West Midlands Pension Fund

Employer Self-Service (ESS) Full Guide

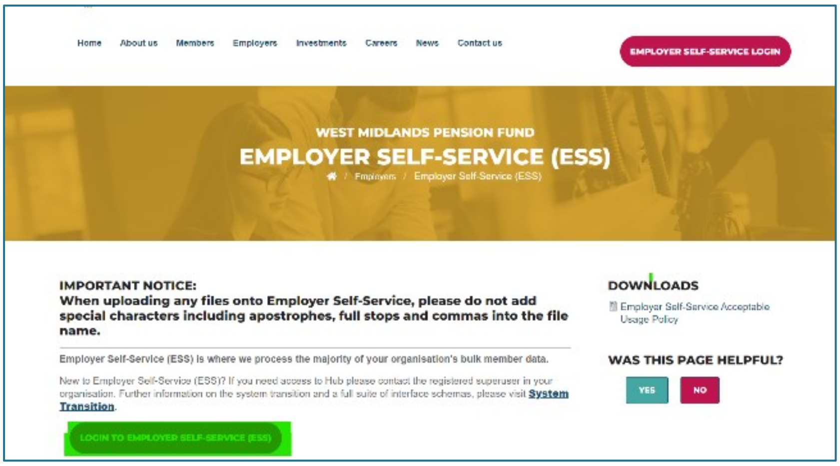
VERSION 1.6, 25/01/2024

Section 1: Introduction to ESS

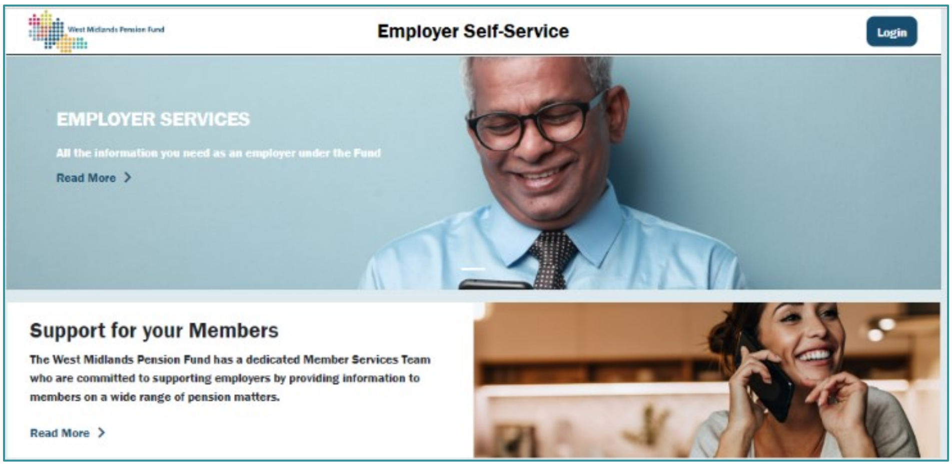
Employer Self Service (ESS) is the platform through which employers and payroll providers conduct pensions administration with West Midlands Pension Fund (WMPF). It facilitates the transmission of information between employers and WMPF, and provides real-time management information.

Logging In

Access to ESS is through the Fund's website: https://www.wmpfonline.com/employers/employer-self-service



Click the Login button in the top right-hand corner:



Enter your login details (username and password) and click 'Continue'.

If you have forgotten your username and/or password, click on the relevant link and you will be prompted to enter your email or username. You will then be emailed your username or a link to reset your password.

Passwords must comprise the following:

- At least one upper case letter
- At least one lower case letter
- At least one number
- At least one symbol (please note * and ! are not accepted)

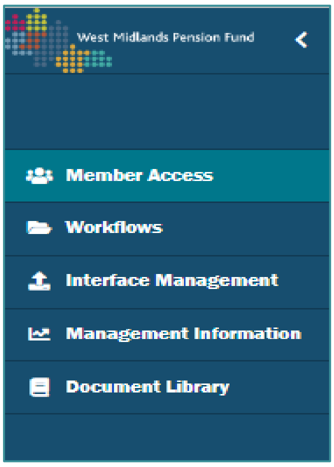
Layout

After logging in you will be directed to your ESS page. The menu on the left-hand side of the page allows you to navigate through the following options:

- **Member Access:** allows the user to search for members, view details about their records, and run calculations.
- **Workflows:** allows the user to start new workflows, search for and view existing cases, and reallocate cases if they are a Super User.
- **Interface Management:** allows the user to submit Interface files (Monthly Submissions, Standard Interfaces and Exit Interfaces). It also displays doughnuts which show details of previously submitted interfaces, including errors and dates of submission.
- **Management Information:** allows the user to view employer information, details of submitted interface files, workflow statistics, and details of active members.
- **Document Library:** contains links to useful documentation, for example links to guidance documents, M1 forms etc.

Member Access

The Member Access tab allows you to view member records and run calculations for members.

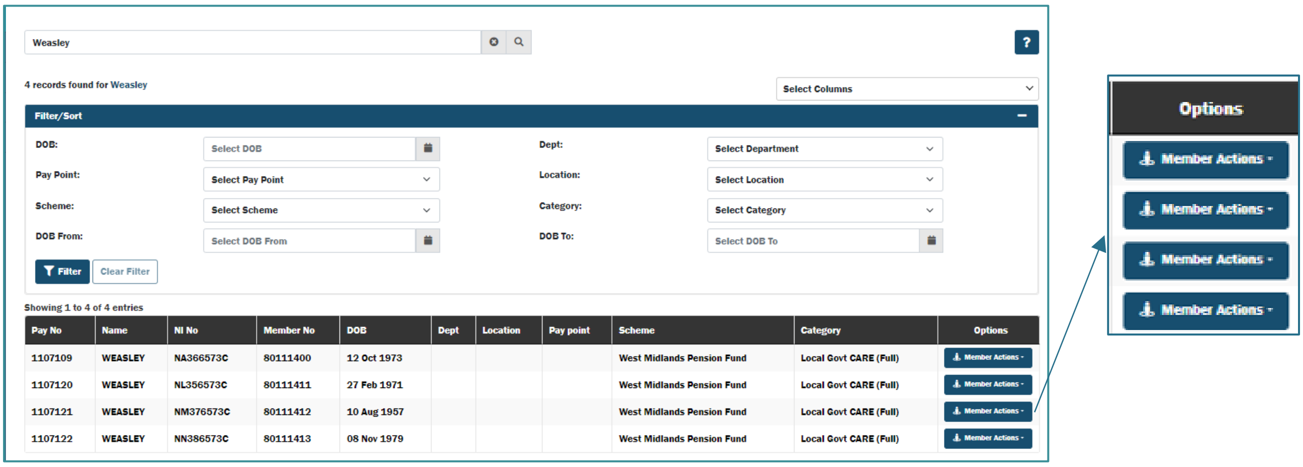


You can search for members using the search bar at the top of the page:

You are able to search for members using surname, National Insurance number, member reference number, or payroll reference number. Partial searches are acceptable.

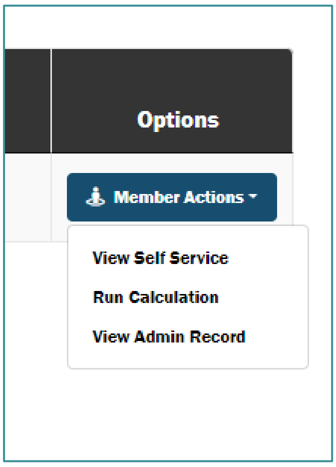
Clicking the magnifying glass with no search term in will return all of the members that you have access to as an employer or payroll provider user.

From these member records you can perform several actions by clicking on the "Member Actions" button on the right-hand side of each line in the "Options" column.



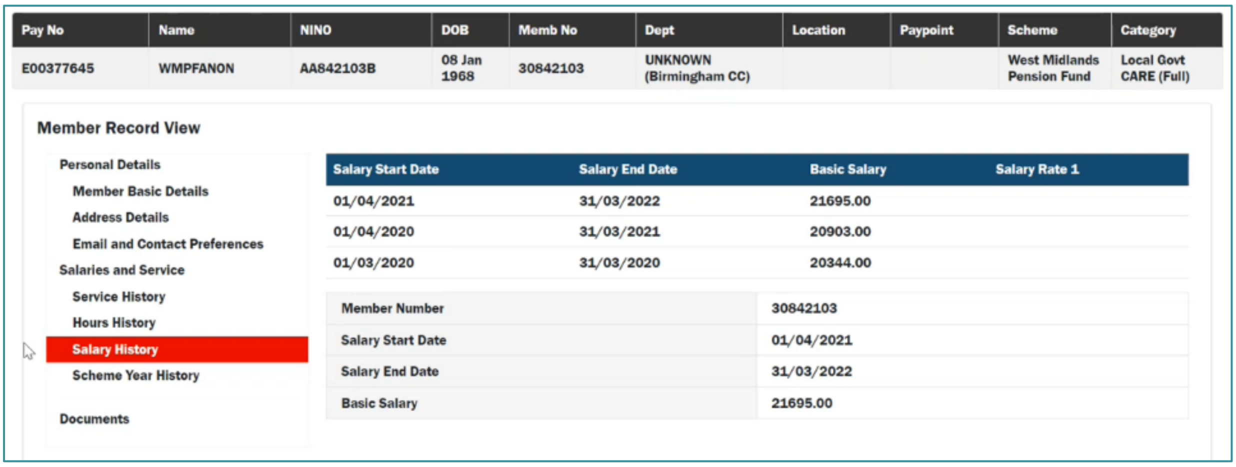
From this drop-down you can:

- Run retirement estimates for members (please see [Calculations](#) below).
- View detailed membership records by clicking "View Admin Record" which will enable you to see the details held for the member by the Fund.
- See the details which the member can see on their MSS (Member Self Service) account.



View Admin Record

Selecting the "View Admin Record" option will open a selection of member views in a new tab on your browser.

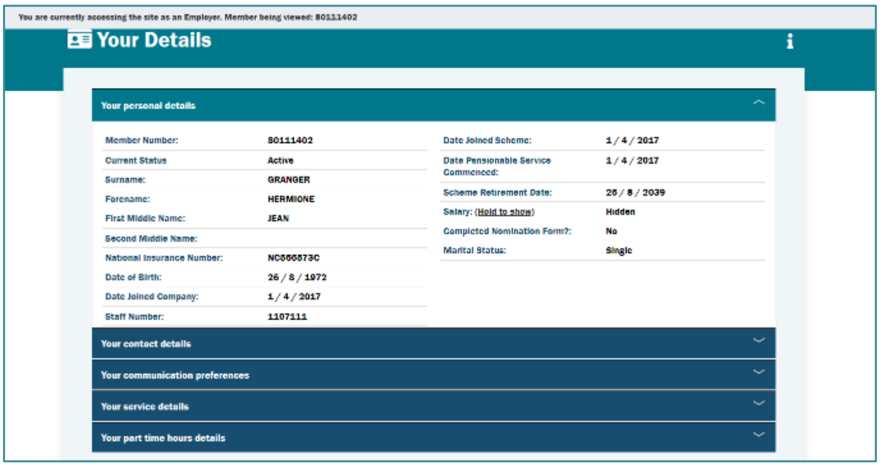


Clicking on each link will allow you to view the relevant information. In the example above the member's salary history is displayed. Please note that member records cannot be edited from this view.

Note: a member's hours history is a summary of their part-time hours only (if applicable). If a member has no part-time hours, no hours will be recorded, and if a member has alternated between full- and part-time hours, only the part-time hours will be visible.

View Self Service

By selecting the View Self Service option, you can see the same details as a member can on their own MSS account.



You are able to view the member's personal details, contact details, communication preferences, service details and hours details (part-time hours only).

Please note that these views are not editable: any changes to these details *within the scheme year* should be communicated to the Fund via a [Standard Interface](). Historic changes (outside of current scheme year) should be notified to the Fund by an [Admin Referral]() workflow.

The Workflow Tab

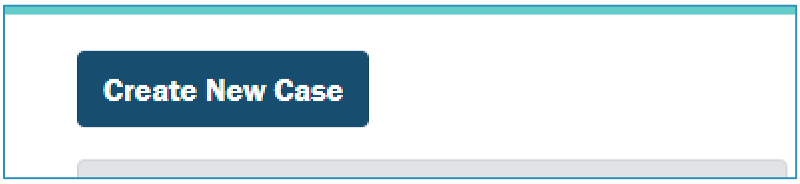
Launching Cases

There are a number of workflows that you are able to run that perform various functions in ESS. Once you have selected a workflow a case is created for you to work on.

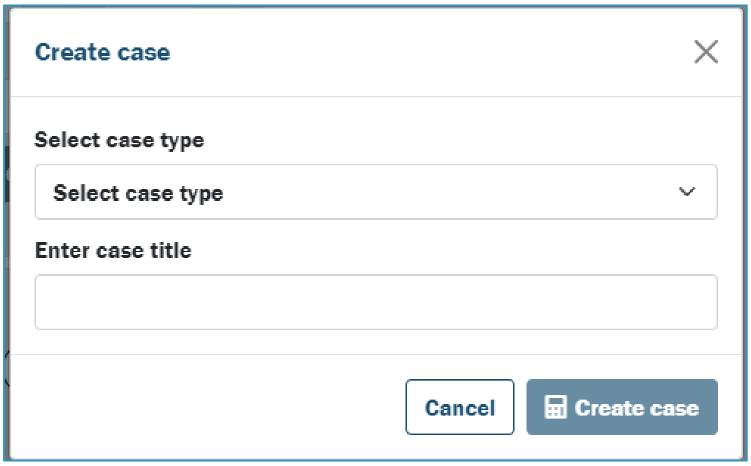
The workflows available to launch are:

- **ESS Employer Amend my Contact Details**
  Allows a user to amend their own contact details for ESS – note this workflow *does not* affect the contacts that WMPF holds for an organisation.
- **ESS Admin Referral:** Allows users to submit queries or documentation securely to WMPF about a member or employer and allows WMPF to respond directly to the case.
- **ESS Employer Maintenance View Only:** Allows users to view details (including valuation details) about the employers that they have access to.
- **ESS LGPS Employer Reporting:** Allows a user to run several reports in relation to the employers that they have access to.
  - **Active List report:** lists all of the current active member records that the user has access to.
  - **Monthly Submissions History:** lists details of monthly submissions that have been submitted for the employers that the user has access to.
  - **Monthly Submissions Warnings Received:** shows a list of warnings received regarding Monthly Submission files.
  - **Employer Workflows:** lists details of workflows currently open concerning specific employers.
  - **Employer Cases Due Report:** lists workflow due dates.
  - **Employer Membership Statistics:** gives details of the membership profiles of the employers you have access to.

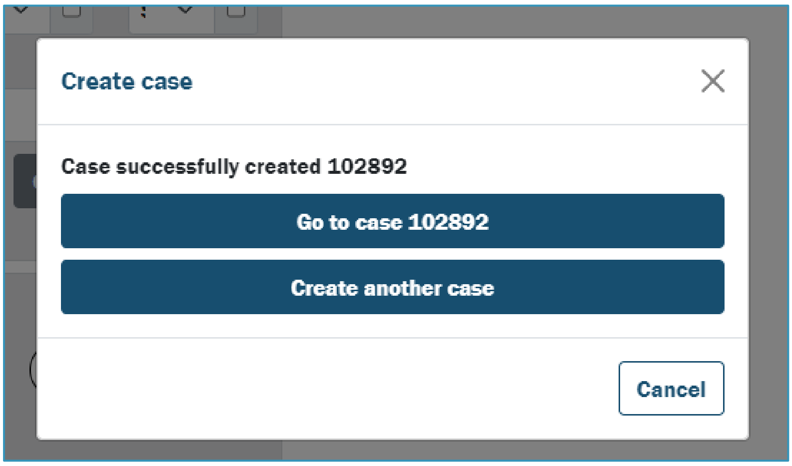
To start a new workflow, click "Create New Case" at the top of the page.



Select the relevant workflow from the *Select Case Type* drop-down and then give your case a title. When entering the case title please be as clear as possible as this will make it easier to locate the specific case later.



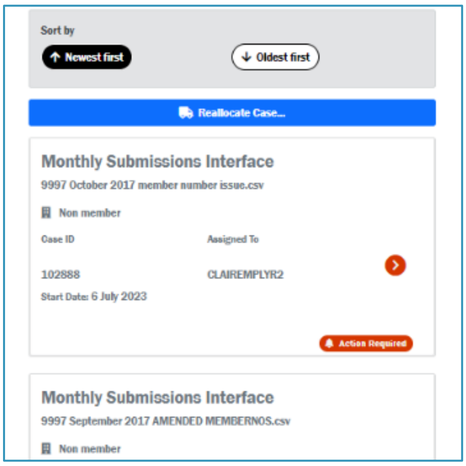
Once the selection has been made, click "Create Case". The relevant case will be created and you will be prompted to either begin working on that case or to create another.



The case will be searchable by case number so it may be wise to note this down to allow the Fund to assist you in case of any queries.

Viewing Cases

Cases you have created will appear in the Case Schedule on the left-hand side of the page as shown below:



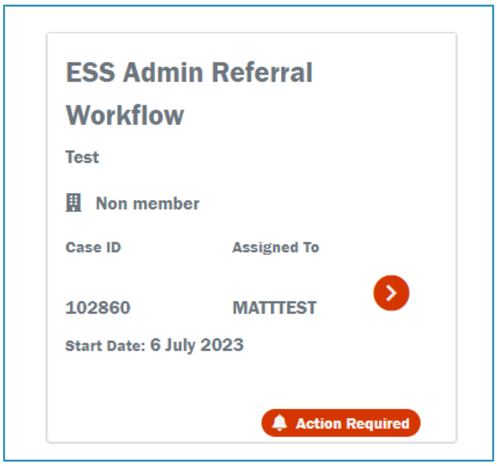
The latest case created will appear first on the schedule with other cases arranged in order of time created with the oldest cases at the bottom.

It is also possible that cases will be created through other means; for example, an Employer Referral case sent to you from the Fund, or a Monthly Submissions case, or a retirement case generated by loading an Exit Interface file where documents can be uploaded (see below). These will appear in the schedule in the same way as cases created via the "Create New Case" option.

If you are attempting to locate a specific case you can search using the Filter and Search options at the top of the schedule. You will be able to search by case type, case status, or by the user the case is allocated to. You can also search by case number by typing this into the *Search* bar. Clicking "Submit" will refresh the schedule so that the case searched for appears at the top. Clicking "Clear" will reset the schedule.

Cases

Each case is represented by a case icon as shown below:

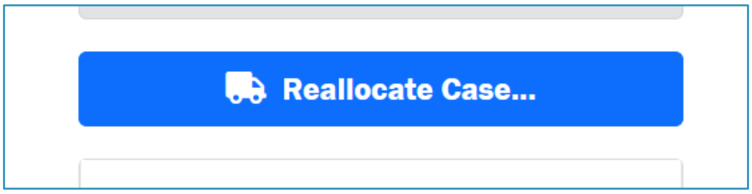


This icon will display the Case Type, Case Number and the date the case was started along with the current allocated user. It will also display the case status in the bottom right corner.

Any user from the same User Group can view the case by clicking anywhere on the icon.

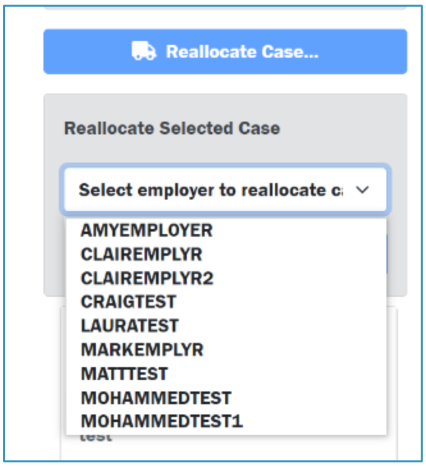
Only Super Users are able to reallocate cases.

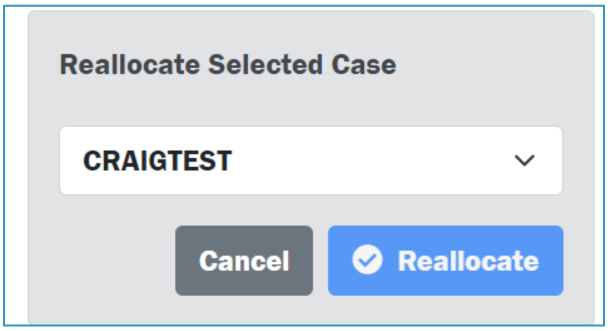
To reallocate a case select the "Reallocate Case" button under the filter options.



You can then choose the relevant case to reallocate by clicking on the box to the left-hand side of each case, as below.

Once the relevant case has been selected, you can reallocate the case by selecting the required user from the "Select employer to reallocate case" drop-down, then clicking "Reallocate".





The case will now be allocated to the selected user.

EDM (Electronic Document Management)

Note: Employer EDM is due to be delivered in an upcoming system update.

The Document Library

This tab is where you can access the Document Library. This is a secure repository of documents you may need to reference when performing pension administration duties, for example schemas for data submission and ESS guidance.

User Group Functionality

There are three types of User Group in ESS**:**

- **Super Users** have the highest level of access for employers and payroll providers. They will be able to launch workflows, view open cases, load interfaces and view member records. Organisations MUST have at least one Super User. The Fund recommends having at least two Super Users as a back-up in case of illness or unforeseen circumstances.
- **Normal users** will be able to launch workflows, view open cases, load interfaces and view member records.
- **Read Only users** will have access to view member records and view open cases but will not be able to launch workflows or upload interface files. It can be useful for an organisation to have Read Only users even if they use a third-party payroll provider to send data to the Fund, as it provides an avenue to monitor performance and make sure the organisation is meeting its statutory obligations.

Further guidance on General Navigation in ESS is available in our empty-room training video.

Section 2: Interfaces

The Interface page is where a user can submit files to the fund. There are three types of interface files that can be submitted: Monthly Submissions, Standard Interface files, and Exit Interface files. The schemas for each of these files can be found on our website under 'Guidance' and go into detail about file layout and contents.

