

Debenhams Ottaway Diversity Report July 2023

Debenhams Ottaway is required by the SRA every 2 years to collect diversity information to help them monitor the diversity of the workforce within law firms in the UK.

This report is split into 8 sections:

- age
- gender
- ethnicity
- religion or belief
- sexual orientation
- disability
- socio economic background
- caring responsibilities.

The report was completed by 82% of all staff, an increase of 7% from 2021. To help analyse the results, the report draws comparisons to data from the last Debenhams Ottaway report (2021) and the SRA workforce data collected in 2021, which is based on the requirement for firms to report their diversity data to help the SRA meet their regulatory objective 'to encourage an independent, strong, diverse and effective legal profession'.

98 out of 119 staff completed this survey.

77% of females, 20% of males and 3% preferring not to say completed the survey.

	Gender – 3 prefer not to say (3%)			
	Male	%	Female	%
Firm	20	21%	75	76%
Full Equity Partners	2	2%	5	5%
Salaried Partners	5	5%	4	4%
Solicitors	5	5%	17	17%
Other Fee Earners	2	2%	10	10%
Role supporting fee earners	3	3%	21	22%
Managerial	1	1%	5	5%
Other support	0	0%	9	9%
Chartered Legal Executive	2	3%	0	0%
Prefer not to say	0	0%	4	4%

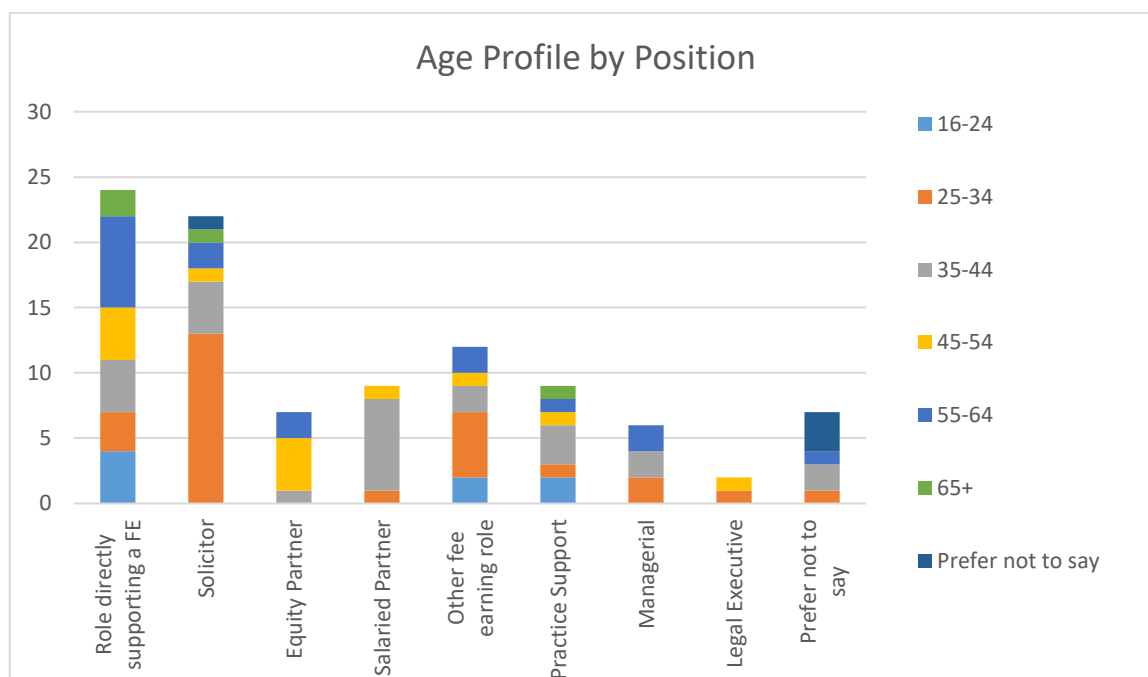
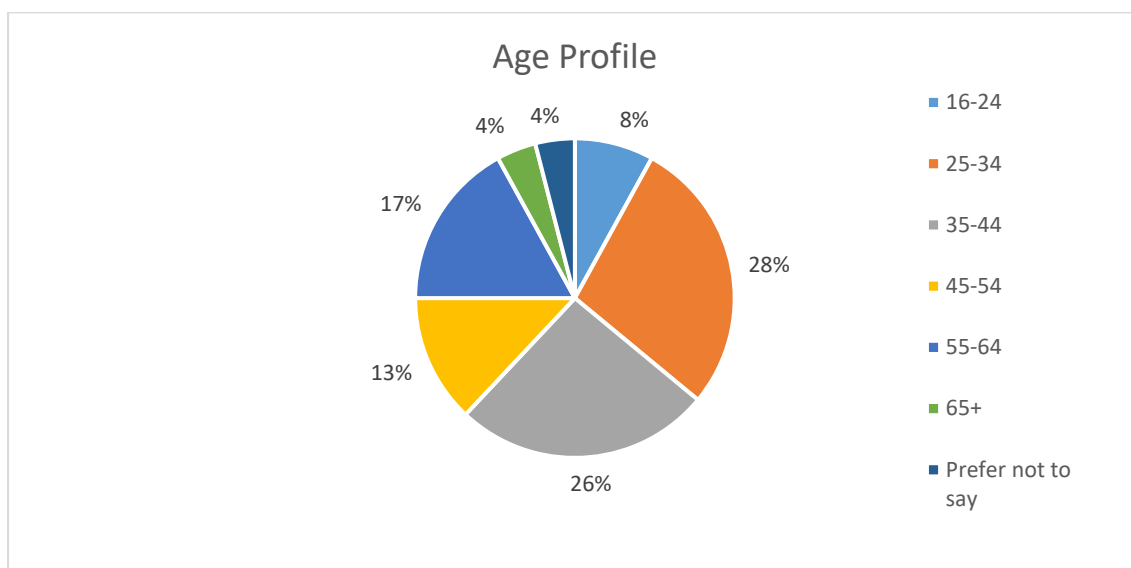
Age profile

