



# Pay Policy Statement 2025

## Introduction from His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales



We recognise the importance of transparent pay arrangements that are equal to all and appropriate to business needs, provide value for money, and reward employees fairly for the work they perform.

This statement sets out our approach to pay, decision-making on senior manager pay and the relationship between employee’s pay and the remuneration of senior management.

The information in this statement complements other information, such as our Annual Plan and Annual Report and Accounts, published on our website.

If you can’t find the information you are looking for, then please contact us: [enquiries@estyn.gov.wales](mailto:enquiries@estyn.gov.wales)

This statement aligns with the principles and reporting standards outlined in:

- the Welsh Government's [Transparency of senior remuneration in the devolved Welsh public sector](#) framework
- the Public Services Staff Commission’s [Transparency of Senior Pay in the Devolved Welsh Public Sector](#)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Owen Evans', written over a faint dotted line.

**Owen Evans**

**His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales**

## Introduction

- 1 This statement covers the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. It provides the framework for decision-making on pay and in particular decision making on senior manager pay in Estyn. Our Strategic Management Group approved this statement on 21 May 2026.

The pay and workforce data tables in the [Annex](#) supplement this statement.

## Pay principles

- 2 Our pay arrangements follow these key pay principles:
  - **Consistency** – focus on ensuring equal pay for our employees and taking action to address pay gaps. Effective and consistent job evaluation is a key element of this. Pay will be appropriate for the level of responsibility and role. Simple salary progression with incremental pay scales enables employees to quickly reach the rate of pay for their role. We carry out regular equal pay audits to identify any pay gaps for protected characteristics and publish an Equal Pay Audit Report in line with good practice guidance. Our latest report can be viewed here: [Equal Pay Audit Report](#).
  - **Openness** – ensuring our arrangements are open, transparent and simple. Accountability for pay arrangements is clear and forms part of our governance structure. We observe the legal and financial requirements set by either the UK Government or Welsh Government. It's reasonable that remuneration arrangements for more senior posts should be more transparent and open to scrutiny than those of lower paid positions. We publish further detail in our [Annual Report and Accounts](#).
  - **Accessibility** – ensuring that organisational decisions relating to remuneration in the Welsh public sector are easily accessible is important for effective scrutiny of public spending. This Statement is published on our website alongside our [Annual Report and Accounts](#).
  - **Affordability and value for money** – our pay system will be affordable, represent good value for money in the use of public funds and support a motivated and valued workforce. We analogue with the Welsh Government on addressing low pay. The real Living Wage, as defined by the Living Wage Foundation, will underpin salary rates.

## Legislative framework

- 3 We are a non-ministerial civil service department. We are independent of but funded by the Welsh Government under section 104 of the Government of Wales Act 1998.

- 4 Our duties and powers are drawn from those of His Majesty’s Chief Inspector for Education and Training in Wales (HMCI) whose position is set out in the [Government of Wales Act 2006](#).
- 5 HMCI has the power to appoint employees and determine their pay and terms of employment under Schedule 2 of the Education Act 2005, with the approval of the Welsh Government. We comply with all relevant employment legislation in determining the pay and remuneration of our employees.

## Decision-making

- 6 HMCI is responsible for recommending to the Welsh Government appropriate pay arrangements for delegated grades. Delegated grades are employees at Administrative Officer, Executive Officer, Higher Executive Officer, Senior Executive Officer, Grade 7 and Grade 6 levels and include His Majesty’s Inspectors of Education and Training (HMI) who are appointed by Orders in Council.
- 7 Underpinning these arrangements, the Assistant Director: Inspection and Central Services is responsible for ensuring that Trade Unions are fully engaged in pay negotiations, in the spirit of social partnership, through collective bargaining. These negotiations are based on analogue to pay awards and conditions of service agreed by the Welsh Government for its employees as far as the budget will allow and that these represent value for money.
- 8 We have strong partnership working arrangements with Trade Union colleagues and work closely with them on pay related matters. Arrangements for the consultation and negotiation of pay are set out under the terms of reference for the Estyn / Trade Unions Strategic Forum.
- 9 Pay awards for delegated grades are normally negotiated on an annual basis. Alternative arrangements may be agreed, for example where existing agreements cover an extended period. During pay negotiations, a pay remit is agreed and then submitted to the Welsh Government for ministerial approval.
- 10 All our employees are civil servants. We set terms and conditions of service, including pay for all posts, except members of the Senior Civil Service (SCS), in line with the provisions set out in the [Civil Service Management Code](#). All employees are eligible to be members of the Civil Service pension arrangements. In determining terms and conditions for our employees, we take account of employment policies applied by the Civil Service and the Welsh Government. Our employment policies are available under [Corporate Policies](#) on our website.

