

Pensions Matters - Spring 2022

LGPS Employers' Newsletter

We hope you find it informative, as always, we welcome any feedback you may have.



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Annual returns 2021/22

2022 is an important year for the Pension Fund, as it is the triennial Fund Valuation. The valuation is an important check by the Fund Actuary to assess the level of pension liabilities and assets and assess the level of contributions required by Employers for the 3-year period from 1 April 2023.

To enable us to provide accurate and timely data to the Fund Actuary, it is important that Scheme Employers submit an accurate and complete annual return. The deadline for submission of your completed and signed 21/22 return was **30 April 2022**.

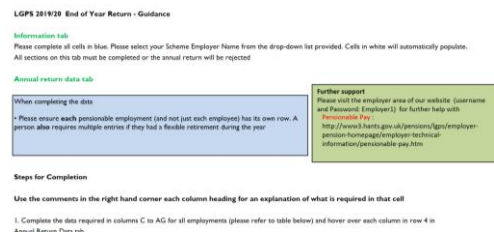
As always, this is an important project in our calendar as it provides us with the opportunity to check that we have the right members set up on the system, with the right status, and provides us with the information needed to update our records with key information – such as pensionable pay – which is essential to calculate a member's benefits, produce annual benefit and pension saving statements, and provide information to the Fund Actuary.

Annual return template

The final 21/22 Annual Return template was sent to Scheme Employers via High Level and Annual Return Contacts at the end of March 2022.

If you did not receive this communication and would expect this, please urgently email pensions.eoy@hants.gov.uk

If you are having any problems submitting your return or have any further questions, please email pensions.eoy@hants.gov.uk



Backdated Pay award

For those employers who were affected by the Local Government Pay award 2021, a STOP PRESS communication was sent to employers to advise of the actions to be taken in respect of pensions. This included how employers should notify Hampshire Pension Services with revised pensionable pay for ex-employees. A copy of this communication can be found on the [Employer News pages](#).

Employer Hub – Online Services

Most Employers are now registered to use the Employer Hub.

As a reminder, you can use the Hub to:

- ✓ View member pension records
- ✓ Submit new starters forms
- ✓ Submit leaver forms
- ✓ Submit changes
- ✓ Run basic reports



Access to run estimates

In addition to the above Employers also can have access to run their own pension estimates for their employees. This means employers are able to immediately generate the information on a members pension entitlements, as well as any associated employer strain charges. If this is something you are interested in, please email pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk to enable us to set you up with access and organise some additional training and support.

Changing your email address on the Hub

You can change your email address on the Hub by clicking on the Change My Account button on your dashboard (visible when you first log in). However, if your communication email address has changed, please email pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk so that we can arrange to have your official contact details updated. This is so that you do not miss important communications like regulatory updates, Pensions Matters and member-related queries.

Completing forms without being timed out

For security purposes, the Hub has an automatic timeout when you have not been active for some time. Therefore, to avoid this affecting you as much as possible while completing forms, please do not leave your Hub account idle during this time. Here are some tips to help you:

- Gather all the information you will need to complete the form
- Log in to the Hub only when you intend to use it

- If you are already logged in, only start the process when you are ready, or refresh the page before you start, to give you the longest time possible (and to check if you've already timed out).

If you have error messages when submitting forms despite following the above advice, please email us on pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk so we can investigate further.

Keeping your login information secure

For data security purposes, your Hub account should *only* be used by you, as accepted in the Hub User Agreement on activation of your account. If you have additional members of staff who need access to member records, please request these accounts via pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk. If you change roles and someone will be stepping into your role, we also need to know so that we can deactivate your account and set up a new one for your replacement.

Member Portal – Email addresses

Following the introduction of 'One-time code' to the Member Portal at the end of 2021, we have seen that more members have been able to login to their accounts without additional support. However, as the 'One-time code' is sent to the members registered email address, this does need to be an account they have access to.