You may find this illustration below useful to help you ascertain which type of interface to submit:

INTERFACE SUMMARY

West Midlands Pension Fund

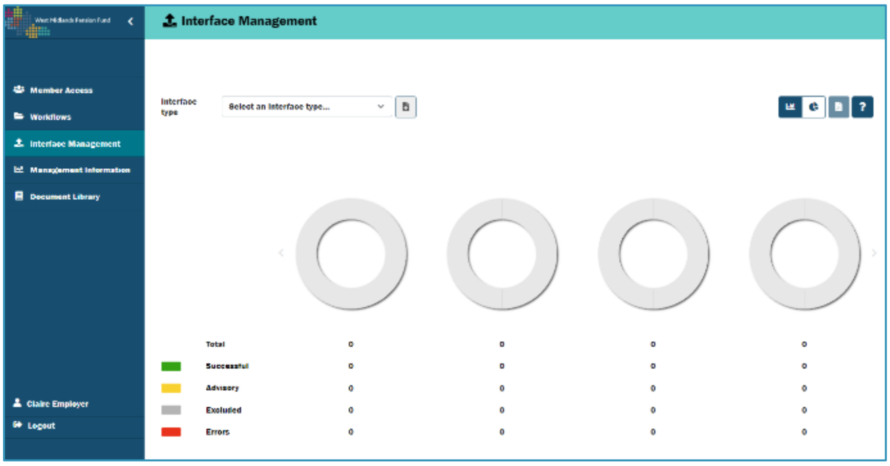
File Type	Purpose	Notes
Monthly Interface	For the submission of earnings and contributions data for active members, notification of joiners to the scheme, and immediate opt-outs (i.e., those members that have opted out of the scheme within three months of joining and have been refunded through the payroll).	Uses existing file layout, but the header row must be left in. Please replace your existing file header with the one provided. Member data changes must not be submitted through the monthly interface file.
Standard (S10) Interface	For the submission of any changes to a member record, such as change of name, marital status, address, service breaks, hours changes. Replaces S10 process in Employer Hub.	Multiple changes can be submitted for a member, but there must be one line per data type (e, g., change in name and marital status on one row with record type 'PD', and change of address on the next row with a record type of 'COA'.)
Exit Interface	For the submission of all leavers with the exception of immediate opt-outs (see monthly interface). Replaces S4 process in Employer Hub.	Multiple leaver types can be submitted on one file. Retirements and Death in Service where documents are required will start a document upload process against the relevant member(s).

- **Monthly Submission** files are how the Fund must be notified of new joiner details (within six months of their joining date)*, earnings and contributions data, additional payments, and opt-outs within three months (refunded through payroll).
  Employers are required by the Pension Administration Strategy (PAS) to submit this data to the Fund by the 19th of the month after the relevant contribution period.
- **Exit Interface** files are how the Fund is notified of leavers whether these are retirements (including ill health), refunds, death in service or deferments.
  Please note that any members opting out in the first three months of joining, but that have not left employment, should be reported on the relevant Monthly Submission file, not via an Exit Interface.
- **Standard Interface** files are submitted to update member records with the latest information, including changes in hours, personal details, payroll reference numbers, etc. *within the scheme year*. Historic updates (*outside of the current scheme year*) should be submitted via Admin Referral workflows.

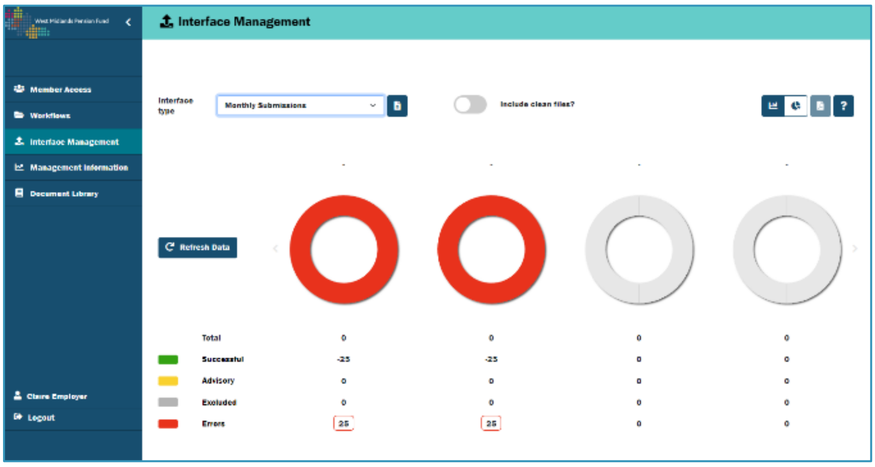
*Please contact the Fund at WMPFEmployerSystemSupport@wolverhampton.gov.uk if you have historic joiners (those more than six months after their date of joining).

Please note that file names for interfaces must not contain full stops or special characters (apostrophes in particular) because these will prevent the interface file from loading.

The Interface Management page also contains a number of "doughnuts" which summarise the status of the three different interface types submitted by your organisation at a glance.



Selecting the desired interface will load the relevant doughnuts and give an immediate visual indication of any actions that need to be taken:



The doughnuts and table show that there are errors on the previously uploaded Monthly Submission files and therefore action to correct the errors must be taken by locating the relevant workflow in your schedule and viewing the error reports (please see below).

Once all errors and warnings are resolved through the relevant workflow, the doughnuts will show the file as successful and will appear in green, as above.

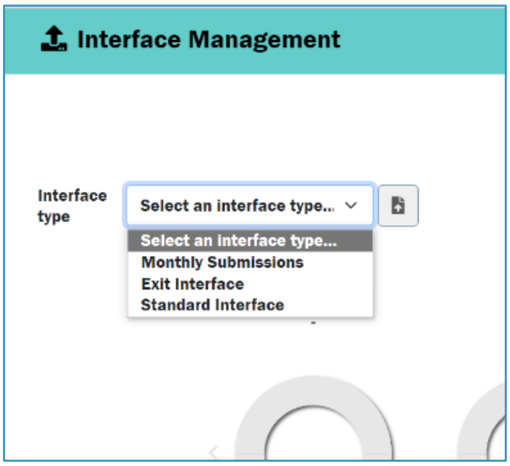
Uploading Interface files

Monthly submissions

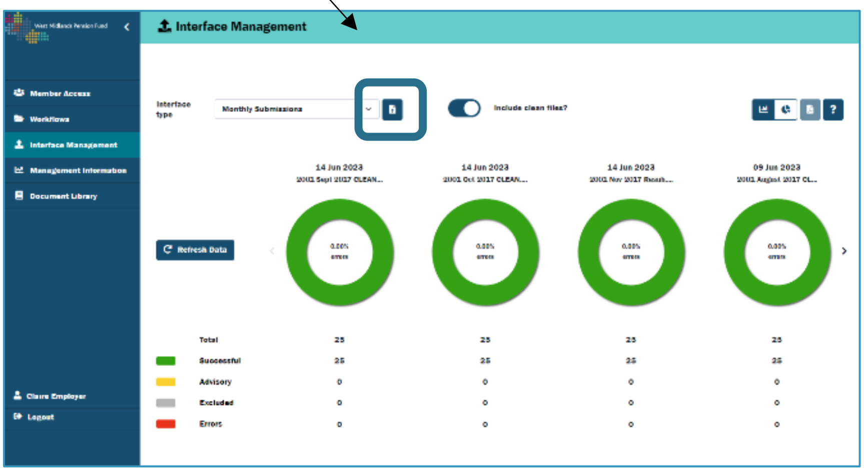
Please note that the deadline for each monthly submission and payment of contributions is the 19th of the following month. Please also note that monthly submission files must be loaded sequentially; for example, you could not load the April 2024 file without successfully loading your March 2024 file.

The [Monthly Submission Schema Pack] provides a template for your file along with detailed information about how to complete your file.

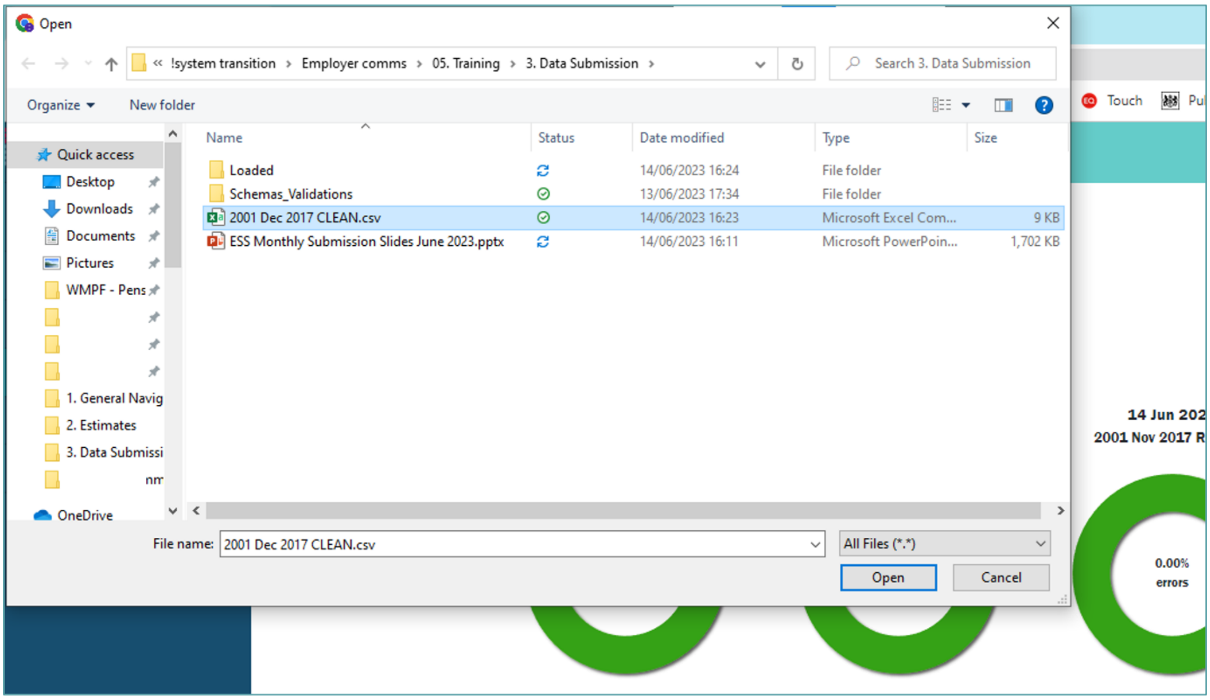
The first step in uploading a Monthly Submissions file is to click on the Interfaces tab on the menu on the left-hand side of the ESS page then select "Monthly Submissions" from the "Interface type" drop-down menu.



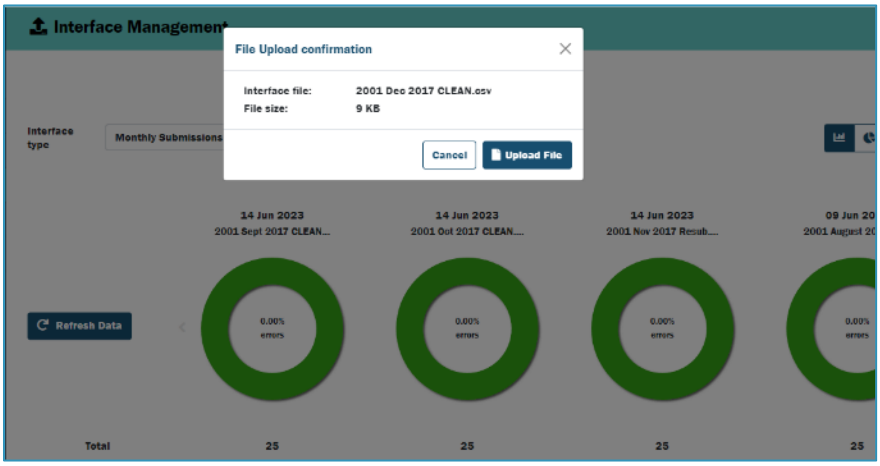
The "Upload Files" button will then become active. Please make sure the file has been saved as a CSV (comma delimited) file as otherwise it will not upload.



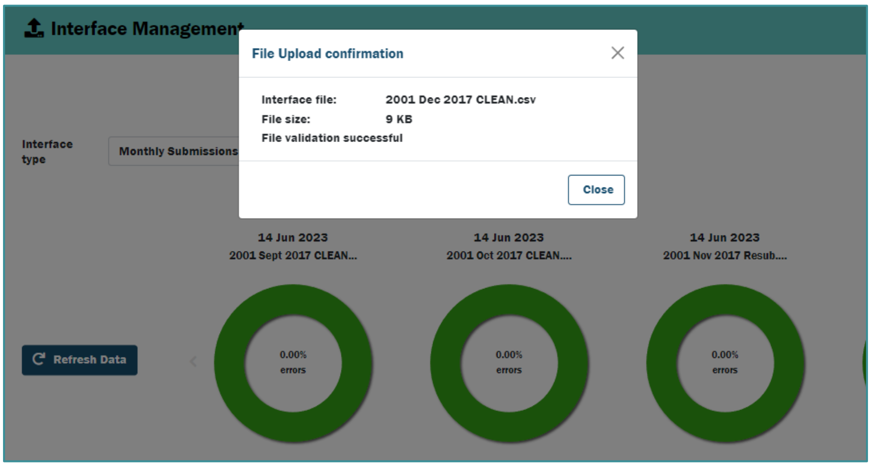
Click this button and choose the relevant file from the folder pop up.



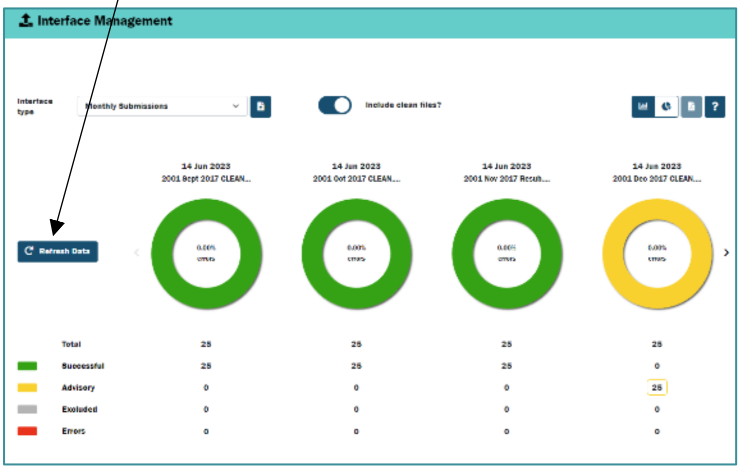
You will be asked to confirm the upload. Clicking “Upload File” will upload the file and begin a new Monthly Submissions case. Alternatively, you can “Cancel” and start again, choosing a different file if necessary.



If at this point there are formatting errors with the file, for example if the headers have been entered incorrectly, error warnings will appear. These warnings indicate that the file needs to be checked and reuploaded. Please see Appendix 1 for a full list of these errors.

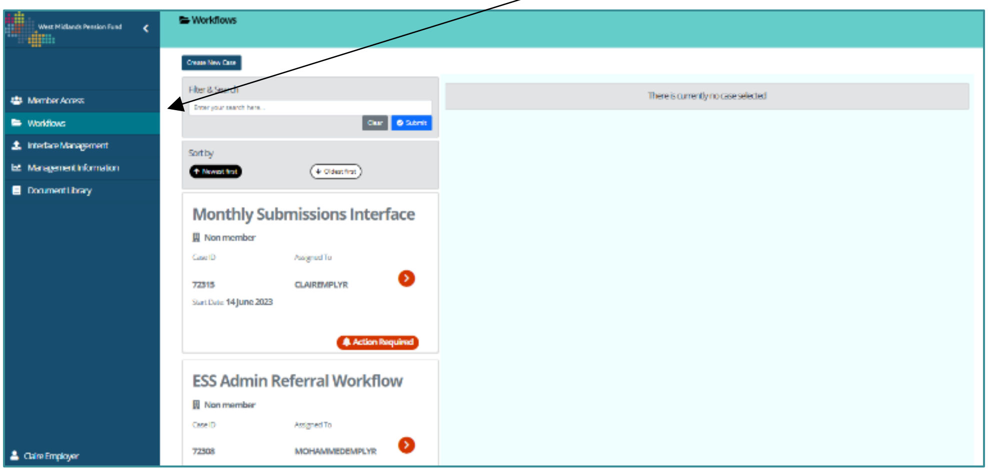


Once the file has been uploaded you will receive a confirmation as above. After clicking "Close", clicking "Refresh Data" will update the doughnuts to reflect the uploaded file:



Please note: If the relevant doughnut is reading "In Progress" the file is still validating. The file will only create a case once the file title has appeared at the top of the doughnut as in the examples to the left.

On uploading a Monthly Submission File a Monthly Submissions case will be created automatically and assigned to the user who uploaded the file. Navigate to the Workflows tab on the menu on the left-hand side of the page. The new Monthly Submissions case should appear at the top of the queue.



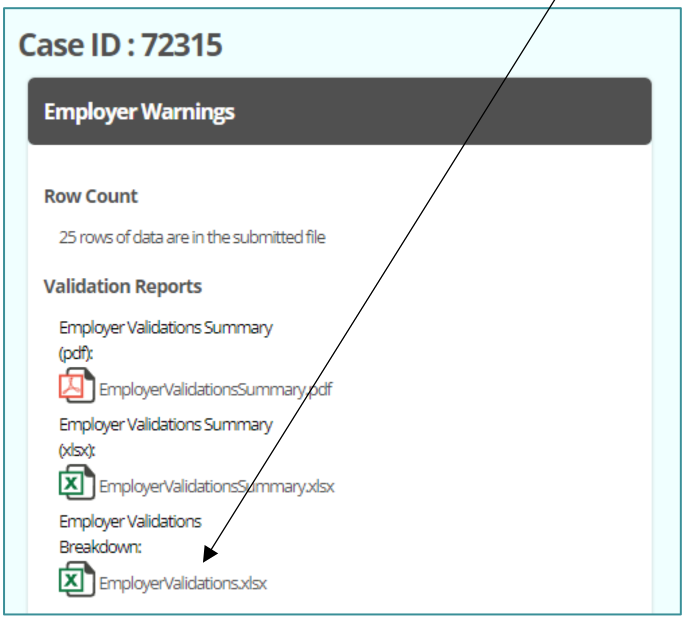
Click anywhere on the case tile to open it. The following instructions will explain how to complete the case. If the case is not completed the Monthly Submissions file will not be sent to the Fund to be actioned.

Once opened the following screen will appear. Please make a note of the Case ID as this will aid in finding the active case at a later date if necessary.

Three files will be made available for you to download as shown below.

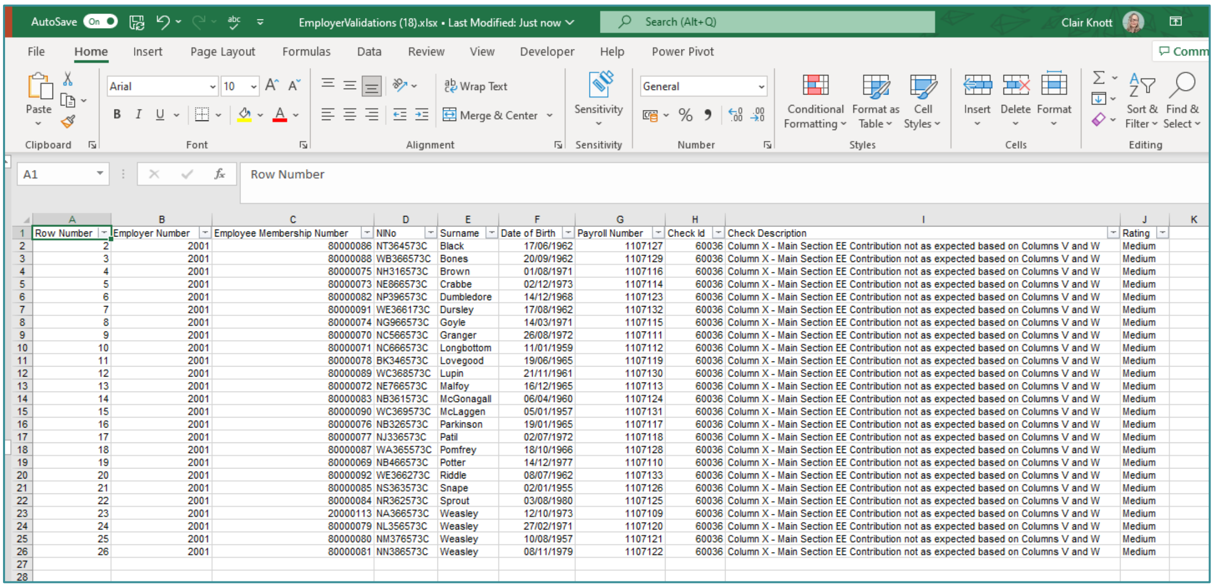
The first two files are summaries of the validations which have been run against the file, whereas the final file under “Employer Validations Breakdown” contains a breakdown of any errors present on the file. The Employer Validations summary PDF contains a list of all successfully run validations. The “Employer Validations Summary” xlsx file contains a list of all the validations run against the file and also identifies any validations that have been failed.

The “Employer Validations” xlsx file under “Employer Validations Breakdown” contains a description of any validations failed on each line of the uploaded file. This will display a list of all the errors and warnings which need to be reviewed and corrected as below.



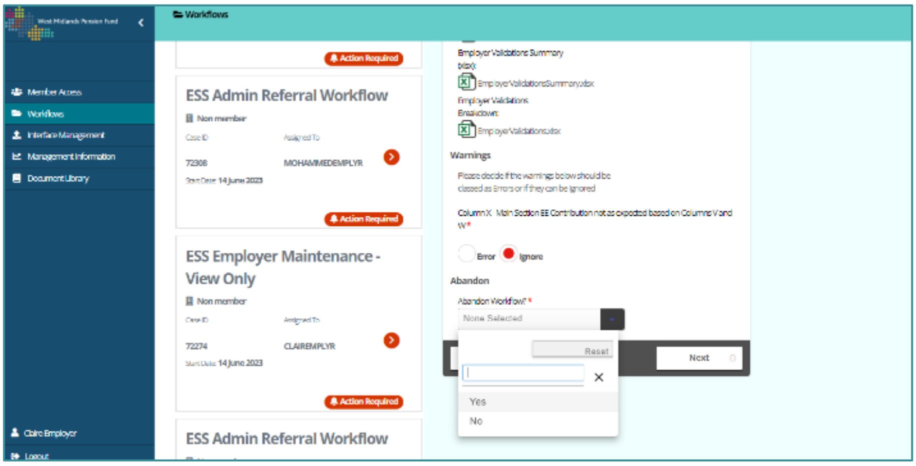
Click on the file to download to your device. We would recommend that this file is saved to a specified location on your device so that it can be referred to when correcting your original file.

