Auto Enrolment Factsheet

The government has introduced auto enrolment regulations effective from 1 October 2012 to encourage greater employee participation in workplace pensions. UCL began to auto enrol its qualifying employees with effect from 1 June 2013.

What pension schemes are applicable?

If you are employed on a fixed monthly pay basis, are over age 16 and below the State Pension Age you will be automatically enrolled into one of two schemes:

If you are employed on a grade 1 – 6 you will be enrolled in the Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London (SAUL) Scheme. In this scheme, UCL will make contributions equivalent to 16% of your salary and you will be required to contribute an amount equivalent to 6% of your salary. More information on SAUL is available at www.saul.org.uk

If you are employed on a grade 6b or above you will be enrolled in the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS). In this scheme, UCL will make contributions equivalent to 18% of your salary and you will be required to contribute an amount equivalent to 8% of your salary.

Alternatively, you may be eligible for continued membership of the National Health Service Pension Scheme if you were a member within the last twelve months of the commencement of your UCL employment and are now employed within a UCL Medical School. If this is the case, then you would be required to complete an NHSPS joining form before NHSPS contributions could be deducted.

Please note that if you are over State Pension Age and below age 75 you will not qualify for automatic enrolment. However, you can elect to join a Pension Scheme (please see “Opting-In”).

What if I am employed as an As and When Employee/Casual Worker?

If you are employed as an “As and When Employee”/Casual Worker, aged between 22 and State Pension Age and your monthly earnings exceed £833 this will trigger UCL to postpone your auto enrolment assessment. If you meet this criteria then you will receive a letter confirming that your assessment has been postponed and that you will only be automatically enrolled into a pension scheme if your earnings typically exceed the Auto Enrolment earnings threshold, (over £833 per month 2016/2017 tax year). This will mean that your earnings will be not be assessed until Month 4 of your employment. You can choose to opt out of the scheme if you want to.

If your earnings are less than £833 per month in the 2016/2017 tax year you will not qualify to be auto enrolled. However, your earnings will continue to be monitored should your earnings qualify you for auto enrolment at a later date. Similarly, if you are under age 22 or over State Pension Age and below age 75 you will not qualify for automatic enrolment. However, you have the right to join SAUL or USS if you are over the age of 65 if you want to (please see Opting-in).
Opting-In

If you want to join USS or SAUL, please contact Pension Services - pensions@ucl.ac.uk or in writing stating that ‘I confirm I personally submitted this notice to join a workplace pension scheme’. You will then be entered into the pension scheme in the next available pay period.

Opting-Out

You can choose to opt out of the scheme if you want to, but if you stay in you will have your own pension which you get when you retire. If you are auto enrolled into a UCL Pension Scheme you may choose to opt out after considering that you may have less income in retirement as a result of opting out. Pension Services cannot print or complete the form for you.

If you are choosing to opt out of SAUL you can do so by downloading and completing an opt out form from the link below and forwarding to pensions@ucl.ac.uk or sending the completed form to Pension Services at Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT. http://www.saul.org.uk/3/forms.html

If you are choosing to opt out of USS you can do so by downloading and completing an opt out form from the link below and forwarding to pensions@ucl.ac.uk or sending the completed form to Pension Services at Gower Street, London WC1E 6BT. http://www.uss.co.uk/SchemeGuide/FinalSalaryBenefitssection/forms/Pages/default.aspx

Please note that you are unable to opt out of the pension scheme until you have been enrolled. Pension Services are unable to print, supply or complete an Opt Out form for you.

Fixed or Enhanced Protection

If you have Fixed or Enhanced Protection and meet the eligibility criteria you will still be automatically enrolled at UCL. You do have the option of withdrawing/opting out of the pension scheme in order to retain your protection but this must be done within one month of your commencement of employment at UCL. If you do not Opt Out you will be in breach of HMRC rules, and risk incurring the penalty of a Lifetime Allowance Charge.

The 3 year Rule

UCL is required as part of auto enrolment to re-enroll all eligible employees into a pension scheme every three years from UCL’s original staging date of 1st March 2013.

UCL’s Commitment to its Employees

UCL is committed to providing access to a pension scheme if you are under age 75 and work in the UK. UCL must by law continue to maintain your membership of a pension scheme that meets the governments standards and if your membership of the scheme ends (and it is not because of something you do or fail to do), UCL must by law put you into another pension scheme that meets the government standards.

Further information on Pension Schemes and Auto Enrolment can be found on the Pension Services website: http://www.ucl.ac.uk/hr/pensions/