Action

Please can you ask your employees to update their member account to replace any work email addresses with a personal email address. Members can do this by logging into their account and updating their 'Personal details'.

More information and guides can be found on our website - [Member Portal | Hampshire County Council \(hants.gov.uk\)](https://www.hants.gov.uk/member-portal)

McCloud Data Collection



We have now received 34% of scheme employer McCloud Data Collection returns that **were due on 30th June 2021** (for the period 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2021).

McCloud Data collection returns for the period 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022 were recently issued to Scheme Employers, **these are due by 30th June 2022**

Action:

McCloud Data Collection templates should be sent to pensions.eoy@hants.gov.uk

If you are experiencing delays in getting the data to us, or the data no longer exists, please get in touch with us urgently if you haven't done so – please email pensions.eoy@hants.gov.uk

Hampshire Pension Services – Next steps

We are currently still testing the upload facility into our Pensions system and once signed off are eager to start uploading data from the end of July 2022 onwards. In the meantime, we are:

- Continuing to work with Employers who we have not had any data or contact from in relation to McCloud
- Chasing responses to initial check queries on data templates submitted.

Other McCloud updates

The Public Service Pensions and Judicial Offices Bill was considered by the Public Bill Committee on 27 January and important amendments were made concerning the LGPS.

These amendments to the LGPS (Chapter 3) include:

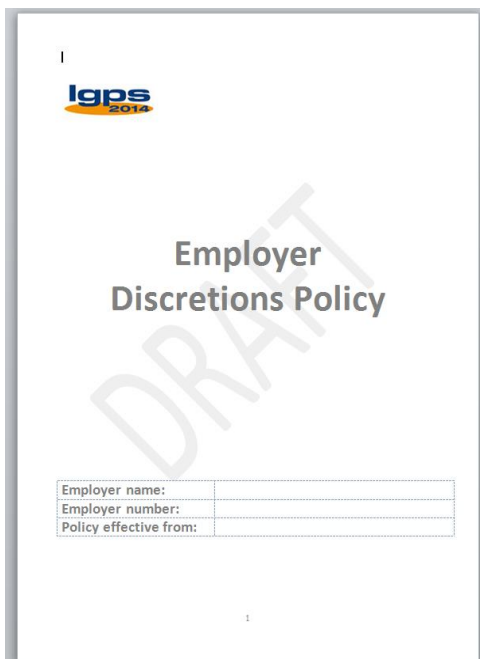
- changes to the qualification criteria, bringing more members into scope for the McCloud remedy
- a requirement for multiple periods of service to be aggregated to qualify for McCloud
- provisions for teachers to be offered membership of the LGPS in respect of “excess teacher service”

The main immediate impact to these amendments was for Funds to look to collect data where they hadn't, however as we have already taken the approach to seek data for all members, nothing further is required from Employers at this stage.

What about data after 1 April 2022

We have been asked by several employers as to whether service data submissions will be required after 1 April 2022. Although there is no obvious reason why we will need to continue to collect this data, Hampshire Pension Services do intend to collect this data annually, alongside your annual return. This will mean a member's pension record as viewed on their online portal account, will always contain the correct service information.

Discretions



The image shows a draft template for an Employer Discretions Policy. At the top left is the LGPS 2014 logo. The title 'Employer Discretions Policy' is centered, with a large 'DRAFT' watermark overlaid. At the bottom, there is a table with three rows for 'Employer name:', 'Employer number:', and 'Policy effective from:'. The page number '1' is visible in the top left and bottom center corners.

Employer name:	
Employer number:	
Policy effective from:	

Scheme Employers must make sure as well as publishing their policy, that the Administering Authority (Hampshire Pension Services on behalf of West Sussex) holds a copy of this.

Failure to do this will mean:

- A breach of the LGPS regulations
- Discretions cannot be applied
- Delays in processing

Further information on [LGPS discretions](#) can be found on our website including a draft template which you may wish to use. We also hold a 'Discretions' Workshop – more information can be found on our [website](#).