Once opened the file will look like this:



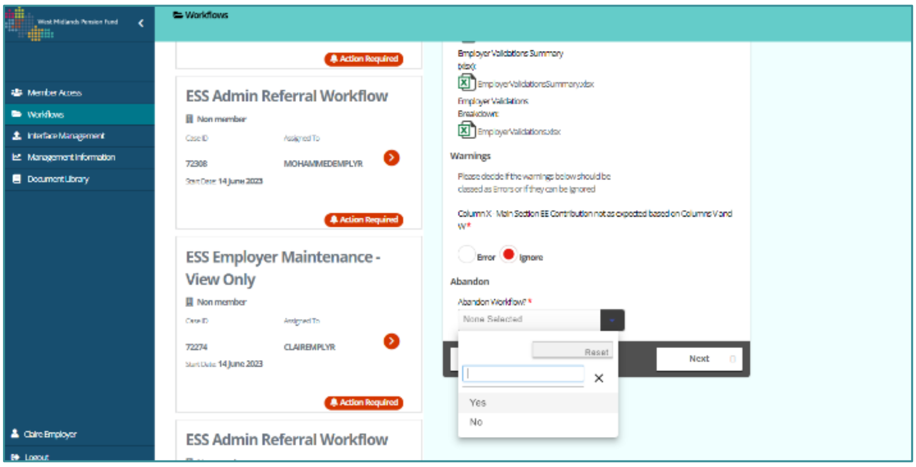
There are two types of errors identified on the file. "Medium" errors (also known as "warnings") are prompts to review the data on the original file and correct on the original file if necessary. "Critical" errors will prevent the file coming through to the Fund, so any "Critical" errors will need to be corrected on the original file.

If any warnings, after review, are classed as "Errors" on the case, or if any "Critical" errors are present on the file, the case should be abandoned and the corrected original file reuploaded in the same way as a new Monthly Submission.



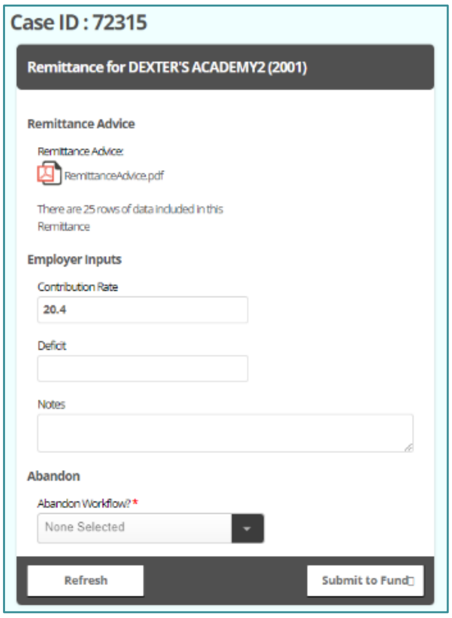
If there are no errors on the file, you will then be able to submit the file to the Fund.

[If there are warnings in the file, you can choose to ignore them and the case will proceed, or you can (if required) choose to turn the warnings into errors, abandon the current case, go back to your source file to correct the errors, and upload your new file.]



Select “No” under “Abandon Workflow” and then “Next”.

The final stage is to submit the file through to the Fund. The following page will appear:



Please note that the “Remittance Advice” pdf is NOT the Remittance Advice constituting proof that the file has been sent to the Fund. The file will NOT be sent to the fund until the “Submit to Fund” button has been selected.

Confirm that the employer contribution rate is correct and select “No” under “Abandon Workflow”, then click “Submit to Fund”. This will submit the monthly submission file through to the Fund and close the workflow. It will also produce a Remittance Advice document which will be stored in the Employer EDM (when available) under the relevant case number.

If there are any new joiners on the submitted file, an email will be sent to the user that uploaded the monthly data file to notify them that the joiner report (containing the new joiner reference numbers) is available to access in the Employer EDM (when available). You must ensure that the new reference numbers are added to the next monthly data file to ensure that you are able to load it.

You can also access membership reference numbers by running an Active List report.

If there are errors on the Monthly Submission file, download the error report that is produced, then abandon the workflow (by selecting "Yes" in the "Abandon Workflow" drop-down and clicking "Continue"). You must then rectify the errors on your original file and re-upload following the same steps as above.

There is also an option for you to download a resubmission file if your file contains errors: we would advise against going down this route and recommend following the 'Abandon Case' route as described above.

For further guidance on the Monthly Submission process, please see our training guide video.

Standard Interfaces

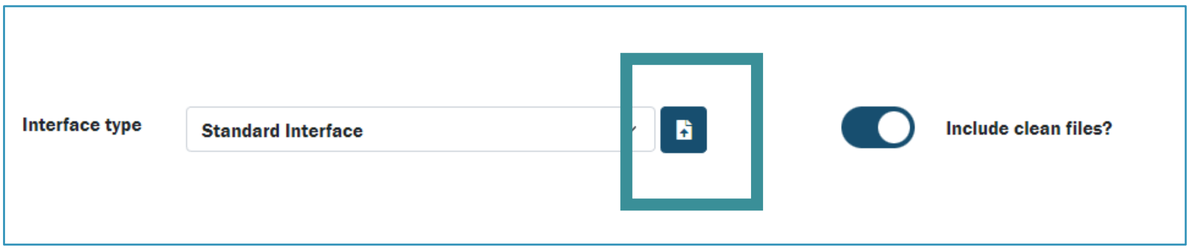
Any changes to member records (within the scheme year) should be submitted to the Fund via a Standard Interface. These include:

- Personal details changes
- Change of address
- Changes in contribution rate
- Change in section (Main or 50/50)
- Hours changes
- Breaks in Service

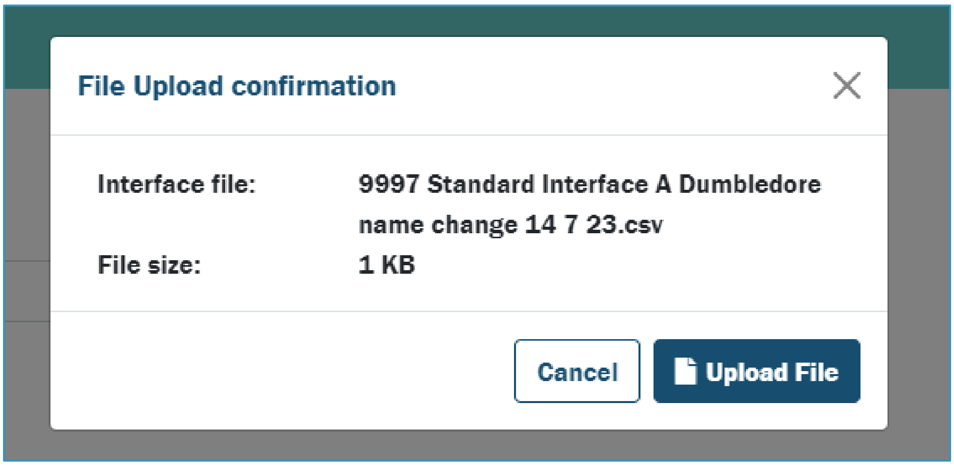
Please note that historic changes (relating to a previous scheme year) on member records should be submitted via an Admin Referral workflow.

The Standard Interface Schema pack, goes into detail about how to complete the file. Once your file has been created, it must be loaded as a .csv (comma delimited file) and submitted to the Fund to update the relevant member records.

Standard Interface files are loaded through the "Interface Management" tab in a similar way to monthly submission files. Select "Standard Interface" from the "Interface Type" drop-down and then click the Upload File button.

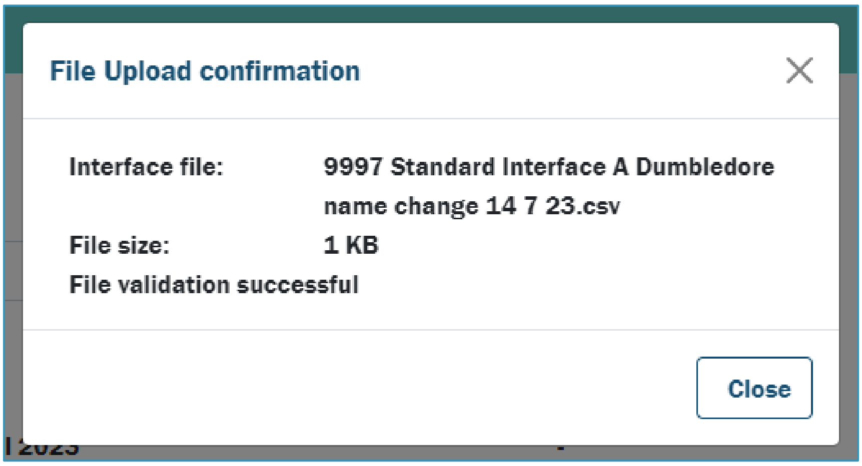


A window will pop up for you to choose the file. When chosen, the following pop up will appear.



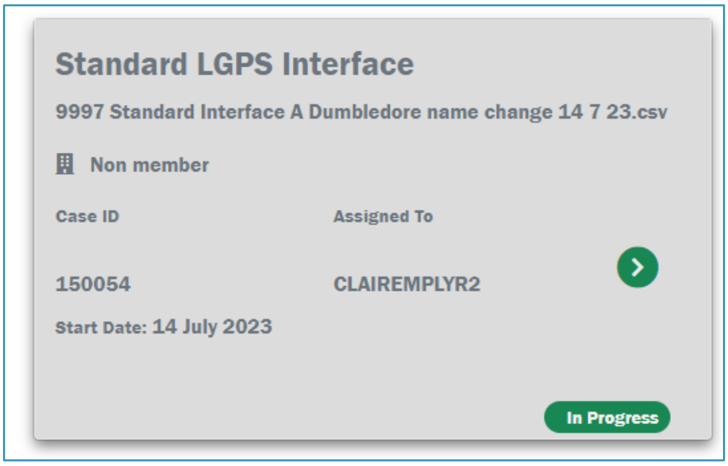
Clicking on “Upload File” will upload the file. Selecting “Cancel” will abort the upload so you can start again with a new file.

Once your file has been successfully uploaded you will receive a confirmation.



If there are any errors or warnings on the file once the validations have been run, the relevant doughnut on the Interface Management tab will update to show this.

After uploading the file, a workflow will automatically be created for you and will appear in your schedule.



As with the monthly submissions workflow detailed above, you will need to complete this workflow before the Fund can process any member changes. As with the Monthly Submissions workflow, any errors will be flagged for you. These can be rectified outside ESS and the file resubmitted in the same way as for the Monthly Submission interface.

Please note that each type of change on a member record (e.g., Personal Details, Change of Address) will require a separate line on the Standard interface. For more details, please see the Standard Interface Schema pack.

Exit Interfaces

Exit interfaces are how you must notify the Fund of leavers. These can be opt-outs (after the first three months), deferments, retirements, and deaths in service. The Exit Interface Schema Pack provides a file layout and full details of how to complete your exit interface.

Our Leaver Flowchart explains how to notify the Fund of opt-outs or leavers. Please note that opt-outs within three months (those refunded through the payroll) should be notified to the Fund via a Monthly Submission interface, not an Exit Interface.

Exit interfaces are uploaded in the same way as the Monthly and Standard interfaces. Much like these interfaces, a workflow will be automatically created if there are errors in the file and will appear in your schedule once a file has been uploaded. You will be notified of any errors within this workflow, and they will also appear on the doughnuts in the Interface Management tab. You can rectify errors by abandoning the workflow, then correcting and resubmitting the file as detailed in the monthly submission guidance.

If you have specified on the Exit Interface that there are documents to submit (RB1/RB1D, for example), a document upload case will be launched and will appear in your schedule. You can upload a maximum of three documents, but you are able to combine all documents onto a single PDF. Please note that file names should not contain special characters (including apostrophes) and that zipped files are not accepted.

Further information on retirements is available here.

Section 3: Queries to and from the Fund

Queries to the Fund: the Admin Referral Workflow

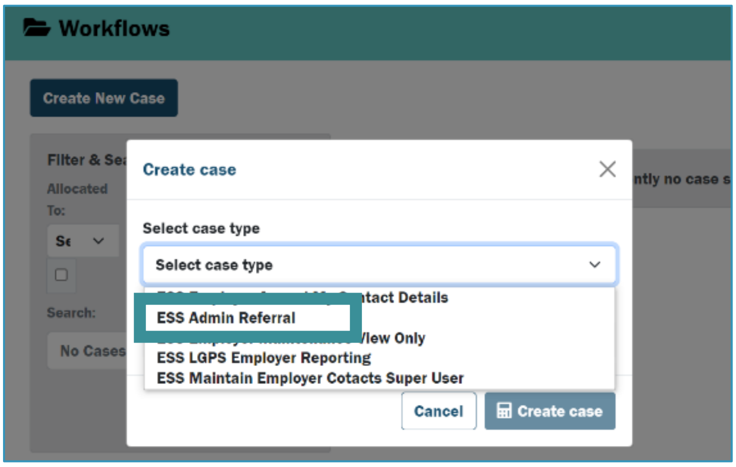
The Admin Referral workflow allows you raise a query or submit historic data changes securely with the Fund. Any documentation that contains sensitive data should be submitted through this workflow.

This workflow allows you to:

- Ask employer or member-related queries to the Fund.
- Send bulk TUPE transfer files.
- Send bulk joiner files (for historic joiners only: new joiners should be flagged on the relevant month's monthly data file).
- Send documents securely to the Fund.

Starting the Workflow

You can start an Admin Referral workflow by selecting the "Create New Case" option in the Workflows tab and selecting "ESS Admin Referral" from the drop-down menu. You will also need to add a case title.



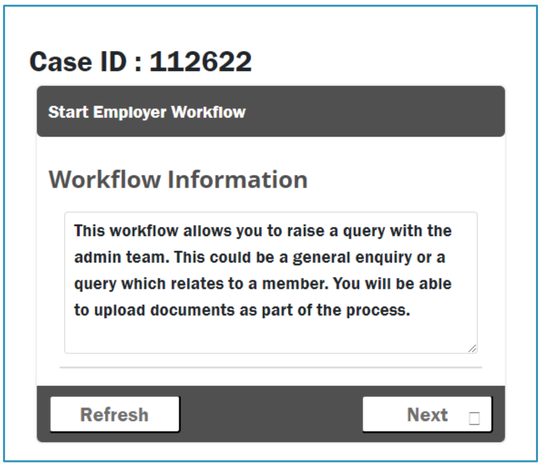
Selecting "Create Case" will create an Admin Referral case, which will then be visible in the Workflow tab. You will also need to enter a case title.

Please enter the Case Title in the format EMPLOYERREFERENCE# (Member number if applicable) DATE DD/MM/YY

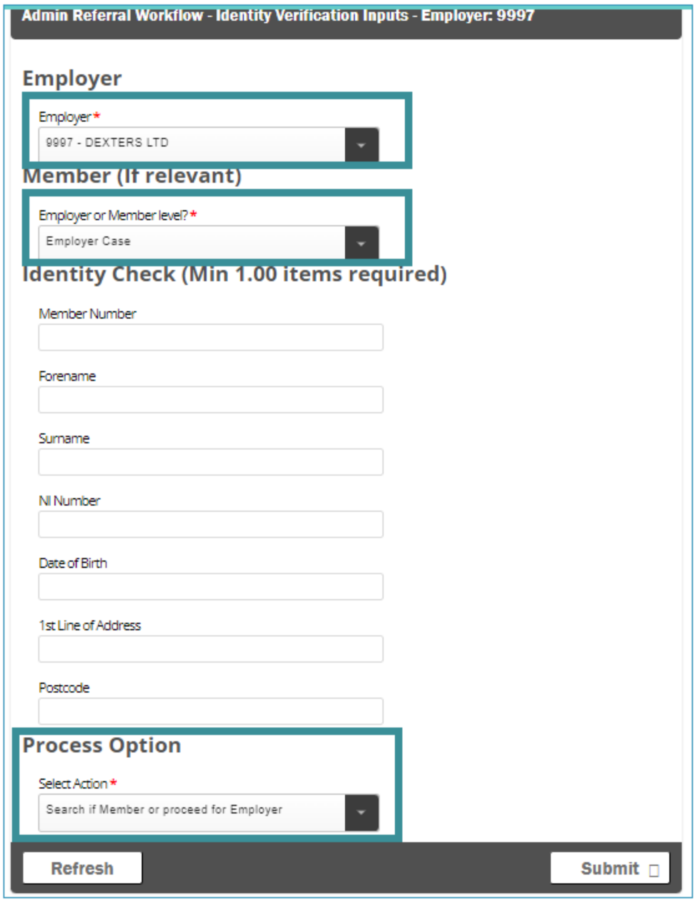
For example: 9997 (80111415) 12/07/2023.

Clicking on the relevant case will launch the workflow. You can then follow the steps below.

When you launch the workflow, you will be given a brief description of what it is for. This will also display the Case ID. It is recommended that this is recorded so that the case can be found in the future if required.



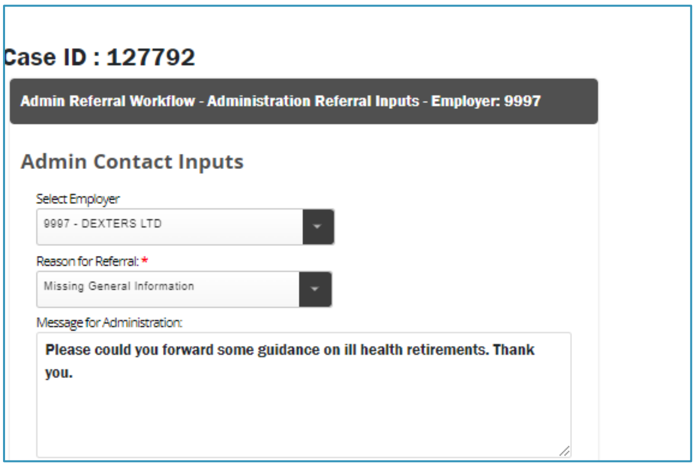
You will be asked if your query regards a specific member, or whether it is a query regarding your organisation. Either way, you must select the relevant employer from the first drop-down menu.

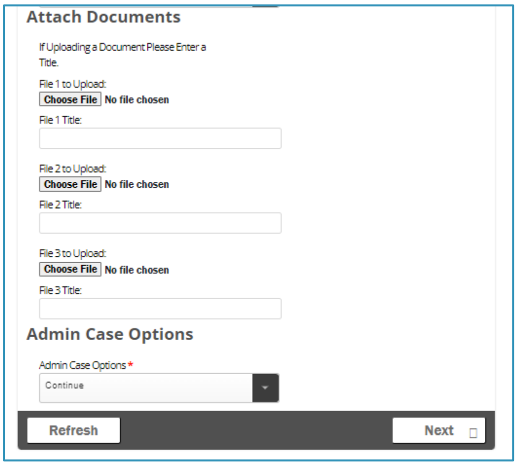


You can then choose whether the query is at member or employer level.

Employer level queries

If the query is an employer level query please select Employer Case from the drop-down menu, then select “Search if Member or proceed for Employer”. Clicking “Submit” will move the workflow onto the next stage.



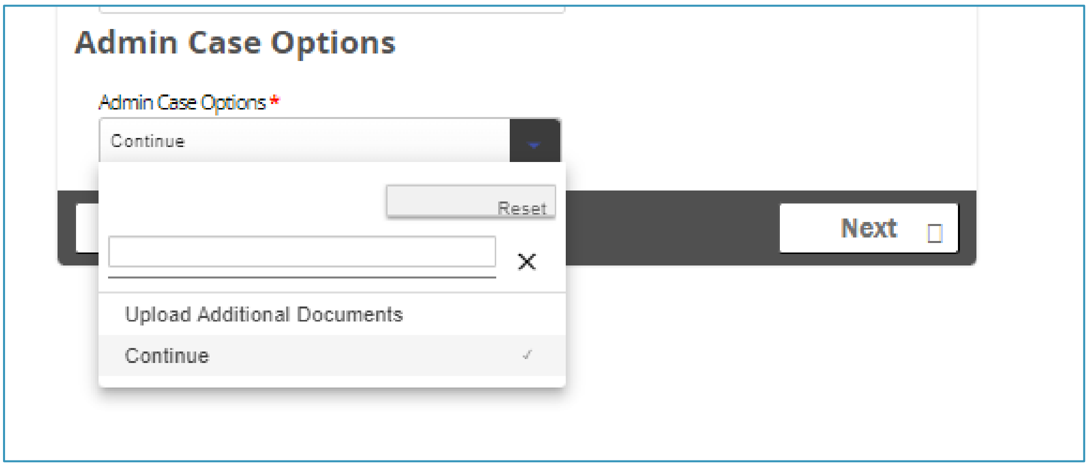


You should enter your query into the “Message for Administration” box to be reviewed and actioned. The “Reason for Referral” dropdown must be used to select a specific type of query.

You are also able to load up to three documents at this stage, by clicking “Choose File” and navigating to the appropriate file. Each file uploaded will require a title. Please make this as clear as possible.

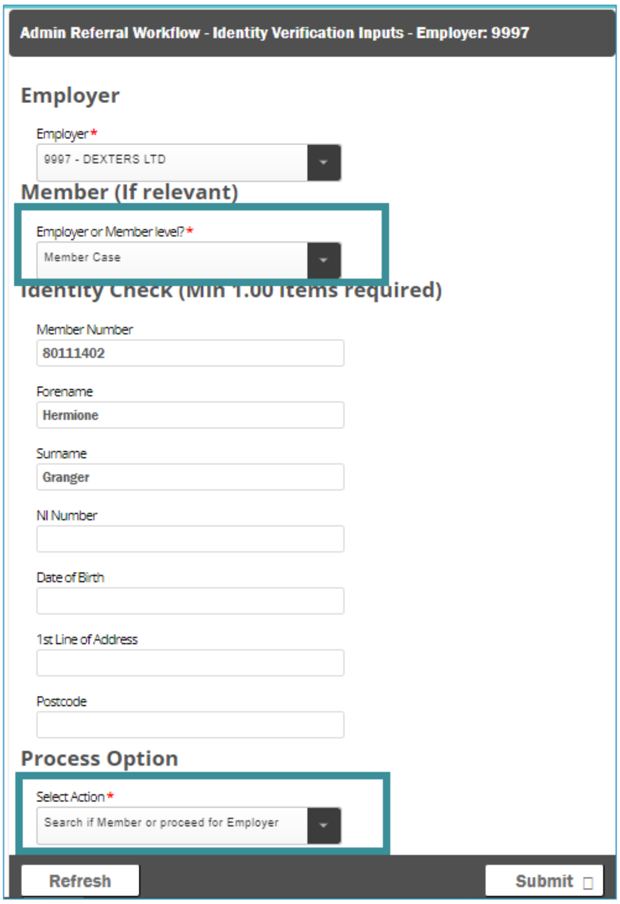
If you need to upload more documents, you can do this by selecting “Upload Additional Documents” under “Admin Case Options”, then clicking “Next”. The workflow will loop back around so you can upload an additional three documents as above.

