

Superannuation & Life Assurance Scheme Trustees' Short Report 2018-2018

CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT

Dear Member

I have pleasure in presenting the Trustees' Annual Short Report which informs members of the key issues relating to the University of Aberdeen Superannuation and Life Assurance Scheme for the year ending 31 July 2018.

Specifically, the Report is a shortened version of the full Trustees' Report and includes details of membership, the financial position of the Scheme and investment performance. A copy of the full Trustees' Report is available on request from the Pensions Office in the Finance Section.

During the year the Trustees met on five occasions. The Scheme's assets are managed by Legal & General Investment Management and over the year the total value of the Scheme's assets increased from £149.5 million to £156.2 million. The Trustees regularly review the performance of the fund managers and will continue to do so.

The University continues to give assurance that it remains committed to the continuance of the Scheme.

Your pension benefits do not change as a result of investment performance, but are based on your service and pensionable salary. Any cost of those benefits in excess of your contributions is met by the University.

Included in this report are details of some external sources of useful information relating to pensions. Scheme specific information can be obtained from the University's Pensions Office.

Ms Jacquelynn Craw
Chair of Trustees

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Benefits

- ❑ The Scheme provides defined pension and lump sum benefits for members on retirement, or for their dependants on death before or after retirement.
- ❑ The University operates Pensions Plus which provides members with a more tax effective way of contributing towards the Scheme.

Pension Increases

All pensions in payment were increased with effect from 1 April 2017. In respect of benefits attributable to service to 31 July 2011, the increase was the higher of 3% or RPI and in respect of benefits attributable to service from 1 August 2011, the increase was the lower of CPI or 5%. All the figures are guaranteed by Scheme rules.

Membership

Any full or part time employee aged between 16 and 75 is eligible to join the Scheme. The membership of the Scheme is summarised in the following table:

The membership statistics are:-

	31 July 2018	31 July 2017
Active members	622	627
Pensioners	976	975
Deferred Members	679	669

Contributions

During the Scheme year, contributions were paid in accordance with Scheme Rules. The employee contribution rate was 7.05% during the year. The University's contribution rate was 17.5% of pensionable salaries to 31 December 2017 and 18.4% of pensionable salaries plus £725,000 per annum from 1 January 2018. In addition the University met the cost of the death-in-service premium to 31 December 2017.

Additional Voluntary Contributions

The Scheme's Additional Voluntary Contributions (AVC) arrangement is no longer open to new members.

If you are not already paying AVCs to the UASLAS AVC arrangement (the AVC arrangement) then you may choose to pay AVCs to a Free Standing AVC arrangement, usually provided by an insurance company of your choice. You can also pay into a 'stakeholder' or personal pension plan while a member of UASLAS.

If you wish to contribute to one of these, you must make your own arrangements with an authorised provider. Please consider taking independent financial advice if you wish to supplement your UASLAS benefits.

Income and Expenditure

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This is a short extract from the Annual Accounts: The full Trustees Report and Accounts are available on the University's pension website. www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/uaslas-210.php

	<u>2017/2018</u>	<u>2016/2017</u>
Net assets of Scheme at 1 August	149,546,171	135,891,765
<u>Income</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>	<u>2016/2017</u>
Members' Ordinary Contributions	49,160	21,233
Members' Scheme B AVCs	12,086	30,067
University Contributions	3,572,779	3,068,678
Transfer Values	19,609	-
Other Income	140,776	75,894
Total Income (A)	3,794,410	3,214,625
<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>	<u>2016/2017</u>
Pensions	4,575,585	4,420,667
Lump Sums	1,025,268	1,190,871
Transfer Values	65,618	621,879
Other benefits for leavers	9,790	11,123
Insurance premiums	64,564	69,961
Administration charges	489,512	450,853
Total Expenditure (B)	6,230,337	6,765,354
<u>Returns on Investments</u>	<u>2017/2018</u>	<u>2016/2017</u>
Change in market value of investments	9,292,451	17,336,913
Investment income	134,400	136,500
Investment management expenses	(378,657)	(268,278)
Net returns on investments (C)	9,052,194	17,205,135
Net increase/(decrease) in fund over year (A minus B plus C)	6,616,267	13,654,406
Net assets of Scheme at 31 July	156,162,438	149,546,171

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Scheme Assets

The Trustees are obliged by law to manage the assets of the Scheme in such a way as to ensure they will be sufficient to meet the increasing liabilities now and in the future. The assets accrue in three principal ways: contributions from the members and the University, investment income and capital appreciation. The day-to-day management of the assets has been delegated to Legal & General Investment Management.

The Trustees have established a "Statement of Investment Principles" in accordance with the guidelines set by the Myners Code of UK institutional investment. This Code is a voluntary statement of best practice and is a set of investment principles for pension funds. It covers such key areas as decision-making procedures, the fund's objectives, asset allocation, adequate expert advice, fund managers' mandates, appropriate benchmarks and performance measurement and transparency of reporting.

