

Annex: Pay reform for the senior civil service

Pension calculations methodology

Civil service defined benefit scheme

In making calculations about the civil service defined benefit (DB) scheme the assumptions used were:

Parameter	Assumption	Source/notes
Scheme type	Alpha	Overwhelmingly the most common arrangement Government Evidence to SSRB, 2021 ¹
Accrual rate	2.32%	Civil service alpha pension scheme guide ²
Lump sum	None	Civil service alpha pension scheme guide ³
Normal pension age	68	Government guidance on state pension age ⁴
Previous pension accumulated	None	We are assuming that the civil servant is at the start of their career.
Marital status	Single	
Salary profile	Salaries are expressed in today's prices (not inflated)*	Explained below
Lifetime pension tax allowance	£1,073,100 (linked to CPI in the future)	Government guidance on tax on private pension contributions ⁵
Annual allowance	£40,000 (linked to CPI in the future; taper for high earners)	Government guidance on tax on private pension contributions ⁶

Note * = To calculate the career average pension in the alpha scheme, each year's accrual is revalued to the date of retirement in line with consumer price inflation. Therefore, for simplicity, we express all monetary figures in today's prices.

The annual pension amount that a civil servant receives in a career average defined benefit scheme after retiring is calculated by adding up the pension accrued by the civil servant each year. The pension accrued for a given year is calculated by multiplying the pensionable salary (the base salary, without any bonuses) that year by the scheme's accrual rate (the rate at which the pension builds up).

We have used the example of a civil servant who starts their career on the Fast Stream at 25, works in the civil service for their entire career and becomes a senior civil servant before retiring at the normal pension age of 68.

We have used the fixed salary progression for the Fast Stream years.⁷ Only 21% of the current SCS began on the Fast Stream⁸ but we have chosen to use the Fast Stream route because it gives us a fixed salary path for the first few years in the civil service, which is likely to be similar overall to non-Fast Stream paths.

After successfully completing the Fast Stream and getting promoted to Grade 7 or equivalent, the civil servant can earn £45,000–£55,000. We have taken the midpoint of £50,000.

Salary progression within delegated grades varies greatly from department to department. So we have used the median salary for delegated grades for all the years that the civil servant spends in these grades.⁹ This does not significantly affect our final overall figures.

Given that there is currently no automatic base salary progression within the SCS levels, we have used the median salary for each SCS level.

We have modelled pension accruals for three example civil servants, retiring on the SCS1, SCS2, and SCS3 levels respectively. The comparators we have highlighted above relate to a civil servant retiring at SCS1 level.

Calculation for civil servant in the alpha scheme, retiring on SCS1 salary (salary profile 1)

Year	Age	Grade	Salary (£)	Annual pension income accrued (salary accrual rate, £)
1	25	Fast stream	28,000	650
2	26	Fast stream	29,250	679
3	27	Fast stream	32,000	742
4	28	Fast stream	32,000	742
5	29	Fast stream	32,000	742
6	30	Grade 7	50,000	1,160
7	31	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
8	32	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
9	33	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
10	34	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
11	35	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
12	36	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
13	37	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
14	38	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
15	39	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
16	40	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
17	41	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
18	42	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300

19	43	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
20	44	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
21	45	SCS1	78,500	1,821
22	46	SCS1	78,500	1,821
23	47	SCS1	78,500	1,821
24	48	SCS1	78,500	1,821
25	49	SCS1	78,500	1,821
26	50	SCS1	78,500	1,821
27	51	SCS1	78,500	1,821
28	52	SCS1	78,500	1,821
29	53	SCS1	78,500	1,821
30	54	SCS1	78,500	1,821
31	55	SCS1	78,500	1,821
32	56	SCS1	78,500	1,821
33	57	SCS1	78,500	1,821
34	58	SCS1	78,500	1,821
35	59	SCS1	78,500	1,821
36	60	SCS1	78,500	1,821
37	61	SCS1	78,500	1,821
38	62	SCS1	78,500	1,821
39	63	SCS1	78,500	1,821
40	64	SCS1	78,500	1,821
41	65	SCS1	78,500	1,821
42	66	SCS1	78,500	1,821
43	67	SCS1	78,500	1,821
44	68	SCS1	78,500	1,821

Career average annual pension income: £63,378*

Pension income as percentage of final salary: 80.7%

Implied defined benefit pot: £1.33m (pre-tax)

Defined contribution pension pot that would be required to purchase an index-linked annuity income of this level: £1.75 million (pre-tax)

* This figure is net of the tax charge that would be applied to the pension income to account for the fact that this pension pot would be deemed to have breached the lifetime allowance.

