

NHS Pensions – Best working practices for Electronic Staff Records (ESR) users

New starter on ESR

When entering the joiner information onto ESR you can check previous employment details via the Inter Authority Transfer (IAT) requests. This will show you the member's previous ESR employment and will confirm if the employment is still ongoing or the date the employment was terminated.

You need to think about how the previous end date affects the pension start date with new trust.

WT/PT previous trust	WT/PT new trust	Action to start date
PT	PT	Ok no action
PT WT WT	WT WT PT	Change pension start date to day after leaving date at previous trust

NB: pension contributions may need to be controlled manually.

IAT only shows contract leaving date not pension leaving date if annual leave is paid up at end of contract.

If you wish to contact the previous Trust to check leaving date, you can find the contact details in the Members Hub on NHS Pensions website or NHS Pensions will investigate if an error 0056(overlapping employment) occurs.

Every month following the running of payroll, joiners and leavers are sent via the interface to NHS Pensions. These are then normally processed by the second week of the following month. Information on processing can be located on Pensions Online (POL) ESR status page in the employer menu. This will show you the date the joiner and leaver processed.

Joiner's information

- 1) Correct errors on Pensions Online (POL). Wait 24 hours so that the ADP4 has correct membership details.

You need to check the employer error handling area on POL to see if there has been a SS10 joiner error produced. If there is an error with the employer you need to correct the information and resubmit. If the information is no longer relevant you can delete the error. If you are unable to action without NHS Pensions help you can resubmit it to NHS Pensions stating the correct information. You are unable to clear the errors that are allocated to Pensions but you can add

comments to assist them in the clearance. This will then be picked up and actioned by NHS Pensions.

- 2) If the error is corrected, the employment should appear on the ADP4 the following day as the information on this only updates overnight.
- 3) Download from NHS Hub the joiners leaver and changes report. The file format will be "PA_SPR_???_Y1617....." ??? = ESR Trust ID. Y = Tax Year. This will come in three tabs (one for each): starters, leavers and changes.
- 4) Download the ADP4 from POL and copy it into the joiners, leavers and changes report download in a separate tab.
- 5) Do a "VLOOKUP" to bring the DOC (date of commencement) from the ADP4 tab to the starters tab using the National Insurance (NI) number then assignment number to bring the date of commencement. When VLOOKUP is complete the starter tab should show three DOCs.
 - a) If all three DOCs are the same then starter is set up correctly.
 - b) If correct on NI number but not on assignment number, check if there are two records on ESR.
 - c) If there are no dates the starter has failed.
- 6) If the information is not showing check the fatal error report on the ESR hub that will show you if the joiner has failed to load. The report is called 'Pensions Error Reporting' and lists the errors via the following fields; Record Type, VPD, EA Code, Assignment Number, Filename, Reporting Date, Original Record Type, Message (error message/type). If the joiner appears on this report you will have to manually input the information via POL and amend ESR to show the correct information (refer to the ESR user guide).
- 7) If the joiner information does not appear in any of the above you need to raise a service request (SR) with ESR for them to check if the information was sent via the interface. If they confirm the information was sent, you should email nhsbsa.datamanagement@nhs.net for them to investigate giving them full details of the joiner and response from ESR.
- 8) If there is still no trace of the information, you will need to input the information via SS10 on POL. Once submitted it can take a couple of days to be recorded on the ADP 4.

If the information still fails to appear please email nhsbsa.datamanagement@nhs.net for them to check. Don't keep re-inputting SS10s unless advised as it will only cause more mismatches. You should also check ESR to ensure that the pensions element is active (please see user guide).

- 9) Check under notifications on POL for new starters messages e.g. Added Years contracts, Special Class status and Pension Sharing Orders.

Leaver information

- 1) Correct errors on POL. Wait 24 hours so ADP4 has the correct membership details.

You need to check the employer error handling area on POL to see if there has been a SD55T leaver error produced. If there is an error with the employer you need to correct the information and resubmit. If the information is no longer relevant you can delete the error. If you are unable to action without NHS Pensions help you can resubmit it to NHS Pensions stating the correct information. You are unable to clear the errors that are allocated to Pensions but you can add comments to assist them in the clearance, this will then be picked up and actioned by NHS Pensions.

- 2) The same as with joiners
- 3) Report already downloaded.
- 4) ADP4 already downloaded.
- 5) Do a "VLOOKUP" to bring Pensions start date and ID from the ADP4 tab into the Leavers tab, using NI number as the lookup.
 - a) If both show as N/A, leaver worked.
 - b) If different ID, check to see if there are two records on ESR.
 - c) If both there and match, the leaver has failed.
- 6) Same as joiners.
- 7) Same as joiners.
- 8) If there is still no trace of the information, you will need to close the record down manually on POL. Once updated it can take a couple of days to be recorded on the ADP 4. If the information still fails to appear please email nhsbsa.datamanagement@nhs.net for them to check. Don't keep closing the record down unless advised as it will only cause more mismatches. You should also check ESR to ensure that the pension's element is active (please see user guide).