The Trustees have procedures in place to review and update the Statement if appropriate, at least once a year. A copy of the full Statement of Investment Principles is available from the Pensions Office on request.

The assets of the Scheme are invested in an insurance policy with Legal & General Assurance (Pensions Management) Limited, part of the Legal & General Group, which is one of the largest financial institutions in the United Kingdom.

Legal & General's investment objective is to maintain the Scheme's distribution close to the benchmark and within the stated ranges.

Investment Strategy

One of the key duties of the Trustees is to set the ongoing investment strategy of the Scheme and ensure that it remains appropriate. It is important that a balance is set between retaining investment stability and long-term growth potential against taking unnecessary risk for short-term gain. To help the Trustees achieve this balance, they work closely with their professional investment managers who implement all day-to-day investment decisions, and monitor their performance on an ongoing basis.

The table below summarises the overall spread of investments.

	31 July 2018	31 July 2017
UK Equities	6.1	15.4
Overseas Equities	14.7	40.7
Index Linked Bonds	24.0	24.1
Property	5.0	6.9
Diversified Fund	50.2	12.9

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Auditors

The Income and Expenditure statement in this Short Report is an abbreviated version of the full Accounts of the Scheme. These form part of the formal Trustees' Report and the accounts were audited as required by the Regulations by KPMG, the appointed auditors.

Trustees & Advisers

The Trustees responsible for the Scheme at the end of the year were:-

Ms Jacquelynn Craw	Independent Chairman
Mrs Caroline Inglis	University Secretary
Mr David Beattie	Director of Finance
Mr Mark Whittington	University Court Nominated
Mrs Diane Massie	Elected Member Representative
<i>vacant</i>	Elected Member Representative

In addition, Professor Alexander Kemp attends the Trustee meetings as an expert adviser.

Appointment of Trustees

The arrangements for appointing membership representatives comply with the Member Nominated Trustee requirements of the Pensions Act 2004. The current member-nominated trustee has been elected to serve for the three year period to July 2019. Subsequent to the year-end an election was held to fill the vacant position.

The specialist advisers appointed by the Trustees are:-

Actuary	Mr Jonathan Seed
Consultants	XPS Pensions Group
Administrators	Equiniti Pension Solutions
Auditors	KPMG LLP
Investment Managers	Legal & General Investment Management
Legal Advisers	Pinsent Masons LLP
Bankers	Bank of Scotland PLC

Nomination Forms

If you die in service there is a lump sum benefit of 3 times your salary at date of death, plus a return of contributions, plus interest. This payment is normally free of inheritance tax and is payable under the discretionary powers of the Trustees. You are recommended to make your wishes known to the Trustees by completing a Nomination Form which will give guidance to the Trustees on how this lump sum should be paid on death in service. The Forms are held in confidence and may be lodged in a sealed envelope. The Form can be revised from time to time if your circumstances change.

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As the Trustees have now expanded the definition of “dependant” to cover partners (of either sex) a second Nomination Form, called the Potential Dependant Nomination Form is available. Details can be found in the members’ Scheme Guide.

Both forms are available on the University’s pension website <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/staffnet/working-here/uaslas-210.php>, or from the Pensions Office. It is important that these forms are kept up to date.

Disputes

There is a procedure for dealing with any dispute involving a member of the Scheme and the necessary forms are available from the Pensions Office in the Finance Section. The arbiter appointed to deal with the first stage of any dispute is Mrs Margaret Stevenson. There were no disputes during the Scheme year.

Auto Enrolment

Starting in October 2012, new regulations require every employer in the UK to automatically enrol the vast majority of their employees into a suitable pension arrangement. There are a number of requirements which must be met including scheme design and regulation.

This Scheme meets or exceeds the requirements and is therefore a “qualifying” scheme.

Members’ Guide

A Guide for Members and a set of Factsheets are available on the University’s pension website.

GMP Equalisation – Lloyds Bank Court Case

A Court judgment in the Lloyds Bank case was announced on 26 October 2018, which may have a small impact on members’ benefits from the Scheme. This relates to the equalisation of Guaranteed Minimum Pensions (GMPs) for men and women and applies to any GMPs earned from 17 May 1990 (the date of an earlier court case on equal treatment). In summary, the High Court confirmed that there is a legal obligation on pension schemes to equalise the calculation of GMPs for men and women. Members who are affected might be due a top-up on their pension, although for most members any top-up is likely to be small.

This Court judgment will have an effect on a large number of members across the Scheme and carrying out the calculations will be a complex process, which could take many months and even years to complete. The Trustees will therefore update members again once progress has been made in this regard.