Calculation for civil servant in the alpha scheme, retiring on SCS2 salary (salary profile 2)

Year	Age	Grade	Salary (£)	Pension accrued (£)
1	25	Fast stream	28,000	650
2	26	Fast stream	29,250	679
3	27	Fast stream	32,000	742
4	28	Fast stream	32,000	742
5	29	Fast stream	32,000	742
6	30	Grade 7	50,000	1,160
7	31	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
8	32	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
9	33	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
10	34	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
11	35	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
12	36	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
13	37	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
14	38	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
15	39	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	1,300
16	40	SCS1	78,500	1,821
17	41	SCS1	78,500	1,821
18	42	SCS1	78,500	1,821
19	43	SCS1	78,500	1,821
20	44	SCS1	78,500	1,821
21	45	SCS1	78,500	1,821
22	46	SCS1	78,500	1,821
23	47	SCS1	78,500	1,821
24	48	SCS1	78,500	1,821
25	49	SCS1	78,500	1,821
26	50	SCS2	103,500	2,401
27	51	SCS2	103,500	2,401
28	52	SCS2	103,500	2,401
29	53	SCS2	103,500	2,401
30	54	SCS2	103,500	2,401
31	55	SCS2	103,500	2,401
32	56	SCS2	103,500	2,401
33	57	SCS2	103,500	2,401
34	58	SCS2	103,500	2,401
35	59	SCS2	103,500	2,401
36	60	SCS2	103,500	2,401
37	61	SCS2	103,500	2,401
38	62	SCS2	103,500	2,401
39	63	SCS2	103,500	2,401
40	64	SCS2	103,500	2,401

41	65	SCS2	103,500	2,401
42	66	SCS2	103,500	2,401
43	67	SCS2	103,500	2,401
44	68	SCS2	103,500	2,401

Career average annual pension income: £73,599*

Pension income as percentage of final salary: 71.1%

Implied defined benefit pot: £1.6m (pre-tax)

Defined contribution pension pot that would be required to purchase an index-linked annuity income of this level: £2.09m (pre-tax)

Calculation for civil servant in the alpha scheme, retiring on SCS3 salary (salary profile 3)

Year	Age	Grade	Salary (£)	Salary net of tax charge for exceeding annual allowance (£)	Pension accrued (£)
1	25	Fast stream	28,000	28,000	650
2	26	Fast stream	29,250	29,250	679
3	27	Fast stream	32,000	32,000	742
4	28	Fast stream	32,000	32,000	742
5	29	Fast stream	32,000	32,000	742
6	30	Grade 7	50,000	50,000	1,160
7	31	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	56,020	1,300
8	32	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	56,020	1,300
9	33	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	56,020	1,300
10	34	Grade 6 & 7	56,020	56,020	1,300
11	35	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
12	36	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
13	37	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
14	38	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
15	39	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
16	40	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
17	41	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
18	42	SCS1	78,500	78,500	1,821
19	43	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401
20	44	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401
21	45	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401
22	46	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401

* This figure is net of the tax charge that would be applied to the pension income to account for the fact that this pension pot would be deemed to have breached the lifetime allowance.

23	47	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401
24	48	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401
25	49	SCS2	103,500	103,500	2,401
26	50	SCS3	138,600	135,918	3,216
27	51	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
28	52	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
29	53	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
30	54	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
31	55	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
32	56	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
33	57	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
34	58	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
35	59	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
36	60	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
37	61	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
38	62	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
39	63	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
40	64	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
41	65	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
42	66	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
43	67	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216
44	68	SCS3	138,600	134,021	3,216

Career average annual pension income: £90,204*

Pension income as percentage of final salary: 65.1%

**Implied defined benefit pot: £2.05m
(pre-tax; note tax charged as greater than lifetime allowance)**

**Defined contribution pension pot that would be required to purchase an
index-linked annuity income of this level: £2.64m (pre-tax)**

* This figure is net of the tax charge that would be applied to the pension income to account for the fact that this pension pot would be deemed to have breached the lifetime allowance.