Guide to year end

Action end of February

1. Run ADP4 and filter records that are not updated to 31 March, previous year. Check if they are in error handling. If they are in employers errors, update. If allocated to NHS Pensions Errors, input comment to assist NHS Pensions to correct errors. NHS Pensions should action within 5 days (give full details of why error has occurred, to assist NHS Pensions with clearance)
2. Extract an ADP4 from POL and a Pension Element Report from ESR, via Payroll Super Admin (or Payroll Admin URP) > Folders> Employees by Element. This will ensure that NHS Pensions and ESR hold the same membership details. To do this you would run a Vlookup between the two extracts checking pensionable employees are on the ADP4 list and no leavers are still on the ADP4. If the employee has left, close the record on POL. If ADP4 is not showing a member, check error handling and correct, otherwise do an SS10 on POL.
3. To check for low earners, below £10 pensionable pay, you can use your final FPS for the year (This can only be used for single assignments). Opt the member out of the Scheme. Take care to ensure they are not working in March.

Action March

1. Depending on your local processing details you need to run a Pension Payment Exception Report before you process BACs (Errors can still be corrected on Supp Payrolls).
2. After the Payroll final process, run the Pension Payment Exception Report again. If there are still errors then you have two choices. You can either let them fall into error handling and correct at that stage **or** you can put the Pension Interface Override Element into the members records and update manually on POL. (The second option does not affect your %'s on heat maps).

Action at 1 April

Update records with pension override element.

After April's payroll run

1. Check for March starters paid April, update POL when March starters are actioned and amend pension balances so contributions aren't recorded again at year end. You do this by using your local pension element (see Annex 1)
2. Check for members that change from W/T to P/T or P/T to W/T in previous year actioned in April. (Permanent amendment report can be run in Ad-hoc reporting or Bi-Discoverer). Amend POL to reflect the change of contract and amend pension balances so contributions aren't recorded again at year end. You do this by using your local pension element (see local pension element guidance).

Action when annual update has been run

1. Download the year end file from the hub.
2. Clear errors in employers' error handling. This should be done if possible in time for TRS cut off date provided by NHS Pensions.

3. Download ADP4 check what records are still not updated to 31 March. Before updating manually check if the member is in NHS Pensions error queue. If they are, input comment to assist NHS Pensions to correct errors. NHS Pensions should action within 5 days (give full details of why error has errored, to assist NHS Pensions with clearance). If not in error handling, update on POL.
4. If you have updated the record on POL, do not repeat the action as there is an error on the system. Contact data management for assistance if the error does not clear on the first attempt.
5. Within 6 weeks of the annual update, log onto POL and go into Notifications>SD55 Notifications and select the Annual Update radial button. Check for messages (i.e. Added Years Contracts, Sharing Orders etc.) Check Added Years contracts are being deducted from POL.

Bank Staff not worked all year

1. Download the report that shows closed bank records from POL (format will be PA_BLL_VPD etc). Amend leaving date from 31 March to the actual leaving date.

TRS to do before deadline

1. If any large payments in arrears for a previous year(s), go through Payroll before TRS deadline amend POL ASAP so Total Reward Statements are accurate.

Year End - Top 10 errors as recorded by NHS Pensions

Error code	Error description	Possible reasons	Action that could stop the error
0056	Whole-time employment overlapping with another employment		When putting new starter on the payroll, check IAT and control pension start date if there is overlapping employment
0400	Contributions not at Reported Rate	<p>1) Change of pension band due to increments or regrading</p> <p>2) Returned from mat leave after a period of no pay and arrears are being collected</p> <p>3) Incorrect manual adjustment normally EE's con input but no EE's pay</p>	<p>1) Action mid contribution rate changes or POL.</p> <p>2) Input EE's pensionable pay of arrears in current year or if arrears are being collected for pervious amend the balance and Pol.</p> <p>3) Use the NHS Pensions Payment Exceptions Report each month that will highlight error in advance.</p>
0421	SD55 Received: Member record not updated for previous year		In February, check ADP4 that all records are update to previous year end contact data management for assistance if you are unable to update record yourself.
0186	No Emp found match Emp ID-EA Code and DOC-DOT		See action 1 in the 'End of February' section in the 'Guide to Year End'.
0420	Earnings, contributions and or worked hours appear low		See action 3. In the 'End of February' section in the 'Guide to Year End'.
0463	Employer's pay less than employee's pay	<p>1) If on mat leave and employee's 8 week average is higher than employer's pay before starting mat leave</p> <p>2) If a half pay adjustment is made in arrears from 1 year to another</p> <p>3) Incorrect manual adjustment</p>	<p>1) Increasing ER's OMP earning will stop this (local trust decision)</p> <p>2) Use the NHS Pensions Payment Exceptions Report each month that will highlight error in advance and use local pension adjustment element to correct and amend previous years balances on POL if over £150</p>
0187	More than one Employment matching EA Code		Known issue at NHS Pensions
0173	Yearly hours-sessions not required		Use Joiner, Changes and Leavers report each month. Check the changes tab of WT to PT and PT to WT changes that are for the previous year and amend POL and adjust balances if required (POL doesn't action changes for previous year).
8030	No Master Record	New starter with missing	Check if a member has previous

