

SUBJECT:

Review of the Northern Ireland Teachers'
Superannuation Scheme (NITSS)

CIRCULAR NUMBER:

2004/20

DATE OF ISSUE:

15 December 2004

AUDIENCE:

- Principals and Boards of Governors of all grant-aided schools;
- Education and Library Boards;
- Council for Catholic Maintained Schools;
- Bodies of Institutions of Further Education; and
- Other Interested Bodies.

SUMMARY OF CONTENTS:

This Circular gives information governing the forthcoming review of the Northern Ireland Teachers' Superannuation Scheme.

ENQUIRIES:

Any enquiries about the contents of this Circular should be addressed to:

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STATUS OF CONTENTS:

Advice

RELATED DOCUMENTS:

Circular 2004/3

SUPERSEDED DOCUMENTS:

None

EXPIRY DATE:

Not applicable

DENI WEBSITE:

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REVIEW OF THE NORTHERN IRELAND TEACHERS' SUPERANNUATION SCHEME (NITSS) - CONSULTATION ON POSSIBLE SCHEME CHANGES

This consultation seeks views on possible options for changes to the NITSS in Northern Ireland* with details of some associated costs.

In Circular 2004/3 – Review of the NITSS - issued in January 2004, we set out the background to the review of the NITSS; the reasons behind the Government's proposal to increase the normal pension age to 65; what an increase in pension age could mean in practice to individuals; and some possible changes to the NITSS that could be part of a package that included the introduction of the higher pension age. We said also that we would provide further information about some possible revised scheme designs and seek the views of members, employers and other interested parties on a range of issues relating to a modernised NITSS.

New flexibilities that will become available to occupational schemes from 2006, will provide the opportunity for provisions of the NITSS to be improved as part of the wider package of changes, so that NITSS members have even greater options than are currently available over the way in which they manage the transition from work to retirement.

Members of the NITSS pay 6% of salary towards a package of benefits. The employer currently pays a further 7% of salary towards the cost of membership of the NITSS. We want to find out what aspects of the scheme are valued most by the membership, and whether members would be willing to pay more than 6% in return for a higher level of benefits.

Ministers have already guaranteed that for existing NITSS members pension benefits earned before 31 August 2013 will not be affected by the changes. However, we do recognise that existing members may wish to take advantage of the new arrangements in advance of 2013 and the section on Transitional Arrangements seeks views on this possibility.

You can download copies of the consultation document and questionnaire from our website:- <http://www.deni.gov.uk>

Hard copies can be obtained from :-

Teachers' Pensions Branch
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Waterside House
75 Duke Street
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Copies can also be requested by e-mail to:

teachers.pensions@deni.gov.uk

A summary of the responses to this consultation will be published on the DE website in Spring 2005.

(*This consultation exercise mirrors that taking place in respect of the teachers' pension schemes in England & Wales and Scotland.)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mervyn Gregg', written in a cursive style.

MERVYN GREGG
Head of Teachers' Pensions, Pay & Administration Branch