- 11 Senior management pay proposals are presented to our Remuneration Committee along similar timescales. Terms and conditions for SCS employees are determined by the Cabinet Office (see [SCS Performance Management and Reward](#) for more information).

## Pay arrangements

- 12 The SCS salary range (which is determined by the UK Government) and our pay band structure are set out in **Annex 1 – Table 1**. The pay structure consists of set bands or grades, with each role allocated to a specified band or grade.
- 13 All posts are evaluated by the Welsh Government using the following:
- All posts below the Senior Civil Service - [JEGS job evaluation method](#)
  - Senior Civil Service posts – [JESP job evaluation methodology](#)

These methods are used across the UK Civil Service. Once a post has been evaluated the score determines the pay band for the post.

- 14 New appointments in delegated grades are normally recruited at the minimum of the relevant pay band. Under some circumstances, we may appoint a new employee to a higher rate within the scale. This is subject to approval by our Resource Panel whose membership includes HMCI. These circumstances might include, for example:
- previous failure to have recruited at a particular salary, grade, specialism, and/or location
  - requirement to recruit where there is a known market premium and clear market evidence to support this
  - to secure the best candidate, taking in to account that candidate’s current circumstances
  - overall value for money when considering the costs of a further recruitment exercise
- 15 Salaries are subject to an incremental increase each year on either 1 January or 1 July, depending on the employee’s start date, until they reach the maximum of the pay band (normally within 1-3 years). Individuals assessed as underperforming are not eligible for incremental progression. On promotion, starting pay is usually to the minimum of the pay band for the new grade.
- 16 Our total salary costs for 2025-2026 are detailed in the **Annex – Error! Reference source not found.** Employee numbers by pay band are set out in the **Annex –**

17 **Table to 7.**

**Wider benefits package**

18 In addition to an employee’s salary, we offer a range of both financial and non-financial workplace benefits. These include membership of the Civil Service Pension Scheme, access to advance of salary and salary sacrifice arrangements, learning and development opportunities and employee wellbeing schemes, as well as a modern flexible working environment.

**Additional payments and allowances**

19 Depending on business requirements, employees may be eligible for the following additional payments where relevant to their role:

- temporary duties allowance
- recruitment and retention allowance
- homeworking allowance
- travel and subsistence

20 Those individuals employed as Assistant Directors (Grade 6), have a recruitment and retention allowance applied to the role.

**Senior pay**

**Role of His Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Education and Training in Wales (HMCI)**

21 Owen Evans took up post as HMCI in January 2022. HMCI is our senior officer who leads and is responsible for the inspection and regulation of education and training in Wales. As our Accounting Officer, HMCI has responsibility to ensure that we use all allocated resources properly and provide value for money. We have an annual budget of around £16 million and on 31 March 2026 we employed 140 people.

22 As head of Estyn, HMCI works closely with the Strategy Board to deliver Estyn’s strategic objectives to:

- Provide public accountability to service users on the quality and standards of education and training in Wales
- Inform the development of national policy by the Welsh Government
- Build capacity for improvement of the education and training system in Wales

**HMCI pay**

- 23 Salary for HMCI is decided and can only be amended by the Welsh Government. Our Remuneration Committee makes recommendations on HMCI pay to our Additional Accounting Officer in the Welsh Government. HMCI's current salary range is £155,000 – £162,500 (within the Director SCS Pay Band 2: £100,000 to £162,500).
- 24 We publish details of HMCI's pay in the remuneration report included in our [Annual Report and Accounts](#).
- 25 Expenses such as for public transport, car mileage, overnight accommodation and parking are claimed back under our [Travel and Subsistence Policy](#). Where benefits-in-kind or other expenses or allowances are taken up these are disclosed in our remuneration report.
- 26 HMCI is a member of the Civil Service Pension Scheme, and their pension details are disclosed in the remuneration report. There have been no increases or enhancements to the pension outside of standard arrangements.