If you are satisfied with your query and have uploaded all the required documents, please select “Continue” under “Admin Case Options” and click “Next”. The query will then be sent to the Fund for actioning.

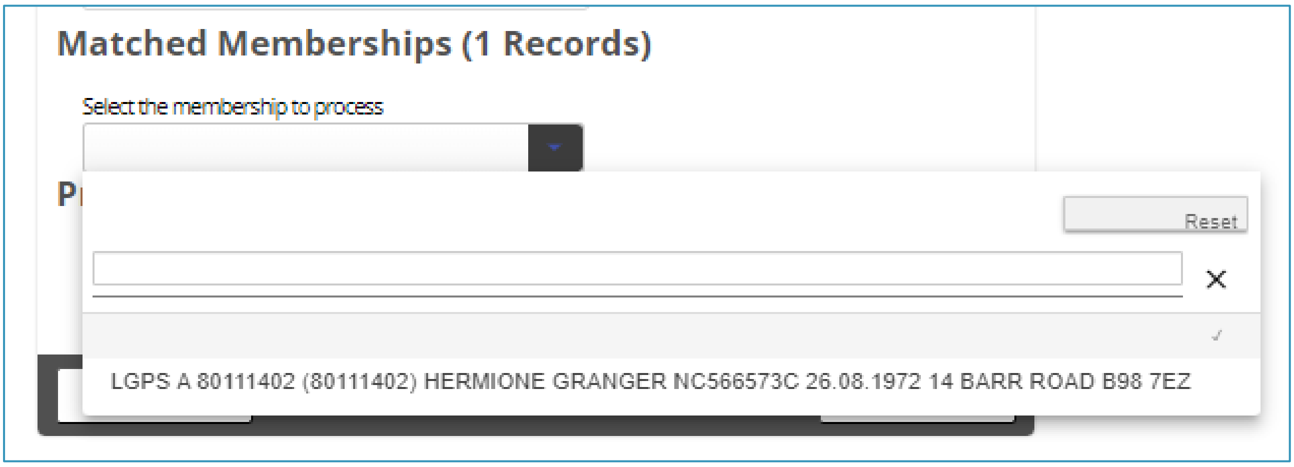


Member level queries

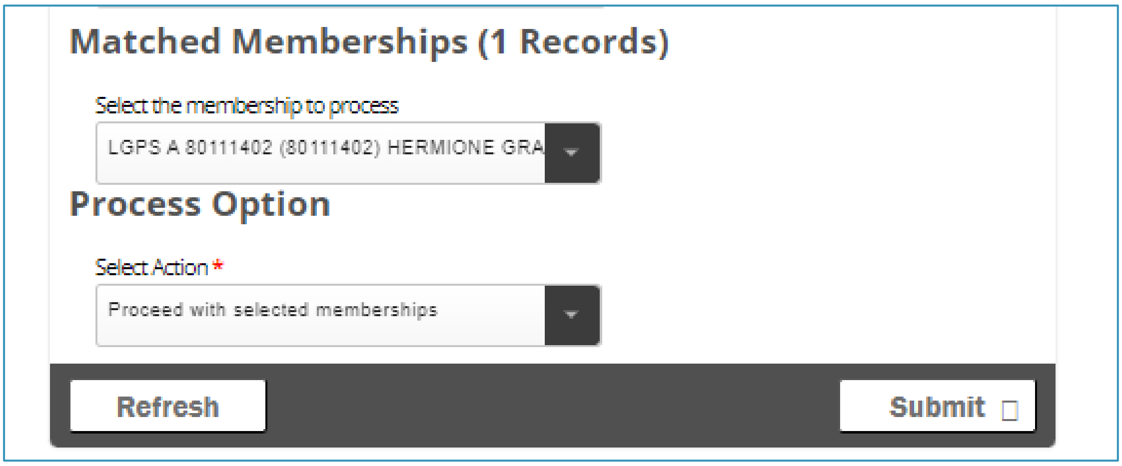
If the query is a member level query, select “Member Case” from the drop-down menu. You will need to enter some identifying information in the search fields. Please enter information in only one field as entering information in multiple fields will cause the workflow to error. Once information has been entered, select “Search if Member or proceed for Employer” in the “Select Action” drop-down, then click “Submit”.



The page will be updated, and you will need to select the appropriate member record before proceeding. To do this select the correct record from the “Matched memberships” drop-down.

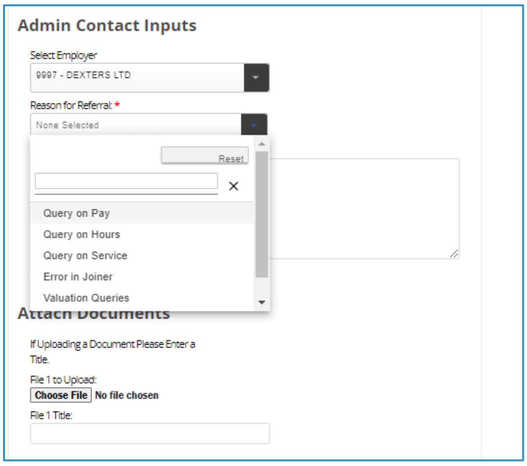


Once a member is selected the “Select Action” drop-down should automatically be populated with “Proceed with Selected Memberships”. Clicking “Submit” will move the workflow on to the next page.



If you have made a mistake or the correct member has not appeared, you can re-enter data in the search fields and select “Search if member or proceed if employer” from the “Select Action” drop-down and repeat the above stage until the correct member record appears.

Once you have proceeded the following page will appear.



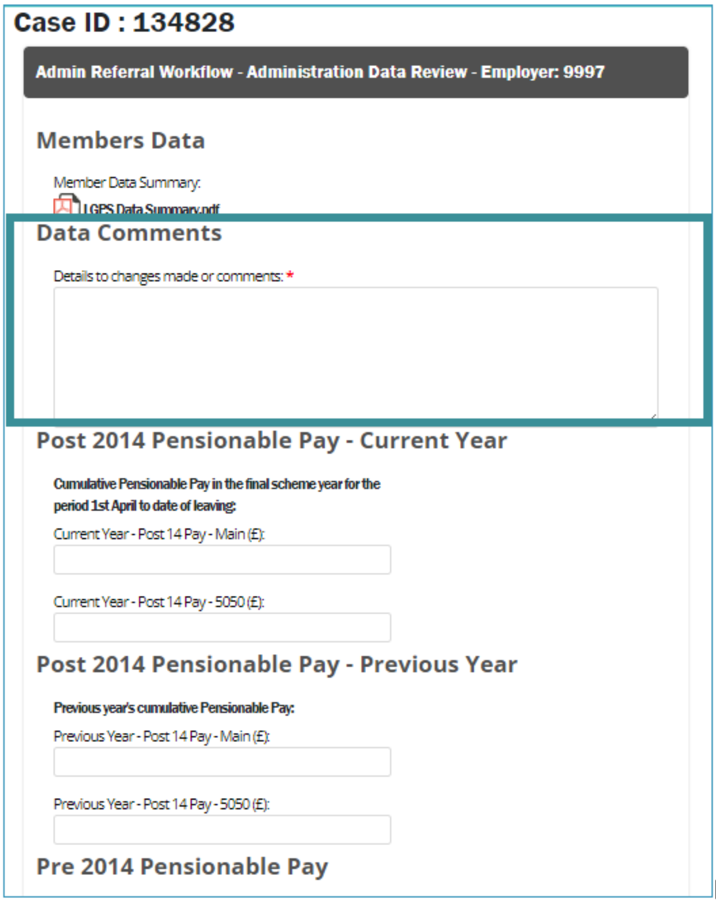
You should make sure the correct employer is selected, then choose a “Reason for Referral” from the drop-down menu.

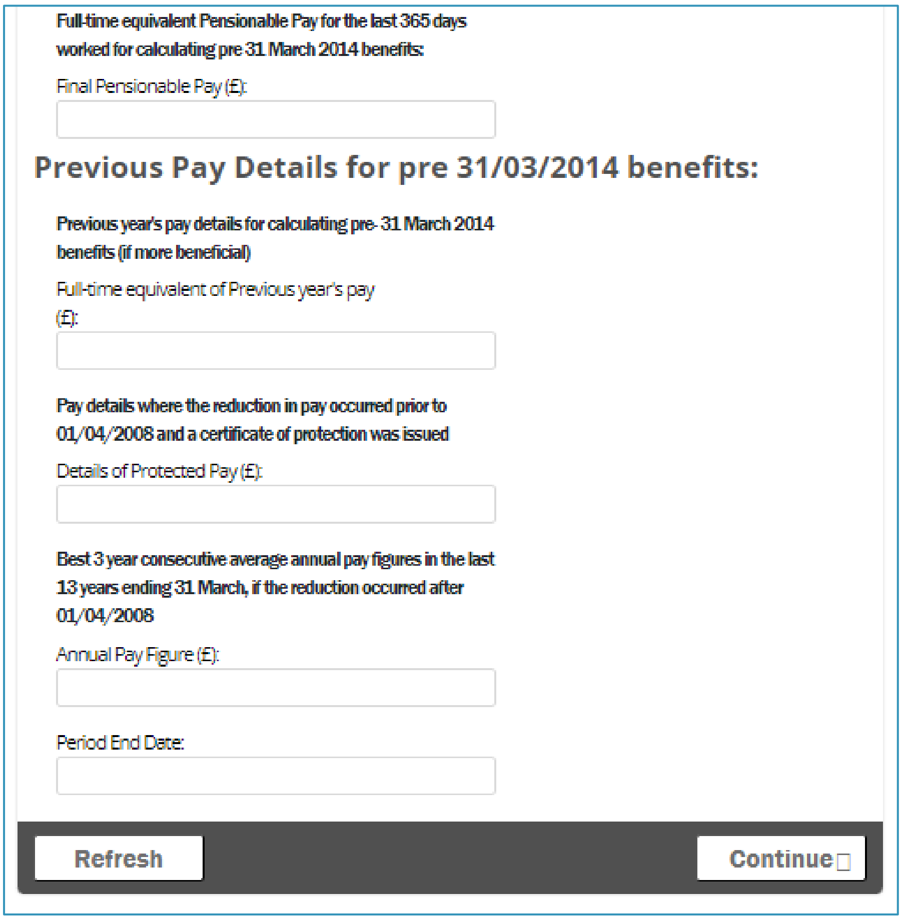
You will also be able to upload documents in the same way as described above.

Please also enter a “Message for Administration” explaining the query for the ease of the case handler.

Once you have entered your query and uploaded any documents, please click “Continue”.

You will be directed to the following page, where you will be invited to enter any changes to pay details if these are applicable. Please note that this will not update the member’s record.





Full-time equivalent Pensionable Pay for the last 365 days worked for calculating pre 31 March 2014 benefits:

Final Pensionable Pay (£):

Previous Pay Details for pre 31/03/2014 benefits:

Previous year's pay details for calculating pre- 31 March 2014 benefits (if more beneficial)

Full-time equivalent of Previous year's pay (£):

Pay details where the reduction in pay occurred prior to 01/04/2008 and a certificate of protection was issued

Details of Protected Pay (£):

Best 3 year consecutive average annual pay figures in the last 13 years ending 31 March, if the reduction occurred after 01/04/2008

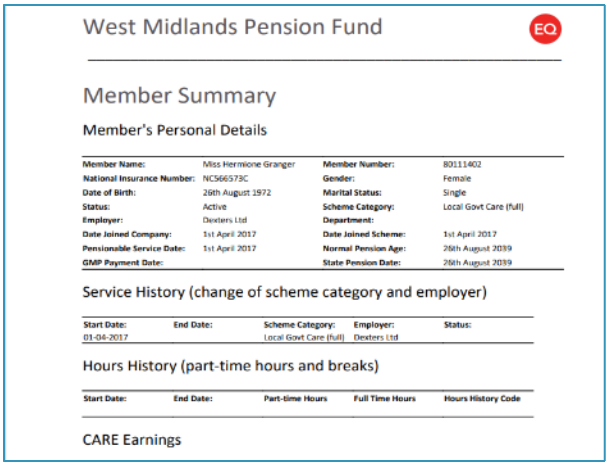
Annual Pay Figure (£):

Period End Date:

Refresh

Continue

The LGPS Data Summary PDF will display all the information the Fund currently holds about the member, so this can be checked before the query is made.



West Midlands Pension Fund

EQ

Member Summary

Member's Personal Details

Member Name:	Miss Hermione Granger	**Member Number:**	80111402
National Insurance Number:	NC566573C	**Gender:**	Female
Date of Birth:	26th August 1972	**Marital Status:**	Single
Status:	Active	**Scheme Category:**	Local Govt Care (full)
Employer:	Dexters Ltd	**Department:**	
Date Joined Company:	1st April 2017	**Date Joined Scheme:**	1st April 2017
Pensionable Service Date:	1st April 2017	**Normal Pension Age:**	26th August 2039
GMP Payment Date:		**State Pension Date:**	26th August 2039

Service History (change of scheme category and employer)

Start Date:	End Date:	Scheme Category:	Employer:	Status:
01-04-2017		Local Govt Care (full)	Dexters Ltd	

Hours History (part-time hours and breaks)

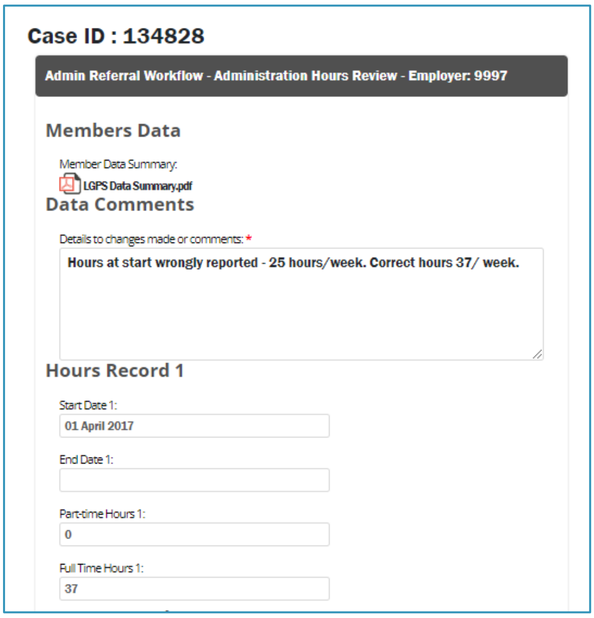
Start Date:	End Date:	Part-time Hours	Full Time Hours	Hours History Code

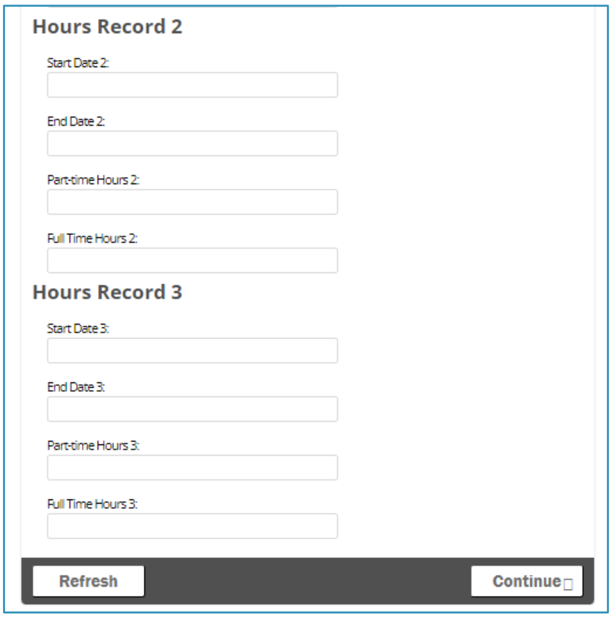
CARE Earnings

Please review the fields, entering any changes or discrepancies in the relevant field.

Please also make sure to inform the Fund of any changes made on this screen in the "Data Comments" box, or to inform us that no data has been changed on this page. This is so the case handler can action any changes made.

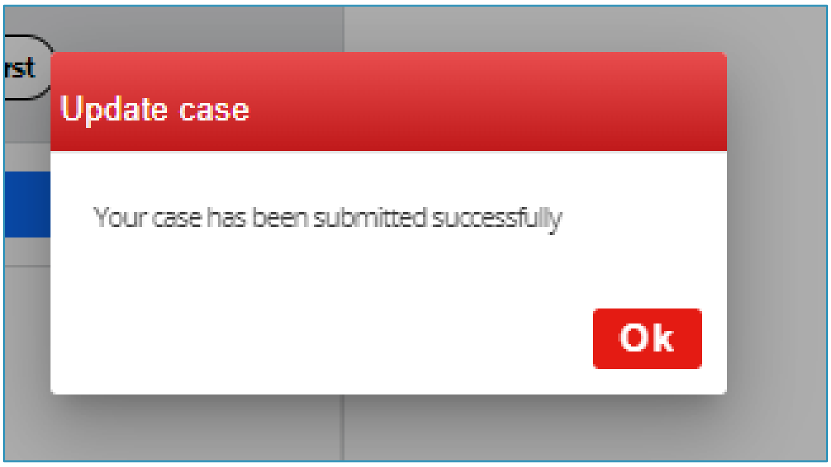
Once any pay details have been recorded, please click "Continue". You will be directed onto the Hours review page.





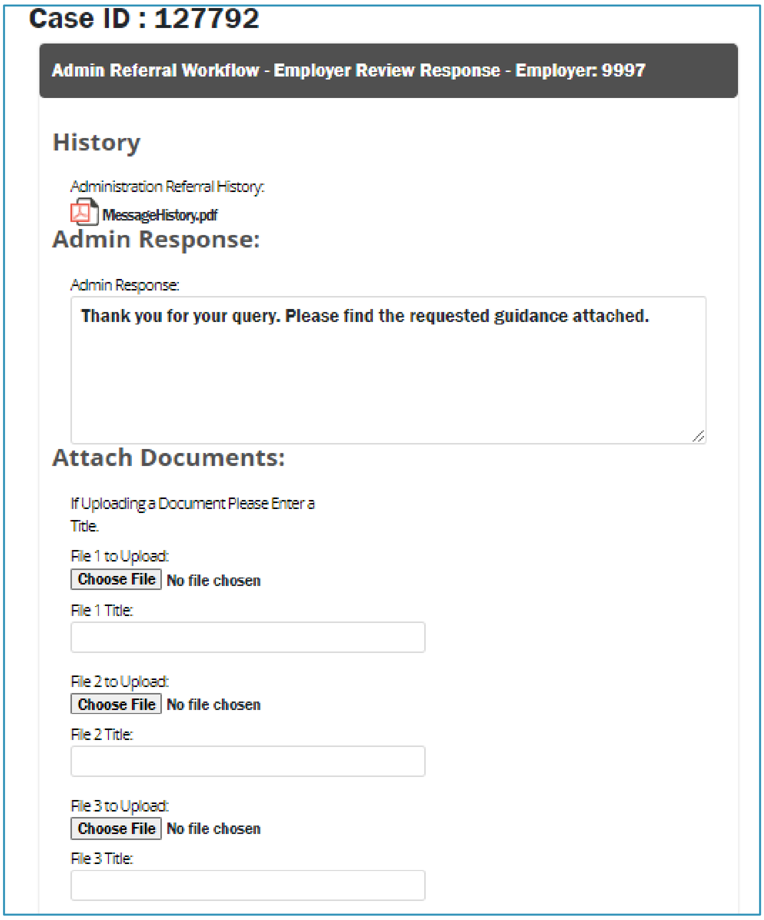
As with the previous Pay Review stage, please enter any hours data that differs from the Fund's already held information. If any changes are recorded, please make sure to enter the details in the "Data Comments" box. Once all changes have been recorded, please click on "Continue".

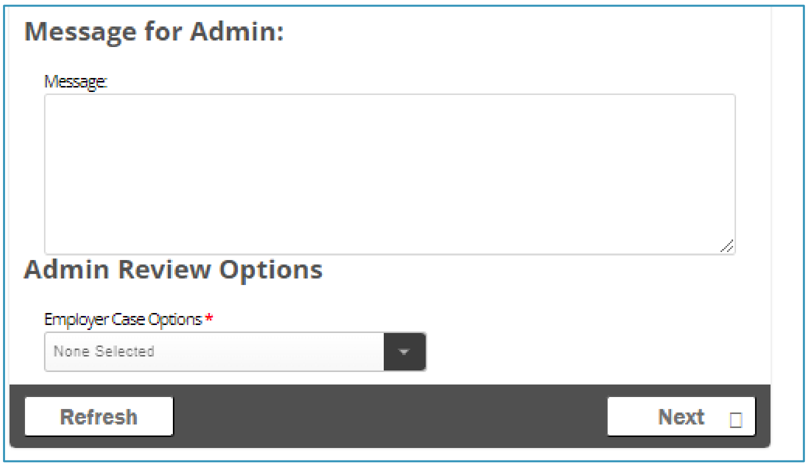
This will then send the query to the Fund to be actioned. You will receive a confirmation that the case has been successfully submitted to the Fund.



Queries returned by the Fund.

Once your Admin Referral query has been assessed by the Fund, and necessary actions taken, it will be returned to your schedule in the Workflows tab. You can open this to view the Fund's response by clicking on the case tab.



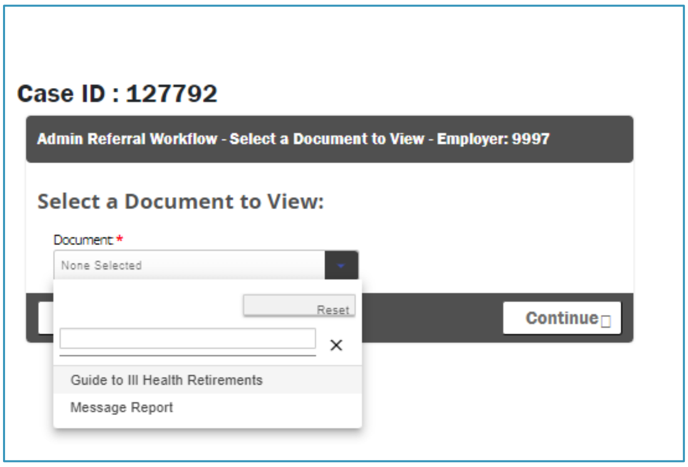


Opening the case will open the above page. The Fund's response will be located under "Admin Response" as above.

The "MessageHistory" PDF file can be downloaded and will display a list of all messages sent during the case, both to and from the Fund, with dates and users who have sent the message.

