

A thick yellow swoosh graphic that starts from the left edge, curves upwards and then downwards, passing behind the main headline.

Shaping the way ahead to a brighter future

The Standard Life logo, featuring the words "Standard Life" in white, with a yellow triangle pointing upwards at the end of the word "Life". Below it is the tagline "There's a lot to look forward to" in yellow.

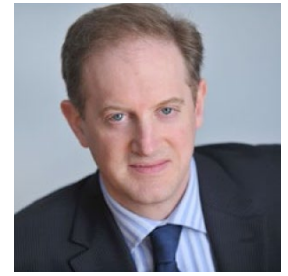
Standard Life
There's a lot to look forward to

For employer use only.



Context

Jamie Jenkins
Head of Pensions Strategy
Standard Life



The introduction of auto-enrolment was one of the most important steps to promote a broader culture of saving in the UK. It's been a success, but people are still not saving enough.

The total minimum contribution will by law increase again in April 2019. Increases like this help people to save more, but it's important that this amount isn't seen as a recommended savings level. According to industry experts, 15% of salary, including employee and employer contributions, is what we should be aiming for. In other words, we need to offer people more guidance about how much they need to save if they want to meet their needs in retirement.

So, while regulation is a good catalyst for change, it isn't enough to effect wholesale behavioural change by itself. Which is why, as an industry, we have a moral obligation to go further to educate people on saving levels required to achieve their retirement goals. And we need to make people aware that they are now largely responsible for their own retirement provision.

This whitepaper is exploring the way ahead in creating a cultural shift and addressing the continuing issue of inadequate lifetime savings across the UK workforce.

Our assumption is that this is achievable through combined efforts. These combined efforts involve the Government continuing the development of effective policies and employers (supported by provider and advisers) taking a strategic approach to employee financial education and engagement.

In this whitepaper

A. We'll demonstrate how the future regulatory landscape can help build a culture of saving. A briefing note produced by the Pension Policy Institute (PPI) and sponsored by Standard Life looks at the potential impact of introducing the Auto-enrolment Review's recommendations.

We specifically focused on millennials, as they're the first generation who may spend their whole working life in workplace pension schemes they've been auto-enrolled into.

According to The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) re-enforcing new habits is a way to create cultural change. If we follow this, then understanding the engagement strategies that work is crucial.

B. We'll also demonstrate how employee engagement interventions and good communications by employers can help change people's perceptions on the value of saving for retirement.

At Standard Life, we've commissioned exclusive research which proves this.

For example, with just one letter we've seen a complete shift in attitude towards the auto-enrolment, from "It's another cost." to "Really good. It has a bigger impact than I would have realised."

This whitepaper will give you some tangible actions you can apply to your own workplace pension scheme communications.

Employers and providers have a huge role to play in driving engagement. They need to work together collaboratively to tackle this significant societal, economic and business issue. It's a complex problem that needs a wholesale change in approach from all the key players: individuals, employers, Government and the financial services sector.



How the regulatory landscape can shape the way ahead

Regulatory landscape

Understanding how auto-enrolment will develop to help close the retirement savings gap

According to The Pensions Regulator (TPR), around 9.3 million people have been automatically enrolled into a workplace pension.

Employers have helped reverse the downward trend in workplace saving. And pension providers, together with business advisers, have ensured employers have the tools, information and services they need to comply with the law.

The next stage of auto-enrolment, **the contribution phasing**, will go some way in addressing the shortfall. From 6 April 2019 onwards, we'll see auto-enrolment minimum contributions rising again.

However this is still not enough to close the retirement savings gap in the UK. And the Government has recognised the need to maintain the momentum. That's why, at the end of 2017, the DWP published its **Automatic Enrolment Review 2017** report.

This review has set out proposals to improve the way auto-enrolment works and to build a stronger, more inclusive savings culture for future generations. The Government's ambition is to implement these changes to the auto-enrolment framework by the mid-2020s.

However, to shape future thinking, it will be essential to learn from the contribution rate increases which come into effect in 2018 and 2019.

Quick reminder: about auto-enrolment

Under auto-enrolment, employers are required to automatically enrol their employees who meet eligibility criteria into a qualifying workplace pension scheme.

The eligibility criteria includes being over age 22 and below State Pension age (SPA), and earning over a trigger amount (currently set at £10,000) from the employer.

