

Our **MONEY**madeclear guides – here to help you

This guide is part of our **Pensions and retirement series**.



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**No selling. No jargon. Just the facts.**

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No selling.  
No jargon.

Just the facts  
about  
pensions.

**MONEY**madeclear  
from the UK's financial watchdog (FSA)

With our **MONEY** made clear range of guides, we cut out the jargon and give you just the facts about financial products and services, helping you to make an informed decision.

# Just the facts about pensions



The Financial Services Authority (FSA) is the UK's financial watchdog set up by government to regulate financial services and protect your rights.

**Remember, this is general information and isn't the same as getting financial or other professional advice. For advice based on your own circumstances, talk to a professional adviser.**

# This guide is for you if

## You want

to know how you can save for your retirement.

It's about the types of pension available and:

- how they work;
- where you may be offered one; and
- answers some of the questions you may have.

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# How pensions work

**If you're working, you're usually paying National Insurance contributions (NICs). This means you'll be eligible for a basic State Pension.**

It's a start but it may not be enough to give you the standard of living you want. So you'll need another source of income as well.

There are other types of pension, either offered through your employer or ones you can start yourself.

They are all long-term investments which you usually pay into throughout your working life. Depending on the type of pension, your employer may also pay in to it. You get tax relief on money you pay in, and your money is invested in stocks, shares and other investments to try to make it grow.

When you retire, your pension fund is usually converted into pension income which is paid to you till you die.

You don't have to stop work to take a stakeholder or personal pension.

You can take a pension from your employer's occupational scheme and carry on working for that employer, as long as scheme rules allow this.

See the *Jargon buster* on page 25 for an explanation of some words you may come across.

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## Key points

- Your retirement can last 20 or 30 years – maybe longer, so you need to be prepared – you may be living on your retirement income a long time.
- Try to think about how much income you'll need. Work out how much you'll want to spend (using today's price levels).
- If you decide to use a pension to save for your retirement, it may be a good idea to start one as soon as possible. If you put it off by just a few years, you could end up with a much smaller pension.
- Find out if your employer offers a pension scheme and whether they contribute to it.
- You cannot take your money out of a pension until you are at least 50 (this is going up to 55 by 2010).
- Many schemes give you a statement each year with details of your possible income at retirement.

# Different types of pension

## Basic State Pension

Your National Insurance contributions (NICs) go towards building up a basic State Pension.

The State Pension age is currently 65 for men and between 60 and 65 for women depending on when you were born. It may, however, increase in the future.

The amount of State Pension you get is based on the amount of NICs you have paid. You may not even get a pension if you've paid less than the minimum though this may change in the future.

In some cases you may be credited with NICs if you are not working. Your local social security office can tell you if you are entitled to credits. Or you can choose to pay voluntary contributions.

## Additional State Pension

If you are (or have been) in employment, you may also be building up an additional State Pension – the State Second Pension, formerly SERPS (State Earnings Related Pensions Scheme).

The amount of State Second Pension you get depends on your earnings and your NICs record.

Anyone earning below a certain amount set by government may be entitled to additional State Second Pension.

Self-employed people cannot build up a pension through the State Second Pension.

Some people who cannot work through long-term illness or disability, or carers, may get some State Second Pension. For more information see the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) booklets – see *Useful contacts*.

There may be changes to the State Second Pension in future. To find out more go to the Pension Advisory Service website – see *Useful contacts*.

## Contracting out of the State Second Pension

If you are an employee, you are automatically included in the State Second Pension unless you decide to leave it (called 'contracting out'), or you are a member of an employer's occupational pension scheme that is contracted out.

If you decide to contract out:

- you stop building up your State Second Pension entitlement and build up a replacement for it in your own pension instead (for example, in a stakeholder or personal pension);
- HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) will pay a rebate of part of your National Insurance contributions into your stakeholder or personal pension.

You will continue to be contracted out of the State Second Pension, unless you decide to contract back in.

If you are contributing to your employer's occupational pension scheme, and it is a contracted-out

scheme, you cannot contract back in while you continue to be a member of that scheme. Check with your employer.

You should make sure you review your decision every year.

The option to contract out may be removed in the future.

For more information about contracting out of the State Second Pension, read our guide **The State Second Pension – should you be contracted out?** – see *Useful contacts*.