The majority of staff at Debenhams Ottaway fall into the 25-34 (28%) followed closely by 35-44 (26%) and 55-64 categories (17%). As detailed in the chart below, 8% of participants are between 16-24, 13% are between 44-54, 4% are 65 years+ and 4% preferred not to say.

In 2021 the majority of staff at Debenhams Ottaway fell into the 25-34 (24%) followed closely by 35-44 (22%) and 45-54 categories (22%). The data shows an increase of 4% in the 25-34 and 35-44 age brackets, and a 6% decrease in the ages between 44-54.

There is a diverse age range in support staff, with a third of the participants being age 55-64.

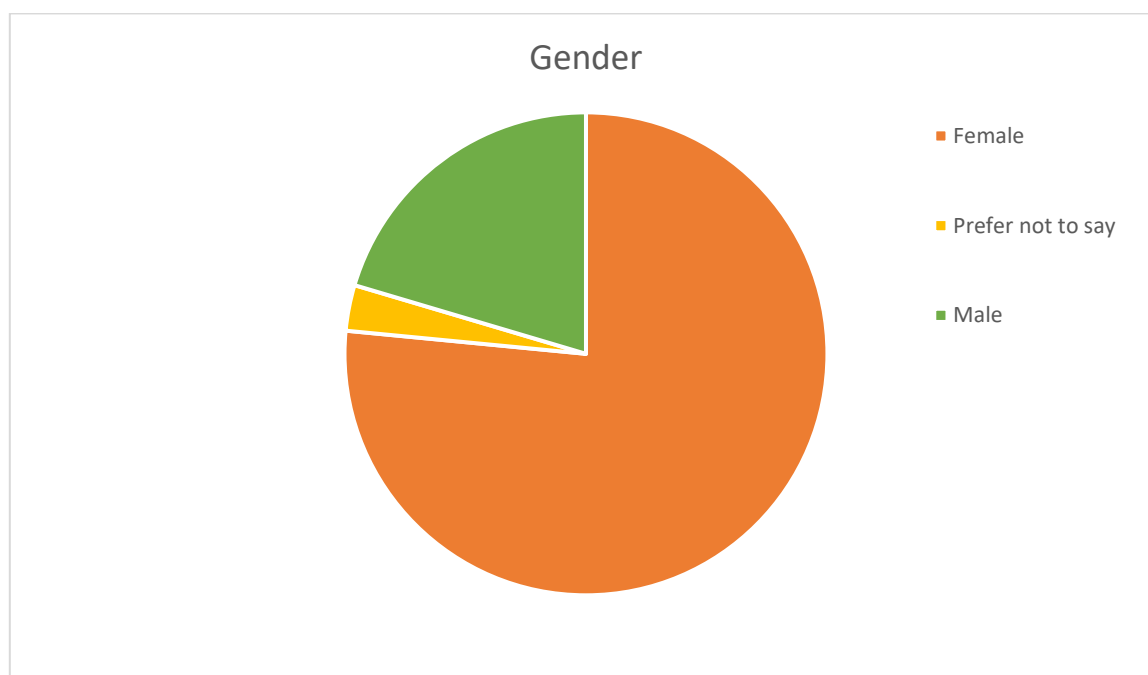
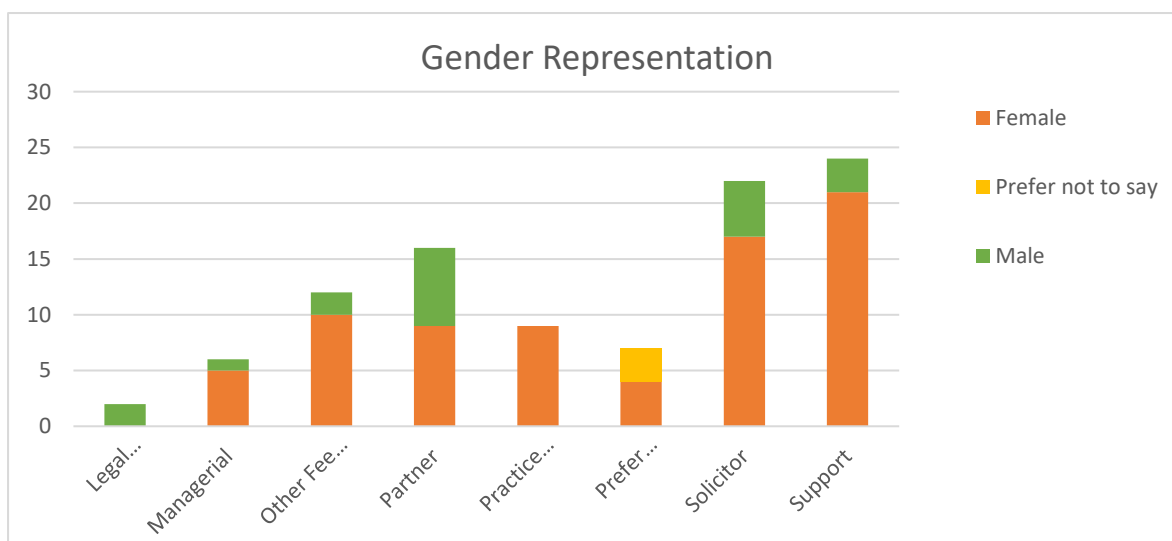
The SRA data also shows the 25-34 category being the majority in the solicitor and other staff categories at 29%.



Gender representation

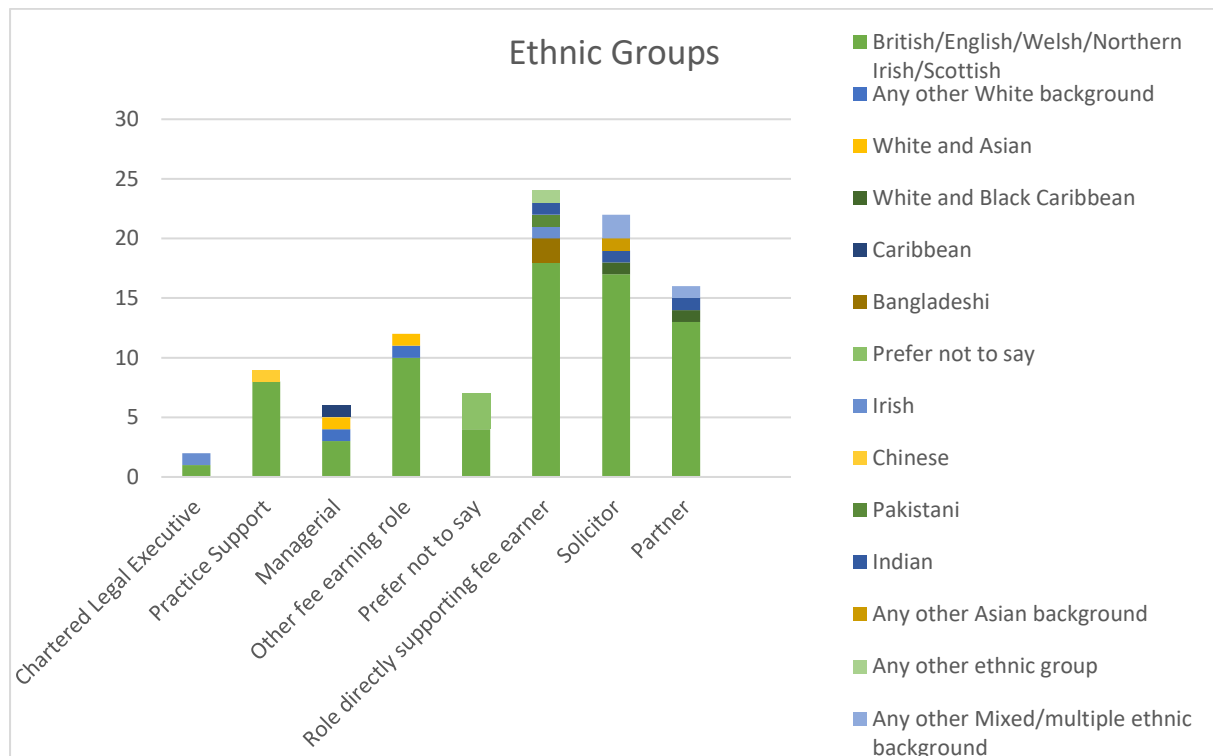
The majority of participants (77%) are female and are represented across the majority of areas by those who completed the survey, with the highest number of participants being solicitors (17%) and support staff (21%). Of male staff (20%) who took part in the survey, the chart shows that the majority are solicitors (13%). This is a very similar result to the firm's 2021 findings.