	found to match input	NINO set up at NHS Pensions with NINO ZZ***** trying to record correct NINO on POL	pension record. If no previous record, ok to amend NINO on POL using SD55G. If there is a previous record then delete the record with the ZZ***** NINO and set record up again using a SS10 otherwise the member will have to SDNO at NHS Pensions.
0197	Amendment-change already recorded but date of change differs		If there has been more than one change in the tax year you would have to manually adjust the members record on POL.

Local Pension Adjustment Element

To set up elements - See the ESR info point <https://www.infopoint.esr.nhs.uk/> or Payroll Manager.

Suggested Local Elements to set up, VPD (XXX) number followed by text:

XXXP NHS Add. Pens Additional Pension
 XXXC NHS Add. Pens Additional Pension
 XXXP NHS Added Years AVC
 XXXC NHS Added Years AVC
 XXXP NHS Pension Arrs EE
 XXXC NHS Pension Arrs EE
 XXXP NHS ERRBO Arrs ERRBO
 XXXC NHS ERRBO Arrs ERRBO
 XXXC CB Added Years AVC

P = Previous Year

C = Current Year

This allows you to correctly allocate monies to the correct financial year and assists with completion of the annual statement and monthly pay overs.

Possible ways the elements can be used

	Retro Done	Retr o Neg ate	Pension Adjust Element (OLD)	Local Pension Adjust (NEW)	NB: (1) Where TPP is less than £150 adjustment is not necessary on POL (2) Don't forget to adjust part time hours, where relevant, in the Pension Adjust Element	
Reason	Y/N	Y/N	Affects employees Pay and reduces ESR Balance	Also affects employees Pay but does not affect balances or balance sent to NHSPA	Explanation	ACTION
SM14 overlaps Current Year (Or DOC change)	Y Pensions	N/A	N/A	N/A	Only action to input correction to ESR and balances adjusted this year OK.	--- ---
SM14 overlaps previous year (Or DOC change)	Y Pensions	Y	N/A	Minus	By negating the retro and doing the adjustment manually using NEW LPA will refund money to the employee but will not affect balances sent to NHS Pensions	YR POL
SM14 overlaps where combined current and previous years					As above but split the figures to the relevant year.	YR POL
SM8 Exceeding WT Previous Year	N	N/A	N/A	Minus	NO retro as calculation done manually by Pensions and by using the NEW LPA it will then refund the money to the employee but will not affect the balances sent to NHS Pensions at year end. NB: If refund spans more than one previous year ensure you use a NEW LPA for	YR POL

					each year and mark as such	
Re-Employed Pensioner i.e. (full refund)	Y Payroll	N	Plus	Minus	Retro done and no negate therefore contra the entries on both Pens Adjust elements so no change to the employees pay. The old pens adjust will raise the employees balance but the reduced balance on the New LPA will not go to NHS Pensions for this year	YR POL
W/t to P/t (VV) Doctors and Sessions to HRS. Also Bank to contract hours	N	N	Minus	Plus	This is done after it has been actioned on payroll. Therefore use close down figures at change for the LPA figures. Manually close down record and then do SS10 for new employment.	---
AJ's from Starters and Leavers List (where it is a + figure on AJ List)	Y Payroll	N	minus	Plus	This is done after it has been actioned on Payroll. Therefore as stated use both Pens adjusts to contra the entries so the employees net pay is not affected. The amount of the New LPA will not affect the balances sent to NHS Pensions. Use the figures from the AJ for the Pens Adjusts but if it spans more than one previous year use the NEW LPA element for each year and mark it as such.	YR POL
AJ's from Starters and Leavers List (where it is a - figure on AJ List)	Y Payroll	N	Plus	Minus		YR POL
Arrears of Pay	Y Payroll	N	Minus	Plus	Retro done and no negate therefore contra the entries on both Pens Adjust elements so no change to the employees pay. The old pens adjust will raise the employees balance but the reduced balance on the New LPA will not go to NHS Pensions for this year. If it spans more than one previous year use the NEW LPA element for each year and mark it as such.	YR POL