### Key points

**You can get a forecast of how much your State Pensions will be from the Pensions Service by completing form BR19 – see *Useful contacts*. The forecast will tell you how much you might get a week.**

## Pension Credit

This is a benefit that the Government introduced to help pensioners with small or no savings at retirement. For more information read the DWP booklet **A guide to Pension Credit (PC10S)**. To get a free copy phone 0800 99 1234 (call rates may vary).

Remember though, governments can change the rules for State pensions and benefits at any time.

## Pensions at work

Although you don't have to join pension schemes offered through your job, it's usually a good idea to do so because:

- your employer normally contributes;
- you often get other benefits as well as a pension, such as:
  - life insurance which pays a lump sum and/or a pension to your dependants if you die while working for that employer;
  - a pension if you have to retire early because of ill health; and
  - a pension for your spouse and other dependants when you die.

If you work for a business with fewer than five employees, your employer does not have to offer you membership of any pension scheme. Check what's available though. Some small employers may offer a scheme anyway.

Not all the pensions offered to you in your job are occupational pensions. Your employer may offer a stakeholder pension or a personal pension through a group personal pension (GPP) arrangement. These pensions are not called 'occupational pensions' even though the employer may contribute.

The Government is planning changes that will mean all employers will have to offer and contribute to a pension in future. For more information, go to the Pension Service website – see *Useful contacts*.

### Key points

- Find out from your employer whether they offer a pension scheme and what type it is.
- You should get a booklet describing the scheme before you join it. Read this so you understand what your employer's scheme offers you.
- It's usually a good idea to join your employer's scheme because they normally contribute to it. So think carefully if you are considering not joining your employer's pension scheme.

## Salary-related occupational pensions

Your employer may provide a salary-related pension scheme. They are also called defined benefit pensions because the benefit (your pension) is worked out using your salary and the length of time you have been a member of the pension scheme.

Usually, the employer contributes to the scheme and there are trustees to look after scheme members' interests.

The scheme trustees and manager, not you, usually make all the investment decisions.

### How they work

You build up a pension at retirement that depends on:

- how many years you have been a member of the pension scheme;
- the earnings that your pension is based on (often averaged over the last three years before retirement);
- the proportion of those earnings which you get as pension for each year of membership. The most common are 1/60th or 1/80th of your earnings for each year of membership.

### The benefits of these schemes are that:

- the pension is based on your length of membership and salary, so you have a fair idea of how much your pension will be (as a proportion of

your earnings) before retirement;

- your employer should ensure there is enough money at the time you retire to pay you the pension – but see **Is there a risk?**;
- your employer normally contributes;
- you get tax relief on your contributions;
- scheme investments grow generally free of income tax and capital gains tax;
- your pension benefits are linked to your salary while you are working, so they automatically increase as your pay rises;
- your pension income from the scheme will normally increase each year in line with the RPI (Retail Prices Index) or a set percentage, whichever is the lower.

### Is there a risk?

Some salary-related occupational schemes have become insolvent and there hasn't been enough money in the employer's pension scheme to pay the pensions they had promised to their current and former employees.

The Government set up a Pension Protection Fund in April 2005 to provide some protection for members of salary-related schemes. For more information about the Pension Protection Fund go to the Pension Protection Fund website – see *Useful contacts*.

## Money purchase pensions

The pensions listed below are all money purchase pensions:

- Occupational defined contribution pensions – some employers offer these schemes.
- Group personal pensions.
- Stakeholder pensions and individual personal pensions.

### How they work

Money purchase pensions build up a pension fund using your contributions (and your employer's contributions if they make any), plus investment returns (if any) and tax relief.

It helps to think of money purchase pensions as having two stages:

**Stage 1:** The fund is invested, usually in stocks and shares and other investments, with the aim of growing the fund over the years before you retire. Remember though that the value of investments may go up or down. For more information about investments, go to the **Products explained** section of our Moneymadeclear website – see *Useful contacts*.

**Stage 2:** When you retire, you can take a tax-free lump sum from your fund and use the rest to secure an income – usually in the form of a lifetime annuity.

A lifetime annuity is an income you buy with your pension fund when you retire. For more information about annuities read our guide **Your retirement options** – see *Useful contacts*.