Although we cannot provide you copies of other employers' policies or advise you on the decisions you make, we are happy to review your discretions policy to ensure these are all covered.

If we do not hold a copy of your most up to date policy, you should send these to: pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk

Employer Starter Notifications



From 1st July 2022, we will be removing the word version of the starter notification. Employers will be able to tell us about new starters to the scheme either by:

- A bulk starter notification spreadsheet (10 or more starters) - to be sent no more than once a month
or
- Individual Starter notification via the Employer Hub

If you have any questions or concerns about this, or would like us to make sure you have access to the Employer Hub, then please email pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk

Tips and Hints for completing the Bulk Starter Spreadsheet

To ensure we can set up new starters promptly and to reduce queries to you, below are some tips and hints when completing the 'Bulk Starter Spreadsheet'

- Please ensure the fields on your spreadsheet are consistent with the requirements of the 'joiner field help' tab of the spreadsheet
- Ensure that all mandatory cells are completed
- Ensure the correct Employer Reference number is quoted in column A – you can find details of your scheme employer code on our [website](#)
- Date of admission – this should be the date the employee is brought into the scheme in this period of membership – this should not necessarily be the start date of their employment if they had previously opted out.
- This form should only be used for recent starters, therefore if the start date was in a previous scheme year (with the exception of starters provided until 30th June for the previous year), an individual starter notification should be provided on the Employer Hub, where you will be asked to provide historic earnings and contributions to enable us to update the members record fully.
- The pensionable pay figure provided should be the 'actual annual pay' – this should then be consistent with the employee contribution rate provided

If you would like any further support in completing either the Bulk Starter Spreadsheet or individual starter form please let us know.

New LGA LGPS Member Website and Branding



The new member website and new LGPS brand have gone live. See the [information leaflet](#) for a summary of both.

The address of the website has not changed – it is still www.lgpsmember.org.

LGPS brand

Different versions of the new logo are available. The logo should be used correctly and consistently in line with the [brand guidelines](#).

See the [LGPS brand and website resources page](#) of www.lgpsregs.org for a file containing all the different versions of the logo.

Redirects

Redirections have been placed on pages of the old site where the address is different on the new site. These will remain in place for at least 12 months. If you include links to the member website on your own website or in your guides and documents, you will need to review and update those links in the longer term.

Employer training bitesize sessions



We currently run several virtual bitesize training sessions for Employers on various areas of the LGPS to help them with their administration and regulatory responsibilities. Each session is between 45 minutes and two hours long.

The next available sessions are detailed below:

Employers in the LGPS, Starters and Opt Outs	12 th May 2022	9.30am to 10.30am
Leavers and Retirements, including Starter, Leaver and Estimate Forms	12 th May 2022	11.00am to 12pm
Pensionable Pay Workshop	12 th May 2022	2pm to 3.30pm
APC's, Absences, paying in more, Paying in less – 50:50	19 th May 2022	11am to 12pm
Organisational changes (Outsourcing, Mergers, Change of Payroll)	19 th May 2022	2pm to 3pm
Discretions and disputes	19 th May 2022	3.15pm to 4pm

For more information and to book your space please visit the [Hampshire Pensions Employer area](#) of our website.

Other news

DCLG bulletins

Since the last Pensions Matters the DCLG have released the following bulletins on their website

<http://www.lgpsregs.org/index.php/resources/news-updates>

Bulletin 222 – March 2022

- New Member Website and LGPS Brand
- Mandatory Scheme pay deadlines

Bulletin 221 – Annual update

- This bulletin sets out the rates and bands that apply from April 2022 for various purposes.

Bulletin 220 – February 2022

- DWP Consultation on draft pension dashboard regulations
- Change to DLUHC email address
- State pension age review

Bulletin 219 – January 2022

- 2022/23 Employee contribution bands
- Pensions dashboard

We hope you find this edition of *Pensions matters* helpful. If you have any comments or queries, please email pensions.employer@hants.gov.uk and we'll be glad to help.