i-Connect Payroll extract file specification

Supplementary guidance

11th February 2022 (version 1)

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Who and what is this guide for?

This document provides guidance for East Sussex Pension Fund employers who are responsible for the submission of payroll extract files via i-Connect.

The i-Connect software is provided by Aquila Heywood. You should have already received their guide to payroll extract files which provides employers with:

1) An understanding the specification of the payroll extract file, and
2) The data items that must be submitted via i-connect.

This supplementary guidance has been created for East Sussex Pension Fund employers for data items where either a separate approach is needed, or further explanation is required.

Information given in this guide supersedes that provided by Aquila Heywood as it details i-Connect processes and requirements specific to East Sussex Pension Fund and its employers.

Item	Data Item	Guidance
1	**NATIONAL INSURANCE NUMBER** Example: AB123456C	Enter the employee's National Insurance (NI) number. i-Connect is unable to process temporary NI numbers. Please contact us if you do not have a NI number for all employees.
2	**PAYROLL REFERENCE 1** Example: 1340547	Enter the employee's payroll number with the current employer. This should be a unique identifier for each post in your organisation. Please contact us if you use the same payroll reference for employees that have multiple posts.
3	**PAYROLL REFERENCE 2** Example: TY0123456	An additional unique identifier, normally the employee's post number with the current employer. It should be a unique identifier for each post in your organisation. This field should only be used after discussion with us, and only if you cannot provide a unique 'Payroll Reference 1'. The format of this reference must be discussed with us prior to onboarding as our administration system may need to be changed to accommodate this.
4	**PAYROLL REFERENCE 3** Example: N/A	Not for use by East Sussex Pension Fund employers.

Item	Data Item	Guidance
5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10	**ALL ADDRESS LINES & POSTCODE**	All address lines and the postcode field are to be populated as specified in the Aquila Heywood i-Connect Payroll extract File Specification Guide (a minimum of two address lines per employee must be provided). It is essential that all address columns and fields on any csv files provided are populated and formatted in the same way each month where member addresses remain the same. This includes the use of capitals or lower-case characters, the placement of a line of the address appearing in a different column to that of the previous month, or any difference at all in the characters/spacing/formatting of any of the address fields compared to the previous month's file. Failure to do so may result in the i-Connect system inadvertently creating change of address tasks for members.
11	**EMAIL ADDRESS** Example: hsmith@domain.co.uk	The personal email address of the employee should be entered here. This field is not mandatory, but it is important as we look to move to more regular online communication with members. Populating this field will not affect access to the Member Self-Service Portal.
22	**DATE OF LEAVING** Example: 31/05/2017	This field is mandatory for leavers. The date the employee left their post should be entered here, or if the member has opted out, the date the member stopped being an active member of the scheme. **Submitting leaver forms** The Fund no longer requires LGPS-8A leaver forms (leaving the pension scheme without immediate payment of benefits) to be submitted by employers who are using i-Connect. Instead, the final pay figure for the last 365 days from the date of leaving, must be inserted in the full time equivalent final pay field (54) at the month of leaving for all members who have left or opted out. This includes casual members. Further information can be found in item 54 guidance below. Please note that leaver forms LGPS-9A (leaving the scheme with immediate payment of benefits), LGPS-10A (left the scheme due to death in service), and RET2 forms (inform us that the retirement is going ahead) are still required and will not be replaced by i-Connect submissions. Some leaver forms can be uploaded through i-Connect, please contact the Fund for training on how to action this. **Leaving employees on the file after they have left the pension scheme:** If an employer knows that arrears of pay is due to an employee after they have left the pension scheme, the member should be left on the file to ensure that any arrears of pay is processed by i-Connect. If no arrears of pay is due the following month but you wish to leave the member on the file for an additional month, then zeros can be inputted in the contribution and pay fields (see FAQs below). Once it is known that there is no outstanding pensionable backpay, employees should be both removed from the file and deleted from the omitted members list on i-Connect.

