

The Rule of 85 and 2020

The Rule of 85 allowed members to retire after age 60 without any reduction to their pension where their age and length of scheme membership (in whole years) added up to 85. The rule was removed from the scheme regulations with effect from 1 December 2006 however certain protections remain in place for members who joined the scheme prior to this date.

Benefits protected by the Rule of 85 are payable without reduction from the later of:

- Age 60 (if the member meets the Rule of 85 criteria on or before this date)
- The date the member satisfies the Rule of 85 (if between 60 and 65)
- Age 65

Different levels of protection apply depending on your age, and these are outlined below.

Group 1 - members born before 1 April 1960 who joined the scheme before 1 December 2006:

- All benefits accrued up to 31 March 2020 are protected by the Rule of 85
- Benefits accrued from 1 April 2020 onwards will be reduced if paid before your State Pension Age

Group 2 - members born on or after 1 April 1960 who joined the scheme before 1 December 2006:

- All benefits accrued up to 31 March 2008 are protected by the Rule of 85
- Benefits accrued from 1 April 2008 to 31 March 2015 will be reduced if paid before age 65
- Benefits accrued from 1 April 2015 onwards will be reduced if paid before your State Pension Age

Group 3 - members who joined the scheme on or after 1 December 2006 (regardless of age):

- None of your benefits are protected by the Rule of 85
- Benefits accrued up to 31 March 2015 will be reduced if paid before age 65
- Benefits accrued from 1 April 2015 onwards will be reduced if paid before your State Pension Age

Although benefits accrued after 1 April 2020 will not benefit from the Rule of 85 protection, all protection accrued up to this date will remain in place even if you leave or retire after 31 March 2020.

The reduction is calculated based on how long before the normal payment dates above you would be retiring. The reduction factors are provided by the Government Actuary's Department. The current early payment reductions are shown below.

Early payment reductions

Number of years	Pension Reduction	Lump sum reduction (for membership to 31 March 2009)
0	0%	0%
1	5.0%	1.7%
2	9.7%	3.3%
3	14.0%	4.9%
4	18.0%	6.5%
5	21.6%	8.1%
6	25.0%	9.6%
7	28.2%	11.1%
8	31.2%	12.6%
9	34.0%	14.1%
10	36.6%	15.5%
11	40.6%	N/A
12	42.9%	N/A
13	45.1%	N/A

Your employer can agree not to reduce your benefits. This is a discretion, and you can ask them what their policy on this is. You can reduce or avoid any reductions by taking your pension later. Your benefits are normally payable from your Normal Pension Age. You can delay payment beyond your Normal Pension Age, but only if you left the Scheme after 31 March 1998. You must take your pension by age 75.

You can use our [online calculators to see an estimate of the benefits](#) which would be payable at retirement. These calculators take into account any Rule of 85 protection that you have.