The amount of pension you'll get at retirement will depend on:

- how much you pay into the fund;
- how much your employer pays in (if anything);
- how well your invested contributions perform;
- the charges taken out of your fund by your pension provider;
- how much you take out as a tax-free lump sum;
- 'annuity rates' at the time you retire; and
- the type of annuity you choose.

### The benefits of money purchase schemes are that:

- you get tax relief on your contributions;
- your fund grows generally free of income tax and capital gains tax;
- you may be able to choose the funds to invest in; and
- your employer may contribute if it's a work-based pension.

## Private pensions

If you've checked on pension schemes offered by your employer or are self employed and have decided on a private pension, you need to shop around for a stakeholder or personal pension.

Stakeholder and personal pensions are money purchase pensions (the pension you get is not linked to your salary).

There are some differences between them.

### Stakeholder pensions

Stakeholder pensions must have certain features. Some of these are:

- limited charges;
- low minimum payments;
- flexible contributions;
- penalty-free transfers; and
- a default investment fund – ie a fund your money will be invested in if you don't want to choose one.

### Personal pensions

Personal pensions are similar to stakeholder pensions, but they usually offer a wider range of investment choices.

Personal pension charges may be similar to stakeholder pension charges but some are higher.

High charges deducted from your fund by the pension provider can reduce the growth of your fund. High charges do not necessarily mean better performance.

You can compare stakeholder and personal pensions from different providers on the **Compare products** section of our Moneymadeclear website – see *Useful contacts*.

### Self-invested Personal Pensions (SIPPs)

SIPPs are a type of personal pension designed for people who want to manage their own fund.

Most SIPPs allow investment in a very wide range of funds and investments such as commercial property, offices, shops or factory premises.

They often have higher charges than stakeholder and personal pensions. For this reason, they may only be suitable for people who have large funds and are experienced with investing.

## Saving now for your retirement

The table opposite shows the estimated monthly pension, at today's prices, you would get for different regular monthly contributions. The estimated pension (annuity) shown assumes that:

- you increase your contributions each year in line with inflation (which we've assumed to be 2.5% a year);
- before charges, your fund grows by 7% a year on top of your contributions;
- charges are 1.5% of the value of your fund each year for the first ten years and 1% a year afterwards;
- a rebate of basic level tax at 20% (the expected rate from April 2008).

When you retire the estimates assume you buy an annuity that increases by 2.5% a year with a 50% spouse's annuity.

Annuity rates assume that the investment return after retirement is 0.8% a year in excess of inflation.

## Remember

These estimates are not guaranteed – you could get more or less than the amounts shown. The table gives you an idea of how much you need to pay now – as a regular monthly contribution – to get the monthly income you want when you retire. In particular, the rate of growth of your fund may vary considerably and may be below 7% a year.

The Pension calculator on our Moneymadeclear website can also help you work out what you need – see *Useful contacts*.

What you pay per month for the first year (tax rebates will be added to this amount)

Your approximate age now	£20		£50		£100		£200	
	Initial monthly pension if you retire at		Initial monthly pension if you retire at		Initial monthly pension if you retire at		Initial monthly pension if you retire at	
	65	60	65	60	65	60	65	60
20	£98	£68	£245	£171	£491	£342	£983	£684
25	£79	£54	£198	£135	£396	£271	£792	£543
30	£63	£42	£157	£106	£315	£212	£630	£424
35	£49	£32	£122	£80	£245	£161	£491	£322
40	£37	£23	£93	£58	£187	£117	£374	£235
45	£27	£16	£68	£40	£137	£80	£274	£161
50	£18	£9	£47	£24	£94	£49	£188	£98
55	£11	£4	£28	£11	£57	£23	£115	£46
60	£5		£13		£27		£54	

# Key things to think about

## How much you can pay into your pension each year

You can pay as much as you like into a pension scheme. However, you'll only get tax relief on up to 100% of your earnings if you are a UK taxpayer. For example, if you earn £20,000 but put £25,000 into your pension scheme, you will only get tax relief on £20,000.

You can get tax relief on a limited amount of contributions if you are not earning.

In addition there is an annual allowance which limits the amount of money you can put in each year. This limit is set by HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) and changes each year. The limit for 2007/2008 is £225,000. Any contributions you make over this limit will be subject to an annual allowance tax charge which is currently 40%.

## How much can you build up in your pension?

There is a lifetime allowance which limits the amount you can accumulate free of tax in all your pension funds when you come to draw your benefits. The allowance for 2007/2008 is £1.6m.

