by: Butler, Dawn

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what steps she is taking to ensure that the Equality and Human Rights Commission assesses the accuracy of the gender pay gap figures filed by employers for the 2018-19 reporting year.

Answering member: Victoria Atkins | **Department:** Women and Equalities

It is an employer's legal responsibility to ensure that they report on time and that their figures are accurate. The vast majority of the over 10,000 organisations that reported this year have reported their data on time.

In 2018, the Equality and Human Rights Commission (EHRC) undertook an investigation into 100 employers suspected of publishing inaccurate gender pay gap figures for the 2017/18 reporting year. The EHRC now intends to carry out the same action on employers' suspected of

publishing inaccurate data for the 2018/19 reporting year and will take enforcement action where appropriate.

[STEM Subjects: Equality](#)

16 Jul 2019 | 274538

Asked by: Shannon, Jim

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps he is taking with the Secretary of State for Education to increase gender equality in STEM subjects.

Answering member: Nick Gibb | **Department:** Department for Education

The Government is committed to increasing gender equality in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) subjects. Efforts have been made to ensure that girls and boys can succeed on an equal basis particularly in STEM. Data from the Joint Council for Qualifications shows that entries by girls made up 27.2% of all entries to A levels in STEM subjects in 2018, an increase of 6.4 percentage points since 2010. There is near gender parity in most STEM subjects at GCSE with entries by girls making up 50% of those sitting biology, physics and chemistry GCSEs respectively in 2018.

The Department is funding a £2.4 million program to improve girls' participation in computer science. The Department also funds the Stimulating Physics Network to improve progression to A level physics with a particular focus on improving girls' participation.

The Department has committed to improving STEM careers advice in schools in the Careers Strategy. This includes ensuring that STEM engagement, such as with employers and apprenticeships, are built into school career programmes by updating school and college statutory guidance. The Department is also raising awareness of the range of careers that STEM qualifications offer through programmes such as STEM ambassadors, 44% of which ambassadors are women.

[Armed Forces: Equality](#)

10 Jul 2019 | HL16930

Asked by: Lord Tebbit

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is their policy that Her Majesty's Armed Forces should be comprised of equal numbers of men and women.

Answering member: Earl Howe | **Department:** Ministry of Defence

The Ministry of Defence is dedicated to achieving a more diverse and representative workforce. Consequently, we have undertaken a wide range of activities to increase representation across British society, including those that have historically been under-represented. As part of this drive, we are working towards a target of 15% of recruits into the

Armed Forces being female by 2020. The target is stretching and reflects the importance Defence places on having diverse Armed Forces with all the benefits this brings.

[Farmers: Equal Pay](#)

08 Jul 2019 | 271467

Asked by: Shannon, Jim

To ask the Secretary of State for International Development, what steps his Department is taking to ensure that its policies and funding support equal pay for female and male farmers.

Answering member: Harriett Baldwin | **Department:** Department for International Development

DFID's 2017 Economic Development Strategy commits to tackling gender discrimination and to delivering safer, more secure and higher-return work for women, building on the 2015 UK commitment made through our G7 membership to include gender objectives in at least 50% of agriculture and food security programmes. A 2018 review of DFID's commercial agriculture programmes found that 31 of DFID's 65 commercial agriculture programmes aimed to increase the returns received by women working in agriculture.

The Department also assists the development of standards that help smallholder farmers reach a decent standard of living: for example, by providing £3.7 million in assistance to the International Social and Environmental Accreditation and Labelling Alliance (ISEAL Alliance) which supports systems such as Fairtrade. DFID is also a founding member of the Living Income Community of Practice.

DFID's 2019 review of commercial agriculture programmes finds that since 2007, 22 million smallholders have benefitted from DFID's current commercial agriculture programming (3.4 million of them women) with 4.7 million of these (1.1 million women) having benefitted financially.

[Financial Services: Equality](#)

02 Jul 2019 | HL16517

Asked by: Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure that the UK financial sector (1) increases its diversity, and (2) ensures equal pay.

Answering member: Lord Young of Cookham | **Department:** Treasury

It is the Government's aspiration to see diversity across the UK economy, and HM Treasury's Women in Finance Charter reflects our ambition to see an improved gender balance in the financial services industry. So far, over 330 financial services firms have signed the

Charter, committing to implement strategic actions to improve their gender balance in senior positions.