In the case of a Defined Contribution (DC) scheme, there must be a minimum total contribution level (currently 5% but increasing up to 8% of band salary from April 2019, of which a prescribed percentage must come from the employer.

The proposed changes by the Automatic Enrolment review 2017

- **Removal of the lower contribution earnings threshold**
Current auto-enrolment minimum contributions are based on a band of earnings in line with National Insurance Contributions thresholds. Removing the lower limit will mean that minimum contributions will be calculated on the first pound of earnings (rather than from the lower earnings limit, currently set at £5,876). The upper cap will remain. This change would mean that people would benefit from increased pension contributions and it removes an anomaly for people with several jobs, where the lower earnings limit would currently apply to each.

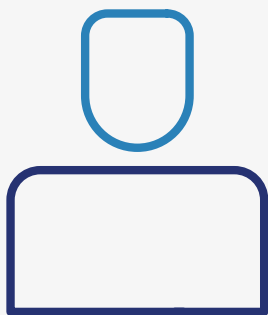
- **Auto-enrolment to be extended to those aged between 18 and 21**
This will mean employers will have to automatically enroll employees from age 18 instead of age 22. People will build up bigger pension pots by saving for longer in their workplace pension. While this will lead to an increase in costs as more employees are included, it should result in a simplification for employers when assessing eligibility.
- **Trials of approaches to increase savings of the self-employed**
The review identified there is around 4.8 million self-employed people in the UK. The review recognises that some have good levels of saving and preparation for later life, but most are under-saving for their retirement. It also identified that there is a very wide variety of cohorts within the overall population, and that it's unlikely one solution will work for them all. In the absence of an employer, simply extending auto-enrolment to this population wouldn't work. Instead, the Government will trial a number of other suggested models during the course of 2018.

Case studies

The impact of auto-enrolment and its upcoming developments on future generations

Standard Life has sponsored a report produced by the Pension Policy Institute (PPI) which shows how much someone saving in a pension throughout their working life might be able to save by retirement. This research aims to highlight the value of long-term saving as well as some of the changes in behaviour that can affect outcomes and the variability arising from long-term investing.

Just as importantly, this research aims to **demonstrate how the upcoming regulatory changes**, the contribution phasing and the changes proposed in the Automatic Enrolment Review, **can help shape the way ahead** and significantly influence younger people's retirement incomes.



The case study savers

The PPI has modelled four hypothetical savers to examine the effect of auto-enrolment on millennials with different characteristics.

The case study savers are shown below:

	Age in 2017	Future earnings at aged 40 (based on 2017 earnings terms) *
Tom	35	£34,000
Jack	22	£34,000
Ruth	27	£49,000
Jem	27	£19,000

*Case study savers future earnings are shown at age 40 because that's likely to be the height of their earning potential.

Below is the methodology and assumptions which the illustrations are based on:

- The results produced by the Pension Policy Institute (PPI) are intended to inform policy discussions, they are projections of hypothetical individuals under various policy scenarios.
- The assumptions in the PPI modelling are based on Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) projections of economic determinants.
- The modelling was done stochastically, this means the PPI didn't maintain a fixed assumption about future economic rates, but instead produced a large number of potential future economic scenarios allowing inflation, earnings growth, and investment returns to vary.
- The figures shown are the median results of the PPI report.
- They are not individual illustrations, so the assumptions are not set with reference to FCA illustration requirements.
- When looking at what impact removing the triple-lock on state pension would have on total retirement income, the PPI assumed the fund was annuitised, with a single life flat, rate annuity, at an annuity rate of approximately 5.4%.
- The long term central assumptions in the model were that CPI growth is 2% a year, general earnings inflation is 4.3% a year, investment returns are at around 6.3% a year. Annual management charges of the fund is assumed to be 0.5% a year.
- Allowance is made for salary progression for the individuals, which is assumed to be age and sex related. The reference earnings levels are obtained by analysing the Labour Force Survey, from where the PPI obtain percentile point earnings amounts for workers by age and sex.
- The salary progression figures are adjusted in line with projected general earnings inflation.

