



IfATE

Shaping skills training

Standard Draft Preview

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Standard in development
L4: Senior pensions administrator
Version 0.0

Title of occupation

Senior pensions administrator

UOS reference number

ST1461

Core and options

No

Level of occupation

Level 4

Occupational maps data

Route: Legal, finance and accounting

Pathway: Financial

Cluster: Financial technician

Typical duration of apprenticeship

20 months

Target date for approval

31/07/2025

Resubmission

No

Would your proposed apprenticeship standard replace and existing framework?

No

Does professional recognition exist for the occupation?

No

Regulated occupation

Is this a statutory regulated occupation?

No

Occupational summary

This occupation is found in organisations of all shapes and sizes that operate or oversee pension schemes or plans.

The broad purpose of the occupation is to provide in-depth pensions expertise and support to junior team members when administering pension schemes or plans. Senior pensions administrators play a critical role in ensuring that the day-to-day operation of pension schemes or plans is carried out with the necessary rigour and in compliance with the specific rules of each plan. They are likely to be involved in supporting junior administrators in

handling complex technical queries, calculations and communications. They process complex members' benefits based on their entitlements under the rules of the pension scheme or plan and applicable regulations. They ensure that regulatory requirements are adhered to and risks escalated. They use their interpretation of scheme or plan documentation, regulations and independent judgement to make key decisions in pensions administration activities to achieve a regulatory compliant outcome and high levels of customer service. They undertake checks for reasonableness in pensions calculations and outcomes

In their daily work, an employee in this occupation interacts with multi-grade teams and will typically work under supervision by a senior leader. They will be responsible for managing their own workloads and will manage the work of others on complex subject matters. Senior pensions administrators will often engage in training, mentoring and coaching junior staff in their areas of expertise. They may also be a subject matter expert within their team or wider areas and provide expert advice and updates on key changes.

An employee in this occupation will be responsible for delivery of complex or non-standard pension administrative tasks to the required quality standards as set out by the organisation. They undertake technical administration and specialised administration processes. The senior pensions administrator also undertakes financial tasks. These may include quality reviews and assurance of key pension records such as scheme cash books, bank reconciliations and cash-flow forecasts. They ensure that customers receive accurate data on their pension position by reviewing complex pension data and drafting Administration Reports for clients. As part of providing excellent customer service the senior pensions administrator ensures that member records are maintained and updated within their team. They respond to complex, multi-aspect pension scheme, or plan specific enquiries from members or plan holders. This could include addressing disagreements arising from fund valuation requests and quality assuring pension data on investment options. They will assist junior colleagues in clarifying the benefits payable under the pension scheme or plan where there are complex matters. They interpret the rules and suggest solutions to problems arising with pension schemes or plans data and benefits payable.

Typical job titles

Lead pensions administrator

Senior pensions administrator

Are there any statutory / regulatory or other typical entry requirements?

No

Occupation duties

DUTY	KSBS
Duty 1 Provide customer service to pension scheme members or plan holders, dealing with more complex and non-standard situations. Be an escalation route for junior staff dealing with contentious issues.	K6 K7 K9 K13 K16 K17 S1 S2 S5 S15 S16 B1 B2 B5 B6
Duty 2 Communicate technical pensions information, both routine and ad hoc, to respond to customers, pension scheme members or plan holders' needs. Provide an appropriate solution to non-routine pensions problems.	K2 K5 K6 K7 K13 K16 S2 S3 S4 S9 B1 B2 B3
Duty 3 Resolve complex pension queries and requests, such as benefit limits, with reference to procedures and customers' pension schemes or plans.	K6 K7 K13 S2 S9 B3 B5
Duty 4 Investigate, analyse and take ownership of potential problems or complaint cases in line with organisational procedures and escalate where required.	K3 K5 K6 K9 S9 S15 S16 S17 B1 B2 B3 B4 B5 B6
Duty 5 Calculate, including manual calculations, and process, complex members' benefits based on their entitlements under the rules of the pension scheme or plan and applicable regulations.	K2 K7 K17 K18 S2 S3 S16 B2
Duty 6 Review and validate work of other team members, including standard pensions calculations and communications. Provide feedback and ensure accuracy and compliance with scheme rules, procedures and legislation.	K2 K6 K7 K13 K17 S6 S12 S14 B1 B2 B3 B5 B6
Duty 7 Ensure that all organisational procedures are followed when undertaking work for customers to ensure that processes are carried out effectively and efficiently.	K5 K6 K11 K12 K15 S1 S2 S3 S6 B2 B5

Duty 8 Undertake specialised technical and non-standard administrative pensions processes and procedures which require interpretation and judgement to achieve satisfactory and required outcomes.	K2 K6 K7 S2 S3 S6 B1 B2 B3 B4
Duty 9 Use digital systems to deliver accurate and efficient pensions administration activities safely and securely.	K8 K10 K11 K12 S10 S11 B1 B2
Duty 10 Manage customer, member and pension scheme or plan data and information safely and securely.	K8 K11 K12 S13 B1 B2
Duty 11 Manage and prioritise personal workload, such as project work or pension scheme or pension plan events alongside day-to-day tasks, whilst ensuring Service Level Agreements (SLAs) are met.	K2 S1 S7 B2 B3
Duty 12 Identify areas for continuous improvement within the organisation and recommend appropriate changes.	K6 K14 S9 S17 B3 B4 B6
Duty 13 Take responsibility for personal and professional development in line with organisational expectations.	K1 K10 K14 K15 S18 B2 B4 B6
Duty 14 Train, support and mentor colleagues, such as pensions administrators, providing feedback and supporting the wider development and knowledge of the team.	K5 K6 K7 K14 K15 K16 K17 S6 S8 S12 S14 S16 B2 B4 B6
Duty 15 Ensure technical communications are accurate, compliant with data legislation, secure, professional, and courteous and complex technical issues are explained in clear, non-technical language.	K2 K4 K6 K7 K8 K11 K12 K13 K16 K17 S2 S3 S4 S5 S12 B1 B2 B3 B5 B6

