FYI®
For Your Information®

HMRC's Services for Managing Pension Schemes

Volume 2019

Issue 11

1 April 2019

Authors
Nikki Williams
Gary Crockford

Managing Pension Schemes will replace Pension Schemes Online as HMRC's online service for managing pension schemes.

A trustee (or organisation) who is registered as a scheme administrator may receive a letter from HMRC asking them to update their details in preparation for the transition.

Background

HMRC provide two platforms through the Government Gateway for managing registered pension schemes:

- **Pension Schemes Online** – which has been around since 2006
- **Managing Pension Schemes** – which was introduced in June 2018

Pension Schemes Online is being phased out over 2019 and 2020 with all data moved onto Managing Pension Schemes.

While the new digital platform is ultimately intended to improve the service for pension scheme administrators, Managing Pension Schemes does not yet have all the necessary functionality, with new functions continuing to be added over the next two years.

This briefing note provides a reminder of the role of the scheme administrator (usually a trustee) and an overview of using both online platforms.

Duties of a scheme administrator include:

- **Registering the pension scheme with HMRC**
- **Paying certain taxes to HMRC**
- **Reporting events to HMRC**
- **Making returns of information to HMRC**
- **Providing information to scheme members, and others, regarding the lifetime allowance, pension input amounts, benefits and transfers.**

Next steps

HMRC has asked existing pension scheme administrators using Pension Schemes Online to update their details in readiness for the migration to Managing Pension Schemes.

Who are scheme administrators?

A registered pension scheme (which includes trust-based occupational pension schemes, personal pensions, stakeholder pensions, free-standing additional voluntary contribution schemes or even a buy-out policy) must have at least one scheme administrator.

For trust-based schemes (including those providing death in service benefits only) the scheme administrator is usually one or more individual trustees, a corporate trustee (perhaps the employer where the employer is the trustee of a stand-alone group life assurance scheme), or a partnership. For personal pensions the scheme administrator will usually be the provider (not the employer).

A scheme administrator must be a legal resident of the UK, an EU member state, Iceland, Liechtenstein or Norway. To register a new scheme, or to take over as the scheme administrator of an existing scheme, the individual must be appointed to the role in line with the pension scheme's rules.

Which system will scheme administrators currently be registered with?

Platform	Scheme registered	Pension Scheme Tax Reference	Scheme administrator ID
Pension Schemes Online	Before 4 June 2018	Begins with 0	Begins with A0
Managing Pension Schemes	From 4 June 2018	Begins with 2	Begins with A2

Adding / removing administrators: Pension Schemes Online

New scheme administrators (e.g. a new trustee)

New scheme administrators to schemes registered before 4 June 2018 must contact Pension Schemes Services who will give them a scheme administrator ID and set up a Pension Schemes Online record.

An existing scheme administrator will then be able to associate them to the pension scheme. If no scheme administrators are registered, then Pension Schemes Services should be contacted.

Ceasing to act as a scheme administrator (e.g. a retiring trustee)

A scheme administrator who ceases to act must record this on Pension Schemes Online within 30 days. There must always be another scheme administrator authorised to act before they can be removed.

Authorising a practitioner

A scheme administrator can authorise a practitioner (such as Buck) to deal with the day to day affairs of the pension scheme. The scheme administrator will need the practitioner's 8-digit practitioner ID. The process is set out in the Pension Schemes Online guidance.

Adding / removing administrators: Managing Pension Schemes

New scheme administrators (e.g. a new trustee)

An individual (or an organisation) who has never registered as a pension scheme administrator before 4 June 2018 can register online through the Government Gateway. They will need to choose whether to register as an individual, an organisation or an agent. For example, an individual trustee would register as an individual; an employer acting as a corporate trustee of a stand-alone group life assurance scheme would register as an organisation.

An existing scheme administrator, who needs to register a new pension scheme on Managing Pension Schemes, will need to use their existing Government Gateway username and password to log into the new service and (after HMRC have updated the details successfully) register the new pension scheme.

Ceasing to act as a scheme administrator (e.g. a retiring trustee)

A scheme administrator who ceases to act can do this through Managing Pension Schemes. There must always be another scheme administrator authorised to act before they can be removed.