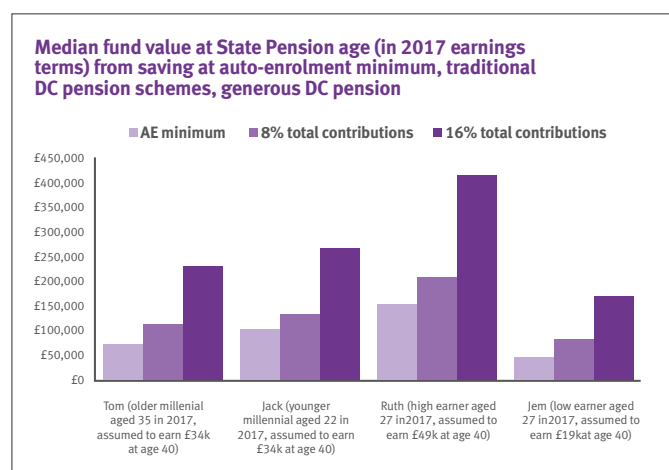
So what do the results show?

1. Even after contribution phasing, the minimum levels set out by legislation won't be enough for people to maintain their lifestyle when they retire.

For example, a 22 year old in 2017 may be able to achieve a pot of £108k at state pension age if he contributes 8% of band earnings. Of course, £108k is much better than having no savings. But we can see the magnitude of a possible shortfall between expectations and reality.

The PPI suggests that an adequate replacement rate for a median earner is 67% of their pre-retirement earnings. This being the case, many people could experience a harsh wake-up call when they get to retirement.

The chart below compares potential fund sizes at retirement in three DC pension schemes:



- AE minimum— auto-enrolment minimum contributions;
- 8% total contributions - a scheme with total contributions of 8% of full salary
- 16% total contributions - a scheme with 16% total contributions, a relatively generous DC pension scheme.

The pension fund under the automatic enrolment minimum is less than the pension fund at 8% contributions for two reasons:

- contributions to AE are phased, and until 2019 are less than 8%, and
- contributions under AE are based on Qualifying Band Earnings, so are less than 8% of total salary.

2. The Auto-Enrolment Review recommendations can make a significant difference

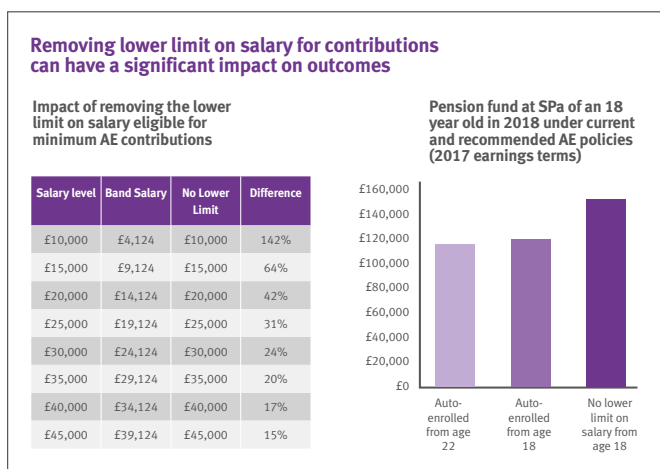
As previously mentioned, these recommendations include removing the lower limit on eligible salary and reducing the lower age limit. These would effectively mean people would save more for longer – so they stand a better chance of building up a bigger retirement pot. Please note investment risks apply.

In fact, the PPI modelling shows that an 18 year old earning a median salary has a 10% chance of achieving a pension fund of over £250,000 if they start saving at age 18 under minimum contributions with no lower earnings limit.

As well as this, the same earner could have a pension pot 4% higher if they start saving immediately at 18, than if they were to start saving at age 22. Putting these two changes together can help people increase their chances of achieving their retirement goals.

So, there's no doubt that on paper, continuing with further legislation could have a positive impact on the savings gap. The DWP's ambition is to implement these changes as part of the AE framework in the mid 2020s.

The charts below also illustrate how removing the lower limit on salary for contributions can have a significant impact on better retirement outcomes.



3. The impact of the triple lock

The triple lock defines the way that the State Pension increases are calculated – it doesn't apply to private pensions. However, the State Pension and the triple lock are important when we're considering what people's total retirement income might be.

Introduced in 2011, the triple lock guarantees that the basic State Pension will rise by a minimum of either 2.5%, the rate of inflation or average earnings growth, whichever is largest. The triple lock is due to last at least until 2020 – and is assumed to continue in the PPI modelling.

The impact of the triple lock on the retirement income of younger generations is likely to be greater than it is for current pensioners.