Private sector comparison

In making calculations about the private sector defined contributions scheme the assumptions used were:

Parameter	Assumption	Source
Average flat-rate employer contribution rate for FTSE100 companies	8.3%	Wills Towers Watson 2020 ¹⁰
Employee contribution rates	Matching the civil service DB scheme employee contribution rates for each salary level	Civil Service Pensions ¹¹
Investment growth	5%	The Money Advice Service Pensions Calculator assumptions ¹²
Fund management charges	0.75%	The Money Advice Service Pensions Calculator assumptions ¹³
Investment growth after deducting charges	4.25%	
Inflation (CPI, used by the civil service DB scheme for pension adjustments)	2%	Bank of England's target inflation rate ¹⁴
Real investment growth (after taking off consumer price inflation)	2.25%	
Index-linked annuity rate (for a healthy, single individual)	4.01%	Annuity rate calculator, ¹⁵ used on 7 July 2021
Salary profile	Same as the illustrative civil servant's	
Lifetime pension tax allowance	£1,073,100 (linked to CPI in the future)	Government guidance on tax on private pension contributions ¹⁶
Annual allowance	£40,000 (linked to CPI in the future)	Government guidance on tax on private pension contributions ¹⁷

Annuity rate assumptions

Metric	Assumption	Source/notes
Type of annuity	Lifetime annuity (guaranteed income for life)	To match civil service DB pension
Member age	68	Normal pension age
Money used from pension pot to buy annuity	£100,000	To make it easier to calculate rates
Frequency	Monthly in arrears	To match civil service DB pension
Marital status	Single	
Income increase every year	2%	To match to civil service DB pension, which is adjusted in line with CPI
Health	Person of average body mass index and no health problems	
Drinking habits	20 units of alcohol a week	
Smoking habits	Non-smoker	
Location	London	About two thirds of the SCS are based in London ¹⁸

For defined contribution pension schemes, the employer and employee contribute a percentage of the annual pensionable salary into an investment fund every year. The total pension pot is made up of the total contributions and the investment returns on the contributions. We have assumed that the private sector employee contributes the same percentage of their salary each year as the example civil servant would to the alpha scheme and then worked out what employer contribution rate would be needed to match the civil service pension. We assume that this employer contribution is the same percentage of salary in every year.

To convert this pension pot into an annual pension income stream, we assume that the individual purchases an annuity from an insurance company. Although many defined contribution scheme members do not purchase annuities – instead preferring to draw

money from their pension on a more ad-hoc basis – looking at annuities provides the fairest comparison to the civil service defined benefit scheme, since both provide insurance against longevity and inflation.

To estimate what pension pot would be needed in the private sector to deliver the same annual income as a civil service defined benefit scheme, we divided the target annual pension income by the annuity rate. Then we worked out what percentage of salary the employer would need to contribute each year to build a pension pot of this size, making tax adjustments as necessary.

Defined contribution pension calculation for private sector employee with salary profile 1

Year	Age	Salary	Employee contribution (%)	Employer contribution (%)	Total contribution (£)	Value at retirement (£)
1	25	28,000	5.4	8.3	3,836	9,986
2	26	29,250	5.4	8.3	4,007	10,202
3	27	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,916
4	28	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,676
5	29	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,441
6	30	50,000	5.4	8.3	6,850	15,955
7	31	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,971
8	32	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,532
9	33	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,102
10	34	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	18,681
11	35	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	18,270
12	36	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	17,868
13	37	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	17,475
14	38	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	17,091
15	39	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	16,715
16	40	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	16,347
17	41	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	15,987
18	42	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	15,635
19	43	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	15,291
20	44	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	14,955
21	45	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	20,495
22	46	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	20,044
23	47	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	19,603
24	48	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	19,171
25	49	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	18,749
26	50	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	18,337
27	51	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	17,933
28	52	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	17,539