According to the data received, over half of Debenhams Ottaway's partners are female (56%). From those who participated 77% of solicitors are female and 23% male. The SRA report that females make up 35% of Partners and 61% of solicitors in the industry. The female representation at Debenhams Ottaway is significantly higher than the industry average.



Ethnicity

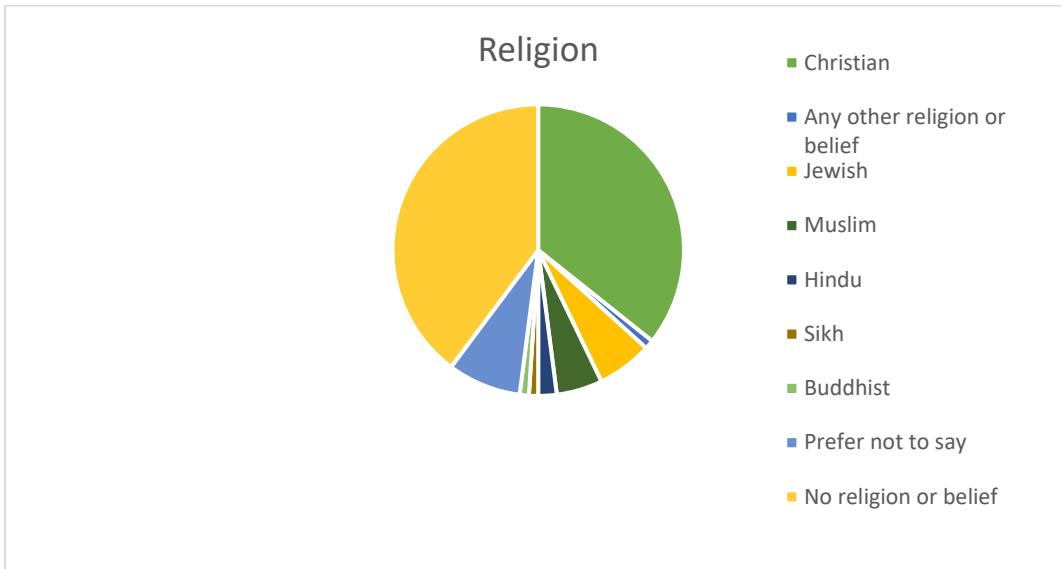
The majority of participants (75%) at Debenhams Ottaway are of British ethnicity. 12% of participants are of a mixture of ethnicities as detailed in the graph below. The SRA reports that the overall proportion of Black, Asian and minority ethnic (BAME) lawyers working in law firms is at 18%. At 8% the firms data is lower than this.