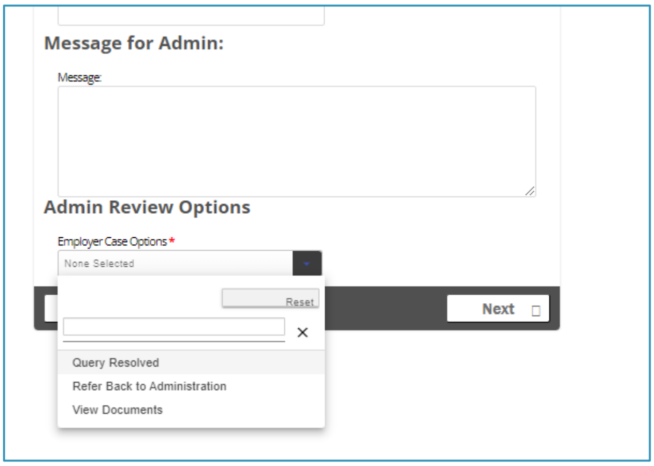
The Admin Response message will indicate if any documents have been attached to the case by the Fund. If documents have been attached, they can be viewed by selecting "View Documents" under "Employer Case Options" and clicking "Next".

You will be invited to choose a document to view. You can choose which document to view by selecting it in the "Document" drop-down menu, then clicking "Continue".



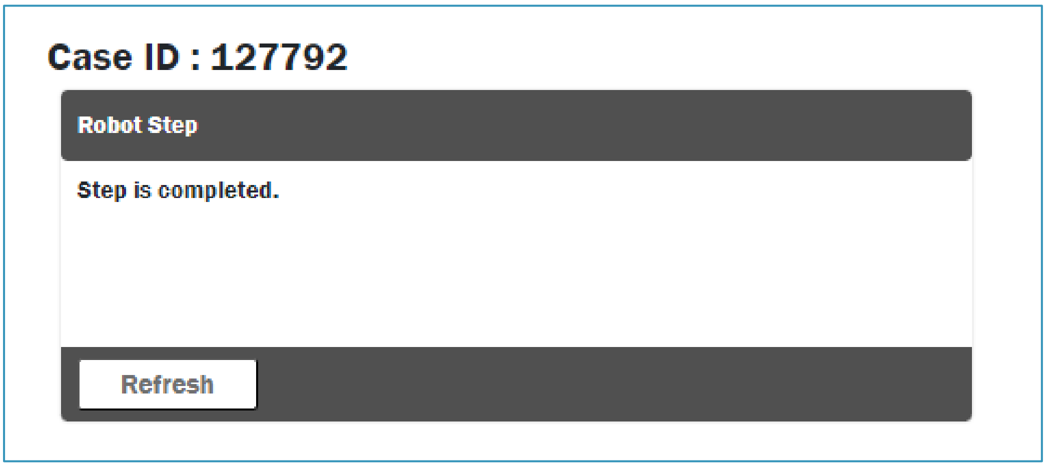
The document will then be made available for you to download and view.

You are then able to view another document if applicable by selecting "Yes" from the "Option" drop-down and clicking "Continue", which will return you to the "Select a Document to View" page. Alternatively, you can select "No" and then "Continue", which will return you to the "Employer Review Response" page.



If you have further queries for the Fund, or the Fund requires a response, you can type in a message for the Fund in the "Message for Admin" box, then select "Refer Back to Administration" under "Employer Case Options" and click "Next". This will return the query to the Fund user handling the case. This can be done multiple times if necessary, until the query is resolved.

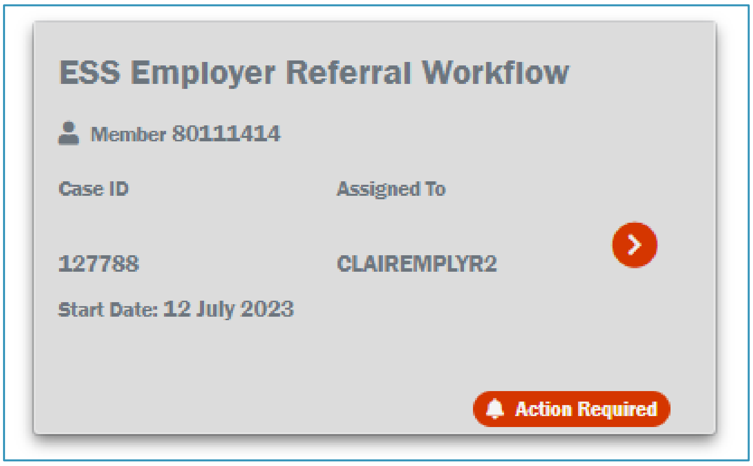
Once the query has been resolved to your satisfaction, you can instead select "Query Resolved" in the "Employer Case Options" drop-down, then click "Next". This will close the Admin Referral workflow.



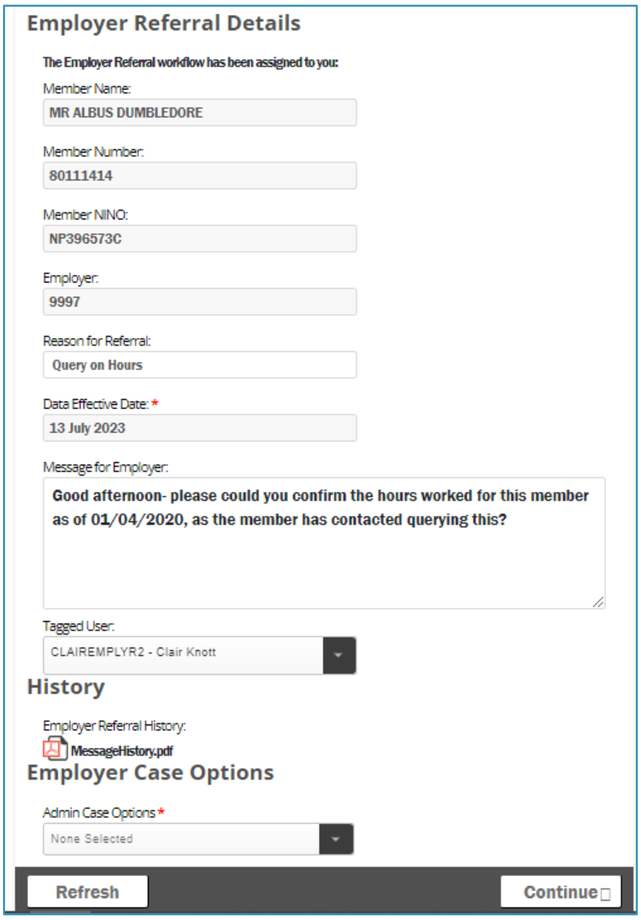
The case will still be accessible in your EDM (filed under the relevant employer number, then sub-filed under the Case Number), along with any documents attached to the case, for future reference.

Queries from the Fund: The Employer Referral Workflow

The Employer Referral workflow is how the Fund will contact you with queries on both a member and employer level. They are launched by a Fund user and will be sent into your case schedule, where they can be picked up.

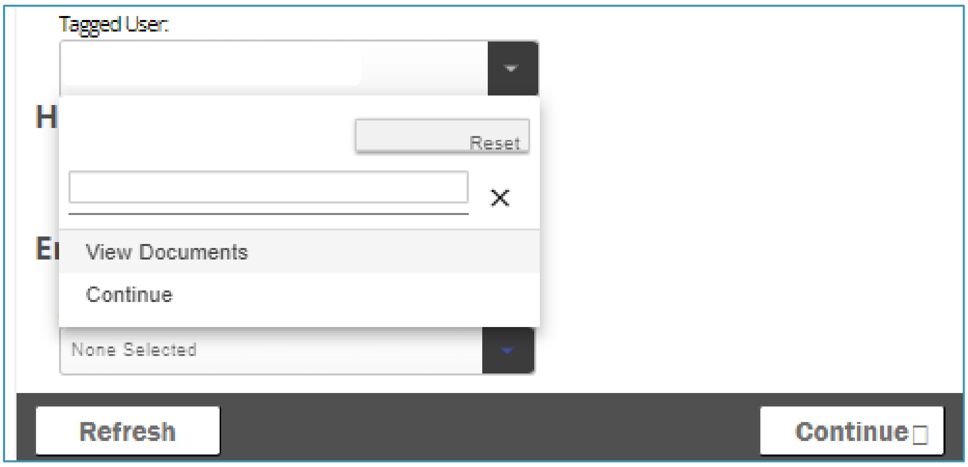


Clicking anywhere on the case tab will open the case. You will see the following:

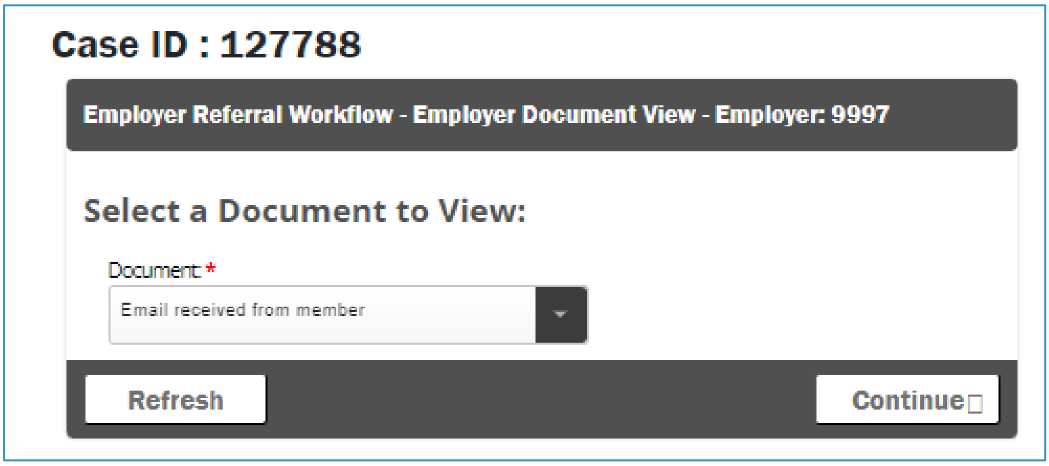


The Message for Employer will contain details of the query. The "MessageHistory" PDF file can be viewed by clicking on it and will contain a history of all the messages from both ESS users and the Fund that have been sent via this case. This will also be saved to the relevant member's EDM for future reference.

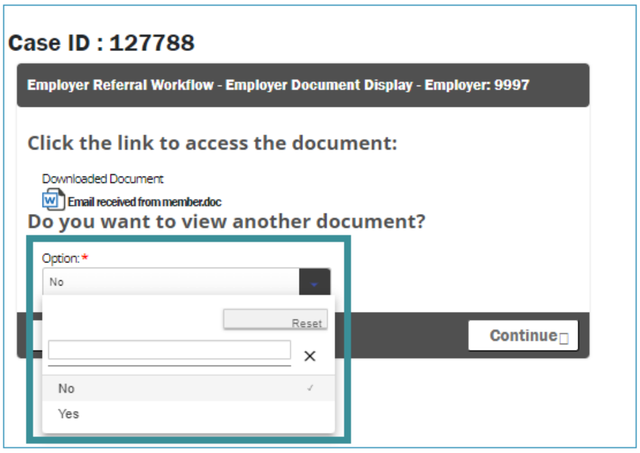
You are able to view any documents attached to the case by selecting "View Documents" from the "Admin Case Options" drop-down menu, then clicking "Continue".



This will redirect you to the Employer Document View page. Select the appropriate document from the drop-down menu, then click “Continue”.

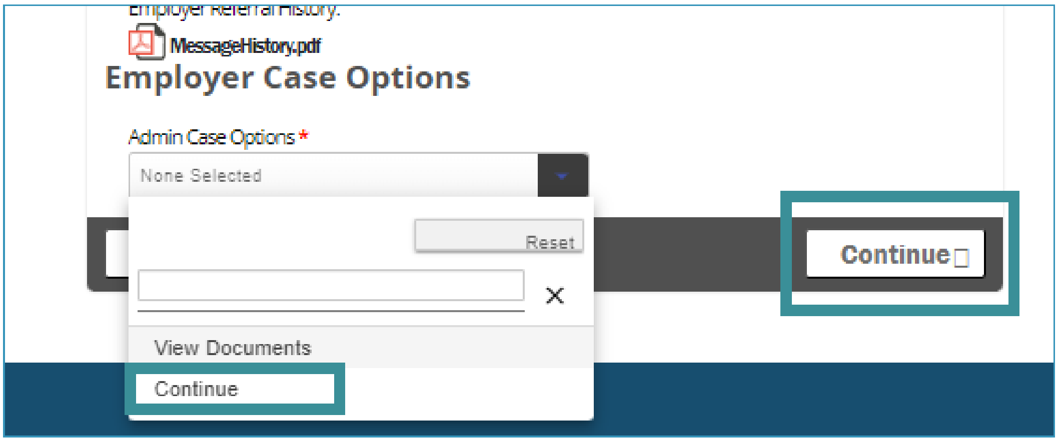


This will direct you to the Employer Document Display page. You will then be able to view and/or download the selected document by clicking on it.

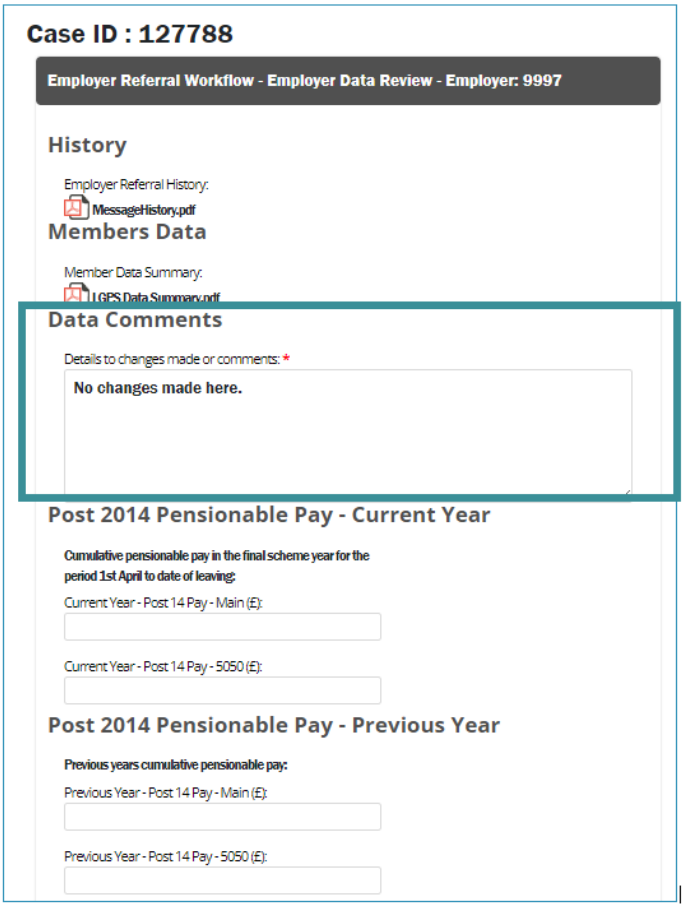


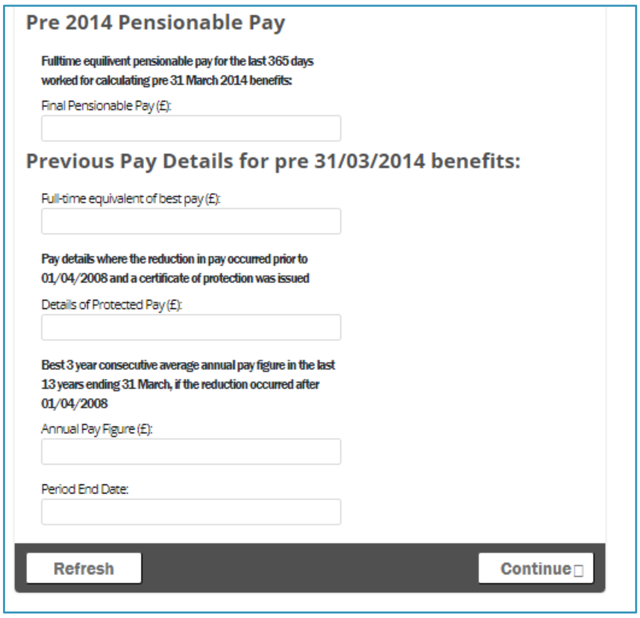
After viewing you can return to the Employer Referral Details page in order to answer the query by selecting “No” in the “Option” drop-down menu or view further documents by selecting “Yes” in this drop-down and clicking “Continue”.

After returning to the Employer Referral Details page, you will be able to send a response to the Fund. Under “Admin Case Options”, please select “Continue”, then click the “Continue” button.



You will be directed to the “Employer Data Review” screen, where you will be invited to enter any changes to pay details if these are applicable. Please note that this will not update the member’s record.





Pre 2014 Pensionable Pay

Fulltime equilivent pensionable pay for the last 365 days worked for calculating pre 31 March 2014 benefits:

Final Pensionable Pay (£):

Previous Pay Details for pre 31/03/2014 benefits:

Full-time equivalent of best pay (£):

Pay details where the reduction in pay occurred prior to 01/04/2008 and a certificate of protection was issued

Details of Protected Pay (£):

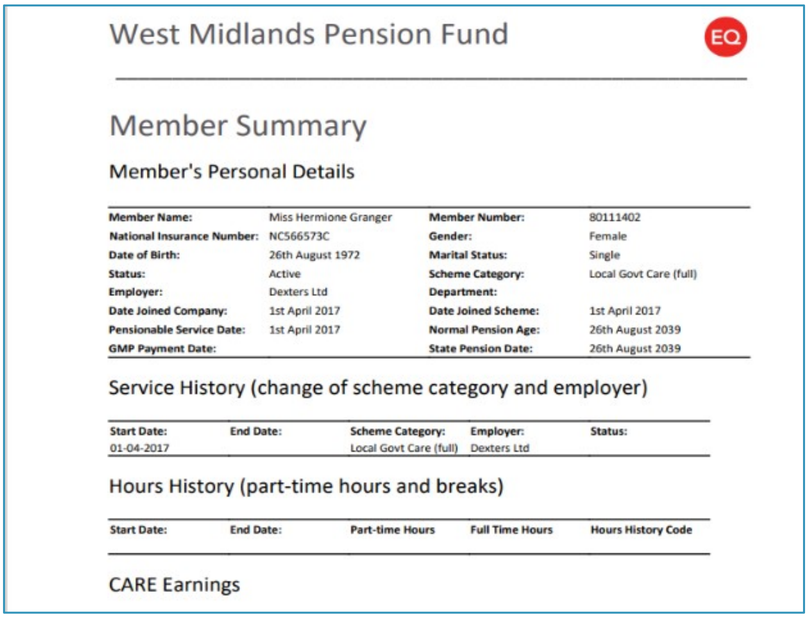
Best 3 year consecutive average annual pay figure in the last 13 years ending 31 March, if the reduction occurred after 01/04/2008

Annual Pay Figure (£):

Period End Date:

Refresh Continue

The LGPS Data Summary PDF will display all the information the Fund currently holds about the member, so this can be checked before the query is made.



West Midlands Pension Fund EQ

Member Summary

Member's Personal Details

Member Name:	Miss Hermione Granger	**Member Number:**	80111402
National Insurance Number:	NC566573C	**Gender:**	Female
Date of Birth:	26th August 1972	**Marital Status:**	Single
Status:	Active	**Scheme Category:**	Local Govt Care (full)
Employer:	Dexters Ltd	**Department:**	
Date Joined Company:	1st April 2017	**Date Joined Scheme:**	1st April 2017
Pensionable Service Date:	1st April 2017	**Normal Pension Age:**	26th August 2039
GMP Payment Date:		**State Pension Date:**	26th August 2039

Service History (change of scheme category and employer)

Start Date:	End Date:	Scheme Category:	Employer:	Status:
01-04-2017		Local Govt Care (full)	Dexters Ltd	

Hours History (part-time hours and breaks)

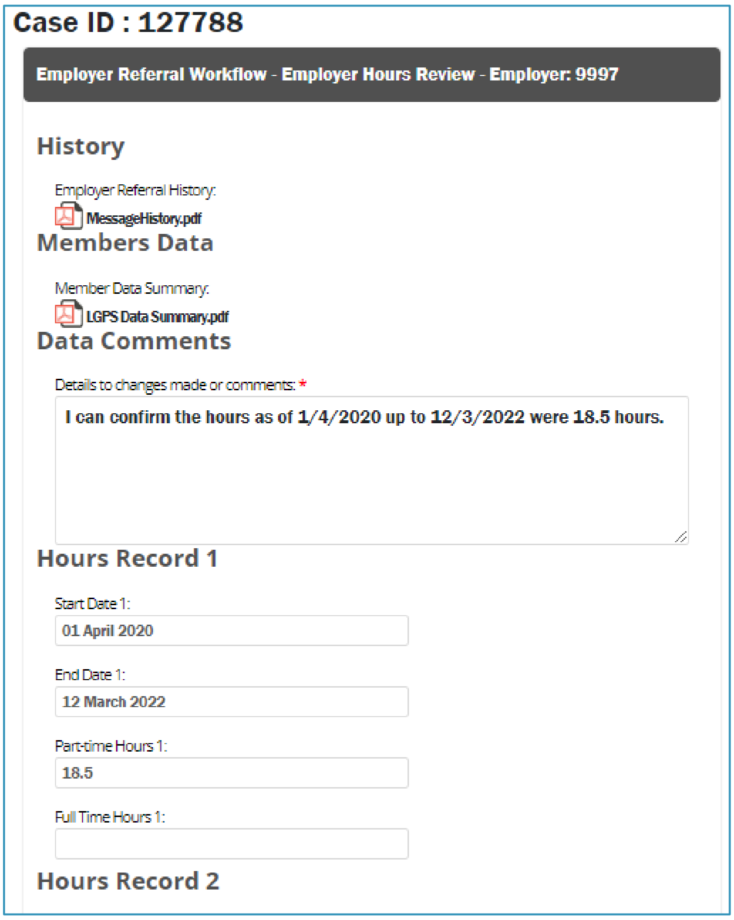
Start Date:	End Date:	Part-time Hours	Full Time Hours	Hours History Code

CARE Earnings

Please review the fields, entering any changes or discrepancies in the relevant field.

Please also make sure to inform the Fund of any changes made on this screen in the “Data Comments” box, or to inform us that no data has been changed on this page. This is so the case handler can action any changes made.

Once any pay details have been recorded, please click “Continue”. You will be directed onto the Hours review page.