Authorising a practitioner

It's not currently possible to authorise a practitioner using the Managing Pension Schemes service. Instead, a scheme administrator must complete online form APSS150 and send this by post.

Registering a new pension scheme on Managing Pension Schemes

Only an existing scheme administrator can register a new pension scheme through Managing Pension Schemes. If the scheme administrator had originally registered under Pension Schemes Online they will need to complete enrolment details when they first sign in to the Managing Pension Schemes service.

HMRC will review the application and this may take some time. It's possible to monitor the progress of an application using Managing Pension Schemes. If the scheme is registered by HMRC a registration certificate will be sent to the scheme administrator by post confirming the date of registration and the schemes Pension Scheme Tax Reference.

Which services are available in Managing Pension Schemes?

Not all of the services currently available in Pension Schemes Online can (at the time of writing) be accessed in Managing Pension Schemes.

Currently available in Managing Pension Schemes
• invite other scheme administrators to be associated to the scheme • accept an invitation from another scheme administrator to be associated to a scheme • remove themselves as scheme administrator from a scheme (as long as there's another scheme administrator added to the scheme first) and then (from March 2019) to de-enrol from the service • (from March 2019) to update some of their scheme administrator details and amend some of the scheme details

Currently unavailable in Managing Pension Schemes
• authorise a new scheme administrator* • file an accounting for tax (AFT) return** • advise HMRC of the wind up of a scheme**

* Instead complete online form APSS150 and send this by post

** Instead email pensions.administration@hmrc.gsi.gov.uk (with ‘Managing Pension Schemes service – AFT / wind up’ in the subject line) giving:

- the scheme name
- the PSTR (starting with ‘2)
- the charge types that are reportable or the date of scheme wind up
- their contact details

HMRC will reply and advise how to file this information.

Transition from Pension Schemes Online to Managing Pension Schemes in 2019 to 2020

The new online service does not currently contain all the functionality to enable scheme administrators to manage a pension scheme. Phase one started in June 2018 and phase two starts in April 2019. New features will be added at intervals over the coming year.

Ultimately, Pension Schemes Online will be decommissioned once HMRC are confident that the Managing Pension Schemes service will enable scheme administrators (and practitioners) to:

- successfully manage pension schemes
- successfully fulfil their reporting requirements (e.g. pension scheme return and event reports)
- receive notifications of all their assessments, charges and penalties
- view charges online
- view lifetime allowance protections for the members of the pension scheme online

During the next couple of years, HMRC will add further functionality to the Managing Pension Schemes service and migrate all existing pension schemes and scheme administrators from the current Pension Schemes Online service to the new service.

To assist with this, HMRC asked (at the beginning of 2018) all scheme administrators to log on and update their details in Pension Schemes Online. This was particularly important where the record had not been updated recently. HMRC will write directly to a scheme administrator who has not been online and updated their details. Inevitably some of these letters will be sent to individuals who are no longer acting as a scheme administrator. A new scheme administrator will need to be appointed as explained above.

Links to HMRC's guidance

Pension administrators – links to a range of guidance for pension scheme administrators and trustees.

Register as a pension scheme administrator – guidance on how to become a pension scheme administrator.

Apply to register a pension scheme – guidance on how scheme administrators can apply to register a new pension scheme with HMRC.

Manage a registered pension scheme – guidance for scheme administrators on how to manage pension schemes.

Pension Schemes Online: user guide – guidance and detailed step by step instructions on how to use Pension Schemes Online (the service for pension schemes registered before 4 June 2018). Guidance is for scheme administrators and practitioners.

Pension scheme newsletters – links to newsletters containing updates and guidance on pension schemes. These include those published on the new Managing Pension Schemes service (originally called Manage and Register Pension Schemes) (the service for pension schemes registered from 4 June 2018). These latter newsletters include guidance on the new service and the timescales for introducing new functions.

Produced by the Knowledge Resource Centre
The Knowledge Resource Centre is responsible for national multi-practice compliance consulting, analysis and publications, government relations, research, surveys, training, and knowledge management. For more information, please contact your consultant or call us on 0800 066 5433.