When the first millennials reach their State Pension Age, the triple lock would have been in effect for around 40 years, therefore would have had a longer period to influence the level of State Pension.

If the triple lock were to be removed, then there are two likely replacement policies:

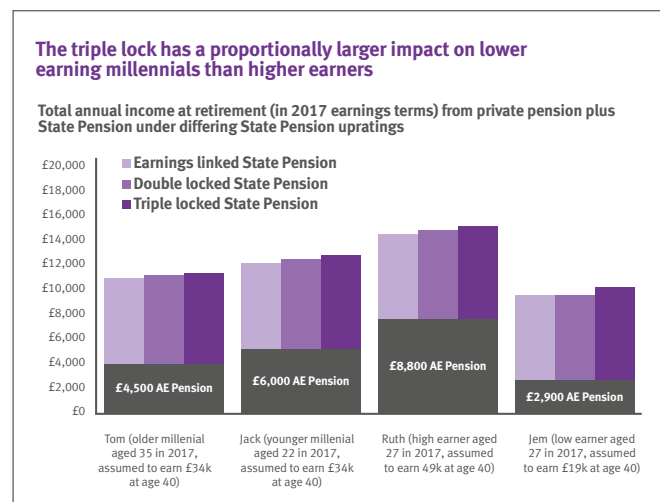
- 'Double lock' – the greater of earnings and consumer price index (CPI)
- Earnings growth

The proportional impact of a change in State Pension is shown in the charts below:

Millennials are probably the generation which has the greatest opportunity to benefit from the full range and impact of auto-enrolment and other pension related legislation.

But it's vital to consider whether this is enough: modelling is hypothetical and only provides part of the picture.

We need to explore the human reaction to this 'top down' change – particularly amongst the people it impacts the most.



How can financial education and good communications shape the way ahead

Financial
education and
employee
engagement

Legislation might have increased membership levels, but people are also less likely to engage with contribution decisions. They see themselves as having little personal control and few options.

Employers have the worry of employees not being able to afford the contribution increase under phasing – but this isn't their only concern. Contribution phasing results in more costs for employers, but if their employees don't value their workplace pension benefit, there's no perceived commercial benefit.

The engagement challenge

Employee engagement is a challenge for employers that extends beyond workplace pensions. Overall employee engagement – measured by Glassdoor data – is flat year on year.

In their 2017 study, Global Human Capital Trends, Deloitte report a 14% decline in organisations' ability to address issues of engagement and culture since the previous year. And this isn't just something that's 'nice to have' – strong employee engagement translates into better customer service and so better commercial results for business.

(Source: Global Human Capital Trends, Deloitte, 2017)

To tackle this particular issue, we need to get inside the employee mind-set. We know that pay and financial benefits are the number one priority for people of all generations when it comes to evaluating an employer. But, that doesn't necessarily mean they value the pension.

That's because generally, people find it difficult to think about tomorrow. Research carried out by the Financial Advice Working Group for HM Treasury and the FCA concludes that, *'People do not look to secure a financially sustainable future early enough. We found that younger people focused on the here and now, with a tendency to over-estimate their future ability to save and under-estimate how much they would need to retire comfortably.'*



Close the gap through engagement

Since we started on the auto-enrolment journey in 2012, a lot of work has been done across the sector to understand the impact of engagement on encouraging positive employee interaction with their pension savings.

Auto-enrolment has increased participation – but not necessarily engagement. In fact, the DWP calls auto-enrolment an ‘inertia-based approach.’ But it also says that engagement can complement auto-enrolment and influence attitudes towards pension saving and behaviour. How? By reinforcing messages at key points when people have decisions to make about continuing to save – or saving more.

And crucially, this is not a one-way communication ‘push’ – it’s a far more complex approach.

Building on capability, opportunity and motivation

There’s a large body of evidence that suggests that multiple factors influence behaviour. There are three main elements, capability (can afford to save), opportunity (access to a pension), and motivation (recognising a need to save).

But it’s when these elements are combined with ‘nudges’ that we’re most likely to see genuine engagement and behavioural change.

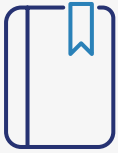
Nudges are designed to create an emotional response that results in positive action. But the way they’re delivered needs to be considered and deliberate.

They work best if they come from a person or organisation that’s trusted and relevant to the individual. In the case of a workplace pension, that’s more likely to be the employer.