Regarding wider work to improve diversity in the UK labour market, we are supporting the government commissioned Hampton-Alexander review to push for 33% of all board and senior leadership positions to be held by women by 2020 in the FTSE 350. Government also fully supports the Parker Review, which recommends that FTSE100 and 250 boards should have at least one director of colour by 2021 and 2024, respectively. The Prime Minister also launched the Race at Work Charter and a consultation on mandatory ethnicity pay reporting as part of a package of measures to make the workplace fairer for people from ethnic minority groups. Over 150 employers have signed the Race at Work Charter, including a number of financial services firms.

Equal pay for men and women doing the same work, equivalent work or work of equal value, has been a legal requirement since 1970. The Government remains fully committed to the Equal Pay protections in the Equality Act 2010.

In 2017, the Government introduced regulations requiring large employers across all sectors, including financial services, to publish the differences in what they pay their male and female staff in average salaries and bonuses annually. The gender pay gap is caused by many factors and does not necessarily mean an employer has breached equal pay laws. Transparency is key to highlighting gender-based differences in pay and enabling employees to hold their employers to account, particularly where equal pay law may have been breached.

[Young People: Gender](#)

24 Jun 2019 | 266814

Asked by: Farrelly, Paul

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the Youth Voice Census Report 2019, published in June 2018, what assessment she has made of the effect of gender on a young person's level of engagement with school and employment.

Answering member: Alok Sharma | **Department:** Department for Work and Pensions

No assessment has been made of gender on a young person's level of engagement with school and employment.

However, the Government is committed to providing targeted support for all young people so that everyone, no matter what their start in life, is given the very best chance.

The Government has raised the participation age to ensure that all young people are supported to continue their education until at least age 18, and invested nearly £7 billion during academic year 2018/19, to ensure there is a place in education or training for every 16 to 19-year old.

Local Authorities (LAs) have a statutory duty to identify and track the participation of 16 and 17 year olds, supporting those who are not participating to do so and making sure that there is sufficient, suitable education and training provision to meet their needs. The September Guarantee places a further duty on LAs to ensure that all year 11 pupils (and year 12 pupils on one year courses) receive an offer of a place in education/training for the following September. It aims to ensure that all young people, regardless of what they achieved in school, understand that there are opportunities that will help them to progress, and to ensure that they get the advice and support they need to find a suitable place.

The latest data for the end of 2017 (provisional) shows that 86.8% of 16-18-year-old females are in Education and Training, compared to 85.1% of males. Source is the 'Participation in education, training and employment: 2017' published statistics.

In January to March 2019 the number of young people aged 16-24 who were not in education, employment or training (NEET) in the UK was at a near record low (764,000) – down 364,000 since 2010. As part of this the number of women aged 16-24 who were NEET was at a near record low (383,000) – down 238,000 since 2010. The number of men aged 16-24 who were NEET was also near a record low – at 381,000 – down 126,000 since 2010.

The latest figures from the independent ONS, show that in February-April 2019 UK employment rate is at a joint record high of 76.1% - and as part of this the female employment rate is at a record high (72.0%). The male employment rate was 80.3% - up 5.3% points since 2010.

[Government Equalities Office: Behavioural Insights Team](#)

19 Jun 2019 | 263103

Asked by: Butler, Dawn

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, if she will provide the (a) full cost breakdown and (b) agreed programme of work and outcomes of the contract her Department has tendered with the Behavioural Insights Team on work relating to the gender pay gap.

Answering member: Victoria Atkins | **Department:** Women and Equalities

We are committed to ensuring that the UK is an international leader on gender equality research, so that employers have the tools and knowledge they need to close their gender pay gaps.

In September 2017, we invested £2 million in the Gender and Behavioural Insights programme (GABI), a two-year partnership between GEO and the Behavioural Insights Team to understand how behavioural science techniques can help to improve gender equality in the workplace. In December 2018 we extended the GABI programme for a third year, investing a further £1 million. Information on further breakdown of costs is commercially sensitive.

The GABI programme is working with large UK-based employers to design, trial and evaluate behavioural interventions to reduce the gender pay gap and improve gender equality more broadly. It is also taking forward a suite of other behavioural science trials including on recruitment, returners, part time working, parental leave, gendered feedback and others.

In August 2018, the GABI programme published guidance for employers to understand what actions are likely to improve recruitment and progression of women and reduce the gender pay gap, which was actively welcomed by businesses: <https://gender-pay-gap.service.gov.uk/actions-to-close-the-gap>. This guidance will be updated in the autumn alongside a set of new Implementation Guides.

