

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Pension Quality Mark Application Form

## Section 1 – About you

Q1 Name of pension scheme \_\_\_\_\_

Q2 Name of sponsoring employer \_\_\_\_\_

Q3 Your name \_\_\_\_\_

Q4 Contact details

Tel No	
Email	
Address	

Q5 Your role in relation to the scheme

Scheme manager/secretary

Human resources manager/director

Chairman of trustees

Adviser to the trustees

Employee benefit consultant

Pension provider/insurer

Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

Q6 If you are an adviser, employee benefit consultant or pension provider/insurer, please confirm that the scheme is aware you are making the application on its behalf

Q7 Number of active scheme members [\_\_\_\_\_]

Q8 I am applying for (please tick one box only)

Pension Quality Mark

Pension Quality Mark PLUS

For office use only

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 2 – The Pension Quality Mark standards

In this section you will be asked to show us how your scheme meets the Pension Quality Mark standards. In answering this section, you should refer to the Pension Quality Mark standards document.

### A: Contributions

*In this section, please complete Q1, 2, 3 and 4. You should then complete the relevant section relating to the contribution structure in the scheme before going on to the section on scheme governance.*

#### Standard A1: Headline contribution

**Q1 Please confirm the headline level of contributions:**

The scheme has contributions of at least 10%. At least 6% is paid by the employer

The scheme has contribution of at least 15%. At least 10% is paid by the employer

#### Standard A2: Pensionable pay

**Q2 Please confirm that for at least 90% of scheme members, pensionable pay normally amounts to at least 80% of total pay.**

Yes – pensionable pay meets this standard

No – pensionable pay does not meet this standard

*(please provide evidence, such as analysis and/ or rules regarding pensionable pay)*

**Q2a If no, please tell us why.**

---

---

**Q3 If the scheme uses salary sacrifice, please confirm that the salary sacrificed by the employee will be treated as a notional employee contribution rather than as part of the employer contribution.**

Yes – contributions will be treated in this way

The scheme does not use salary sacrifice

#### Contribution bases

**Q4: On what basis are contributions made to the scheme? (please tick one box only)**

The scheme has fixed contributions

The scheme has matching contributions

The scheme has age-related contributions

The scheme has service-related contributions

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

The scheme is non-contributory

*(please proceed to the relevant section after answering this question)*

### Standard A3: Fixed contributions

**Q5 Please confirm that the employer contribution is the same size or larger than the employee contribution**

Yes – employer contributions match or exceed employee contributions

No – employer contributions do not match or exceed employee contributions

**Q5a Please tell us about the contribution levels**

Employer contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ %

Employee contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ %

*(please proceed to governance section)*

### Standard A4: Matching contributions

**Q6 Please confirm that at least one of the contributory options available has the potential (when combined with the employer contribution) to meet the PQM/PQM PLUS standard, and that employer contributions, inclusive of any match, are at least 6% for PQM and 10% for PQM PLUS?**

Yes – at least one of the options meets the standard

No – none of the options meet the standard

**Q6a Please tell us about the highest matching contribution level available**

Employer contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ %

Employee contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ %

**Q7 Please confirm that the employer contribution matches or exceeds the employee contribution required to receive the employer contribution**

Yes – employer contributions match or exceed employee contributions

No – employer contributions do not match or exceed employee contributions

**Q8 Please confirm that the scheme or employer explains to scheme members how they can opt for contributions that meet or exceed the contribution levels for PQM/PQM PLUS headline standard**

Yes – this information is provided

No – this information is not provided

*(please proceed to governance section)*

### Standard A5: Age-related contributions

**Q9 Please state the average actual contributions received by scheme members**

Employer contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ %

Employee contribution

\_\_\_\_\_ %

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

- Q10 Please state the average contribution of a notional scheme member who joined on his/her 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday and left on his/her 65<sup>th</sup> birthday**  
Employer contribution \_\_\_\_\_%  
Employee contribution \_\_\_\_\_%
- Q11 Please confirm that where scheme literature provided to employees mentions PQM/PQM PLUS it will make it clear at what ages the contributions do and do not meet the headline contribution standards (A1)**  
Yes – the scheme explains this to members   
No – the scheme does not explain this to members
- Q12 Please confirm that for all age groups the employer contribution matches or exceeds the employee contribution**  
Yes – employer contributions match or exceed employee contributions   
No – employer contributions do not match or exceed employee contributions   
*(please proceed to governance section)*