In the next section, we’ll show how our own research backs up this hypothesis.

So, we understand the theory of how effective engagement in this context has to be a multi-dimensional combination of the ‘lethargic’ legislative approach and proactive, well planned and executed communication.

But does this work in practice?



A practical example

Changing perceptions of auto-enrolment contribution phasing through effective communications

Method and context

We teamed up with Scott Porter Research and Marketing to conduct a study into reactions to different ways of engaging with people about contribution phasing. The research sample included people from across all demographic groups, who were all auto-enrolled into a workplace pension.

Qualitative methodology

22 face-to-face depths (1 hour in length)

Research objective

The main goal of this research was to provide guidance on the development of a letter template. This is the template that Standard Life provides to employers so they can communicate auto-enrolment minimum contribution increases to their employees.

Specific objectives were to

- assess the extent to which the 'enhanced' version has the potential to impact on perceptions of the contributions rise and increase employees' engagement with their pension

- explore understanding of key messages and extent of engagement
- establish reactions to the language and structure of the letters
- assess the impact on opt-out rates

The situation is complex; there's a huge amount of inertia due to poor engagement and we need to change this to improve outcomes. But at the same time, we need to make sure our messages are received in the right way – so we avoid a scenario where people 'wake up' to their pension and react by opting out.

We tested different versions of communications informing employees about the auto-enrolment minimum contribution increase. They had differences in layout, tone, presentation style and content.

One was more formal, the other less formal with a more approachable tone.

A few examples of tested communications

Letter A

Hi Mary Smith,
30 Lifford Road
Edinburgh
EH4 2JH

Dear Mary,

We are writing you to let you know that from April 2018 legislation is changing and the minimum amount saved into your workplace pension, both by you and by us, will increase.

By joining our pension scheme you have taken the first step towards achieving the lifestyle you want at retirement. It's time to build together on this success by saving more.

By law, minimum contributions will increase in two phases.

Date effective	Employee minimum contribution	Employer minimum contribution	Total minimum contribution
Current contribution	2%	3%	5%
6 April 2018 to 5 April 2019	3%	2%	5%
6 April 2019 onwards	5%	3%	8%

Paying a bit more into your pension scheme today will have a small impact on your current earnings, but will make a big difference to how much you get back at retirement.

What do you have to do?

The increase will happen automatically; you don't have to take any action. However, you can also choose to save more than the minimum amount should you wish.

On your pay slip you will see your contributions and our contributions. You will not see your tax relief. This is added to your pension separately.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Day
HR Director

Standard Life Assurance Limited is registered in Scotland (SC26632) at Standard Life House, 30 Lifford Road, Edinburgh EH4 2JH. Standard Life Assurance Limited is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority and regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service. www.standardlife.com
G1407000 1007 © 2017 Standard Life Aberdeen. Images reproduced under license. All rights reserved.

Letter B and illustration leaflet

Hi Mary Smith,
30 Lifford Road
Edinburgh
EH4 2JH

Dear Mary,

It's time to step up for your future

Joining our pension scheme was your first step towards a better lifestyle in retirement and the beginning of a team effort to get you there. Now it's time to build on this together by saving more.

By law, from 6 April 2018, pension contributions are required to increase to a total minimum of 5% (3% employee minimum contribution and 2% minimum employer contributions).

1 What's changing?

The minimum amount saved into your workplace pension, both by you and by us, will increase. Here's how the new combined contributions will work.

Before Prior to 6 April 2018	Now 6 April 2018 to 5 April 2019	In the future From 6 April 2019
1% Employee's minimum contribution	3% Employee's minimum contribution	5% Employee's minimum contribution
1% Employer's minimum contribution	2% Employer's minimum contribution	3% Employer's minimum contribution
2% Total minimum contribution	5% Total minimum contribution	8% Total minimum contribution

The power of saving just 2% more

Saving a little more now will move you closer to the retirement you want in future.

Looking back, more than 28% of pre-retirees and over 23% of retirees regret their choices and wish they have saved more by putting aside a larger share of their income for retirement. *Don't be one of them.*

It's a small amount which can make a big difference

John 23

Assumptions
Current salary: £22,000
Salary progression at mid-rate: 4%
Active Plus II Universal SIPP Lifestyle Profile
Average yearly cost of charges: 1.1%
Retirement age: 65

Contributions now:
John saves into his pension: 1%
Employer contributes: 1%
Contributions from 6 Apr 2018:
John saves into his pension: 3%
Employer contributes: 2%

Monthly contributions before the 6th of April 2018
You'll get tax relief: £4.5

Monthly contributions after the 6th of April 2018
You'll get tax relief: £13.5

The power of saving just 2% more

Saving just 2% more will have a small impact on your current earnings, but it will make a big difference to how much you get back at retirement. Check the leaflet to find out how.

