

# **NATIONAL GRID UK PENSION SCHEME**

## **INTERNAL DISPUTE RESOLUTION PROCEDURE**

### **EXPLANATORY NOTE**

#### **WHO IS COVERED?**

This procedure covers disagreements between the Trustees of the National Grid UK Pension Scheme (the Scheme) and people in the following categories. If you have a complaint to make to the Trustees and you are included in one of these categories, this procedure will apply to you:

- Scheme members (this includes pensioners and deferred pensioners, but not those who have transferred out of the Scheme more than six months previously)
- Widows, widowers, registered civil/same sex partners and dependents of members
- Prospective members
- Anyone who has been a member, prospective member, widow, or widower or dependent within the last six months
- Someone who on the member's death is entitled to Scheme benefits but who is not financially dependent on the member
- Anyone claiming to be in any of these categories.

#### **Your right to be represented**

If you wish to make a complaint and you do not wish to correspond with the Trustees yourself, you may ask a personal representative to act on your behalf. This personal representative should not be a Trustee of the Scheme.

#### **Assistance of the Pensions Ombudsman and/or MoneyHelper**

You have the right to refer your complaint to the Pensions Ombudsman free of charge.

The Pensions Ombudsman solely deals with pension complaints. It can help if you have a complaint or dispute about the administration (including transfers/conversion) and/or management of personal and occupational pensions.

Contact with the Pensions Ombudsman about a complaint needs to be made within three years of when the events you are complaining about happened - or, if later, within three years of when you first knew about it (or ought to have known about it). There is discretion for those time limits to be extended.

The Pensions Ombudsman can be contacted at:

**The Pensions Ombudsman 10 South Colonnade, Canary Wharf, E14 4PU**

**Tel:** 0800 917 4487

**Email:** [CentralSupportMailbox@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk](mailto:CentralSupportMailbox@pensions-ombudsman.org.uk)

**Website:** [www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk](http://www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk)

You can also submit a complaint form online: [www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint](http://www.pensions-ombudsman.org.uk/making-complaint)

If you have general requests for information or guidance concerning your pension arrangements, contact MoneyHelper, provided by the Money and Pensions Service, as follows:

**MoneyHelper Money and Pensions Service 5th Floor, 120 Holborn London EC1N 2TD**

**Tel:** 0800 011 3797

**Website:** [www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise](http://www.moneyhelper.org.uk/en/pensions-and-retirement/pension-wise)

### **Exemptions**

If you have begun court proceedings or the Pensions Ombudsman is already investigating your complaint, this procedure will not apply to you.

### **PROCEDURE**

At Stage 1 of the procedure, disputes are usually considered by a pairing of senior pension employees on behalf of the Trustees, unless the nature of the complaint is such that this would lead to a conflict of interest. In such cases, disputes will be referred to a pairing of the Trustees.

If you disagree with the decision of the appointed persons at Stage 1, you can require the complaint to be put to a committee of the Trustees at Stage 2 of the procedure. If any Trustees were involved with the decision at Stage 1, they would not be part of the committee at Stage 2.

If you disagree with the decision at Stage 2, you can refer the matter to the Pensions Ombudsman.

### **Information to be provided**

If you want to bring a complaint, you must provide details about yourself and the complaint in writing. You should complete a disputes form, which can be obtained from the pension administration team or the NGUKPS Trustee Executive Team (if not already completed or included with this guidance note). When completing a Stage 2 form, you should enclose a copy of the Stage 1 decision and explain why you are dissatisfied.

At Stage 2 of the procedure, you, or your representative, may attend the meeting of the committee of the Trustees reconsidering your complaint and put forward your reasons for making the complaint. You will then be required to withdraw from the meeting before a decision is made and provided with the Committee's decision in writing following the meeting.

When you receive a decision, it will include details of any relevant legislation or provisions in the Scheme rules that have been relied on in reaching that decision. It will explain whether the Trustees are upholding or overruling the first decision, and it will tell you about the Pensions Ombudsman.

### **Time limits**

At Stage 1 of the procedure, a decision will normally be reached within four months of the receipt of a properly completed form. There may be a further period of up to 15 working days to notify you of the decision once it has been made.

An interim response will be provided if a full response is not possible within four months, explaining the reason for the delay and indicating when a response is likely to be provided. In many cases it may be possible to reach a decision earlier than the reasonable periods indicated. You will be informed of the decision as soon as practicable.

If, after you have received the Stage 1 decision, you wish to make an application for the decision to be reconsidered at Stage 2, you have six months in which to notify the Trustees of your request in writing. The Trustees will then have a further four months to reconsider the initial decision and 15 working days to notify you of their decision.

### **FURTHER INFORMATION**

Full details of the Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure are available on request from the pensions team:

**National Grid UK Pension Scheme, Pension Administration, Howden, Decimal Place, Chiltern Avenue, Amersham HP6 5FG**

**Freephone number:** 0808 175 1336

**International dialling:** (+44) 1483 661 340

**Email:** [NGUKGasPension@howden-group.co.uk](mailto:NGUKGasPension@howden-group.co.uk)