Case ID : 127788

Employer Referral Workflow - Employer Hours Review - Employer: 9997

History

Employer Referral History:

MessageHistory.pdf

Members Data

Member Data Summary:

LGPS Data Summary.pdf

Data Comments

Details to changes made or comments: *

I can confirm the hours as of 1/4/2020 up to 12/3/2022 were 18.5 hours.

Hours Record 1

Start Date 1:

01 April 2020

End Date 1:

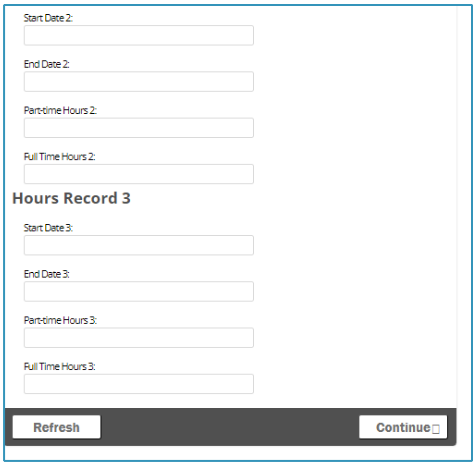
12 March 2022

Part-time Hours 1:

18.5

Full Time Hours 1:

Hours Record 2



Start Date 2:

End Date 2:

Part-time Hours 2:

Full Time Hours 2:

Hours Record 3

Start Date 3:

End Date 3:

Part-time Hours 3:

Full Time Hours 3:

Refresh

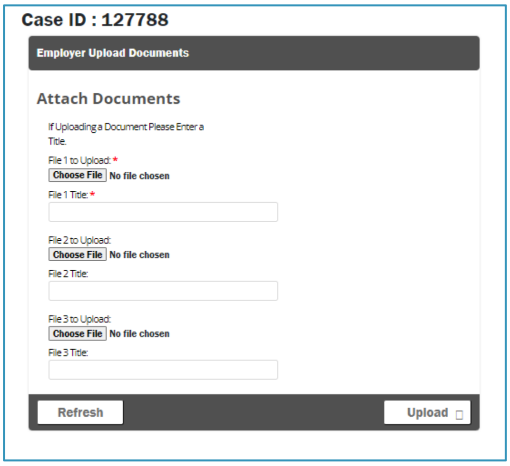
Continue

As with the previous Pay Review stage, please enter any hours data that differs from the Fund's already held information. If any changes are recorded, please make sure to enter the details in the "Data Comments" box. Once all changes have been recorded, please click on "Continue".

This will lead to the "Employer Response" page.

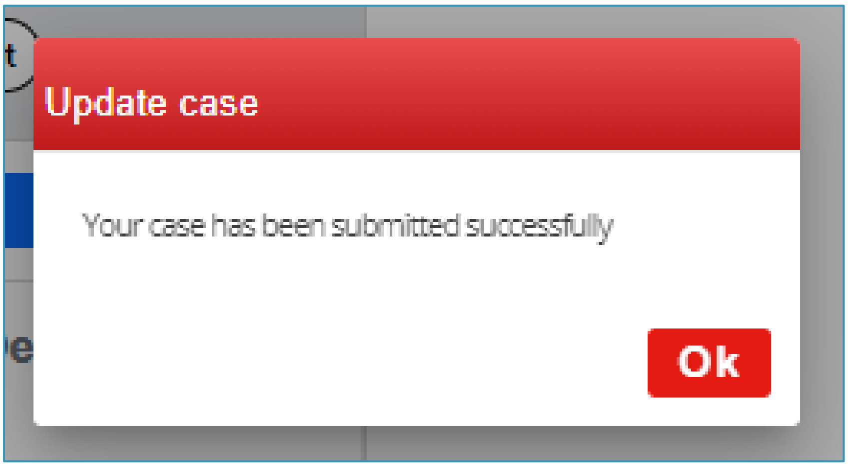
Please enter a response to the Fund in the "Employer Response" box. You will be able to view any documents necessary before submitting to the Fund by selecting "View Documents" under "Employer Case Options", as above. You can also upload any necessary documents at this stage, by clicking "Upload Documents" in the "Employer Case Options" and clicking "Continue".

This will allow you to upload up to three documents, by clicking "Choose File" and entering a File Title for each uploaded document. Please make this as clear as possible so that it can be identified by the Fund case handler.



When you have attached all necessary documents, click "Upload". This will return you to the "Employer Response" page.

Once you have viewed and attached any necessary documents, and entered a response to the Fund's query, you can choose "Submit to Admin" from the "Employer Case Options" drop-down menu and select "Upload". This will send the response through to the Fund. You will receive a confirmation that the case has been updated.



The Fund user will then review the case and action as appropriate. It will then either be completed by the Fund user or returned to your case schedule if necessary.

Section 4: Reporting

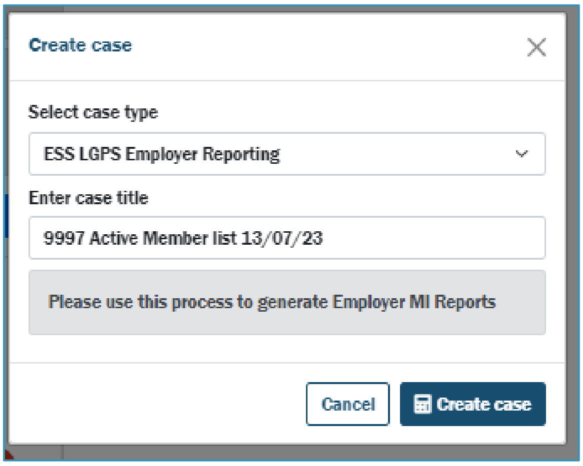
There are several reports that can be run through ESS to provide a wide variety of information about your organisation and members. These reports can be run via the ESS LGPS Employer Reporting workflow.

Users will be able to access the following reports:

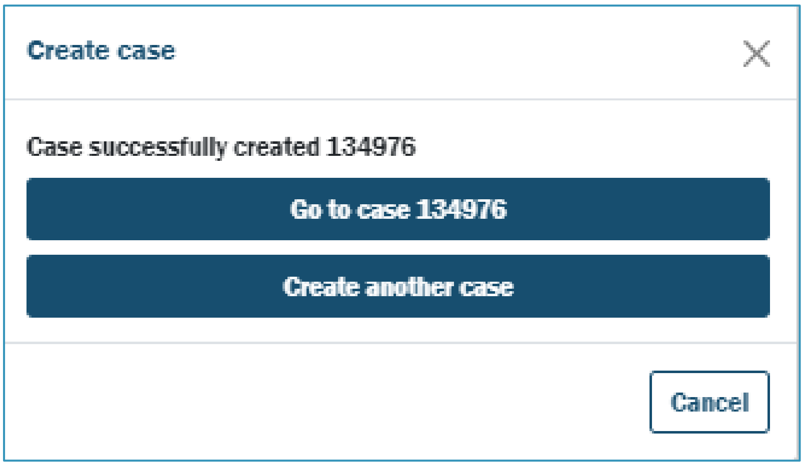
- **Active Member report:** lists all of the current active member records for a specific employer.
- **Employer Contacts Report:** lists all the currently held contacts for a specific employer.
- **Monthly Submissions History:** lists details of monthly submissions that have been submitted for a specific employer.
- **Monthly Submissions Warnings Received:** shows a list of warnings received regarding Monthly Submission files.
- **Employer Workflows:** lists details of workflows currently open concerning specific employers.
- **Employer Cases Due Report:** lists workflow due dates.
- **Employer Membership Statistics:** gives details of the membership profiles of the employers you have access to.

ESS LGPS Employer Reporting Workflow

This workflow should be started as detailed above, by selecting “Create New Case” from the “Workflows” tab. Select “ESS LGPS Employer Reporting” on the “Select Case Type” drop-down, and enter a case title, then click “Create Case”.

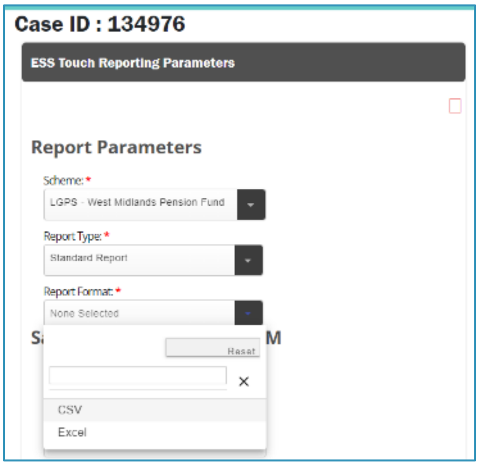


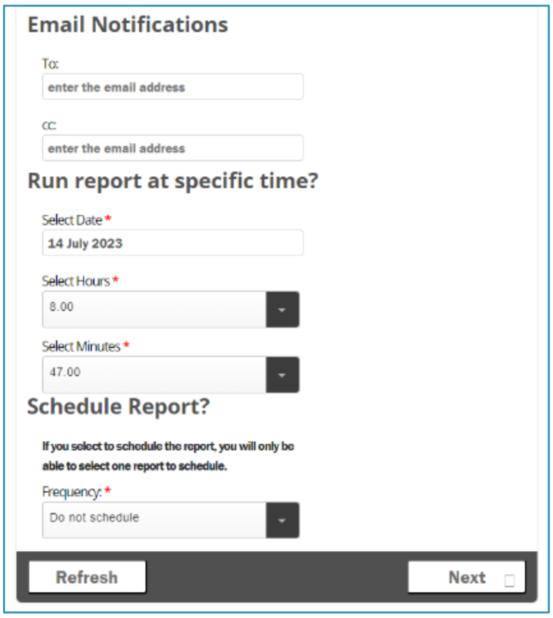
The case can then be opened or left in your case schedule to be opened at a later date.



On launching the case you will be able to view the workflow information. Click “Next” to begin the workflow. You will be asked to select the employer record for which you wish to run a report.

Select the appropriate employer from the drop-down menu, check the circle next to “Select” under “Select Option”, then click “Next”.



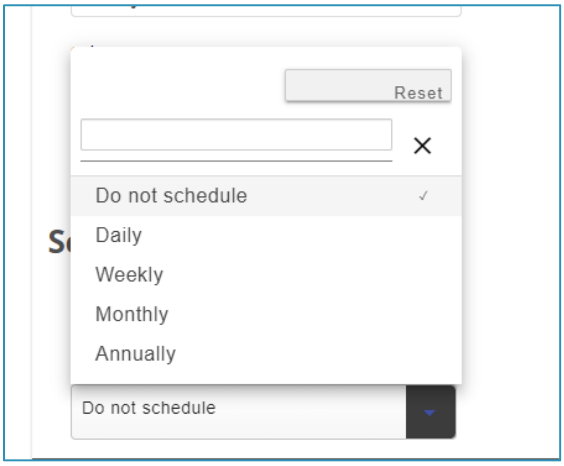


You will be directed to the ESS Touch Reporting Parameters page. Make sure “LGPS” is selected under “Scheme” and that the “Report Type” is set to “Standard Report”. You can choose whether the report is produced as a .csv file or as an xlsx file by selecting the appropriate option under “Report Format”.

You can decide to save the report to your Employer EDM by selecting that option under “Save Report to Scheme EDM”. If this option is chosen, please enter a report name so it can be identified at a later date.

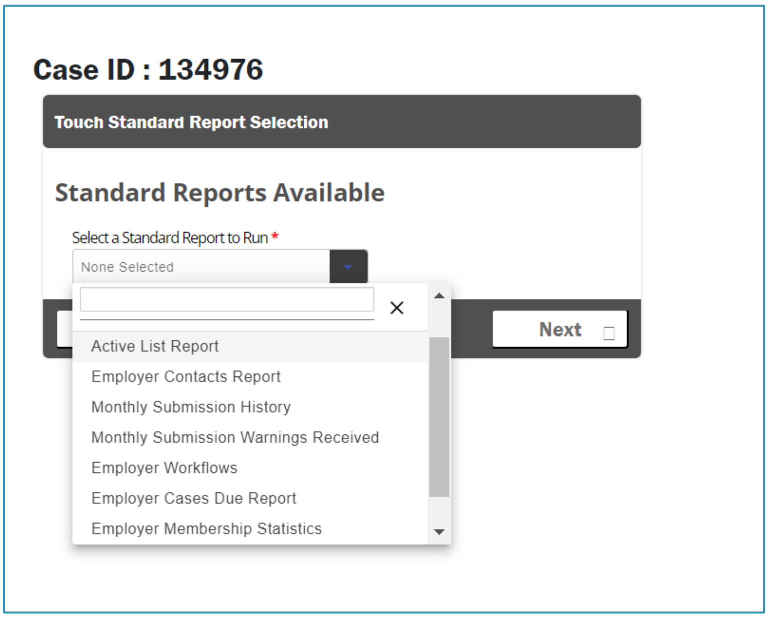
You can enter an email address for the report to be sent to, as well as an address that can be cc’d in. When the report is generated, it will be emailed to these addresses automatically.

You are able to run the report immediately by selecting the appropriate date/ time under “Run report at specific time” or run it in the future if required. Similarly, you can schedule reports to run daily, weekly, monthly, or annually by selecting the appropriate option under “Schedule Report”.

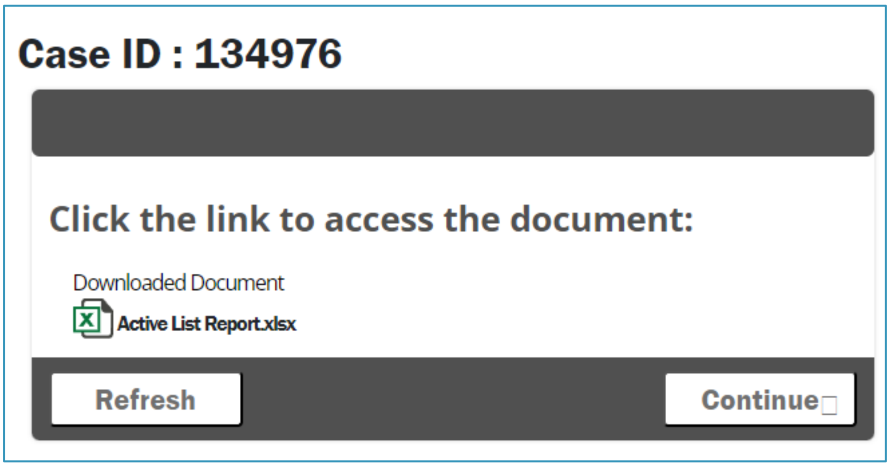


When you have selected the appropriate settings, click “Next”.

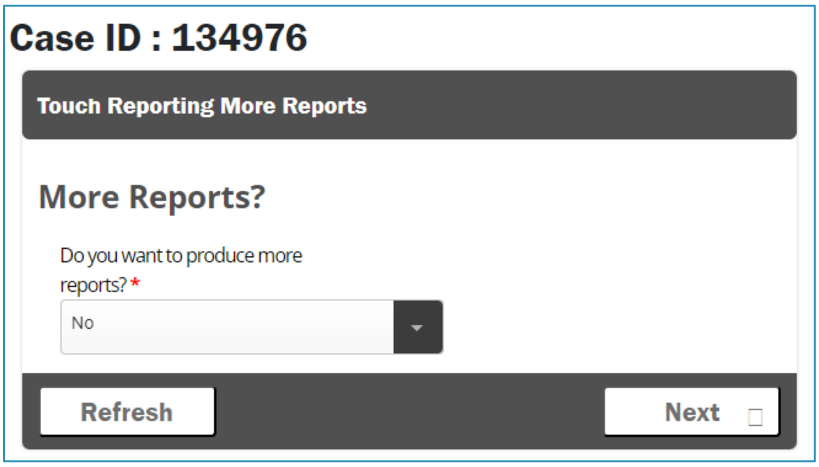
You will be directed to the “Standard Report Selection” page, where you can select the type of report you wish to run. Select the appropriate report and click “Next”.



This will direct you to the report. Click to access the document.



Clicking “Continue” will move you on to the option to produce more reports. If you do not wish to produce more reports select “No”, then “Next, which will end the workflow. If you wish to run further reports select “Yes “, then “Next”. You will be returned to the “Reporting Parameters” page, from which you can run further reports.



For further guidance on producing reports, please see our empty-room training recording.

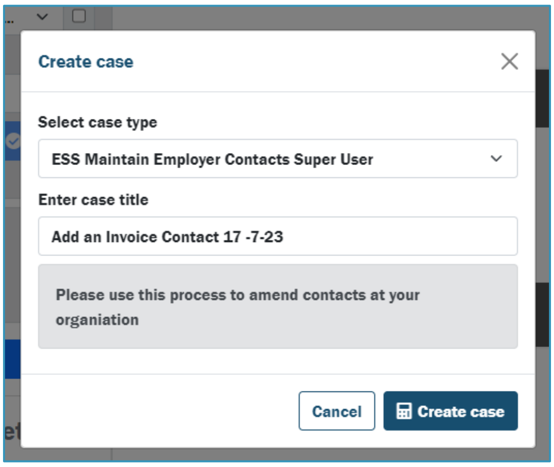
Section 5: Changes to your organisation

Adding and removing your organisation's contacts

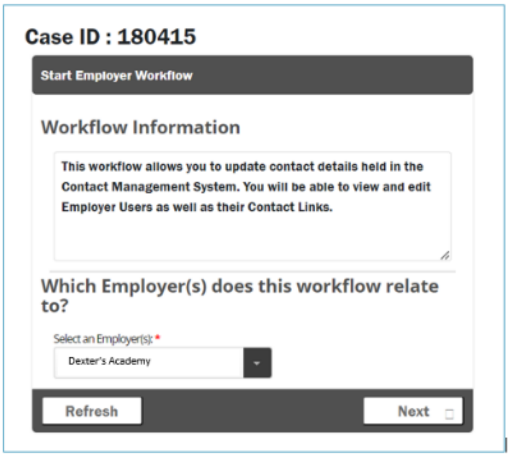
[Note: this functionality is due for release at a later date]

In ESS, Super Users have the ability to add and remove Fund contacts for their organisation. Note: payroll providers cannot update their clients' contacts at the Fund, and vice versa. This is done through the "ESS Maintain Employer Contacts Super User" workflow.

Launch the workflow as above by selecting "Create new case" in the Workflows tab. Select the "ESS Maintain Employer Contacts Super User" option in the drop-down menu, add an appropriate case title, and click "Create Case".

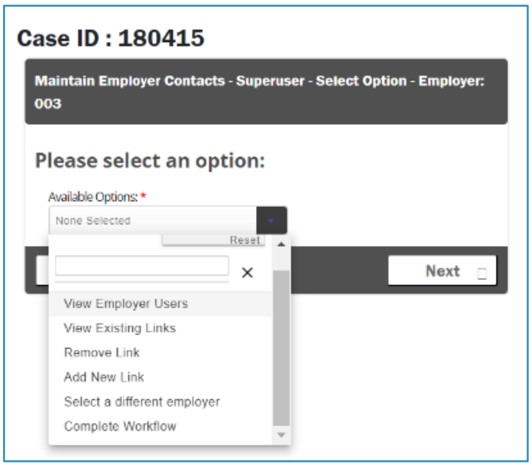


You can choose to launch the workflow straight away, or to create further cases. If the latter option is chosen, the workflow will be made available in your schedule.



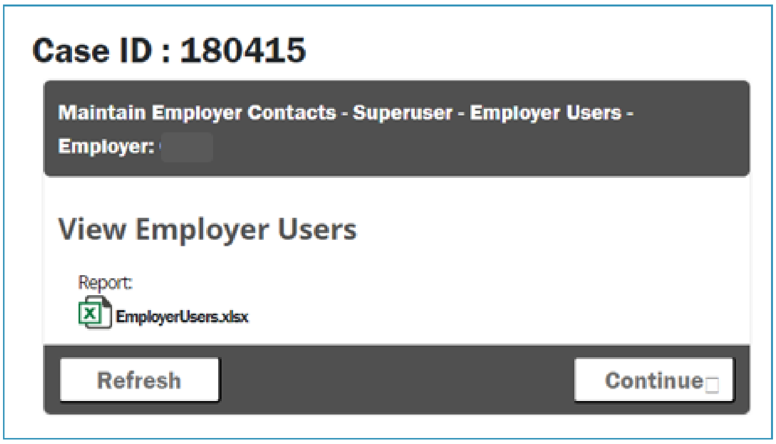
When the workflow is launched, you will be asked to confirm which employer the workflow relates to. Select the employer in the drop-down menu and click "Next".

You will be directed to the following screen, where you can choose to view all current ESS users in your organisation and/or view existing contact links. You can also add a new contact link or remove contact links. You can also use this page to select a different employer record for which to amend contacts or complete the workflow.



Select the appropriate option and click “Next”.

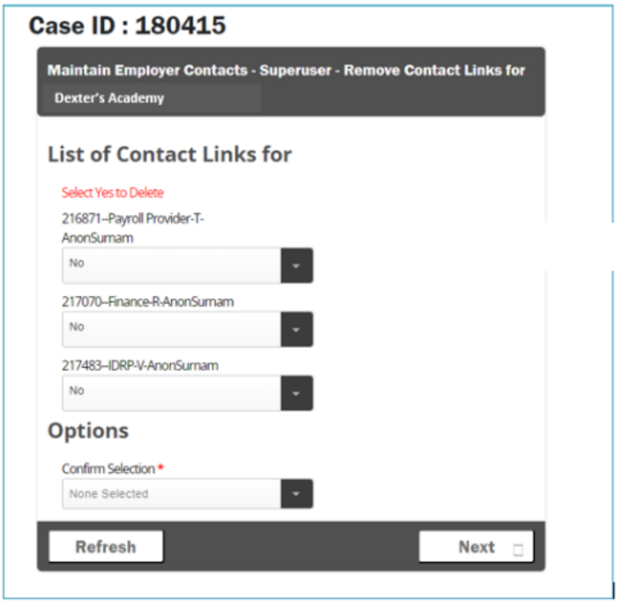
“View Employer Users” will produce a spreadsheet of all current ESS users at the specific employer. This will allow you to review all those who have ESS access to the employer. After viewing the report, clicking “Continue” will return you to the “Select option” page above.



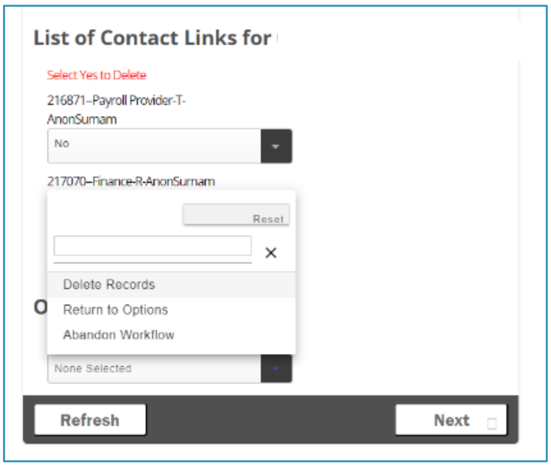
Selecting “View existing links” will produce a report of the current contact links for the organisation that are held by the Fund. These will be organised into the Email Main Contact, the Finance Contact, Invoice Contact, Strategic, IDRP and Payroll Provider contacts, alongside a MAT Head Office contact if applicable. This will allow you to review the contacts held by the Fund.

