

Who is eligible to join the Scheme?

February 2026



Who can join?

If an individual is employed by a participating employer in a predominantly teaching role, and they're between the age of 16-75, they're eligible for enrolment into the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

What role does a teacher perform?

The Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations don't expressly define what 'teaching work' is, so we rely on other definitions of teaching found in regulations such as the Teachers' Disciplinary (England) Regulations 2012, Regulation 3, which states that 'teaching work' is:

(1) Subject to paragraph (3), each of the following activities is teaching work for the purposes of these Regulations:

- (a) planning and preparing lessons and courses for pupils(1);
- (b) delivering lessons to pupils;
- (c) assessing the development, progress and attainment of pupils; and
- (d) reporting on the development, progress and attainment of pupils.

(2) In paragraph (1)(b) "delivering" includes delivering lessons through distance learning or computer aided techniques

(3) The activities specified in paragraph (1) are not teaching work for the purposes of these Regulations if the person carrying out the activity does so (other than for the purposes of induction) subject to the direction and supervision of a qualified teacher (2) or other person nominated by the head teacher to provide such direction and supervision.

For traditional teaching roles, where timetabled classes or lectures take up the entirety or most of the role they perform, their role would fall under the definition of 'teaching work'.

(3) above would relate to the role of a 'teaching assistant' which would fall under the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS). Any role which does not constitute 'teaching work' would also fall under the LGPS.

There are a limited number of roles, such as Youth and Community workers and Educational Organisers, which fall under the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations in certain circumstances. Please refer to 'What is an organiser?' section below.

Executive Heads and CEOs

For roles such as an Executive Head or Chief Executive Officer within a school, it's unlikely that they'll fulfil all parts which make up 'teaching work' but that's not to say that those roles would not qualify for membership of the Scheme. If eligible, these roles will usually qualify under part (c) and (d) of Regulation 3 above, however the following points must be considered by participating employers:

The person must undertake some academic and teaching roles. Any CEOs and Executive Headteachers that occupy a financial or administrative role wouldn't be eligible for membership of the Scheme.

- There must be a degree of proximity to the pupil or student. If an individual isn't directly responsible for the development, progress and attainment of a student(s), the individual will fall outside of the scope of eligibility. For example, a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who delegates all teaching work to others i.e. to the head teachers at each school in the Academy Trust
- There'll be occasions where an individual may have two roles (split 50/50), which may be best served as two separate contracts. One may relate to their teaching work and covered by the Scheme, whereas the other would fall outside of it in respect of their non-teaching work. If these roles are separated, it makes the eligibility of the role simpler to determine.

What is an organiser?

There are circumstances where other individuals may be eligible for membership of the Scheme, without necessarily being involved in teaching work as described above. In the TPS 2010 Regulations this individual would be described as an 'organiser'.

An 'organiser' is 'a person who performs duties in connection with the provision of education or services ancillary to education other than administrative services.'

An individual will be eligible for the role of an 'organiser' if their employer is one of the following organisations named in Part 3 of Schedule 1 of the Teachers' Pensions Regulations:

- (i) a diocesan board of education established under the Diocesan Boards of Education Measure 1991;
- (ii) a body affiliated to the National Open College Network;
- (iii) a Roman Catholic diocesan schools commission;
- (iv) the Inspiring Futures Foundation;
- (v) the Royal National College for the Blind;
- (vi) the Stapleford Centre.

Furthermore, those organisers where funding is provided by one of the bodies below, covers the costs of employing an organiser, (salary, employer national Insurance, employer pension contributions) may also be included in the Teachers' Pension Scheme.

These fall under Part 4 of Schedule 1 of the Teachers' Pensions Regulations.

29 Organiser employed by:

- (a) Sport England;
- (b) Sport Wales;
- (c) UK Sport; or
- (d) any other person, other than a local authority, to whom grants:
 - (i) are made by any of those bodies or by a local authority in exercise of education functions; or
 - (ii) are or have been made by the Secretary of State or the Welsh Ministers,in respect of expenditure incurred for the purpose for which the organiser is employed.

Other employments where Organisers fall under the scope of the Teachers' Pensions Regulations on election with consent include:

30 Organiser employed as a youth and community worker by a body to which grants are made by a local authority in the exercise of its functions under sections 15 or 508 of EA 1996.

31 Organiser employed by:

- (a) Action for Blind People;
- (b) the Association of Christian Teachers;
- (c) the Association of Business Schools;
- (d) the Assessment and Qualification Alliance;
- (e) the City and Guilds of London Institute;
- (f) the Catholic Education Service;
- (g) EMFEC;
- (h) the Field Studies Council;
- (i) Macmillan Cancer Support;
- (j) the North East Religious Learning Resources Centre Limited;
- (k) SCOPE.
- (l) the Jewish Schools Network.

Where an employer uses the Teachers' Pension Scheme to satisfy the requirements of automatic enrolment, then the employer will automatically enrol organisers into the Scheme.

It should be noted that most 'organisers' would fall under the LGPS unless specifically referred to in the Teachers' Pension Scheme Regulations, as outlined above.

Who makes the decision?

It's for you as the employer to determine the eligibility of the individual for membership of the Teachers' Pension Scheme in accordance with the Regulations. This is because you're more likely to understand the main thrust of a person's job role in line with a person's contract of employment, rather than Teachers' Pensions.

Care should be taken in this matter, and you should be particularly careful about those members who start in a teaching role but may have a change in role later on in their career, which means that they're no longer eligible to remain in the Scheme.

For this reason, you may wish to consider expressly stating the weight of 'teaching' in an individual's job description as this will provide evidence you can use, should a question be raised about the individual's eligibility.

If an individual is incorrectly placed into membership of the Scheme, action will be taken to correct the position and the contributions refunded; so, it's important you carefully consider and assess individual roles before taking a decision as to which pension scheme is most appropriate.

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