### Senior employees

- 27 Senior management roles are covered by SCS employees at Deputy Director Pay Band 1 level. Senior management SCS employees' current salary range is £105,000 – £110,000 (within the Deputy Director Pay Band 1: £81,000 £128,900).
- 28 SCS pay is not delegated. This means that we implement SCS pay awards in accordance with the guidance produced by the UK Government, following recommendations from the Senior Salaries Review Body (SSRB). Further information on the SSRB can be found on the [Gov.UK website](#).
- 29 Our Strategy Board includes senior employees within the organisation and the Assistant Director Central Services at Grade 6 level. The Strategy Board is chaired by HMCI and meets four times per year. Its primary purpose is:
- to establish and monitor our strategic agenda
  - to promote effective corporate governance
- 30 The Strategy Board has two sub-committees:
- the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee
  - the Remuneration Committee
- 31 Our Remuneration Committee is chaired by a Non-Executive Director. The Committee is responsible for providing advice to the Welsh Government on HMCI pay and determining senior employee pay based on the advice and recommendations of HMCI. The Committee ensures that remuneration is handled in a fair and appropriate way and in line with Cabinet Office and Welsh Government guidance. The Committee has some flexibility to operate within the guidance set out by Cabinet Office. For example, we have not made any

performance related variable (or bonus) payments to HMCI since 2013 nor to other SCS employees since 2010. The Welsh Government approves all senior pay decisions.

- 32 There were no changes to senior management in 2025-2026.
- 33 We publish details of senior manager’s pay in our remuneration report contained in our [Annual Report and Accounts](#).

## **Talent management and succession planning**

- 34 Our talent management approach ensures that we provide equality of opportunity for everyone to demonstrate their potential and progress their career either with us or outside of Estyn. Our performance management process recognises good performance and supports employee development. We support the development of high potential individuals by offering more challenging and stretching roles.
- 35 We ensure that effective succession planning is in place to maintain corporate knowledge and leadership through:
- distributed leadership
  - opportunities to lead or be involved in key projects
  - shadowing opportunities
  - temporary promotion opportunities in all grades up to Deputy Director level
  - our commitment to learning and development to ensure we equip our employees with the knowledge and skills required for their current role and any future role(s) internally or in the wider public sector
- 36 Our learning and development arrangements enable all our employees to be the best they can be through the provision of varied and relevant training and development. This includes leadership and management development programmes. We advertise opportunities for promotion or secondment/loans internally to support movement around the public sector and promote equal opportunity for all.

## **Performance related pay**

- 37 We do not offer performance related payments for delegated grades.
- 38 For senior employees, the Remuneration Committee has some flexibility to propose performance related (or bonus) payments to SCS employees. The committee has not proposed or made any of these payments since 2013.

## **Gender pay gap reporting**

- 39 The gender pay gap measures the difference between the average (mean or median) pay of men and women. The median gender pay gap compares the pay of women and men in

the middle of their pay distributions. The mean gender pay gap also takes into account differences in pay at the top of the organisation when calculating the difference in pay.

40 The figures in the table below are Estyn’s gender pay gap as of 31 March 2026.

	Female average (mean)	Male average pay (mean)	Mean gender pay gap	Female median average pay	Male median average pay	Median gender pay gap
Salary	£65,416	£81,192	19.5%	£78,691	£89,466	12.1%

41 The primary cause of our gender pay gap is an imbalance in representation. Women are over-represented in junior grades.

42 We take action to rebalance representation with diverse interview panels, development and mentoring and promoting family friendly policies and flexible working among men as well as women. We continue to test the effectiveness of these approaches regularly.

### Support for lower paid employees

43 One of our key principles is a focus on addressing low pay and supporting the Living Wage. Pay agreements consider any particular focus needed for lower paid employees and any issues flagged through equal pay audits.

44 Everyone directly employed is paid at rates above the UK Living Wage as defined by the Living Wage Foundation.

45 Agency workers are paid an hourly or daily rate that is the equivalent to the pay bands of our employees.

### Highest and lowest pay point

46 The lowest pay within Estyn is the starting rate of the Administrative Officer salary range. The highest paid employee is HMCI.

### Exit policy

47 To support organisational change, we may from time to time elect to run voluntary severance exercises. In these circumstances employees will be offered compensation based on the [Civil Service Compensation Scheme](#) framework. We publish the costs associated with any severance agreements in our [Annual Report and Accounts](#). All severance activity is supported by a business case which considers value for money, including a cost benefit analysis.