Clicking “Continue” will return you to the “Select option” page.

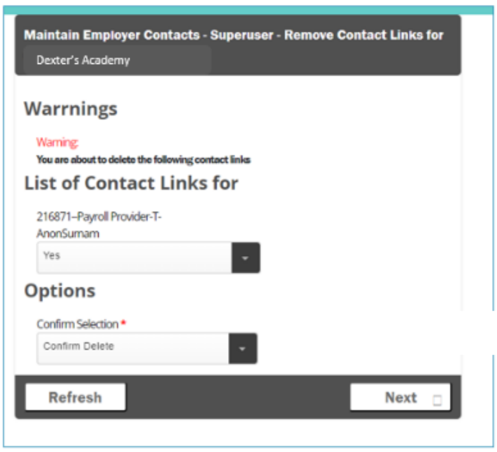
Selecting “Remove Link” will direct you to the “Remove Contact Links” page.



Select “Yes” from the appropriate drop-down menu to delete the relevant contact(s). You will need to confirm by selecting “Delete Records” under “Confirm Selection”. Otherwise, you can either choose to abandon the workflow, or return to the “Select Options” page.



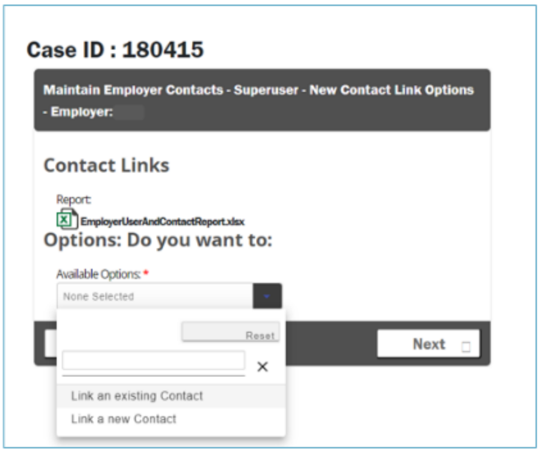
If you select “Delete Records” you will be asked to confirm on the next page.



You can confirm the deletion by selecting “Confirm Delete” under “Confirm Selection”. Alternatively, you can choose to abandon the workflow or return to the “Select Options” page.

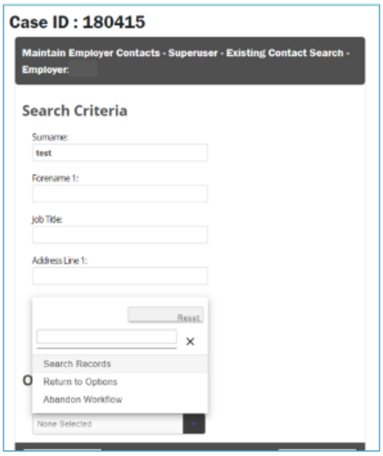
If the deletion is confirmed the contact link will be removed. You will then be returned to the “Select Options” page.

Selecting “Add New Link” on the “Select Options” page will direct you to the “New Contact Link Options” page.

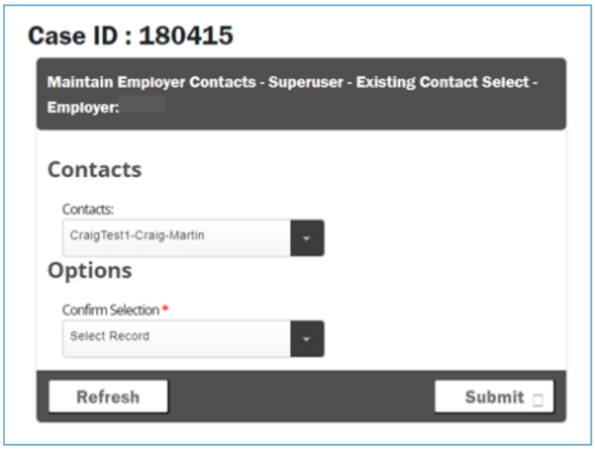


A report will be produced showing all current ESS Users and contact links for the organisation. You can then choose to add a new contact link- either by linking an existing contact or creating a new contact.

If you choose to link an existing contact, you will be directed to the below screen, where you can search for the existing contact details.



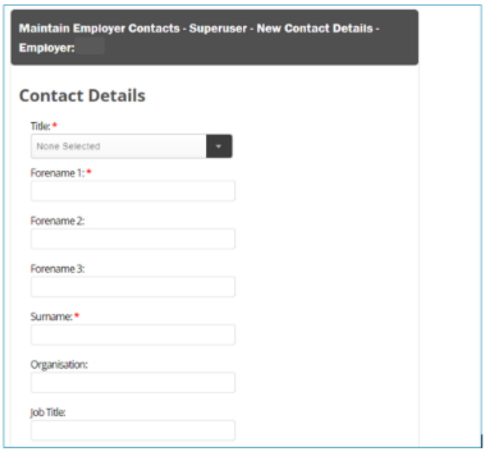
After inputting the relevant search data, you will have the option to either abandon the workflow, return to the “Select Options” page, or to “Search Records” for the contact. Choosing the latter and clicking “Submit” will direct you to the following page.

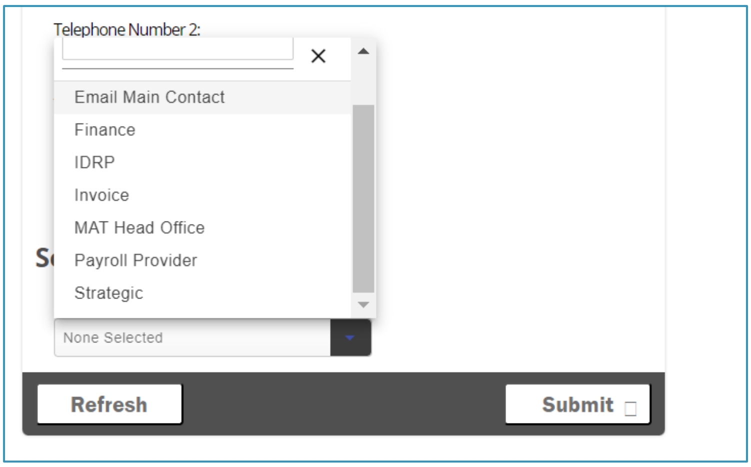


You will again be given the option to abandon the workflow or return to the "New Contact List options" page. Otherwise select the appropriate contact link and click "Submit".

You will then be returned to the "Select Options" page.

You can instead choose to "Add Link" from the "New Contact Link options" page. You will be directed to the "New Contact Details" page, where you can input the necessary information. Fields marked with a * are mandatory.

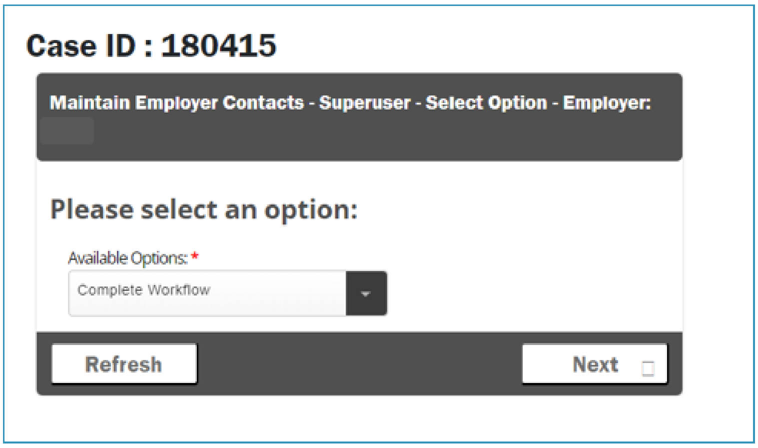




Once the details have been entered you will be asked to confirm the “Contact Type”. Select the appropriate option from the drop-down menu, then click “Submit”.

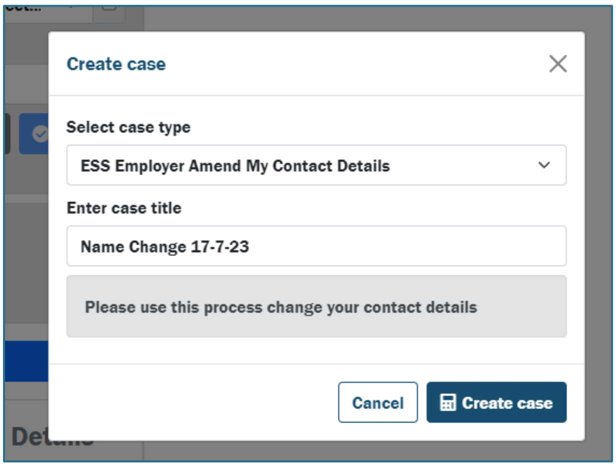
The contact link will be added, and you will be returned to the “Select Options” page. From here you can select to add another contact, to change employer record to add/ delete further contacts, or to complete the workflow.

The workflow will only be completed when the “Complete Workflow” option has been selected on the “Select Options” page.



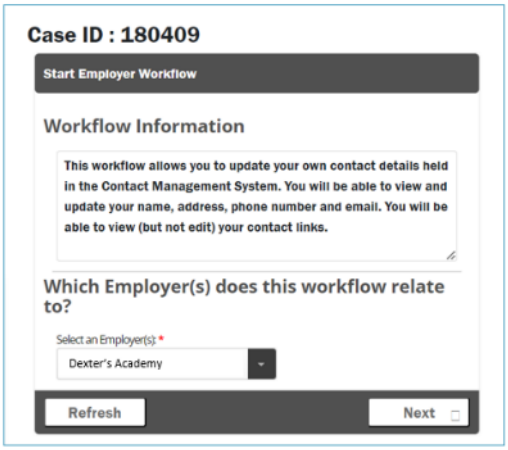
Amending your contact details

If you are not a Super User, you can still update your own contact details via an “ESS Employer Amend My Contact Details” workflow. Launch the workflow as above by selecting “Create new case” above the schedule in the Workflows tab. Select the “ESS Employer Amend My Contact Details” option in the drop-down menu, add an appropriate case title, and click “Create Case”. Please note: these details are only those associated with your own ESS account, and not the employer’s Fund contact.

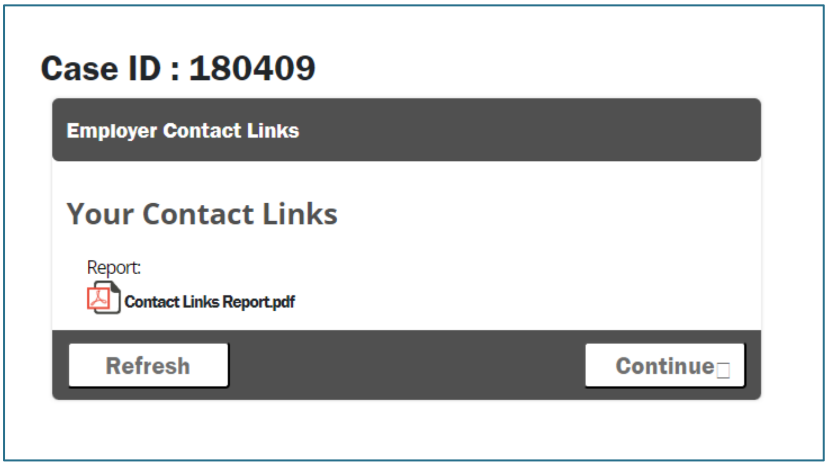


You can choose to launch the workflow straight away, or to create further cases. If the latter option is chosen, the workflow will be made available in your schedule. When the workflow is launched, you will be asked to confirm which employer the workflow relates to.

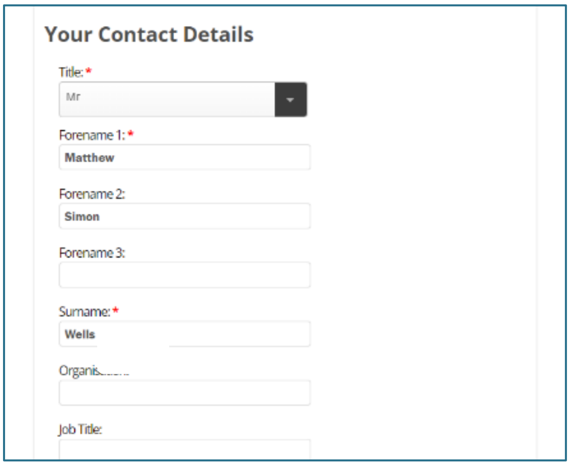
Select the employer in the drop-down menu and click “Next”.

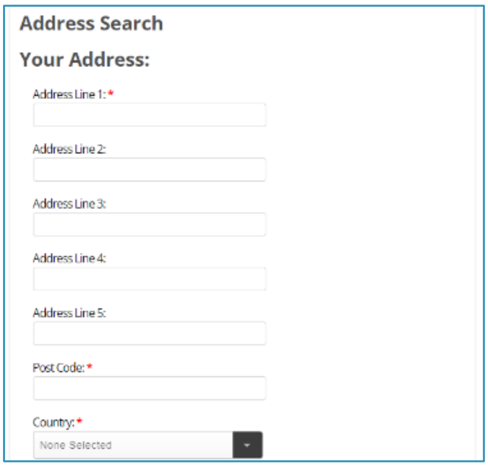


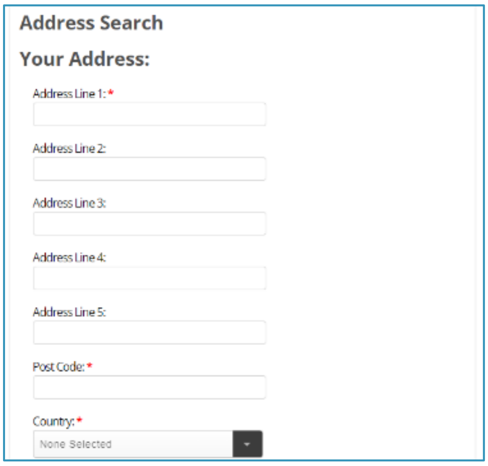
You will be directed to the “Employer contact links” page, where you can download a PDF showing which contact links you have to the employer in question.

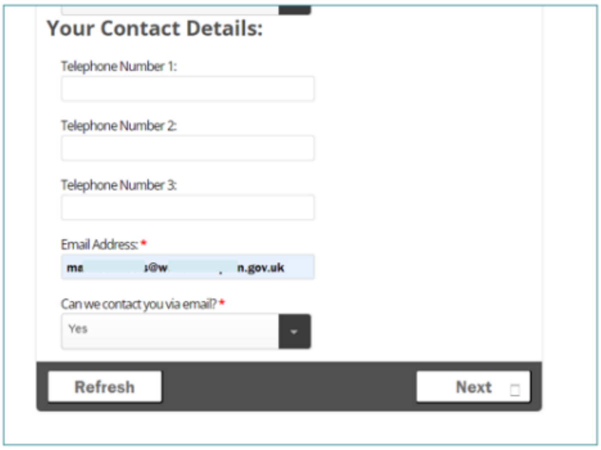


Clicking “Continue” will direct you to the “Your Contact Details” page.









On this page you can add or amend any of the details in the above fields. Fields marked with a * are mandatory and so must have some information inputted.

Once you have amended and completed the required information, click “Next”. This will update your contact details and end the workflow.

Notifying the Fund of changes

Academy trust changes

On those occasions where an academy is changing trust, the Fund will require the following documentation to be sent through an Admin Referral workflow:

A copy of the Commercial Transfer Agreement signed by both parties.

A completed Contact List to reflect the change of Trust and any contact or payroll changes.

FOR NEW ACADEMY TRUSTS ONLY - a copy of Memorandum and Articles of Association.

A copy of the Contact List can be found in your Document Library.

On receipt of these documents the Fund can begin the process of updating the relevant employer records and transferring members across to the new Trust.

Before changing Trust, you will need to ensure all monthly submissions data has been submitted to the Fund, by running a Monthly Submission Report and submitting any missing data via a Monthly Submissions interface, as above. You will also need to make sure you are up to date with any outstanding leavers. This will mean making sure any Employer Referral/ Admin Referral workflows are completed before the date of payroll change and running an Active Member report to review any possible/confirmed leavers so that they can be reported on an Exit Interface.

Change of payroll provider

If your organisation is changing payroll provider, please inform us in advance via an Admin Referral workflow. Please include a Contact List within this workflow to enable us to update our records.

Before changing Payroll Provider, you will need to ensure all monthly submissions data has been submitted to the Fund by running a Monthly Submission Report and submitting any missing data via a Monthly Submissions interface, as above.

You will also need to make sure you are up to date with any outstanding leavers. This will mean making sure any Employer Referral/ Admin Referral workflows are completed before the date of payroll change and running an Active Member report to review any possible/confirmed leavers so that they can be reported on an Exit Interface.

As the outgoing payroll provider may be dealing with this, it is up to the employer to liaise with the outgoing payroll provider to make sure these actions have been completed.

Section 6: Retirement estimates

Types of Retirement

Members of the Fund may retire in a number of different ways. All the below retirement types should be reported via an Exit Interface.

Normal Retirement

Members would normally retire when they reach their Normal Pensionable Age. It is the employer's statutory duty to notify the Fund of retirements, as laid out below.

Redundancy/ Business Efficiency

Where an employee leaves on the grounds of redundancy/business efficiency and is aged 55 and over, the member is entitled to immediate payment of their unreduced benefits based on their normal pension age.

As a result of these unreduced benefits being paid earlier than the normal pension age, an early retirement cost (ERC) is payable by the employer to cover the pension fund strain cost. Please see the **LGPS Regulations 2013**.

Early Retirement

Members have the option to access their reduced pension benefits at any time between the age of 55 and their normal pension age.

Flexible retirement

Members have the option to ease into retirement by accessing their pension benefits early while continuing to work at reduced hours or moving to a less senior position. The member is not eligible for flexible retirement if they haven't attained age 55 and haven't met the two years vesting period.

Flexible retirements require an employer Discretionary Policy to be in place. ERCs may be payable if any pension reductions are waived during a flexible retirement.

Ill Health Retirements

If a member has to leave work due to illness, they may be entitled to receive immediate payments of their benefits. These can be paid at any age and are not reduced due to early payment. To qualify for ill-health retirement members must meet the two-year vesting period.

There are three tiers of Ill-Health Retirement.

Tier 1: Member is unlikely to be capable of gainful employment before Normal Pension age.

Tier 2: Member is unlikely to be capable of gainful employment within 3 years of leaving but is likely to be capable of gainful employment before Normal Pension Age.

Tier 3: Member is likely to be capable of gainful employment with 3 years of leaving or before Normal Pension age if this is earlier.

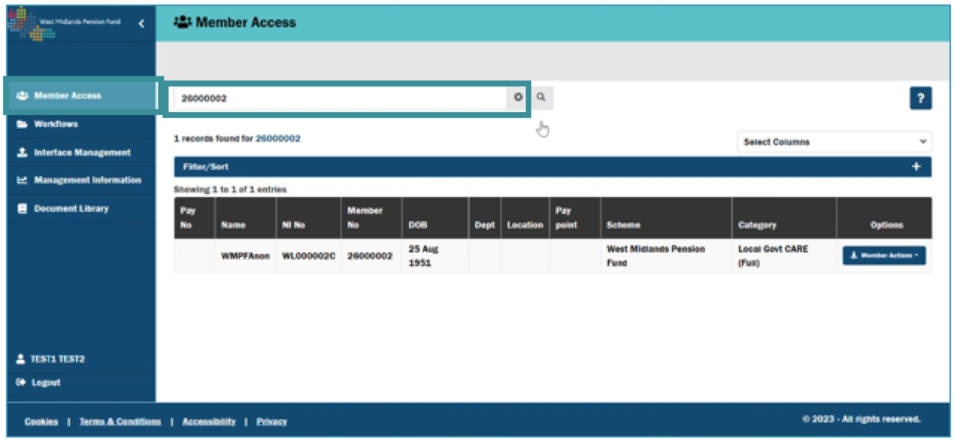
An Independent Registered Medical Practitioner must be appointed by the employer to give an opinion on the Tier that should be awarded, however please note that it is the employer who has final discretion on the Tier awarded. This can be challenged by the member if they are unhappy with the verdict.

ERCs will be payable by the employer if an Ill-Health Retirement is granted.

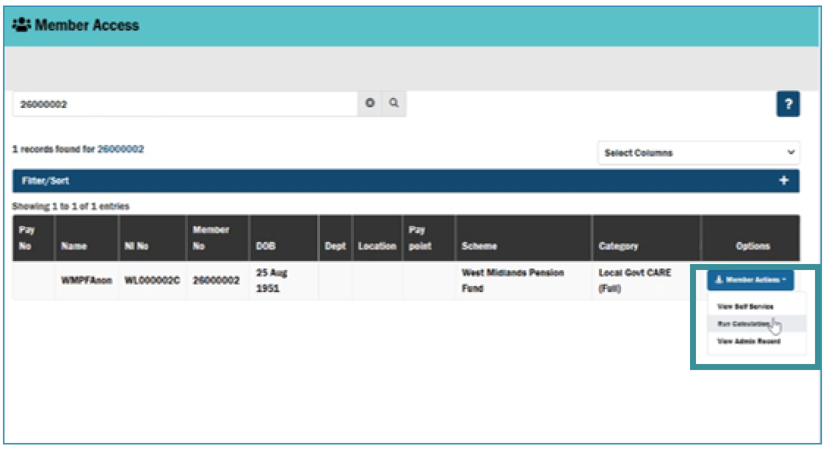
Calculations

Before submitting a retirement to the Fund, you should run a calculation to estimate their pension benefits by following the below instructions.

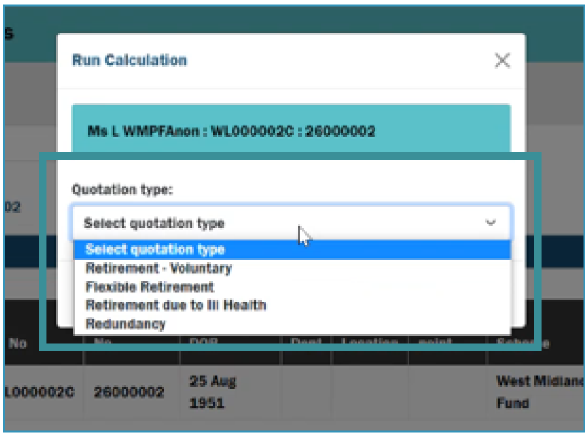
After logging in to ESS navigate to the Member Access tab. Use the search bar to search for the appropriate member. You will be able to search for the member via surname, DOB, NI number, pension reference number or Payroll number.