Religion or Belief

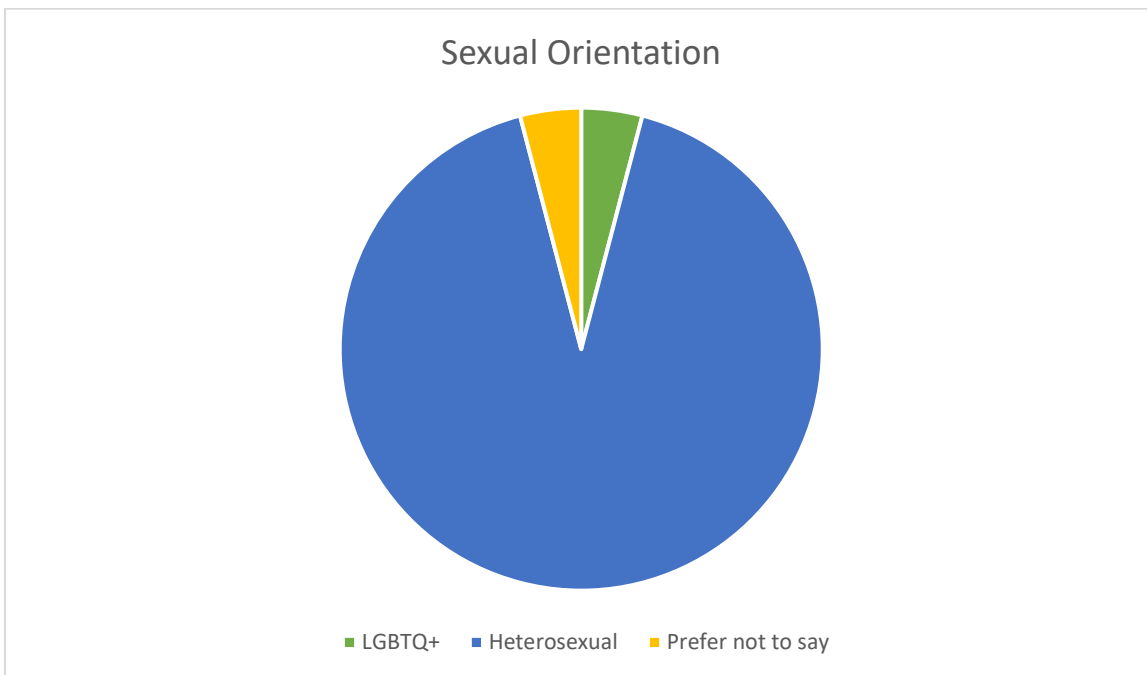
The majority of people surveyed 36% are Christian and 39% have no religion or belief as detailed below. These statistics are very similar to the data collected at Debenhams Ottaway in 2021 with a similar % of people outside of these two main categories. This matches the SRA results who also found the largest religious group for individuals was Christian (43%) followed by those individuals who have declared themselves to have no religion or to be atheist (33%).

Out of those who participate 8% preferred not to disclose, 6% are Jewish, 5% Muslim, 2% Hindu and 1% were Buddhist or 'other'.



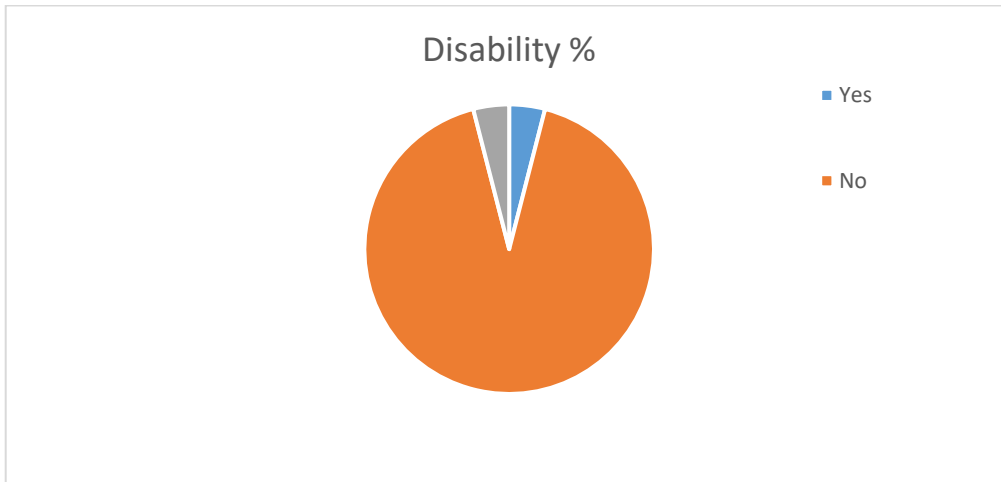
Sexual Orientation

The firm reports that 4% of employees who took part in the survey selected LGBTQ+ as their sexual orientation, 92% as heterosexual and 4% preferring not to say. These results are similar to the SRA report from 2021 which showed 3.5% of staff as LGBTQ+, 89% as heterosexual and 6.9% preferring not to say.



