# Automatic Enrolment – New UCL Contracts

The government has introduced pension auto enrolment regulations to encourage greater employee participation in workplace pensions. These place an obligation on employers such as UCL to enrol eligible individuals into a pension scheme which meets certain minimum standards.

For individuals employed on a fixed monthly basis, the provisions in your contract of employment provide for contractual enrolment to be used. Please see the section on **Auto Enrolment (Contractual enrolment)** below for more information.

The sections on **Opting Out of USS, SAUL Start or the NHSPS**, **Opting-In** and **UCL's Commitment to its Employees** apply to all individuals.

UCL recommends that you read the sections of this website page which apply to you very carefully particularly if you have a valid HMRC **Enhanced** and **Fixed Protection** certificate.

**IMPORTANT NOTICE**: This webpage deals with complex matters of law and tax. It is not advice and it does not purport to be a detailed resume of the legal or tax positions. Your own circumstances will be unique and can impact on how this affects you.

## New UCL Contracts

If you are employed on a fixed monthly pay basis, are over age 16 and below age 75, you will be contractually enrolled into one of two schemes:

If you are a new employee from the 1 April 2023 on a grade 1 – 6 you will be enrolled in the Defined Contribution (DC) Section of the [Superannuation Arrangements of the University of London](https://www.legalandgeneral.com/workplace/s/saul/) (SAUL Start) Scheme for the first 3 years of your scheme membership. 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. You will be offered continued membership of the DC section or the option to join the Defined Benefit (DB) section of SAUL at the conclusion of your first 3 years of membership. For the DB section, UCL will make contributions equivalent to **21%** of your salary and you will be required to contribute an amount equivalent to **6%** of your salary. If you have previously been eligible for membership of SAUL at UCL or another institution, then it may be possible, subject to SAUL’s approval, to join or retain membership in the Defined Benefit Section of SAUL. Please email Pension Services: pensions@ucl.ac.uk if this applies to you. More information on both sections of the scheme is available [here](https://www.saul.org.uk/#/home).

* 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 **21.6**% of your salary and you will be required to contribute an amount equivalent to **9.8%** of your salary.[[1]](#footnote-1) More information on USS is available [here](https://www.uss.co.uk/).

You may choose to opt out of the scheme if you want to (please see Opting Out of USS, SAUL or the NHSPS below).

Alternatively, you may be eligible for continued membership of the National Health Service Pension Scheme.

### Eligibility for the National Health Service Pension Scheme (NHSPS)

UCL will contractually enroll you into one of two schemes, as noted above. However, if you were previously a member of the NHSPS and are now employed by a recognised employer of the NHSPS e.g. a UCL Medical School, you may be eligible to re-join the NHSPS.

To re-join you are required to complete an [NHSPS (SD65) joining form](https://www.nhsbsa.nhs.uk/sites/default/files/2018-05/SD65-20180525-%28V7%29.pdf). You must complete Part 1 and then the form should be scanned to [pensions@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:pensions@ucl.ac.uk) or sent to Pension Services at Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT. **UCL will then confirm if you are eligible to re-join.**

**Pension Services must receive the joining form within 3 months of the date of your commencement of employment with UCL, or your application may be turned down.** Please note, if you have not **fully completed and signed** the joining form then **UCL will not be able to accept it and there may be a delay** in your re-joining the NHSPS. UCL accepts no liability for any delay caused by receipt of an incomplete/unsigned joining form.

**You should think carefully about the impact that this may have on your personal tax position and whether your action could cause a loss of any lifetime allowance protection that you may hold.**

Whether to join the NHSPS and **the impact of your membership of the NHSPS on your personal tax position is entirely a matter for you to consider. UCL is unable to advise you on this matter and will not accept liability for the loss of any lifetime allowance protection caused by your action**.

If you are not a member of the NHSPS and you meet the criteria for auto-enrolment, then UCL has an obligation to enrol you into the USS or SAUL. **You should not assume that because you have chosen not to join the NHSPS, that your personal tax position is protected going forward.**

### If you have Fixed or Enhanced Protection

From 6 April 2023 you will be able to accrue new pension benefits, join new arrangements or transfer without losing Fixed or Enhanced protection. You will also keep your entitlement to a higher pension commencement lump sum as per your protection certificate.

