

Leaving pensionable employment

May 2025



What happens to my pension if I leave teaching?

You can choose to:

- Leave your benefits in the Scheme. You'll then be known as a deferred member.
- Transfer your pension to another scheme.
- If you've not previously taken your benefits and have less than two years' pensionable service, you can request a repayment of your contributions. You'll not receive the full amount as there will be tax and National Insurance deductions.

What happens if I leave my pension in the Scheme?

You can leave your pension benefits in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. To be eligible to receive Scheme benefits you need to have two years of qualifying service. All periods of pensionable employment are added together to qualify for benefits. This means that if you haven't qualified by undertaking two years' service when you left, you could do so if you return at a later date.

How do I transfer my pension benefits to another scheme?

Transfers between pension schemes can be a lengthy process, as information has to be obtained from a number of third parties. If you want to transfer your benefits, [you should complete the application via our website](#). We'll provide your new scheme with a transfer value who will then inform you how much pension your transfer value will buy in your new scheme. You'll then need to decide if you want the transfer to happen.

Transfers can only take place if your new scheme is registered with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC). You can't transfer your benefits to a defined contribution scheme, unless you have not qualified for benefits but have three months service with the Scheme.

You'll need to check with your new provider about the type of scheme you're joining. Transfers need to be completed before you reach your Normal Pension Age in the Teachers' Pension Scheme. If your service is pre-1986 you can transfer your benefits to an Occupational Pension Scheme, but not to a Personal Pension Scheme. When considering any transfer, you should obtain independent financial advice before making a decision.

Beware of scams

Companies are singling out savers and claiming that they can help members cash in their pension early. Please avoid these companies. To find out more [view the Money and Pension Service website](#).

Where there is any difference between the legislation governing the Teachers' Pension Scheme and the information in this factsheet, the legislation will apply.

Can I have a repayment of contributions?

If you've not qualified for benefits because you have less than two years pensionable service currently, you can have a repayment of your contributions. If you were already in receipt of benefits from the Scheme you can't have a repayment, but will receive additional benefits. Where you receive a repayment there will be deductions for tax and National Insurance. Before you can request a repayment, you must have been out of service for more than a month and you won't be able to restore the service in the future.

What happens if I'm affected by the Transitional Protection changes?

You may be affected by the Transitional Protection changes which will mean you'll need to make a future choice regarding service you have built up between 1 April 2015 – 31 March 2022 (the remedy period). You can [find out more information on these changes on our Transitional Protection webpages](#).

If you decide to transfer your service out of the Teachers' Pension Scheme after 1 October 2023, we'll calculate and confirm your final salary and career average transfer values in relation to the remedy period. For a club transfer, the higher of the two options will be sent by default to the receiving scheme. For a non-club transfer, the two values are combined and sent to the receiving scheme.

[More Transitional Protection changes can be found on our Transfers webpage](#).