**Standard A6: Service-related contributions**

- Q13 Please state the average actual contributions received by scheme members**  
Employer contribution \_\_\_\_\_%  
Employee contribution \_\_\_\_\_%
- Q14 Please confirm that where scheme literature provided to employees mentions PQM/PQM PLUS it will make it clear at what service periods the contributions do and do not meet the headline contribution standards (A1)**  
Yes – the scheme explains this to members   
No – the scheme does not explain this to members
- Q15 Please confirm that for all periods of service the employer contribution matches or exceeds the employee contribution**  
Yes – employer contributions match or exceed employee contributions   
No – employer contributions do not match or exceed employee contributions   
*(please proceed to governance section)*

**Standard A7: Non-contributory schemes**

- Q16 Please confirm that contributions from the employer are at least 10%/15%**  
Yes – employer contributions are at least 10%/15%\*   
No – employer contributions are less than 10%/15%\*   
*(\*please delete as appropriate)*  
*(if you answered no the question above please go to questions 13, 14 and 15)*

- Q17 Please confirm that employer contributions are at least 6%/10%**

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

Yes – employer contributions are at least 6%/10%\*

No – employer contributions are less than 6%/10%\*

*(\*please delete as appropriate)*

**Q18** What percentage of members are making voluntary contributions that, when combined with the employer contribution, meet the PQM/PQM PLUS standard?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

**Q19** Please confirm that the scheme or employer explains to scheme members how they can make contributions that meet or exceed the contribution levels for PQM/PQM PLUS headline standard

Yes – this information is provided

No – this information is not provided

**Thank you. Now please move on to the questions on scheme governance.**

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **B: Scheme governance**

*Please complete question 1 and then questions relating to the governance structures in the scheme. You should then complete questions 13 and 14.*

### **B1: Headline governance arrangements**

**Q1 Which type of governance arrangement applies to the scheme?** *(please tick one box only)*

There is a trustee body

There is a management committee (or similar formal group)

There is an annual scheme review

*(please proceed to the relevant section after answering this question)*

### **Standard B2: Trust Board**

**Q2 Please provide the dates of the last two trustee meetings (main committee or a sub-committee) that discussed the scheme relating to the application.**

Date of last trustee meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Date of second to last meeting \_\_\_\_\_

**Q3 Please confirm that trustees undertake training that meets the relevant DC sections of the Pension Regulator's code on trustee knowledge and understanding:**

Yes – trustees receive appropriate training

No – trustees do not routinely receive appropriate training

**Q4 Which of the following issues has your committee considered in the past 12 months?** *(please tick all that apply)*

The effectiveness, accuracy and cost of the administration

The performance and charges of the fund managers

The appropriateness and range of the investment choices offered

The effectiveness and accuracy of member communications

The level of employee engagement

The processes and support for members approaching retirement

Relevant changes to legislation, regulation or tax rules

None of the above

*(please proceed to questions 13 and 14)*

### **Standard B3: Management committee**

**Q5 Please provide dates of the last two management committee meetings that discussed the scheme relating to the application.**

Date of last meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Date of second to last meeting \_\_\_\_\_

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Q6 Please confirm there is at least one scheme member (or their representative) on the management committee**

Yes – there is a scheme member (or their representative) on the Committee

No – there is not a scheme member (or their representative) on the Committee

**Q7 Please confirm that committee members have received relevant training on pension issues**

Yes – committee members have received appropriate training

No – committee members do not routinely receive appropriate training

**Q8 Which of the following issues has your committee considered in the past 12 months?**

*(please tick all that apply)*

The effectiveness, accuracy and cost of the administration

The performance and charges of the fund managers

The appropriateness and range of the investment choices offered

The effectiveness and accuracy of member communications

The level of employee engagement

The processes and support for members approaching retirement

Relevant changes to legislation, regulation or tax rules

None of the above

*(please proceed to questions 13 and 14)*

**Standard B4: Annual scheme review**

**Q9 When was the last annual scheme review held?** \_\_\_\_\_

**Q10 How were members' views taken into account during the review?**

Staff survey

Direct involvement of members (or their representatives) in the review

Other *(please specify)*

---

---

**Q11 Please confirm that the review involved input from someone with knowledge and understanding of pension issues**

Yes – the review involved someone with knowledge and understanding

No – such a person was not involved in the review

**Q12 Which of the following issues were covered by the review? *(please tick all that apply)***

The effectiveness, accuracy and cost of the administration

The performance and charges of the fund managers

The appropriateness and range of the investment choices offered

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

- The effectiveness and accuracy of member communications
  - The level of employee engagement
  - The processes and support for members approaching retirement
  - Relevant changes to legislation, regulation or tax rules
  - None of the above
- (please proceed to questions 13 and 14)*