### You should seek your own advice

Auto-enrolment is complex and parts of this webpage also deal with matters in relation to personal taxation.  UCL cannot give you advice and therefore **you may need to consider your own position in respect of financial planning, your personal tax position and the legal intricacies of any of the issues raised in this notice.**  This webpage should not be seen as advice in any way or a detailed resume of the relevant law.  **If enrolment into USS or SAUL will be detrimental to you, it is your responsibility to ensure that it does not happen or you opt out within the necessary timescale**.

## Opting Out of USS, SAUL Start

You can choose to opt out of USS and SAUL Start if you want to but you should also consider that:-

* If you stay in you will have your own pension to take when you retire
* Your pension belongs to you, even if you leave us in the future
* UCL and you will both pay into the scheme every month
* You may have less income in retirement as a result of opting out.

**You cannot sign the Opt Out Form any earlier than the day on which you were auto-enrolled (Auto Enrolment (Contractual enrolment) or Auto Enrolment (Statutory enrolment)), the day on which you joined the NHSPS or the day on which you were re-enrolled (Re-enrolment).**

Pension Services are unable to print, supply or complete an Opt Out Form for you, but you can obtain a copy of the relevant form as follows:

* If you are choosing to opt out of SAUL Start from the date that you commenced employment, you can do so by downloading and completing [an opt out form](https://www.legalandgeneral.com/workplace/s/saul/joining/) from the dedicated Legal and General SAUL Start website. Legal and General will allow you an opt out window of 30 days from the date that your joining details are provided to the scheme. You will receive an email notification from Legal and General stating the 30 day period that you have to withdraw and claim back your contributions. You can still opt out from SAUL Start following the 30 day notice period but you will not have access to a refund of your contributions.
* If you are choosing to opt out of USS you can do so by downloading and completing [an opt out form.](http://www.uss.co.uk/members/members-home/resources/forms)

### Important information if you are opting out of USS

You can elect not to join USS from the commencement of your employment. If you see a reference to opting out within 3 months of joining on the USS website or the USS Opt Out Forms. However, the period to opt out of the USS is the time period which applies to your circumstances e.g. Auto Enrolment (Contractual enrolment), Auto Enrolment (Statutory enrolment) or Re-enrolment.

If you are uncertain, please contact Pension Services who will be able to confirm which circumstances apply to you. Please note that they will not be able to discuss the exact USS Opt Out dates applicable to you.

The fully completed and signed ‘**Opt Out Form**’ should be scanned to [pensions@ucl.ac.uk](mailto:pensions@ucl.ac.uk) or sent to Pension Services at Gower Street, London, WC1E 6BT.

**Please note, if you have not fully completed and signed the Opt Out Form then UCL will not be able to accept it and there may be a delay in completing the process of Opting Out.**

If you return your USS within the required timescale and successfully opt out, you will be treated as though you had not become a member of the scheme. You will receive a refund of contributions and will no longer pay contributions to the scheme.

## Opting-In

Please note that if you do not meet the criteria to be automatically enrolled and you are under the age of 75, you may elect to join a pension scheme, which would usually be SAUL Start or the USS. Depending on your circumstances, you may not be entitled to receive employer contributions to your pension.

If you have previously opted-out but wish to rejoin at a future date, you may also opt-in.

If you want to join a pension scheme, please contact Pension Services [by email](mailto:pensions@ucl.ac.uk) stating that ‘I confirm I personally submitted this notice to join a workplace pension scheme’. On receipt of the email, Pension Services will enter you into SAUL Start/ the USS for the next available pay period.

Please note that you may only opt in once in any 12 month period.

If you were previously a member of the NHSPS, please confirm this to Pension Services when you contact them.

**Working overseas and remaining in USS**

It is recommended to review your USS membership if [working abroad](https://www.uss.co.uk/for-members/life-events/working-or-retiring-overseas) as although you can probably remain in USS it may not be sensible due to overseas countries taxing employer contributions 20%+ and the employee contribution not benefiting from salary sacrifice.

## 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 government's 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.

2023-4

1. The current contribution rates are shown as at 1 October 2021, but UCL and the USS reserve the right to alter (including to increase) the contribution rates from time to time [↑](#footnote-ref-1)