For more information about tax allowances for both the annual and lifetime allowance go to the **Pension rules from April 2006** section of the Directgov website – see *Useful contacts*.

You may still have to pay tax on your income when you start to take your pension.

## Think about how much income you'll want

Bear in mind that you won't have work expenses and you may have paid off your mortgage, but your home fuel bills could be higher and you may need to spend more on healthcare.

To help you work out how much you'll need think about the income you currently have. What proportion of it do you think you would need in retirement? Half your present income? Two-thirds? Or work out how much by using the **Budget calculator** on our Moneymadeclear website – see *Useful contacts*.

## Do you want information or advice?

When getting a pension, the general information you get from a firm either verbally or in print will usually just describe the products or services they provide. You are not being given advice based on your particular needs or circumstances. To get this type of financial advice, you'd need to see a financial adviser.

You don't have to take advice but if you don't and the scheme you choose turns out to be unsuitable, you will have fewer grounds for complaint.

## Getting financial advice

We regulate advisers who give advice on personal and stakeholder pensions, but we do not regulate advice about employers' occupational pension schemes. For information about occupational pensions go to the Pensions Regulator's website – see *Useful contacts*.

Advertisements, product brochures and other promotions produced by firms we regulate must be clear, fair and not misleading. To find out if a firm is regulated by us see *Useful contacts*.

In addition, when you use a regulated financial adviser, you will have access to the Financial Ombudsman Service if things go wrong and the Financial Services Compensation Scheme if the pension adviser stops trading – see *Useful contacts*.

Firms we regulate must only recommend pension products that are suitable for you and must give you certain information about the firm, their services and costs.

For more information on financial advice and on finding a financial adviser, read our guide **Getting financial advice** – see *Useful contacts*.

## Meeting a financial adviser

After discussing your personal needs and circumstances with you, the adviser will recommend a product and explain why they have suggested that product.

To help advisers give you suitable advice always tell them whether your employer offers an occupational pension that you could join, or have joined.

Advisers will usually tell you to check out your employer's occupational pension as your first priority.

Key points

**Some questions to ask yourself before you see an adviser.**

- How much can I afford to pay regularly?
- When do I hope to retire?
- What savings, investments or other assets do I have?
- Will my partner have a pension?
- What am I likely to get from State Pensions?
- What do I know about investing my contributions and how do I feel about investment risk?

Key points

**Some questions to ask an adviser**

- What sort of investment would be most suitable for me, given:
  - that I can/cannot join an occupational pension;
  - the length of time until I retire;
  - my employment status and prospects;
  - my other savings, investments and assets; and
  - how I feel about investment risk.
- How much should I be saving to get the retirement income I want?
- Is a stakeholder pension the best option for me? If not, why not?

Important information you'll get

**The Key Features Document**

explains the main features of the pension and will answer most of the following questions:

- If I take out a particular pension now, can I switch to another later?
- Will there be charges for switching?
- What are the charges for the pension I am being recommended?
- How much of my investment will be lost through these charges?
- Must I pay regular contributions?
- Can I vary my contributions or stop them altogether?
- What happens if I choose to make regular contributions but can't keep them up after all – say, because I'm ill or made redundant?
- What will my dependants get when I die?
- At what age can I start taking my pension?
- Can I change the age I start taking my pension without penalty?

Getting a private pension without advice

Brochures and adverts will include factual information, and although you can expect the facts to be accurate, remember that you'll be reading marketing information, not investment advice. They are designed to show products in their best light.

Ask yourself the same questions that you would ask if you decided to get advice.

Shop around and get information about several comparable products. Use the **Compare products** section of our Moneymadeclear website to help you compare features and costs of stakeholder and personal pensions – see *Useful contacts*. Consult different pension providers and ask them for a **Key Features Document**.

Use the **Pensions calculator** on our Moneymadeclear website to get an idea of your pension for various amounts of contributions – see *Useful contacts*.

For more information about stakeholder pensions get a copy of our factsheet **Stakeholder pensions and decision trees** – see *Useful contacts*.

If you are unsure you may want to talk to a financial adviser before you decide.

## Reviewing your plans

Retirement planning is not a one-off task. Once you have started a pension or other retirement savings, you should keep it under review.

