

## General Information Leaflet - Free Standing AVC Scheme

The Equitable Free Standing AVC Scheme is a UK registered pension scheme. The HMRC pension scheme reference is **00685194RQ**. This scheme is written under trust with Equitable Life Assurance Society as the trustee, so individual members of the scheme do not have voting rights at the Society's Annual General Meeting. It is an occupational arrangement.

### **Guaranteed Annuity Rates**

There are no guaranteed annuity rates under this policy.

### **Commission**

We do not pay commission or loyalty bonuses to Independent Financial Advisers or any other third party.

### **Pension Advice Allowance**

We will pay your financial adviser up to £500 from your savings free from tax, providing certain criteria are met.

### **Guaranteed Minimum Pension (GMP)**

There is no GMP liability under this policy, or any other safeguarded rights.

### **Protected Rights**

This policy contains no protected rights.

### **Loyalty Bonus**

We do not pay a loyalty bonus.

### **Terminal Bonus**

We do not pay terminal bonus. However, we do allocate an amount of final bonus which is only known at the point of termination.

### **ORIGO Options Pension Transfer**

We do not currently support this.

### **Members Over Age 75**

No contributions may be paid after your 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.

### **Online Facility**

We do not offer a facility for you to manage your savings online.

**This information is based on our understanding of current legislation and HM Revenue and Customs regulations, as at the date of production.**

# Retirement

## Minimum Retirement Age

This is age 55, unless you have a protected minimum age. There is no upper age limit for taking retirement savings.

## Ill Health

You may be able to take your retirement savings before age 55 where you are incapable of carrying out your occupation.

## Retirement Options

- Take some or all of your retirement savings as cash. A quarter of each amount taken is tax free and the rest taxed at your marginal rate.
- Transfer your retirement savings to another company. You must do this if you want to use your retirement savings for income drawdown, as we do not offer flexi-access drawdown. We send your whole fund to your chosen provider and they pay your tax free cash. It is not possible to do a partial transfer from your Free Standing AVC.
- Use your retirement savings to buy an annuity on the open market (this may not be available if you live outside the UK). We pay your tax free cash and send the rest to your chosen company to buy an annuity.

## Pension Commencement Lump Sum (PCLS)

You can usually take up to 25% of your retirement savings as a tax free cash lump sum, also known as PCLS.

## Protected Tax Free Cash

There is no protected cash available under this policy.

## Death Benefits

The rules of the scheme give Equitable Life discretion to choose who should receive the proceeds of the policy. You may nominate who you would like the benefits to be paid to, and we will take this into consideration when deciding who should receive the benefits.

If you die before retirement savings are taken, the fund is payable as either a lump sum or a pension. If you die after age 75, any death benefits become subject to tax. If benefits are paid direct to a beneficiary they will be taxed using their tax code. If paid to your estate they will be taxed at 45%.

## With-profits Information

### IMPORTANT MESSAGE ABOUT YOUR RETIREMENT SAVINGS

We have announced plans regarding the future of the Equitable.  
If approved, the Proposal will increase the value of your with-profits policy,  
convert it from with-profits to unit-linked,  
remove the investment guarantee and transfer it to Utmost Life and Pensions.  
Information about the Proposal can be found at [www.equitable.co.uk](http://www.equitable.co.uk)

You should think carefully before taking your savings. If the Proposal is approved, and you take your with-profits savings before implementation, you would miss out on the proposed increase to your policy value.

### With-profits Values

With-profits policies have a guaranteed value which is the minimum amount payable on retirement, maturity, death or at a time specified in the policy. Your policy document sets down exactly when the guarantee applies. Most with-profits pension policies taken out before 1 July 1996 provide a guaranteed investment return of 3.5% pa. Your statement of value will confirm if this applies. This increases the guaranteed benefit over time.

If you take your investments at a time when the guarantee applies, we work out the amount we pay by looking at:

- your policy value, which depends on the type of policy you have, the amount of premiums you have paid and when you paid them, the investment returns on the fund, the costs and charges, and any other profits and losses from the Society's business; plus
- an amount which represents the share of capital that has been allocated to your policy and is payable when your policy is paid out.

We compare the total of these two parts with the guaranteed value and pay the larger figure.