The appropriate member record will appear on the screen. Left click on the "Member Actions" button on the rightmost column of the table, then select "Run Calculations".

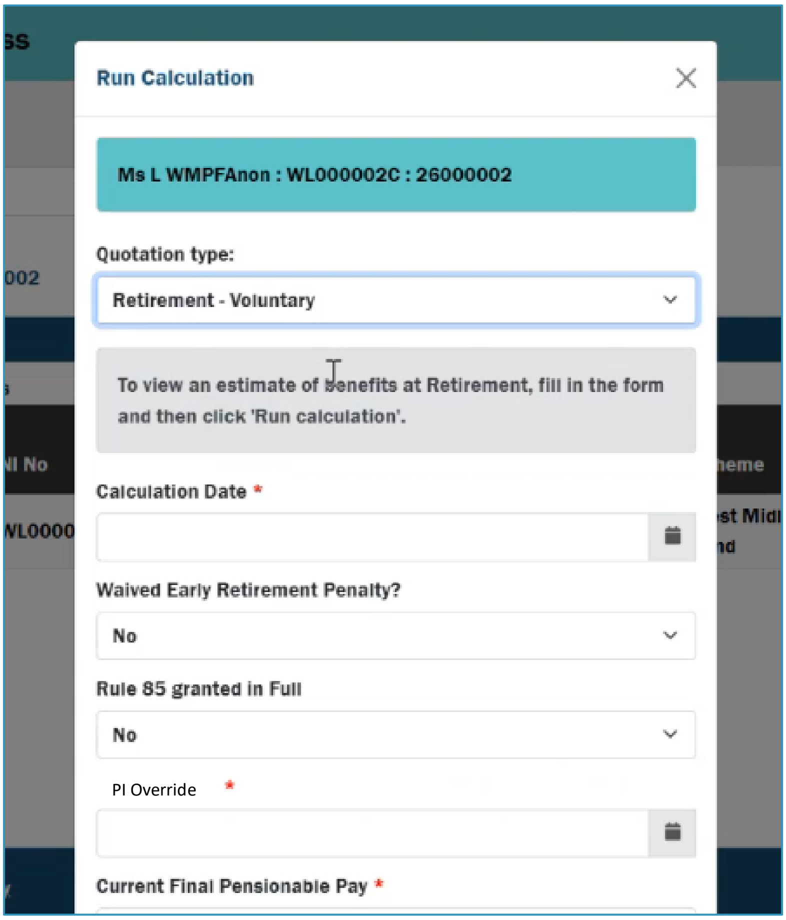


The "Run Calculation" pop-up will appear on screen. Check that the member details are correct, then select the appropriate type of retirement from the "Quotation Type" menu. *[Please note, ill health retirements are currently not available to run.]*



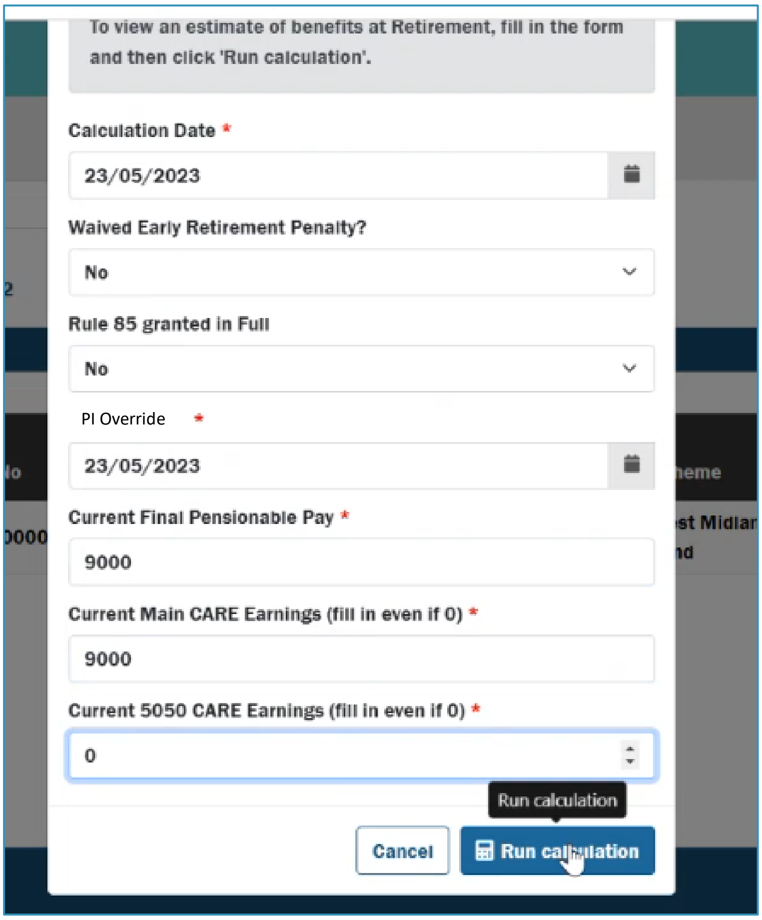
Following the selection, the following screen will appear. Please fill in all the available data in the fields. Fields marked with an * are mandatory.

For "Retirement-Voluntary" and "Redundancy" the following screen will appear.



The "Calculation Date" should be the day the retirement is due to take place, in the format DD/MM/YYYY.

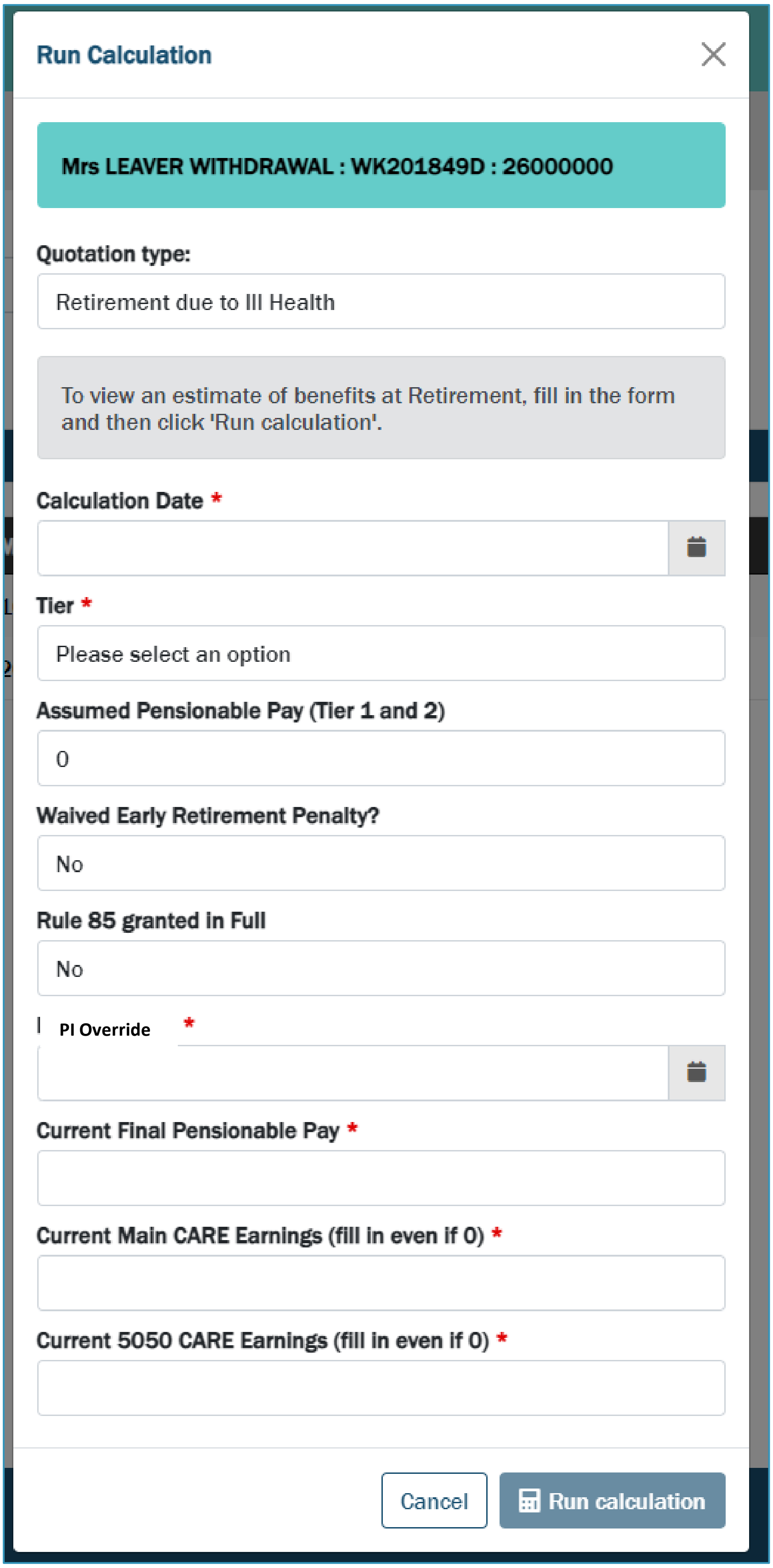
The “PI Override Date” is the date at which the Final Pensionable Pay is derived. In most circumstances this will be at the calculation date, but this may differ where a previous year’s pay has been used.



The “Current Final Pensionable Pay” is the final pensionable pay (FTE).

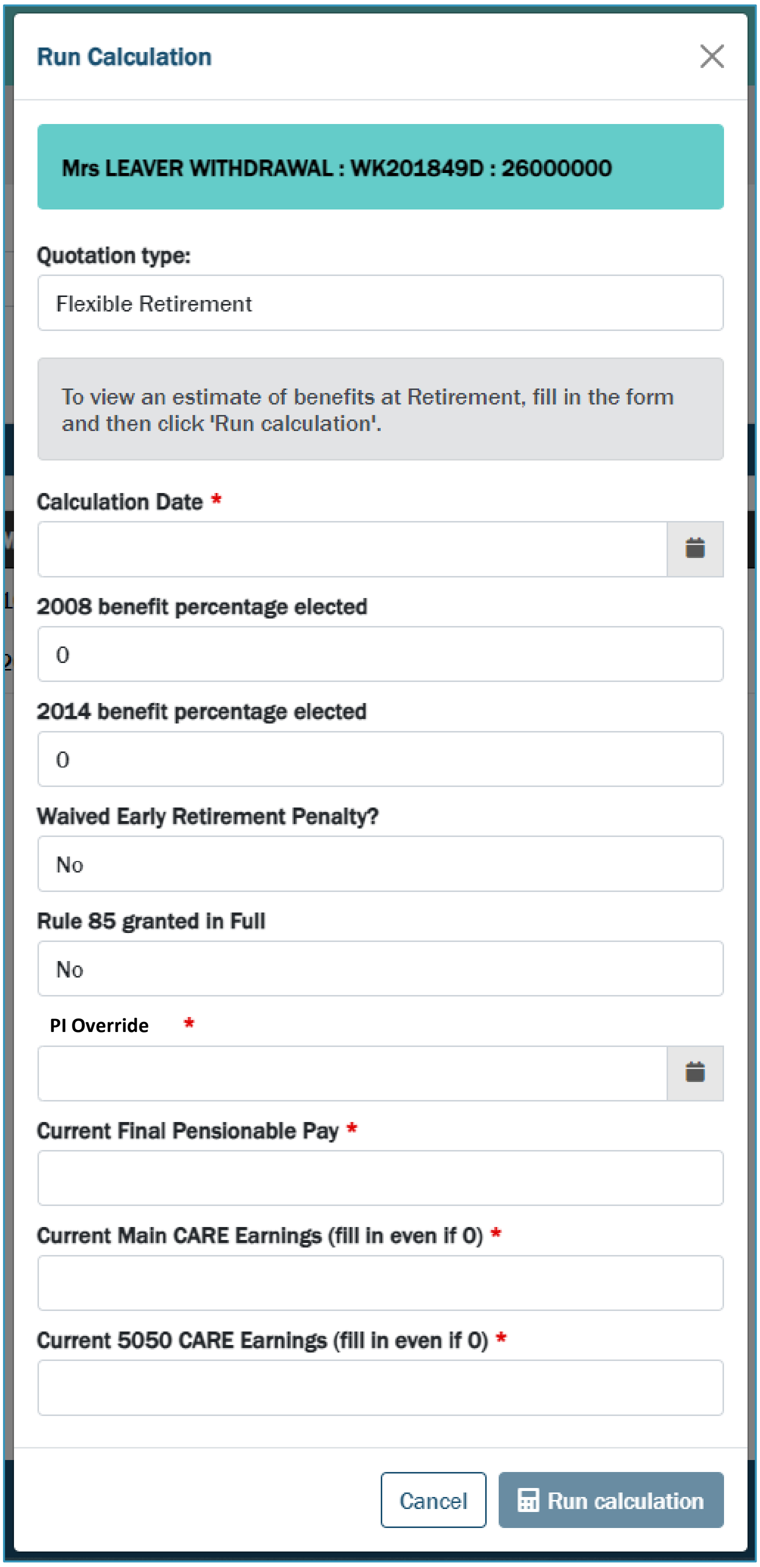
The “Current Main CARE earnings” figure is the main section pensionable pay from the 1st of April to the date of retirement. The “Current 5050 CARE earnings” figure is the 50/50 section pensionable pay from 1st April to date of retirement. Both fields need to be filled in, even if the figure is “0”. *Please ensure that the earnings fields are rounded up to the nearest whole number: decimal figures are not accepted.*

For **Ill Health retirements,** the screen will look like this:



You will need to select the appropriate "Tier" from the drop-down menu. If Tier 1 or Tier 2 is selected, you will also be able to enter the "Assumed Pensionable Pay" figure.

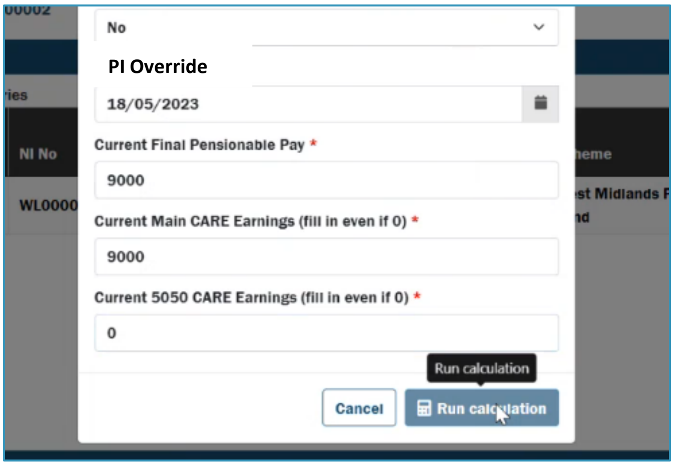
For **Flexible Retirements**, the screen will look like this:



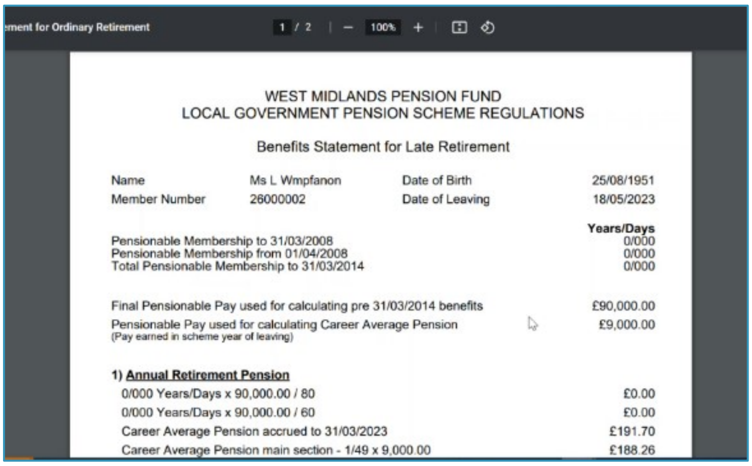
The “2008 benefit percentage elected” and “2014 benefit percentage elected” fields should be filled in if possible.

The “Rule of 85 Granted in Full” no longer needs to be “Yes” for all flexible retirements.

Once all the appropriate data has been entered, click on “Run Calculation”:



A PDF of the calculation results will be created and will automatically be downloaded to your browser. This can be viewed and/or saved to your computer for your records. The PDF will look like this:



WEST MIDLANDS PENSION FUND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME REGULATIONS

Benefits Statement for Late Retirement

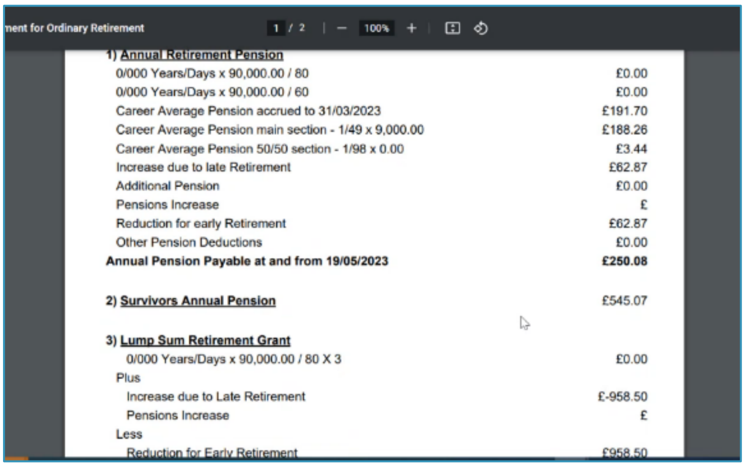
Name	Ms L Wmpfanon	Date of Birth	25/08/1951
Member Number	26000002	Date of Leaving	18/05/2023

	Years/Days
Pensionable Membership to 31/03/2008	0/000
Pensionable Membership from 01/04/2008	0/000
Total Pensionable Membership to 31/03/2014	0/000

Final Pensionable Pay used for calculating pre 31/03/2014 benefits	£90,000.00
Pensionable Pay used for calculating Career Average Pension (Pay earned in scheme year of leaving)	£9,000.00

1) Annual Retirement Pension

0/000 Years/Days x 90,000.00 / 80	£0.00
0/000 Years/Days x 90,000.00 / 60	£0.00
Career Average Pension accrued to 31/03/2023	£191.70
Career Average Pension main section - 1/49 x 9,000.00	£188.26



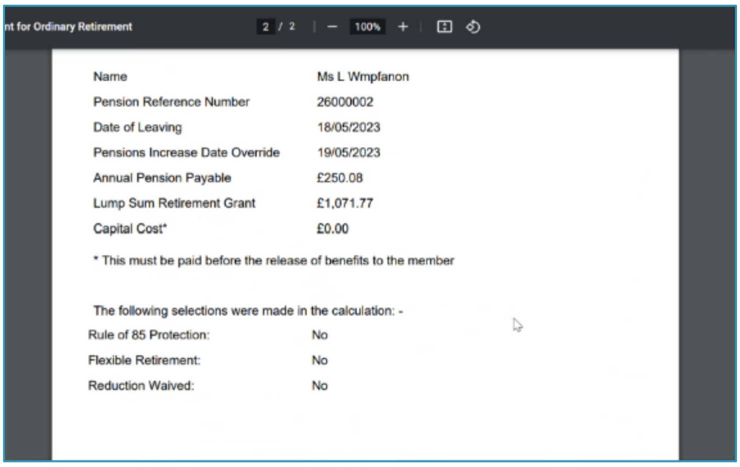
1) Annual Retirement Pension

0/000 Years/Days x 90,000.00 / 80	£0.00
0/000 Years/Days x 90,000.00 / 60	£0.00
Career Average Pension accrued to 31/03/2023	£191.70
Career Average Pension main section - 1/49 x 9,000.00	£188.26
Career Average Pension 50/50 section - 1/98 x 0.00	£3.44
Increase due to late Retirement	£62.87
Additional Pension	£0.00
Pensions Increase	£
Reduction for early Retirement	£62.87
Other Pension Deductions	£0.00
Annual Pension Payable at and from 19/05/2023	**£250.08**

2) Survivors Annual Pension £545.07

3) Lump Sum Retirement Grant

0/000 Years/Days x 90,000.00 / 80 X 3	£0.00
Plus	
Increase due to Late Retirement	£-958.50
Pensions Increase	£
Less	
Reduction for Early Retirement	£958.50


nt for Ordinary Retirement 2 / 2 100%

Name	Ms L Wmpfanon
Pension Reference Number	26000002
Date of Leaving	18/05/2023
Pensions Increase Date Override	19/05/2023
Annual Pension Payable	£250.08
Lump Sum Retirement Grant	£1,071.77
Capital Cost*	£0.00

* This must be paid before the release of benefits to the member

The following selections were made in the calculation: -

Rule of 85 Protection:	No
Flexible Retirement:	No
Reduction Waived:	No

Notifying the Fund

Retirements should be notified to the Fund via an Exit Interface. On submitting the Exit Interface, a Document Upload workflow will be automatically created for each Retirement notified on the exit file to enable you to upload the necessary documentation.

For all types of retirement, it is required that you submit the below:

- Forms RB1 & RB1(D)
- Copy of Birth certificate
- Copy of passport/Driving Licence
- Copy of Marriage/Civil Partnership/Divorce Decree Absolute certificate
- Copy of Spouse’s/Partner’s birth/death certificate

For Ill Health retirements, all of the above documents should be included as well as:

- M1 Form
- Statutory notification

For deaths in service, all of the above documents should be included as well as:

- Death certificate (if available)
- Statutory notification

The Fund should be notified of retirements three weeks in advance of the retirement date where possible, or up to one month after the retirement date (if the date of retirement is before Normal Pension Age), or one week after the retirement date (if the date of retirement is at Normal Pension Age).

Please see the Pension Administration Strategy (PAS) for further details of your statutory requirements.

WHERE TO GO FOR HELP

Our website has a wealth of information, not just about ESS, but also about leavers, becoming a scheme employer, joiners, and calculating pay.

You can also view one of our training videos, or book to attend one of our live virtual training sessions.

Want to talk to us? No problem, you can give us a call on 0300 111 6516 and speak to one of our officers, submit an Admin Referral query, or you can email WMPFEmployerSystemSupport@wolverhampton.gov.uk.