



Frequently Asked Questions for Automatic Enrolment and the Network Rail Pension Schemes

Q. What are my qualifying earnings?

- A. This is the amount of your gross pay between a lower and upper limit which is reviewed annually by the UK government. In 2025/2026 tax year this will be your gross annual pay between £6,240.00 and £50,270.00. This means that only earnings between the two bands are used to calculate pension contributions.

Q. What is my pensionable pay?

- A. Your pensionable pay is your basic pay plus regional allowance if you receive one.

Q. What is SMART?

- A. SMART is how your contributions are deducted from your salary and paid into your pension scheme. These are shown as a SMART deduction, in the 'payments' column, on your payslip to reflect the reduction in your contractual pay. The SMART contribution is added to your employer contribution before being paid into your Pension Scheme. The benefit to you of doing this is that it reduces the National Insurance Contributions that you and Network Rail will have to pay. For more information on how SMART works, please visit:
<https://www.mynrpension.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/SMART-Booklet-2021.pdf>

Q. What if I want to pay more into the pension?

- A. You can choose to pay up to 4% of your pensionable pay into your NRDC Pension with Network Rail contributing up to a maximum of 7%. If you wish to change your contributions to get the maximum benefit of the Network Rail contribution, you will need to complete a NRDC 'Change of Contributions' form which can be found on www.myNRpension.co.uk.

Please note if 4% of your pensionable pay is less than 5% of your qualifying earnings, an additional underpin contribution will be deducted from your pay to ensure that both yourself and Network Rail are contributing the minimum level of contributions.

Q. What if I wish to pay more than the 4%?

- A. You can opt to contribute more than 4% of your pensionable pay, and this would be treated as an AVC (additional voluntary contribution). This can be done by completing an NRDC 'Change of Contributions' form available from www.myNRpension.co.uk.

Q. What does a contribution underpin mean?

- A. A Contribution Underpin is the term used for collecting the minimum pension contributions required by government legislation. Whilst you can elect to pay between 0 – 4% of your pensionable pay, if the contribution amount you have elected does not meet the minimum requirement of 5% of qualifying earnings (3% employer), the difference will need to be collected to meet this minimum. This is taken by way of the contribution underpin.

**Q. How can I opt out?**

A. To opt-out, of the NRDC, you have two options –

- 1) Opt-out of the NRDC fully
- 2) Opt-out of having to pay underpin contributions.

To do so you will need to request an opt-out form from the NRDC scheme administrators, WTW, via

Email: NetworkRailPensions@wtwco.com

Phone: 01737 230 487

The opt-out notice must be signed by you. Once you have completed it send it to:
Network Rail, NRSS Payroll; Network Rail, Square One, 4 Travis Street, Manchester, M1 2NY
or email it to NRSSPayrollProcessing@networkrail.co.uk.

If you opt out within 30 days of being enrolled into NRDC, you may be eligible for a refund of your contributions. For more information, please contact WTW. If you have been a member for more than 30 days, but underpin contributions have now been applied, you will not receive a refund of your contributions.

Q. What if I just want to opt-out of the underpin?

A. You can opt out of the underpin contributions only at any time. You can then choose to pay between 0 – 4% of your pensionable pay each period, with Network Rail contributing between 3 – 7%. If you opt to contribute 0% no contributions will be taken from your next pay; Network Rail will continue to pay 3% of your pensionable earnings. Please note to opt-out of the underpin you will need to contact the scheme administrator, WTW, as detailed above.

Q. If I opt-out of the scheme, can I join at a later date?

A. Yes, you can re-join or request that the underpin contributions should apply, as appropriate. To re-join the NRDC, contact Network Rail Pensions in writing by sending a letter, or you can attach the letter as a PDF and send this electronically. The letter has to be signed by you and if sending it electronically, it has to contain the phrase “I confirm I personally submitted this notice to join a workplace pension scheme”.

Q. If I opt-out, will I be enrolled again at a later date?

A. Anyone who opts out or stops making payments into a pension scheme will be automatically re-enrolled back into NRDC on the next scheme anniversary date being April 2028 (the next anniversary date thereafter is April 2031) and underpin contributions will apply.



Q. Are there other pension schemes that I can join?

- A. You do have the option of joining the CARE Pension Scheme. CARE is a defined benefit pension arrangement. Your pension at retirement is based upon your Pensionable Pay in each year of membership.

The current employee contribution rate is 7.24% of your pensionable pay each pay period and Network Rail currently contributes 10.86%. The pension you earn each year is calculated as 1/60th of your Pensionable Pay. Each unit of pension that you earn is then increased until retirement by the increase in the Consumer Prices Index (CPI).

More information on the Network Rail CARE scheme can be found at www.myNRpension.co.uk. To join the Network Rail CARE Pension Scheme please contact the Network Rail Pensions Team at pensions@networkrail.co.uk.

Q. Where can I get further information?

- A. If you have any questions about the Network Rail pension schemes, please contact the Network Rail Pensions Team by:

Email: pensions@networkrail.co.uk

Or visit: www.myNRpension.co.uk