- **Review your plans regularly**  
Make sure you are contributing enough to provide the retirement income you want – see the table on page 11.
- **Review your plans if your circumstances change**  
For example, if you get a new job, become self-employed, marry or get divorced.

When reviewing your plans your options may depend on how long you have to go till retirement, whether you have to provide for your partner, and the type of pension you already have.

### Find out if you're on track

Are you on target to get the level of income you want in retirement? And has that level of income changed? See the table on page 11 for how much you may need to save to get the income you want.

### How much State Pension might you get?

Go to pages 4 and 5 for information on State Pensions. Get a State Pension forecast from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) by completing form BR19 – see *Useful contacts*.

### How much might you get from salary-related occupational pension schemes?

You should get a benefit statement from the salary-related occupational pension scheme you belong to in your current job.

This will show how much retirement pension you have built up so far and the amount you might build up if you carry on in the scheme until retirement. Salaries tend to increase by at least as much as inflation, and sometimes by more, so your forecast pension should maintain its buying power too.

You may also get benefit statements from any salary-related occupational pension schemes you used to belong to in the past. Ask for one if you don't get one.

### How much might you get from money purchase pensions?

Each year you should get a statement from each pension provider including those schemes that you no longer contribute to – ask for one if you don't get one.

It will show how much pension income you might get, based on the value of your pension fund today, taking account of future payments into your plan; how the funds might grow; future inflation; and pension income from your fund when you retire (usually paid as a lifetime annuity).

This is only an illustration, not a guarantee. Nobody can be certain about future investment returns, interest or inflation.

## Will you have enough?

Once you've checked your scheme, if you think you won't have enough money when you retire, you'll need to think about ways to increase your pension income.

You can top up your occupational pension in several ways, but the most frequently used ones are as follows.

### Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVCs)

This is a pension top-up arrangement run by your employer, sometimes called an 'in-house' AVC. Your employer normally deducts your contributions from your pay.

Most AVCs are money purchase schemes. Your contributions are invested to build up a fund. When you retire you use the fund to buy extra pension income.

The amount you can buy depends on:

- how much you've paid in;
- how well your investments grow;
- the level of charges; and
- the 'annuity rate' at which you can convert your AVC fund into pension income.

Some employers' final salary schemes have AVC schemes where you can buy 'added years'. This increases the number of main-scheme membership years you are credited with, so will increase your pension.

Talk to your pension scheme administrators for more information on what your employer offers.

### Stakeholder and personal pensions

You can also top up your pension with a stakeholder pension or personal pension. These are separate from your occupational pension scheme and you pay your contributions direct to the pension provider in addition to your occupational scheme.

### Topping up your personal or stakeholder pension

You can top up your personal or stakeholder pension by increasing your contributions to your current pension.

## Working beyond retirement age

You may want to boost your retirement income by working beyond retirement age.

You can postpone taking your State Pension for as long as you want and get either extra State Pension or a one-off taxable lump sum. For more information, go to the DWP website – see *Useful contacts*.

You can postpone taking a personal or stakeholder pension by agreement with your pension provider, and continue contributing to the pension.

You can continue working and contributing to an occupational pension scheme if the scheme rules allow. You stop paying NI contributions once you reach State Pension age.

## Alternatives to pensions

You may want to consider other ways of building up assets that you can use to produce an income when you retire. You may also want to think about moving to a smaller property or using assets that may be left to you in a will.

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## Unlocking your pension benefits early

If you have a pension fund and are 50 or over (going up to 55 by 2010), you may consider taking your pension benefits before you retire – known as 'pension unlocking'. Think very carefully before making any decision about taking cash from your pension early.

Pension unlocking is only suitable for a very limited number of people and circumstances.

If you take your pension early, your income will probably be considerably less than you could expect if you waited until your retirement date and you will have less to live on when you retire. You can only use a pension fund once.

### Key points

**Pension unlocking is only suitable for a very limited number of people and circumstances.**

**Make sure you understand the basis of any advice that you receive. Firms providing a pension unlocking service may not be able to advise you on any other options.**

### Ask yourself the following questions:

- How much pension income would I get now and how much would I get if I left it until retirement age?
- Would it be enough to meet my living expenses?
- Do I really need to raise extra cash?
- If so, is there another way of raising what I need?
- What benefits could I be giving up, for example ill-health benefits or death benefits?
- What would the effect be on my State benefits or tax position?
- Would I have to pay any penalties if I unlocked my pension?
- How much would I have to pay in charges to get my money early?
- How much would I have to pay the adviser?
- How much would my adviser get out of my pension fund for unlocking my pension?