[Sports: Equal Pay](#)

11 Jun 2019 | 259975

Asked by: Reynolds, Emma

To ask the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, what steps his Department is taking to close the gender pay gap in sport; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Mims Davies | **Department:** Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport

It is important that women and men are recognised and paid equally for doing the same work. I welcome the positive step that has been taken to ensure that all companies in Great Britain with more than 250 employees are required to report their gender pay gap to the Government Equalities Office.

We know there is some work to do to narrow the gender pay gap across the sport sector. Sport England's workforce strategy for England, "Working in an Active Nation", highlights the commitment to achieving higher gender diversity in leadership roles on boards in sport. Furthermore the UK Sport and Sport England Code for Sports Governance, which is mandatory and applies to any organisation seeking funding from Sport England or UK Sport, includes a target of at least 30% gender diversity on boards.

[Aviation: Females](#)

11 Jun 2019 | 259271

Asked by: Knight, Julian

To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, what assessment he has made of the effect of the Women in Aviation and Aerospace Charter on improving gender equality in aviation; and if he will make a statement.

Answering member: Michael Ellis | **Department:** Department for Transport

Earlier this year, nine months after its inception, the Charter celebrated reaching 100 signatories. This milestone signifies that industry is not only committed to greater diversity, but that it is also willing to come under greater scrutiny to prove its commitment to attract and recruit more women and then support their progress so they in turn can act as role models for future generations. We look forward to seeing progress being made against the Charters objectives and the difference it makes to industry.

[Doctors: Equal Pay](#)

30 May 2019 | 256964

Asked by: Farrelly, Paul

To ask the Secretary of State for Health and Social Care, whether he plans to evaluate the potential effect on the gender pay gap in medicine of the Government's decision not to include (a) consultants and (b) specialist and associate speciality doctors in the NHS shared parental leave entitlement implemented in April 2019.

Answering member: Stephen Hammond | **Department:** Department of Health and Social Care

The shared parental leave arrangements introduced in April 2019 were part of the Agenda for Change pay and contract reform agreement and enacted via changes to the National Health Service Terms and Conditions of Service Handbook.

The provisions were extended to doctors and dentists in training, by virtue of the fact that their contractual arrangements mirror certain non-pay schedules from the NHS Handbook.

The current terms and conditions for consultants and specialty and associate specialist (SAS) doctors do not share these same schedules and therefore the changes do not automatically apply to these staff.

We firmly believe that all members of NHS staff should be treated equally. Established routes for contractual changes are via NHS Employers. Medical trades unions have been invited by NHS Employers to adopt the same non-pay schedules from the NHS Handbook for consultant and SAS doctors as have already been adopted by doctors and dentists in training, including those relating to shared parental leave.

An evaluation on the potential effect on the gender pay gap in medicine of not including consultants and specialty and associate specialist doctors in the NHS shared parental leave entitlement has not been planned.

The Department has commissioned an independent review into the gender pay gap in medicine, chaired by Professor Dame Jane Dacre. The review, which commenced in April 2018, is currently examining qualitative and quantitative evidence which will help identify the impact

of cultural, practical and psychological issues that contribute to the gender pay gap in medicine.

The evidence collected and examined will go on to produce a series of implementable recommendations for publication in September 2019.

[Females: New Businesses](#)

02 May 2019 | 247710

Asked by: Shannon, Jim

To ask the Secretary of State for Education what steps she has taken to promote entrepreneurship among female pupils in school.

Answering member: Anne Milton | **Department:** Department for Education

The government's careers strategy for England, published in December 2017, aims to give young people from all backgrounds the opportunity to learn from employers about work and entrepreneurship. The careers strategy is clear that positive steps are being taken to eradicate gender norms in the classroom that could otherwise lead to girls narrowing their career choices.

While it is for schools to decide how best to provide entrepreneurship education, the careers statutory guidance encourages schools in England to provide opportunities for all pupils, regardless of gender, to develop entrepreneurial skills.

The Careers & Enterprise Company's network of Enterprise Advisers, comprising of senior volunteers from business, helps schools and colleges to work with local businesses. This gives young people exposure to individuals, including positive female role models, who can provide insight into a wide range of jobs and careers. Over 2,000 business volunteers have been recruited and over 40% are self-employed or from small businesses and microbusinesses. Through the careers strategy, all schools and colleges will be offered an Enterprise Adviser by 2020.

[State Retirement Pensions: Females](#)

30 Apr 2019 | 247728

Asked by: Grady, Patrick

To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will publish a response to EDM 2296 on providing financial restitution to born in the 1950s women.