## Off-payroll arrangements

- 48 We may use off-payroll arrangements to engage
- educational professionals on secondment as inspectors
  - agency workers to fill temporary administrative vacancies
- 49 These arrangements provide flexibility and cover resource gaps that we haven't been able to fill through permanent recruitment. Secondment arrangements supplement our internal inspection capacity and also provide an opportunity to build capacity for improvement in education providers once the secondee returns to their substantive post.
- 50 Our Operational Group and Resource Panel identifies and regularly reviews the number of secondments and skills required. Secondees are usually appointed for a maximum period of two years (extended in exceptional circumstances with prior approval from the Civil Service Commission). Secondees remain on their employer's payroll and we reimburse their employer for their salary, employer pension and national insurance contributions.
- 51 Our Resource Panel identifies and regularly reviews the need for agency workers to fill temporary vacancies, for example to cover absence or to provide additional resource for a project. We appoint agency workers to temporary vacancies through a recruitment agency. The recruitment agency is responsible for the correct payment of tax and national insurance contributions.
- 52 All off-payroll arrangements are paid at rates above the UK Living Wage. Assurance has been sought for all existing off-payroll engagements that the employer is paying tax and national insurance. In line with reforms to the off-payroll working rules (IR35) we use the guidance on gov.uk to examine contractor roles to assess whether they are within the scope of off-payroll rules. We work with agencies and payroll providers to ensure that arrangements are in place to calculate and collect tax and National Insurance payments.

## Annex: Pay and workforce data

**Table 1: Estyn pay bands – Delegated grades and Senior Civil Service 1 April 2025 – 31 March 2026**

<b>Pay Bands – Senior Civil Service</b>	<b>Pay Point</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Director (SCS Pay Band 2)	Maximum	£162,500
	Minimum	£100,000
Deputy Director (SCS Pay Band 1)	Maximum	£117,800
	Minimum	£81,000
<b>Pay Bands – Delegated Grades</b>	<b>Pay Point</b>	<b>Salary</b>
Grade 6	4	£89,791
	3	£83,736
	2	£79,589
	1	£76,752
Grade 7	4	£73,092
	3	£68,036
	2	£64,570
	1	£61,127
Senior Executive Officer (SEO)	4	£56,471
	3	£52,583
	2	£49,940
	1	£47,698
Higher Executive Officer (HEO)	4	£45,399
	3	£41,853
	2	£39,485
	1	£37,129
Executive Officer (EO)	3	£35,014
	2	£31,902
	1	£30,769
Administrative Officer (AO)	2	£29,305
	1	£27,315

**Table 2: Staffing grade breakdown – as of 31 March 2026**

Pay band	Total FTE	Number employed
SCS Pay Band 2	1.0	1
SCS Pay Band 1	2.0	2
Grade 6	80.32	87
Grade 7	2.66	3
SEO	5.00	5
HEO	10.81	11
EO	20.04	21
AO	9.37	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>131.20</b>	<b>140</b>

**Table 3: Gender composition – as of 31 March 2026**

Pay band	Male		Female	
	FTE	%	FTE	%
SCS Pay Band 2	1	0.76	-	0.00%
SCS Pay Band 1	-	0.00	2	1.43%
Grade 6	43.81	33.39	36.51	27.83
Grade 7	1	0.76	1.66	1.27
SEO	-	-	5	3.81
HEO	1	0.76	9.81	7.48
EO	3.93	3.00	16.11	12.28
AO	3	2.29	6.37	4.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>53.74</b>	<b>40.96</b>	<b>77.46</b>	<b>59.04</b>

**Table 4: Pay relativities**

The lowest pay is the starting rate of the Administrative Officer salary range. The highest paid employee is HMCI.

Multiple of salary	Ratio
Ratio low to high	The multiple between the annual salary of the lowest (£27,315) and highest paid (£155,000 – £162,500) employee using the mid-point of salary band 1 to 5.8
Median ratio to high	The multiple between the median salary (£89,791) of Estyn and the highest paid (£155,000 – £162,500) using the mid-point of salary band 1 to 1.77

**Table 5: Off payroll engagements**

The table below shows the average amount of inward secondments and use of temporary agency staff in 2025-26.

	Average FTE	Average headcount
Agency	3.18	3.42
Secondments (in)	3.11	4.33