**Standard B5: Simple investment options**

**Q13 Please confirm which simple investment option is available to members:**

- A default investment option
- A simple choice from a limited range of risk/return rated funds
- A wider range of funds, but with face-to-face information or advice
- None of these

**Standard B6: Charges**

**Q14 Please confirm that total charges, including all administration and fund management charges paid by members (including past members), are not more than a 1% AMC.**

- Yes – total charges do not exceed 1% AMC
- No – total charges exceed 1% AMC

Thank you. Please now complete the section on scheme communications.

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

## C: Communications

*Please complete all of the questions in this section.*

### Standard C1: Headline communications standard - clear and engaging communications

**Q1 Please confirm that the scheme provides clear and engaging communications when they join the scheme, on an ongoing basis and at retirement.**

Yes – the scheme provides this information

No – the scheme does not provide this information

### Standard C2: Initial communications

**Q2 Please confirm that the scheme provides information to new and prospective members that emphasises the benefits of the scheme and explains how the employee can join it.**

Yes – the scheme provides this information

No – the scheme does not provide this information

**Q3 Please confirm that, where there is flexibility over contributions, the scheme explains how employees can opt for contributions that meet or exceed the PQM/PQM PLUS standard**

Yes – the scheme provides this information

No – the scheme does not provide this information

### Standard C3: Ongoing information

**Q4 Please tell us how the scheme provides ongoing communications with scheme members (please tick all that apply)**

Face to face (eg individual advice/group seminars/telephone helpline)

Tailored information (eg online access to pension accounts)

Generic information (eg newsletter/written update)

None of the above

### Standard C4: 'At retirement' communications

**Q5 Please confirm that scheme members approaching retirement age receive information and support to help them think about their options (including the Open Market Option)**

Yes – members receive this information

No – members do not receive this information

*For office use only*

*Ref. no.:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date awarded:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date received:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Renewal date:* \_\_\_\_\_

**Standard C5: Quality of written communications**

**Q6** Please send examples of the written materials referred to in questions 2, 3, 4 and 5 above

*For office use only*

Ref. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Date awarded: \_\_\_\_\_

Date received: \_\_\_\_\_

Renewal date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Section 3: Completing the application process

Thank you for completing the Application Form.

To complete the application process, you must now:

1. **Save and print off the Application Form.** You will see that the form will include a unique reference number. This number should be used in all correspondence with us.
2. **Sign the Application Form.** The form should be signed by the sponsoring employer, trustee, scheme secretary or manager.
3. **Read, print and sign the Terms and Conditions.** Subject to being awarded the Pension Quality Mark, the scheme will be required to adhere to these. The Terms and Conditions should be signed by the sponsoring employer, trustee, scheme secretary or manager.
4. **Send us the relevant supporting documentation referred to above.**
5. **Send us your assessment fee or details of your BACS payment.** The assessment fee is £250.00 + VAT.

Please send this information to:

Pensions Quality Mark Limited  
Cheapside House  
138 Cheapside  
London  
EC2V 6AE

Bank details for BACS payments:

NatWest  
Sort Code: 60-07-29  
Account number: 46045090

Once we have received your application form, you will receive confirmation and a VAT receipt.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Role in relation to the scheme\*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

(\*This form must be signed by either the sponsoring employer, a trustee, the scheme secretary or scheme manager.)

*For office use only*

*Ref. no.:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date awarded:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Date received:* \_\_\_\_\_

*Renewal date:* \_\_\_\_\_

## Checklist of documents to be sent to Pension Quality Mark team

### Required documentation:

Signed application form\*

Signed Terms and Conditions\*

Evidence – analysis or scheme rules on pensionable pay\*

Example of new scheme member communication (C2 – Q2, Q3)\*

Example of ongoing communication (C3 – Q4)\*

Example of 'at retirement' communication (C4 – Q5)\*

### Other documentation you may wish to provide:

Trustee Board meeting agenda

Management Committee meeting agenda

Information on stand-alone scheme review

Presentation to new scheme members

Presentation to existing scheme members

Investment options explanation document

Newsletter