

Information for members of the Research Councils' Pension Scheme

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RCPS Reform Update

What Do I Need To Know?

Reform of the RCPS has been delayed further and will not happen before April 2020

In our last scheme reform update we said that the RCPS reforms had been delayed until April 2019. Reform means the transfer of the RCPS to the Civil Service pension arrangements, something which we have been telling you about since 2014.

Part of the reason for moving the reform implementation date was the ongoing litigation between the Firefighter's pension scheme and Judicial pension scheme and the Government. In broad terms, both schemes challenged some changes brought into effect as part of public sector pension reforms in April 2015. In January 2018 an Employment Appeal Tribunal (EAT) ruled that the 'transitional arrangements' the Government implemented as part of the reforms were age discriminatory.

The Government remain of the view that the 'transitional arrangements' are lawful and are challenging the EAT ruling through the Court of Appeal. This hearing is expected to be scheduled in November 2018, with the judgment likely to be handed down in early 2019. While this litigation continues, HM Treasury have said that transfers to other public sector schemes should not progress until the position is clarified by the Court.

Against this background, the RCPS Management Board have decided that the RCPS shall continue as is until April 2020. This also means that JSS will continue to administer the RCPS and that members will remain in their current scheme.

Meanwhile, here is a reminder of the 'transitional arrangements' it was originally expected would apply to RCPS members when the scheme eventually transferred to the Civil Service pension arrangements:

- Protected Members – Those within 10 years of normal scheme pension age (at 1 April 2012) remain in their existing pension scheme section;
- Tapered Protection Members – Those between 13½ and 10 years from normal scheme pension age (at 1 April 2012) would join the Civil Service alpha scheme during a period up to 2022 (this has also been referred to as *tapered enrolment*);
- All other members would join alpha at the point of transfer including those who had joined the RCPS schemes since 1 April 2012 regardless of their age at 1 April 2012.

These provisions are part of the Public Service Pension Act 2013 and are based on a person's age at 1 April 2012.

The normal scheme pension age for members in Classic, Classic Plus or Premium is 60. For Nuvo members the normal scheme pension age is 65.



JSS Pensions Administration

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The delay to April 2020, at the earliest, also means that JSS continue to administer the payment of pensions to pensioners and the administration of preserved pensions.

The reform plan will be reviewed by the RCPS Management Board, in consultation with BEIS (sponsoring department for the scheme) and HM Treasury, once the rulings from the Court of Appeal are published. We will share more news with our members and participating employers as soon as we know what effect it has, if anything, on the RCPS reform approach.

In the meantime it is continuation 'as is' for the RCPS and for JSS.

Remember, if you have any reform related questions please visit our website or contact us using the email address below.

Annual Benefit Statement

I'd like to take the opportunity to remind you – if you haven't already – to read your Annual Benefit Statement that we sent you in July this year. Your benefit statement contains important information about the pension benefit you are accruing. If you didn't receive your statement please let us know; email us with your name and scheme number - jss.statements@bbsrc.ac.uk.

If you'd like to know more information about the benefits of being in the RCPS please visit our 'benefit' pages here: <http://jsspensions.nerc.ac.uk/members/benefits/index.asp>.

Kye Honor
Head of JSS

Email JSS about pension reform:
jss.reform@bbsrc.ac.uk

JSS Website – Reform pages:
<http://jsspensions.nerc.ac.uk/reform/index.asp>

Contact JSS: <http://jsspensions.nerc.ac.uk/contact.asp>