# Your questions answered

## Question

If I decide to start a private pension, how do I make sure I get the right pension for me?

## Answer

Shop around to check what is available. The **Compare products** section of our Moneymadeclear website can help you – see *Useful contacts*. It would probably be a good idea to get financial advice.

If you decide not to get advice, make sure you ask for all the information available about a firm's services and costs and make sure you read the Key Features Document.

## Question

I'm in my employer's scheme. How can I tell what type of pension it is?

## Answer

Check the booklet describing the scheme you got from your employer. If you haven't got a booklet, ask your scheme manager for a copy.

## Question

How can I check how much pension income I'll get from all my current pensions?

## Answer

You should get a pension statement each year from each of your pension providers – ask for one if you don't get one. You can get a forecast for your State Pension from the Pensions Service by completing form BR19 – see *Useful contacts*.

## Question

How often should I review my pension plans?

## Answer

Review your plans regularly or when your circumstances change to make sure you're on track. Use your pension statement to find out.

# Next steps

## Step 1

Think about the income you want in retirement. The basic State Pension may not be enough.

## Step 2

Find out what, if any, pension your employer offers, whether they contribute and how you can join.

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## Step 3

If you need to start your own pension, consider getting financial advice. Use the **Compare products** section of our Moneymadeclear website and read the Key Features Document.

## Step 4

Review your pension plans regularly including any State Pensions you may be entitled to, to make sure you're on track to get the retirement income you want.

# If things go wrong

## Complaints and compensation

### Personal or stakeholder pensions

The FSA regulates the way pension providers are run. We also regulate the sales and advice process for pensions. This means firms advising on or selling pensions must be regulated by us. To find out whether we regulate a firm, use the **Check our register** service on our Moneymadeclear website or call the Consumer Helpline – see *Useful contacts*.

We have procedures that firms must follow when dealing with complaints.

First contact the adviser or pension provider who sold you the pension. If they cannot resolve the dispute, you can take it to the Financial Ombudsman Service; the firm will tell you how to do this.

## Occupational pension schemes

Your employer's occupational pension scheme must, by law, offer a formal complaints procedure, so first contact your pensions administrator at work. If it is not resolved, you can take it to the Pensions Advisory Service who will try to mediate between you and the scheme to resolve the matter. If necessary they will help you take your case to the Pensions Ombudsman.

The Pensions Regulator is the regulatory body for work-based pension schemes. These are schemes that an employer makes available to employees. They include all occupational pension schemes, and any stakeholder and personal pension schemes where employees have direct-payment arrangements.

For more information about the Pensions Regulator, visit its website – see *Useful contacts*.

## If things go wrong

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For help with making an effective complaint, get a copy of our guide **Making a complaint** – see *Useful contacts*.

### State Pensions

If you have a complaint about the handling of your State Pension, raise it first with your local social security office. Look in the phone book or contact your Citizens Advice Bureau for the address.

### Compensation

If a personal or stakeholder pension provider has difficulties and becomes insolvent, the Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS) may be able to help you. Read the FSCS guide **How we can help** – see *Useful contacts*.

If an employer's salary-related scheme becomes insolvent, you may get some compensation from the Pension Protection Fund. For more information go to the Pension Protection Fund website – see *Useful contacts*.

### Winding up an old scheme and offering a new one

If your employer is winding up its occupational pension scheme, it may have a new scheme into which it wants the members to move. If it doesn't intend to offer another scheme, then the trustees have to distribute the assets according to the rules. Read the Pensions Advisory Service guide **Winding-up a pension scheme – a guide for scheme members** – see *Useful contacts*.

# Jargon buster

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## Some key words and phrases explained.

### Accrual rate

The proportion of pensionable earnings you receive as a pension for each year of a pension scheme membership.

### Annuity

A series of fixed payments that are paid at regular intervals – usually until you die.

### AVCs – Additional Voluntary Contributions

A pension top-up for an occupational pension. You pay contributions into a scheme run by your employer to boost your main pension.

### Contracting out

The facility to leave the State Second Pension (or SERPS) and build up benefits in a personal pension.

