

Opting out of the Research Councils' Pension Scheme

This fact sheet provides important information for you to read if you are thinking about opting out of (leaving) the Research Councils' Pension Scheme (The Scheme).

Opt out and miss out

If you are thinking of opting out of The Scheme, please remember that you will be missing out on:

- A range of valuable benefits for you and your family
- An important part of your pay and reward package
- The peace of mind that comes from knowing you have made a start on planning for your retirement

It may be that your reasons for wanting to opt out are one or more of the following:

- I don't want to pay a percentage of my pay towards a pension
- I am too young to think about a pension
- I am not planning to stay long with my current employer

If so, please read on.....

What you need to know

- Your employer cannot ask you or force you to opt out.
- If you are asked or forced to opt out, you should report it to The Pensions Regulator <https://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/>
- If you change your mind, you may be able to opt back in – complete an Opt In Form and send it to your employer's HR department or agent.
- If you stay opted out until your employer's next staging date you will normally put you back into The Scheme.
- If you change your job, your new employer will normally put you back into a pension scheme straight away.
- If you have another job, your other employer might also put you into a pension scheme, now or in the future. This notice only allows you to opt out of pension saving with your current employer. A separate notice must be filled out and given to any other employer you work for, if you wish to opt out of that employer's pension saving as well.

I don't want to pay a percentage of my pay towards a pension

Your contributions actually cost you less than the contribution rate because of tax relief. If you are eligible for the **Partnership Pension Account** option, you don't have to pay anything if you don't want to. Your employer will make contributions anyway to build up a pension pot for you.

Eligibility for the Partnership Pension Account

All individuals employed in a pensionable capacity are eligible for the Partnership Pension Account option except those protected members that joined prior to 1 October 2002. Protected membership status refers to those that will not move to the Alpha Scheme once the RCPS reforms.

I'm too young to think about a pension

You're never too young to start building up a pension – the earlier you start the better. If you want to enjoy "life after work", a pension that has built up over your working life could be the key to helping you achieve this.

I'm not planning to stay long with my current employer

If you leave The Scheme (other than **Partnership**) before pension age with less than 2 years' service and without any previous pension having been transferred in you will not be able to preserve your pension benefits.

If you leave with more than 3 months', but less than 2 years', service you will be able to choose to have a refund of your contributions or to apply to transfer the notional value of your pension benefits to another pension scheme.

If you leave within 3 months of joining The Scheme you will receive a refund of your contributions less tax.

However, if chose the **Partnership Pension Account** option your pension fund builds up from day one and if you leave you can take a **Partnership** pension with you – it is yours for life. Alternatively, if you decide to stay with you current employer for longer than first planned, you can switch from **Partnership** to **Nuvos** (if you joined on or after 30 July 2007) or **Premium** (if you joined before 30 July 2007).

Please note; automatic enrolment legislation requires employers to re-enrol staff every three years from their staging or duties date.

For more information about automatic enrolment please speak to your employer. Further information can also be found on The Pensions Regulator [website](#).

Further information about the Scheme

Please read the appropriate pension scheme booklet for further information on the pension benefits offered by your employer. These booklets are available on our website:

<http://jsspensions.nerc.ac.uk/guidesandforms.asp>.

Please think very carefully before making your decision and consider taking independent financial advice to help you make the right choice.

If you still decide you wish to opt out of the Scheme completely, you should complete the opt out form and send it to your employer or your employer's agent.

Once your employer receives your signed form, your opting out will take effect from the date you joined the Scheme if you are within three months of being automatically enrolled or from the next convenient pay period.

But remember – if you opt out you will miss out.

This fact sheet provides information to help you think about the consequences of opting out. Neither this fact sheet nor the booklets referred to cover every aspect. The full details are contained only in the rules, which are the legal basis of the scheme. You should note that nothing in this fact sheet can override the rules, and in the event of any unintentional difference, the rules will apply.

Opting out of the Research Councils' Pension Scheme

DECLARATION

I have read the whole of this form and the opting out information and understand the contents. I do not wish to remain a member of The Scheme

I understand that I will keep any benefits I have qualified for in my current scheme, but will not build up further benefits including:

- An index linked pension
- Widow's/widower's / civil partner's pension
- Partner's pension (**Classic Plus, Premium** and **Nuvos** members only)
- Death benefits
- Children's pensions
- Ill health retirement benefits
- The right to buy added pension

I do not want a partnership pension, where my employer will still make contributions even if I make none (applies to **Premium** and **Nuvos** members only).

I also understand:

- If I remain in eligible employment I may apply to rejoin the section of the Scheme that I opted out of.
- I will not be able to continue or restart any added years' contracts I have now (**Classic, Classic Plus** and **Premium** members only).
- I may be able to make added pension contributions if I rejoin.
- I will be automatically re-enrolled by my employer periodically (typically every three years) from my employer's staging date. I will have further rights to opt out again if I am re-enrolled. (A factsheet on automatic enrolment can be found on the JSS website: <http://jsspensions.nerc.ac.uk/>).
- I wish to opt out of pension saving
- I understand that if I opt out I will lose the right to pension contributions from my employer
- I understand that if I opt out I may have a lower income when I retire.

Signature.....

Full Name

Date..... Telephone no:

Staff/Payroll No. Email:.....

National Insurance No..... **OR** Date of birth

Office address, including department

**Please return this form to your employer's HR department (or their HR provider).
Your employer must complete the following section.**

Employer to complete

Business Use Only	
This application form has been checked and approved on behalf of the employer (HR/Payroll).	
Date form received by the employer	
It is important that the date given here is the date on which the form is received by the employer as this will be taken as the opting out date.	
Please give: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the date on which the employee was automatically enrolled, or (if later); the date you told the employee they had been automatically enrolled. 	
It is important that (if applicable), an accurate date is given here as this will be taken as the start of the opting out period.	
Date Opt Out effective from.	
Refund paid or being arranged for payment via payroll? (See note below)	Yes No
You should only give a refund if you have staged and have automatically enrolled this employee and you have received the opting out form within three months of the start of the opting out period. In all other cases, you must answer NO, and should take action to stop contributions from the next available pay period and send a copy of this completed opting out form to JSS to assess further actions needed.	
Department name	
Full name	
Job Title	
Telephone Number	
Signature.....	
You (the employer) must send a copy of this form to JSS.	
Date sent to JSS	