Duty 16 Build strong, effective customer and team working relationships.	K1 K4 K5 K13 K16 S4 S6 B1
Duty 17 Support team leaders on technical pensions matters, such as acting as lead administrator or Subject Matter Expert.	K1 K2 K3 K4 K6 K7 S6 S9 S15 S16 B1 B2 B3 B5

KSBs

Knowledge

K1: pension schemes or plans including their detailed structure, the different roles and responsibilities involved in running a scheme or plan and how they interact.

K2: the regulatory and compliance landscape for pensions and how it affects the role of a Senior Pensions Administrator (SPA), including interpreting and applying these regulations.

K3: the governance of pension schemes and plans such as the roles of Trustees and Trustee Boards.

K4: organisational strategy and the impact of external factors such as the UK budget, culture and stakeholders and how the role of the senior pensions administrator aligns within this.

K5: the role of pension organisations within the pensions industry and how they interconnect with other organisations, including both public and private sector pension arrangements.

K6: complex and non-standard pensions processes and procedures such as overseas transfers and implementing divorce orders.

K7: principles of scheme or plan benefits including interpreting pension scheme or plan information and benefits payable, interpretation of scheme or plan documentation, performance of pension calculations and checks for reasonableness.

K8: risks such as pension scams and other types of financial fraud.

K9: complaints procedures and processes including identification of complaints, approaches for resolution including handling escalated complaints and referring to the Pensions Ombudsman.

K10: principles of software packages for pension administration including how updates such as "factors" are applied.

K11: approaches to data security within pensions administration including the requirements of Data Protection legislation, its application in the pensions industry and related risks, such as the organisational processes for reporting a data breach.

K12: principles of safe and secure online working including awareness of cyber-security and specific vulnerabilities to cyber-attack for financial sector organisations.

K13: communication styles and language to be used in conveying pensions information to stakeholders.

K14: principles of continuous improvement within the organisation and approaches to raising suggestions for improvement.

K15: features of Responsible Investment (RI) and Environment, Social and Governance (ESG) matters, including climate change, their organisations approach to and policies for managing these issues.

K16: diversity, equity and inclusion in the workplace such as, services that are available to support customers with specific needs such as those who are non-English speaking, non-verbal or profoundly deaf.

K17: advantages and disadvantages of using automated systems in comparison to manual benefit calculations and the methods used to check and validate pensions benefits calculations, including manual checks.

K18: approaches to monitoring and identifying development needs and opportunities.

Skills

S1: deliver expected customer service establishing customer needs, in line with the organisations service standards and the regulatory framework.

S2: perform more complex or non-standard pension administrative tasks that meet the required quality standards as set out by the organisation.

S3: handle technical pensions administrative procedures, such as undertaking technical administration and specialised processes.

S4: tailor the use of interpersonal skills and communication channels to meet the needs of stakeholders.

S5: identify and explain complex pension matters to non-technical stakeholders to support their informed decision making.

S6: work within a team and across other teams to collaborate with and support colleagues to achieve results such as meeting or exceeding service standards and organisational goals.

S7: independently plan, manage and prioritise own workload effectively alongside the needs of colleagues.

S8: support less experienced colleagues to understand team workloads and targets.

S9: identify and resolve, within their remit, complex pension problems including identifying the appropriate course of action and recommend solutions.

S10: use digital systems to carry out and authorise pensions administrative tasks, generate and analyse key metrics such as technical reports.

S11: use digital systems and applications safely and securely, in accordance with data security policies.

S12: review and validate the technical pensions work of other team members such as calculations and interpretation of regulations.

S13: maintain robust and accurate schedules, records and systems of pension administrative activities.

S14: train and develop colleagues on routine administration and pension technical tasks.

S15: resolve customer service interactions such as complaints or more complex pension queries as an escalation point.

S16: be an escalation, or a referral point, for colleagues on technical pension matters.

S17: use analysis to identify trends and evaluate pensions activities for possible areas of improvement and enhancement, recommending any actions with consideration to the impact on the wider organisation.

S18: identify and monitor own development needs and opportunities.

Behaviours

B1: acts in a professional manner with integrity and demonstrates organisational values. Demonstrates empathy and fairness, treating others with respect.

B2: accountable and takes ownership of their tasks and workload and supports others to meet team and wider business objectives.

B3: works flexibly and adapts to circumstances, suggesting improvements or solutions when necessary.

B4: maintains a growth mindset towards change; uses own initiative, learning from setbacks and spotting opportunities.

B5: works with and supports collaboration with internal and external stakeholders; recognising different priorities and how actions affect the business.

B6: reflects on own practice and seeks learning opportunities for professional development and supports others.

Qualifications

English and maths

English and maths qualifications must be completed in line with the apprenticeship funding rules.

Does the apprenticeship need to include any mandated qualifications in addition to the above-mentioned English and maths qualifications?

No

Consultation

xxxxxx TBC xxxxxxxxxxxx

Progression routes

ST0472 Financial services professional v1.0 L6

ST0480 Senior leader 1.2 L7

Supporting uploads

Mandatory qualification uploads

Mandated degree evidence uploads

Professional body confirmation uploads

Subject sector area

15.1 Accounting and finance