



Preserved Benefits into Payment on Medical Grounds

If you left the scheme before your normal retirement age and you had enough membership to qualify for a benefit the chances are that you were awarded a preserved benefit. Preserved Benefits normally come into payment at your normal retirement age but there is provision for them to be paid early if you become ill and satisfy the rules of the scheme for their payment.

In order to start the process you must apply to the scheme employer you were last employed by advising them of your illness and asking for your benefits to be brought into payment.

If you have multiple preserved benefits with the same employer you will need to indicate which employments you are referring to in your letter as each will have to be assessed individually. If you have multiple employments with different employers you will need to apply to each employer individually.

Changes to the pension scheme from 1st April 2008 resulted in different eligibility criteria based on the date of leaving the scheme as follows,

Leavers on or before 31st March 2008

You must be *permanently incapable* of performing your former job.

Leavers on or after 1st April 2008

You must be *permanently incapable* of performing your former job and, be incapable of gainful employment* for at least three years from the date of your application.

* *Gainful Employment is paid employment for not less than 30 hours in each week for a period of not less than 12 months.*

Payment of Benefits

In either scenario described above the amount of benefit payable is the current value of your preserved benefit at the date of payment (Current Value = Benefits at Leaving plus annual cost of living increases).

The date from which the benefits are paid is a decision your former employer makes but is usually from the date upon which your application to have them put into payment is received.

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Serious Ill Health

If you are diagnosed with a life threatening illness with a short life expectancy the procedure for preserved benefit into payment can be accelerated without the need for many of the forms and processes that would usually be required. All that would be required would be confirmation of your illness from your medical specialist. Your former employer knows about this and would put this into operation as soon as you informed them.