If you take your investments at a time when the guarantee does not apply, a transfer value is payable. This is calculated as the total of the policy value and the share of capital described above. Depending on the Society's financial circumstances at the time of transfer, this value may be reduced by a financial adjustment. Currently, the financial adjustment is nil (0%). Transfer values can go down as well as up.

Further details on the with-profits fund can be found on the website in the Principles and Practices of Financial Management, and the website shows details of the asset mix. Our with-profits funds are managed by Black Rock Investment Management (UK) Ltd.

### Switching Funds

There is no charge for switching funds. We reserve the right to deduct a charge in future without notice.

The with-profits fund available for switching will be the underlying value of the policy plus any capital distribution. This is reduced by the financial adjustment, currently nil, where the switch occurs before age 75.

Any guarantees will no longer apply to any funds switched out of the with-profits fund.

### Contributions to With-profits

If with-profits contributions are not made in accordance with the policy terms and conditions, no further contributions to purchase with-profits benefits will be accepted. The main condition is that a contribution must be invested in the with-profits fund at least once in each policy year. The minimum contribution we can receive is £25 gross per month by direct debit or £250 gross per annum by lump sum.

### Contribution Charges

No contribution charges apply.

There are no additional charges or penalties for ceasing, amending or restarting contributions.

### Allocation Rate

This is 100%.

### Annual Charges

Annual charges are currently 1% for expenses and 0.5% for costs of guarantees. These are taken into account when calculating the return allocated to policies each year.

Further details can be found on our website in "A guide to how we manage the with-profits fund".

## Unit-linked Information

### Unit-linked Values

When you take your investments, the amount will be worked out using unit prices applicable at that time and will be based on premiums paid up to that date. Unit prices can go down as well as up.

Unit-linked funds are managed by Aberdeen Standard Investments.

### Switching Funds

There is no charge for switching funds. We reserve the right to deduct a charge in future without notice.

Unit-linked funds cannot be switched into with-profits if future contributions to with-profits cannot be accepted (see 'Contributions to With-profits').

There are 11 unit-linked funds, and there is no restriction on the number of funds you may hold investments in. However, from 17 June 2019, Fund of Investment Trusts and Property fund closed to new investments.

### Contributions to Unit-linked

Contributions to purchase unit-linked benefits can be started or stopped at any time. The minimum contribution we can receive is £25 gross per month by direct debit or £250 gross per annum by lump sum.

### Contribution Charges

No contribution charges apply. There are no additional charges or penalties for ceasing, amending or restarting contributions.

From 17 June 2019, we will no longer accept new contributions into the Fund of Investment Trusts and Property fund. Any existing contribution arrangements will be redirected to the International and Managed funds respectively. You can choose to pay any future contributions into any other Equitable Life unit-linked funds at any time. Details can be found on our website.

### Allocation Rate

This is 100%.

### Annual Charges and Citicodes

Unit-linked funds - 0.5%, 0.75% or 1% depending on the fund. These annual charge rates are not guaranteed.

Equitable Fund Name	AMC	Citicode	Underlying Investment Name
European Pension	0.75%	EU33	AAM European Equity Enhanced Index
Far Eastern Pension	0.75%	EU19	AAM Asia Pacific Enhanced Index
Fund of Investment Trusts Pension	0.75%	EU20	HIFML Fund of Investment Trusts
Gilt & Fixed Interest Pension	0.50%	EU21	Aberdeen Sterling Government Bond
International Pension	0.75%	EU31	AAM World Equity Enhanced Index
Managed Pension	0.75%	EU23	Various
Money Pension	0.50%	EU41	Aberdeen Global Liquidity Fund Plc
North American Pension	0.75%	EU25	AAM US Equity Enhanced Index
Pelican Pension	0.75%	EU26	AAM UK Equity Enhanced Index
UK FTSE All Share Tracker Pension	0.50%	EU96	Aberdeen All Share Tracker Fund
Property Pension*	1%	EU27	Aberdeen Property Trust

\* In addition, the property fund is charged a portion of the property asset management related expenses. For the year to 31 December 2018 this amount was 1.44%.

Further details can be found on our website in "A guide to how we manage our unit-linked funds". This guide is available on our website which also includes unit-linked fund prices, performance and factsheets.