Item	Data Item	Guidance
		If you are an employer that will have a large, backdated pay rise across all employees, you will need to speak to the Fund separately regarding what to do for members who have left and not include these members on i-Connect. Any historic leavers must be removed from the file at the end of the Scheme year and not be included from 1st April. If backpay is processed for employees after they have been removed from the file, please contact us and provide details. Generally, we would recommend that employees should be left on the file for 3 months after leaving. However, this may vary from employer to employer, so please speak to the Fund regarding this as part of your onboarding process.
26, 27 & 29	**EMPLOYMENT BREAK DETAILS**	These fields are for unpaid employment breaks only (sickness should not be entered here). If the member is off sick, the assumed pensionable pay figure should be inserted in the pensionable pay field (39) and the employment break and start date fields (26 & 27) should be left blank.
35	**TITLE** Example: Miss	This field is mandatory.
38 & 40	**ANNUAL PENSIONABLE SALARY & EFFECTIVE DATE**	Not required by East Sussex Pension Fund.
41	**DATE JOINED PENSION SCHEME** Example: 01/07/2017	This field is mandatory. Please enter the date the member joined the Local Government Pension Scheme <u>for this post</u> in the format DD/MM/YYYY. This field should also be used for members that opt in again (see item 51 below).
42	**JOB TITLE** Example: Finance Officer	This field is mandatory. Enter the employee's job title, not exceeding 20 characters (input the first 20 characters only where job titles exceed 20).
50	**OPT OUT DATE**	Not required by East Sussex Pension Fund but please note the following: **How to submit opt out details** Employers should submit opt out details by treating as leavers and completing the date of leaving (22) and reason for leaving (57) fields – with the reason populated as opt out. **Opt outs within the same month of joining** • If a member has had no contributions deducted from their pay, do not include them on the i-Connect file. • If a member has made contributions during the first month before they opt out, then include them on the i-Connect file.
51	**OPT IN DATE**	Not required by East Sussex Pension Fund. If a member opts in, please insert the date the member opted in into the date joined pension scheme field (41).
54	**FULL TIME EQUIVALENT FINAL PAY**	This field is mandatory and must also be populated for casual workers. <u>For all active members</u>: please enter the member's annual full-time equivalent rate of pay on the payroll period end date.

Item	Data Item	Guidance
		If the member works part time or term time hours, the employer should calculate what the equivalent pay would be if they worked full time hours, 52 weeks of the year. For all members who have left or opted out: please enter the member's annual final pay for the last 365 days from the date of leaving, based on the LGPS 2008 definition of pay (more information in the FAQs at the end of this document). This includes casual workers. Please note, if you are using a final pay figure for a year different to the last 365 days, for example, if there has been a pay reduction or a valid certificate of protection of pension benefits has been issued, you will need to inform us separately of the date to which the final pay figure relates.
57	**REASON FOR LEAVING**	This field is mandatory if a member has left employment and a date of leaving (22) has been entered. Please specify from the list below (maximum 100 characters) the reason for leaving: • opted out of scheme • voluntary resignation • end of fixed term contract/temporary appointment • dismissal • dismissal – fraud/grave misconduct • redundancy / efficiency (member is under age 55) • TUPE transfer • attained normal pension age (NPA) equal to state pension age • attained age 55-60 and wishes to receive immediate payment of benefits • attained age 60-NPA and wishes to receive immediate payment of benefits • ill-health (please indicate which tier – 1, 2 or 3) • attained age 55 (please indicate if in the interests of efficiency or by reason of redundancy) • flexible retirement • death in service.

Frequently asked questions

Below is a list of frequently asked questions. If you have any further questions, please contact the i-Connect Team at East Sussex Pension Fund (contact details on page 6).

What forms do employers still need to use if they now submit monthly payroll files via i-Connect?

If you are submitting monthly files via i-Connect, you will no longer have to submit the:

LGPS-5A starter form

LGPS-5B change of details form

LGPS-8A leaver form but instead, the final pay figure for the last 365 days from the date of leaving, must be inserted in the full time equivalent final pay field (54) at the month of leaving for all members who have left or opted out.

These forms are still required:

LGPS-9A (leaving the scheme with immediate payment of benefits)

LGPS-10A (left the scheme due to death in service)

RET2 (inform us that the retirement is going ahead)

LGPS31 monthly contributions form is still required as i-Connect cannot currently reconcile contributions.

Please note, there may be occasions where the Fund will still need to contact you with regards to a particular employee's leaving or joining details.