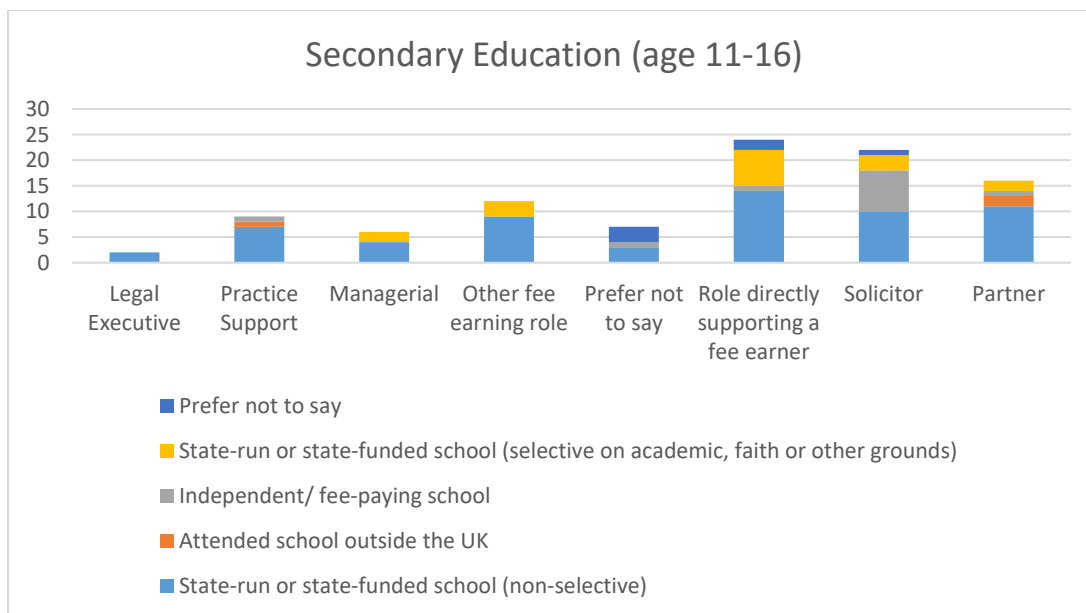
Disability

4% of participants reported as having a disability in accordance with the Disability Act. This is an increase compared to 2021, which was 1%. No staff reported their disability to be very limiting. The SRA recorded that 5% of lawyers and other staff reported having a disability and compared to 14% of the UK workforce. 92% of Debenhams Ottaway participants reported as having no disability which is the same as 2021 and 4% did not disclose.