### FSAVCs – Free-Standing Additional Voluntary Contributions

A pension top-up policy for an occupational pension, but separate from your employer's pension scheme and normally run by an insurance firm.

### Group Personal Pension

A type of personal pension offered by some employers but not classified as an occupational pension scheme – see *Money purchase pension*.

### Lifetime annuity

A lifetime annuity converts money from your pension fund into pension income, which is taxed. There are different types to suit your circumstances.

## Jargon buster

### Money purchase pension

Some occupational pensions and all personal, group personal, stakeholder, FSAVCs and some AVCs are money purchase pensions. Your contributions are invested in, for example, the stockmarket. The size of your fund depends on how much is invested and how well those investments do. At retirement, some or all of the fund may be used to buy an annuity.

### Occupational pension

Available through employers and run by pension scheme trustees. There are two types – salary-related (defined benefit) and money purchase (defined contribution).

### Personal pension

A pension policy you take out yourself from an insurance company or another financial institution and into which you pay contributions. It may also be offered by employers – see Money purchase pension.

### Protected rights pension

The part of your pension fund which was used to contract out of the State Second Pension (or SERPS) that must be used to buy a protected rights annuity.

### Salary-related pension scheme (also known as a final salary or defined benefit)

A type of occupational pension. The amount of pension you get is worked out on your salary at or near retirement, or when you left employment, and your pensionable service.

### Stakeholder pension

A type of personal pension that has to meet certain standards set by the government.

### State Pension

A pension based on your National Insurance contribution record.

### State Second Pension

An additional State pension paid on top of your basic State Pension. This used to be called SERPS. Self-employed people cannot build up a State Second Pension.

### Tax-free lump sum

An amount of cash you can take at retirement free of tax set by HRMC. Individual pension schemes may have different rules on the amount of tax free cash you can take.

No selling.  
No jargon.

Just the facts  
about  
pensions

**MONEY**madeclear

# Useful contacts

Call rates may vary – check with your telephone provider for their charges.

To order other Moneymadeclear guides, check our Register or for general information or guidance

## Financial Services Authority (FSA)

Consumer Helpline: 0845 606 1234  
Minicom/Textphone: 08457 300 104  
[www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk](http://www.moneymadeclear.fsa.gov.uk)

To report misleading promotions  
**08457 300 168**

## Other Moneymadeclear guides

- **About the Financial Services Authority**
- **Getting financial advice**
- **Making a complaint**
- **Pension transfers**
- **Retirement options**

## Pension information and advice

### DWP Pensions Information Order Line

For booklets about State Pensions  
0845 7313 233  
Textphone: 0845 604 0210  
[www.thepensionservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk)

### DWP website

For information about deferring your pensions.  
[www.dwp.gov.uk](http://www.dwp.gov.uk)

### Future Pension Centre

For a forecast of your State Pension  
0845 3000 168  
Textphone: 0845 3000 169  
[www.thepensionservice.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionservice.gov.uk)

For free factsheets on pensions and Form BR19

For details of your occupational pension scheme talk to your pensions administrator, pensions manager or pension trustees at work.

## The Pensions Advisory Service

For general pension queries and leaflets

0845 601 2923  
[www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk](http://www.pensionsadvisoryservice.org.uk)

## The Pensions Regulator

[www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk](http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk)

## The Pension Protection Fund

[www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk](http://www.pensionprotectionfund.org.uk)

## Directgov

[www.direct.gov.uk](http://www.direct.gov.uk)

## HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC)

For tax queries

[www.hmrc.gov.uk](http://www.hmrc.gov.uk)

## Financial advisers/planners

### IFA Promotion

0800 085 3250 (freephone)  
[www.unbiased.co.uk](http://www.unbiased.co.uk)

Provides a list of 8 independent financial advisers in your area

## Institute of Financial Planning

0117 945 2470  
[www.financialplanning.org.uk](http://www.financialplanning.org.uk)

For help in planning your finances

## Complaints and compensation

### Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS)

Complaints resolution  
South Quay Plaza  
183 Marsh Wall,  
London E14 9SR

0845 080 1800

[www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.financial-ombudsman.org.uk)

### Financial Services Compensation Scheme (FSCS)

For help if the firm goes out of business.

7th floor, Lloyds Chambers  
Portsoken Street  
London E1 8BN

020 7892 7300

[www.fscs.org.uk](http://www.fscs.org.uk)