Do you still need to know about legitimate change of addresses if the address fields on the i-Connect file must be consistently populated?

If a member has a genuine change of address the new details should be included on the next i-Connect file.

The address fields **must** be populated consistently and formatted in the same way each month for all member addresses that remain the same. This includes the use of capitals or lower-case characters, the placement of a line of the address appearing in a different column to that of the previous month, or any difference at all in the characters/spacing/formatting of any of the address fields compared to the previous month's file. It is important to apply this to member addresses that remain the same because i-Connect recognises a change in format as a change of address, creating inadvertent change of address tasks for our Pensions Administration Team.

What information should be included on the file for a member who has left to submit backpay information?

You should populate all details as they were last included on the previous file, with the exception of the pay, contributions and full-time equivalent final pay figures. The cumulative values for CARE pay and employee and employer contributions must be updated to reflect the total year to date values inclusive of the backpay amounts. Likewise, the final pay figure should be amended to take account of any pay rises that have occurred in the last 365 days of leaving. The pay period pay and contribution figures may either be inserted or a 0 must be entered.

What do I do if some of the information for a member that has already been submitted is incorrect?

The cumulative values for contributions and pay figures can be corrected the following month, provided it is within the same pension scheme year (1st April – 31st March). For anything else, please contact us separately.

What is meant by the 2008 definition of final pay and when do I need to submit this information?

Final pay is the full-time equivalent pensionable pay in the previous 365 days of scheme membership from date of leaving, or one of the previous 2 years if this is higher. The definition of final pay is from the 2008 regulations, and this includes any additional payments that were pensionable before the scheme rules changed in 2014. It includes your normal pay, contractual shift allowance, bonus, contractual overtime, maternity pay, paternity pay, adoption pay, shared parental pay and any other taxable benefit specified in your contract as being pensionable. It should not include any pay for non–contractual overtime or additional hours. If you were part-time for all or part of the final year, the whole-time pay that you would have received if you had worked whole-time is used. If your pay in your final year was reduced because of sickness or relevant child related leave, final pay is the pay you would have received had you not been on sick leave or relevant child related leave. For more information about final pay and how it is used in working out benefits, please visit https://www.lgpsmember.org/more/2008-2014.php. Please note, if you are using a final pay figure for a year different to the last 365 days, for example, if there has been a pay reduction or a valid certificate of protection of pension benefits has been issued, you will need to inform us separately of the date to which the final pay figure relates.

The final pay figure must be included on your i-Connect file for all members who leave or opt out at the month of leaving. This should be included in the full time equivalent final pay (54) field (doing so means that LGPS-8A leaver form will not be required).

What do I do if an employee has had a change of post reference, but their actual post has not changed?

You will need to contact us directly, so that this can be updated manually on our internal pensions administration system before including the member and their new reference on an i-Connect submission. If you do not notify us prior to the next monthly submission a duplicate record will be created and i-Connect will treat the member as having an additional post. Please note that if a member leaves their post and starts a new role with the same employer, this should be treated as a leaver (see below).

Why do employees that have left their post and started a new role with the same employer need to be treated as leavers?

If a member starts a new role, they are legally entitled to new starter options and have the same rights as a new joiner even though this might not be viewed by the member or employer as having left employment or the scheme. This is because a new post may bring with it different terms – such as a change of pensionable pay and a different contribution rate. Therefore, each post or role should be treated separately on i-Connect and where a member ends one post and starts another during the same month, these should be populated on separate lines of the i-Connect file alongside the unique identifiers for the different posts. Likewise, for employees with multiple posts, each post and its associated payroll and pension information, should be inserted onto separate lines on the i-Connect file. New starters, including members that begin a new post, are sent correspondence from the Fund, and have 12 months to let us know if they do not wish their records to be aggregated.

What should I do if my file won't process on i-Connect or there are errors or suppressions showing?

Please contact us if you have any issues submitting or processing your file. We ask that you contact us in the event of any errors or suppressions occurring, so that we can resolve any formatting issues or data queries.

Contact us

If you have any queries regarding this supplementary guide or require any assistance with i-Connect, please contact:

IConnect@eastsussex.gov.uk