Education background

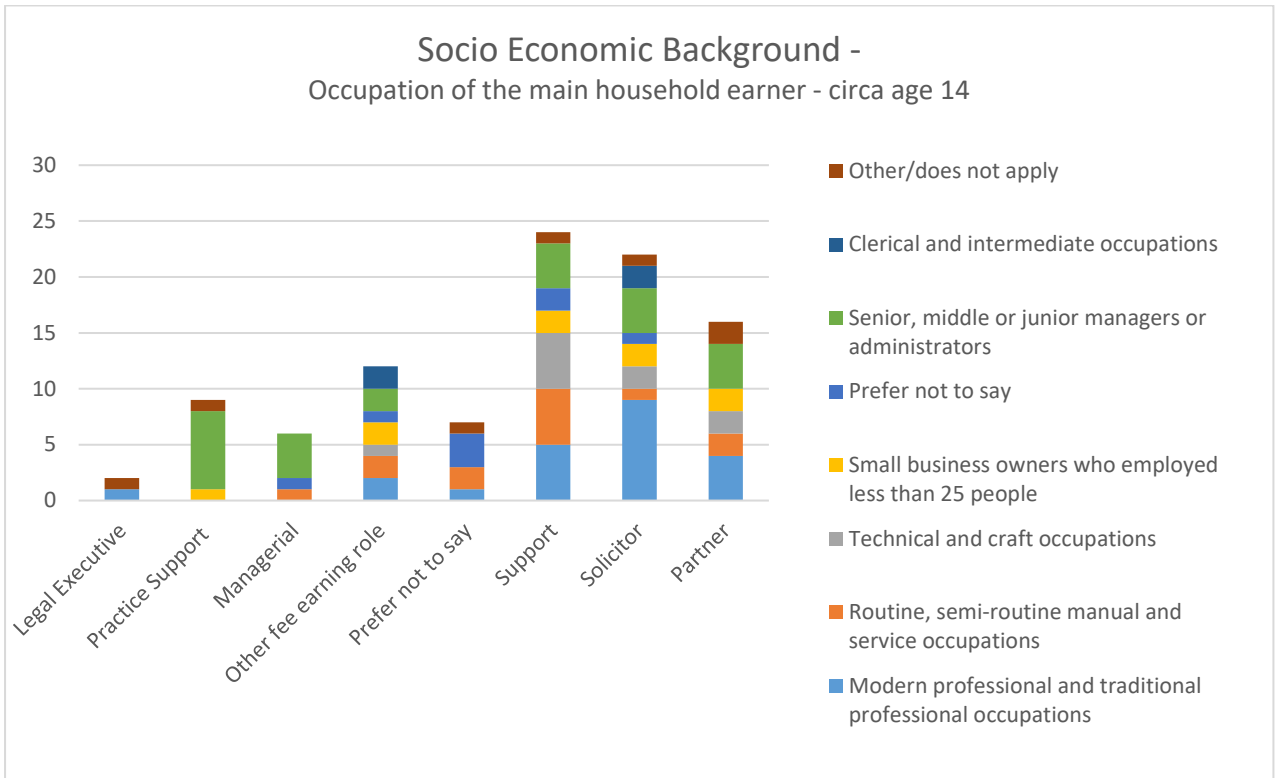
60% of participants attended a UK state non-selective school, whereas 12% attended a UK independent/fee paying school, 66% of which are solicitors. The representation of participants who attended UK selective state schools came in at 17% and 3% of participants attended a school outside the UK.



Social Mobility

70% of the participants recorded that neither of their parents attended university. 21% of staff said that at least one parent was educated to degree level, 7% preferred not to say and 1% were unsure.

22% of all participants (16% of which were fee earners/partners) reported that the occupation of main household earners around the age of 14 were in a modern professional and traditional professional occupations. 26% of staff had a parent in senior, middle, or junior manager or administrator positions. 10% were in technical and craft occupations and 13% were in routine, semi-routine manual and service occupations. 9% of participants parents were small business owners and 6% were in clerical and intermediate roles. 8% would prefer not to say and 6% came under 'other'.