Maternity Arrears for the prev year collected this year	N	N	Minus (Ees Conts Only)	Plus (Ees Conts only)	Where the maternity arrears are for the previous year but collected current year. The pay to the employee is not affected but the balance is reduced by the old element only. Therefore both years correct - no adjustment required on POL as should hold correct Ers conts which NHS Pensions use for calculations.	YR ---
½ pay Sickness Adjust for Previous year	N	N	Minus (EES Conts only)	Plus (EES Conts only)	As per the Maternity where they are for the previous year but collected current year. The pay to the employee is not affected but the balance is reduced by the old element only. Therefore both years correct - no adjustment required on POL as should hold correct Ers conts which NHS Pensions use for calculations.	--- ---
% Banding incorrect deduction in previous year adjusted this year	Y + Payroll		Minus	Plus	The pay to the employee is not affected but the balance is reduced by the old element only. Therefore both years correct once POL adjusted for previous year.	YR ---
	Y - Payroll		Plus	Minus	The pay to the employee is not affected but the balance is reduced by the old element only. Therefore both years correct once POL adjusted for previous year.	YR ---
Career Break (For Months 7 to 24 Only)	.		+ Ers + Ees	-Ers (ers conts value) + Ees (= value of Ers Conts)	The + Ees and + Ers in the OLD ADJUST will put the balances correct on ESR. The - Ers conts in the NEW LPA contra's the Ers pay. However the employee is paying both Ees and Ers conts therefore the + Ees in the NEW LPA is the value of the Ers conts which will have the result of showing the employee has paid this.	YR ---
Opt out previous year adjusted this year	Y Payroll	N	Plus	Minus	This is done after it has been actioned on Payroll. Therefore use both Pens adjusts to contra the entries so the employees net pay is not affected. The amount of the New LPA will not affect the balances sent to NHS Pensions. Do not use the April pens pay from the soe as it will be incorrect. To calculate the Pens Pay take the Ers conts in April and multiply by 100/14.	Check record has been deleted/does not exist on POL

New starter in March paid April	Y Payroll	N	Minus	Plus	This is done after it has been actioned on Payroll. Therefore use both Pens adjusts to contra the entries so the employees net pay is not affected. The amount of the New LPA will not affect the balances sent to NHS Pensions. You will need to calculate the amount to be adjusted, unless it is shown on a retro.	YR POL
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Monthly actions

Payment Exception Report errors and actions

Reason for exception	Cause	Action
Employee's pension contributions are not in line with their specified deduction rate.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Change of pension band due to increment or regarding 2) Returned from mat leave after a period of no pay and arrears are being collected 3) Incorrect manual adjustment normally ee's con input but no ee's pay 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) No action can be taken 2) Input employee's pay but take care this action doesn't cause highlight message 4 3) Correct using pension adjust element
Part time pensioned hours are zero but there are employee's pension contributions.	Check Assignment Status if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Maternity error cause because Part hours recorded under deemed hours 2) Active input error 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Check that employee has contract hours, if bank employee input pension hours 2) Input the hours that are required
Part time pensionable hours paid exceed contract hours for the grade	To many pensionable hours made current month	Recover pensionable hour and pay as non-pensionable
Employer's pensioned pay is less than employee's pensioned pay.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) If on mat leave and employee's 8 week average is higher than employer's pay before starting mat leave 2) If a half pay adjustment is made in arrears from 1 year to another 3) Incorrect manual adjustment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Possible fix is the increase er's pay in line with ee's pay 2) Use the local pension element to adjust the balances 3) Correct using pension adjust
Employer's pension contributions are not 14.3 of employer's pensioned pay.	Incorrect manual adjustment	Correct using pension adjust
Employer's pension contributions exist but employee's contributions are zero or less.	Check Assignment Status if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) maternity and has been on no pay from the beginning of the current year 2) incorrect manual adjustment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) will correct itself when return from mat leave 2) correct using pension adjust
Employer's contributions are less than employee's contributions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) if ee's contribution are 14.5% 2) if SD502 is action in April for a new starter in March a refund is given 3) incorrect manual adjustment 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) no action required 2) use the local pension element to adjust the balances 3) correct using pension adjust

Data Exception Report errors

This can be run to ensure that the pension element is completed correctly.