Answering member: Guy Opperman | **Department:** Department for Work and Pensions

The approach of Labour, Conservative and the Coalition governments for the last 24 years since the 1995 pensions Act is the same. This

Government's position on the changes to State Pension age (SPa) remains clear and consistent.

The legislative changes to women's SPa address the longstanding inequalities that had previously existed between men and women's SPa. If State Pension age had not been equalised, women would be spending over 40 per cent of their adult life in retirement and this proportion would be continuing to increase. Even after equalising women's State Pension age with men's, women will spend on average around two years more in receipt of their State Pension because of their longer life expectancy.

The overall trend in the percentage of pensioners living in poverty is a dramatic fall over several decades. We are forecast to spend over £120 billion on benefits for pensioners, including £99 billion on the State Pension (2019/2020). In 2019/20 we are spending £3.1 billion to increase benefit and pension rates for pensioners.

The welfare system continues to provide a safety-net for those experiencing hardship, including that caused by unemployment, disability, and coping with caring responsibilities which affect those unable to work and therefore most in need in the run up to their State Pension age. Women who have had their State Pension age increased have the same eligibility to working age in-work, out-of-work and disability benefits as a man with the same date of birth.

This matter has been comprehensively debated on many occasions in Parliament, and any amendment to the current legislation which creates a new inequality between men and women would be highly dubious as a matter of law. The Government does not respond to individual EDMs.

[Schools: Discrimination](#)

29 Apr 2019 | 246440

Asked by: Cunningham, Mr Jim

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to prevent sexism in schools.

Answering member: Nick Gibb | **Department:** Department for Education

The Equality Act makes it unlawful for a school to discriminate against or treat a pupil less favourably because of protected characteristics. Under the Public Sector Equality Duty, schools that are public bodies have a general duty to have regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and to advance equality of opportunity between different groups and foster good relations between different groups.

In November 2018, the Department published Respectful School Communities, a self-review and signposting tool that supports schools in developing a whole-school approach that promotes respect and discipline. This can combat sexual bullying, sexual harassment, and

prejudice and helps schools to identify the various elements that make up a whole school approach, consider gaps in their current practice, and get further support. The Respectful School Communities review is available here: <https://educateagainsthate.com/school-leaders/?filter=guidance-and-training-school-leaders>.

The Department is making relationships education compulsory for all primary pupils, relationships and sex education compulsory for all secondary pupils, and health education compulsory for all pupils in state-funded schools from September 2020. The draft guidance sets out that pupils will be taught about the importance of developing healthy, respectful and positive relationships. Pupils should also know about the negative impact of discrimination, what a stereotype is, and how stereotypes, including those based on gender, can be unfair, negative or destructive.

Advice is also available for schools and colleges on how to prevent and respond to reports of sexual violence and harassment between children. It sets out what to do if there are incidents of this kind in the school.

[Qualifications: Gender](#)

29 Apr 2019 | 246439

Asked by: Cunningham, Mr Jim

To ask the Secretary of State for Education, what steps his Department is taking to tackle the achievement gap in qualifications between male and female pupils in schools.

Answering member: Nadhim Zahawi | **Department:** Department for Education

This government is determined to deliver an education system that offers world-class education to every pupil, and ensures that all children and young people – regardless of their gender, ethnicity or background – have the opportunity to go as far as their talents and hard work will take them.

Our ongoing education reforms are intended to set the highest expectations for what all school-age pupils will achieve. We have put in place a stretching national curriculum and world-class qualifications, and performance measures that encourage more pupils to study GCSEs in the academic subjects that most enable progress to higher education. We have also introduced the Attainment 8 and Progress 8 measures, which are designed to focus the attention of secondary schools on the academic progress that every pupil makes between the end of primary school and the end of key stage 4, as well as their achievement in GCSEs.

We have given head teachers flexibility over the resources allocated to their schools, so that they can determine what provision to put in place to ensure that every pupil – boys and girls alike – is engaged, challenged and can achieve to the best of their abilities. The national funding formula for schools includes a low prior attainment factor, to help

schools put support in place for those pupils who did not reach the expected standard in national assessments at the end of the previous phase of education. We also continue to provide additional funding to schools through the pupil premium in order to improve the progress and attainment of pupils from financially disadvantaged family backgrounds.

[Females: Education](#)

10 Apr 2019 | 241411

Asked by: Farrelly, Paul

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, what recent discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Education on the provision of (a) inclusive and (b) positive education about periods and the human body in schools.