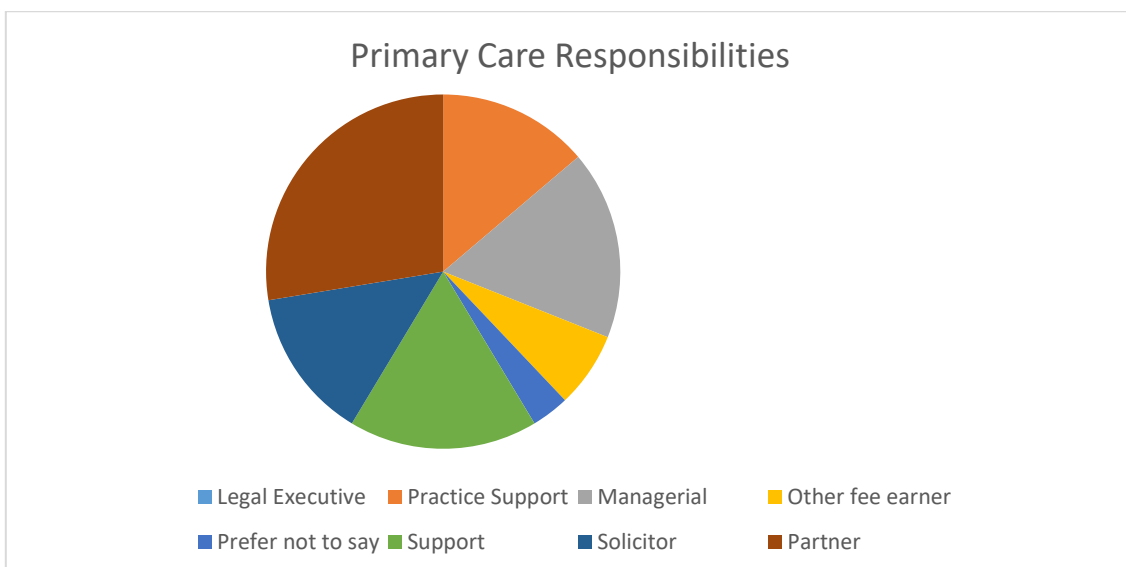


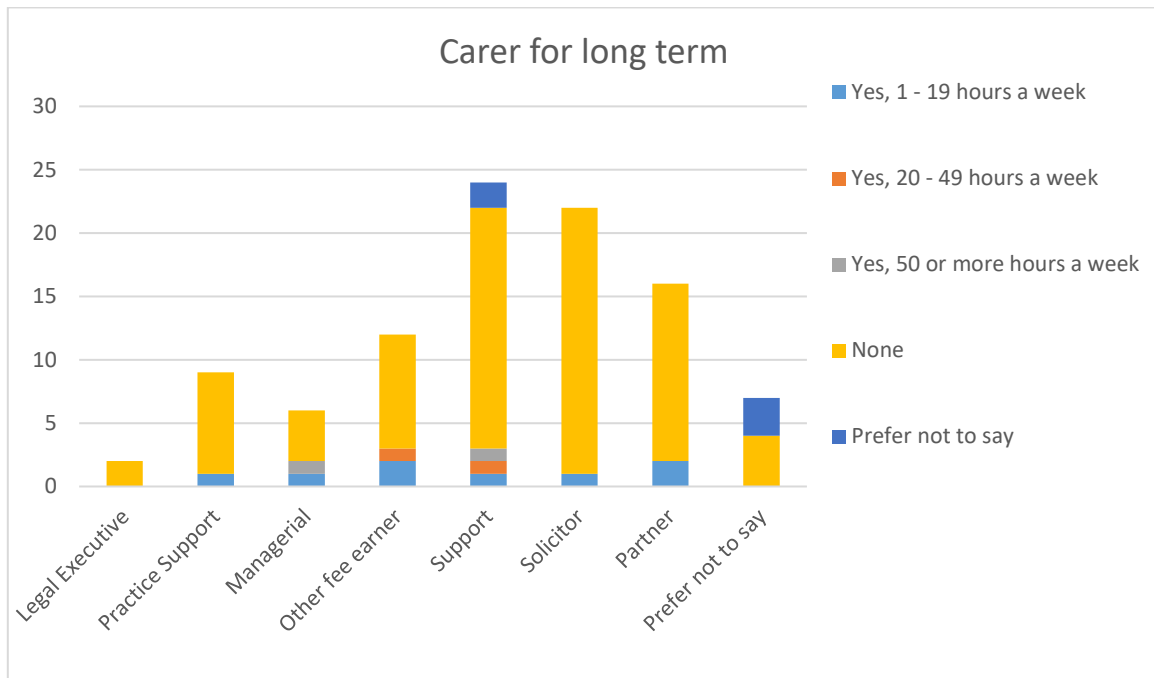
Caring responsibilities

67% of staff who completed the survey have no primary carer responsibilities, this is a 8% decrease since 2021. 30% have caring responsibilities which is an increase of 7% since 2021 and 3% preferred not to say.

The SRA report that a third of lawyers have primary caring responsibilities for children (33%) and support staff were at 24%. At Debenhams Ottaway 14% of the 30% who have caring responsibilities are fee earners, with the other 16% being made up of other staff.

The majority of staff who participated at Debenhams Ottaway have no long-term caring responsibilities (81%), whereas 8% carry out 1-19 hours per week. This is a slight increase compared to the 6% in 2021. Only 2% of staff carry out 20-49 and 50+ hours per week. 5% preferred not to say.





Conclusion

We had an increase in response levels to that in 2021 (7% increase) and the above data appears to be fairly in line with the SRA data as a whole.

There have been a few changes in the Debenhams Ottaway statistics since the last time the survey was completed such as:

- A higher representation of people between 25-34 age category.
- A higher representation of females across the firm as a whole.
- A difference in the male and female ratio in Solicitors has changed from a 50/50 split in 2021 to 77% female and 23% male in 2023.
- A 7% increase of staff having primary career responsibilities, the split is 48% fee earners and 52% other staff.

This aside, a lot of the statistics remain similar or unchanged, but altogether shows that we are on par specifically with the SRA data, as in each of the above categories the results were similar with no major differences.