29	53	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	17,153
30	54	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	16,775
31	55	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	16,406
32	56	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	16,045
33	57	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	15,692
34	58	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	15,347
35	59	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	15,009
36	60	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	14,679
37	61	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	14,356
38	62	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	14,040
39	63	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	13,731
40	64	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	13,429
41	65	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	13,133
42	66	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	12,844
43	67	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	12,562
44	68	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	12,285

Total defined contribution pension pot at age 68: £696,452
(does not exceed the lifetime tax allowance)

Annual pension income from annuity: £27,928

Employer contribution that would be needed instead to match civil service annual pension income for salary profile 1: 31.6%

Defined contribution pension calculation for private sector employee with salary profile 2

Year	Age	Salary	Employee contribution (%)	Employer contribution (%)	Total contribution (£)	Value at retirement (£)
1	25	28,000	5.4	8.3	3,836	9,986
2	26	29,250	5.4	8.3	4,007	10,202
3	27	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,916
4	28	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,676
5	29	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,441
6	30	50,000	5.4	8.3	6,850	15,955
7	31	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,971
8	32	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,532
9	33	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,102
10	34	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	18,681
11	35	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	18,270

12	36	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	17,868
13	37	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	17,475
14	38	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	17,091
15	39	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	16,715
16	40	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	22,906
17	41	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	22,402
18	42	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	21,909
19	43	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	21,427
20	44	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	20,956
21	45	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	20,495
22	46	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	20,044
23	47	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	19,603
24	48	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	19,171
25	49	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	18,749
26	50	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	24,177
27	51	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	23,645
28	52	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	23,124
29	53	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	22,615
30	54	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	22,118
31	55	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	21,631
32	56	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	21,155
33	57	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	20,690
34	58	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	20,234
35	59	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	19,789
36	60	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	19,354
37	61	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	18,928
38	62	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	18,511
39	63	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	18,104
40	64	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	17,705
41	65	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	17,316
42	66	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	16,935
43	67	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	16,562
44	68	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	16,198

**Total defined contribution pension pot at age 68: £819,334
(does not exceed the lifetime tax allowance)**

Annual pension income from annuity: £32,855

Employer contribution that would be needed instead to match civil service annual pension income for salary profile 2: 32.4%

Defined contribution pension calculation for private sector employee with salary profile 3

Year	Age	Salary	Employee contribution (%)	Employer contribution (%)	Total contribution (£)	Value at retirement (£)
1	25	28,000	5.4	8.3	3,836	9,986
2	26	29,250	5.4	8.3	4,007	10,202
3	27	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,916
4	28	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,676
5	29	32,000	5.4	8.3	4,384	10,441
6	30	50,000	5.4	8.3	6,850	15,955
7	31	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,971
8	32	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,532
9	33	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	19,102
10	34	56,020	7.35	8.3	8,767	18,681
11	35	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	25,602
12	36	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	25,039
13	37	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	24,488
14	38	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	23,949
15	39	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	23,422
16	40	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	22,906
17	41	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	22,402
18	42	78,500	7.35	8.3	12,285	21,909
19	43	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	28,251
20	44	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	27,630
21	45	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	27,022
22	46	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	26,427
23	47	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	25,845
24	48	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	25,277
25	49	103,500	7.35	8.3	16,198	24,721
26	50	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	32,376
27	51	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	31,663
28	52	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	30,966
29	53	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	30,285
30	54	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	29,619
31	55	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	28,967
32	56	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	28,329
33	57	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	27,706
34	58	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	27,096
35	59	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	26,500
36	60	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	25,917
37	61	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	25,347
38	62	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	24,789

39	63	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	24,243
40	64	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	23,710
41	65	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	23,188
42	66	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	22,678
43	67	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	22,179
44	68	138,600	7.35	8.3	21,691	21,691

Total defined contribution pension pot (pre-tax): £1,027,601

Annual pension income from annuity: £41,207

Employer contribution that would be needed instead to match civil service annual pension income for salary profile 3: 35.6%

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