Answering member: Victoria Atkins | **Department:** Women and Equalities

The Minister for Women and Equalities recently announced a new Taskforce that will bring together representatives from all sectors to develop comprehensive and sustainable solutions to period poverty. Preparation for this has included discussions with a number of Ministerial colleagues.

The Taskforce will present the opportunity for discussions on education around menstruation. The government is making Health Education compulsory in all state-funded schools, alongside Relationships Education for all primary pupils, and Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) for all secondary pupils from September 2020. As part of this subject, all pupils will be taught about menstruation and menstrual wellbeing at a timely point.

[Females: Equality](#)

05 Mar 2019 | 227057

Asked by: Watson, Tom

To ask the Minister for Women and Equalities, with reference to the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women, what discussions she has had with Cabinet colleagues on improving access for women's organisations and coalitions to engage with Government.

Answering member: Victoria Atkins | **Department:** Women and Equalities

The Minister for Women and Equalities regularly discusses gender equality issues with Cabinet colleagues and this Government is committed to tackling the major injustices that hold women back. We regularly consult with women's organisations as we develop policies, and will continue to do so. For example, we have engaged with

women's groups through the Centenary Programme, Returners Programme and the LGBT action plan.

The Government Equalities Office is currently developing a programme of work to ensure that women's voices are better heard by policymakers. Our aim is to understand the barriers that women face and enable them to fulfil their potential.

[Schools: Discrimination](#)

12 Feb 2019 | HL13345

Asked by: Lord Watson of Invergowrie

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many schools in England treat girls differently to boys in terms of (1) common room access, (2) playground activities, (3) eating arrangements, and (4) any other activities in the school but outside the classroom.

Answering member: Lord Agnew of Oulton | **Department:** Department for Education

In June 2018 the department published the attached guidance 'Gender separation in mixed schools', to support schools in complying with the law on this matter. Such separation is permissible when in accordance with exemptions under the Equality Act 2010 – for instance those related to the correction of educational disadvantage or the needs of different sexes, provision for competitive sports, or is insignificant enough to be regarded as de minimis.

Ofsted began systematically reporting on pupil segregation matters from September 2018 and has drawn attention to this in several inspection reports published since that date. The exact number of schools reported by Ofsted could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

The department is taking action in relation to each school where this has occurred, by seeking details of the school's plans to eliminate segregation or making organisational changes to the school and setting out the approvals process which has to be followed. The department is also in touch with a number of schools thought to operate segregation for pupils to discuss their plans, and has liaised with representative bodies for the schools involved.

Information regarding how many schools in England treat girls differently to boys in terms of (1) common room access, (2) playground activities, (3) eating arrangements, and (4) any other activities in the school but outside the classroom, is not held centrally.

4. Organisations and further reading

4.1 Committee reports and inquiries

[16 Jul 2019 - Gender Sensitive Parliament Audit - oral evidence, HC 188](#)

Women and Equalities Committee

16 Jul 2019

[Two thirds of women MPs say that progress on tackling violence against women in politics impacts their willingness to stand for re-election](#)

Women and Equalities Committee

01 November 2019

4.2 Government reports

[Gender separation in mixed schools](#)

Department for Education

June 2018

[Gender equality at every stage: a roadmap for change](#)

Government Equalities Office

July 2019

[Gender equality monitor](#)

Government Equalities Office

July 2019

[The case for change: How economic gender inequalities develop across the life course](#)

Government Equalities Office

July 2019

[Dataset: Gender pay gap](#)

Office for National Statistics

Annual gender pay gap estimates for UK employees by age, occupation, industry, full-time and part-time, region and other geographies, and public and private sector. Compiled from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.

[DFID Strategic Vision for Gender Equality: Her Potential, Our Future](#)

7 March 2018

Department for International Development

[UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security 2018–2022](#)

HM Government

January 2018

4.3 Further reading

[Global gender gap report 2020](#)

World Economic Forum

3 January 2020

[Working it Out: Improving employment opportunities for women with criminal convictions](#)

Prison Reform Trust

17 February 2020

[Gender Equality Index 2019: Work—life balance](#)

European Institute for Gender Equality

11 October 2019

[Youth Voice Census Report 2019](#)

Youth Employment UK

May 2019

[Gender equality in sport: Getting closer every day](#)

European Parliamentary Research Service

March 2019

[Where Are All the Women? Shining a light on the of women's sport in the media](#)

Women in Sport

October 2018

[Gender Equality in the Media Sector](#)

European Parliament

2018

[About International Women's Day](#)

International Women's Day.

[International Women's Day 2020 campaign theme is #EachforEqual](#)

International Women's Day

[Women Deliver website](#)

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