You're not on your own. We are all helping in the step up.

We will help by increasing our contributions paid into your pension to 2%. The Government will also support you by offering income tax relief on your contributions. All these will be giving your future a huge boost.

What do you have to do?

- Nothing, the increase will happen automatically. You don't need to do anything.
- On your pay slip, you'll see your contributions, as well as what we've added. You won't see your tax relief. This additional amount is paid into your pension pot separately.

Tip: Use the retirement calculator to track your progress towards reaching your goals.

Yours sincerely,

Mark Day
HR Director

Ask

If you have any questions about auto-enrolment minimum contributions increases, please contact our pension team at:
Pensions House
1 St Andrew's Place
Reading
Berkshire RG1 1BX

Or if you have questions regarding your workplace pension, please contact Standard Life call centre at:
0800 634 3027
available Monday to Friday
from 9am to 5pm

Standard Life Assurance Limited is registered in Scotland (SC26632) at Standard Life House, 30 Lifford Road, Edinburgh EH4 2JH. Standard Life Assurance Limited is authorised by the Financial Conduct Authority and regulated by the Prudential Regulation Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service. www.standardlife.com
G1407000 1007 © 2017 Standard Life Aberdeen. Images reproduced under license. All rights reserved.

First things first

Before we tested the actual communication, we first sense-checked employees' general perception of their workplace pension.

There was a feeling that pensions are a good thing to have. But there was also a lack of understanding of the main features and benefits – in particular tax relief – and a perception that there's very little personal control.

Starting from this low base of understanding and interest, we could be forgiven for making some assumptions around which of the two versions of the communication is more effective. Surely people across the board will respond better to the less formal, more accessible approach?

In fact, the results show just how complex it can be to get engagement right – why we must never make assumptions and why we must constantly adapt and refine our approach.

When we consider that we're trying to influence behaviour with this communication – to get people interested enough to save more and not opt-out – then it's useful to sense check the scenario against the three key elements that influence behavioural change. Capability, opportunity and motivation.

People enrolled in a workplace pension definitely have the **opportunity** to save more; however, at the moment, we see little evidence of any **motivation** beyond a passive acceptance that pensions are probably a good thing. And in terms of **capability**, we've already highlighted some concerns about affordability with an increase in contribution level.

So, not only do we have a low base of understanding, we have some shaky foundations when it comes to being able to change behaviour in this scenario.



Our key findings

1. The power of language

As we get into the specifics of the two types of communication, this is where we see how important the choice of language is. In fact, the reaction to both were polarised and influenced entirely by tone and layout – not by customer profile. There's an extremely fine balance between being accessible and being professional.

Conversely, a formal approach lacks the capacity to engage and could be discarded as another 'boring' letter. (Feedback related to letter A)

The main response engendered by letter A is one of resigned acceptance. After reading this letter people see the minimum contribution increase as something that can't be affected and as another 'tax' to put up with.

Examples of spontaneous reactions on letter A



"It's another cost."

Male, 34, £27-30k, SME



"I feel like you're almost railroaded into agreeing to this."

Female, 22, £22-27k, SME



"Very corporate: here you go, don't worry about it, don't make too much noise."

Male, 22, £22-27k, large employer



"Even though I like it and it looks professional, for me, if this is all I got... it's almost like this would be the letter you sent out if you didn't really want people to know what was happening... You get letters like this from your bank all the time and you never read them."

Female, 38, £22-27k, medium employer

Our sample showed that being too 'salesy' and informal in the choice of language detracts from the importance of the message (feedback related to letter B).

Examples of spontaneous reactions on letter B



"This one is more positive about a negative thing."

Female, 24, £27-30k, SME



"It sounds like some sort of sales pitch. It should be clear and serious, but instead it's like they're trying to sell you something."

Female, 38, £22-27k, medium employer



"Actually I don't feel it has gravitas. I feel the colours are wrong and there are too many gimmicky bits. It'd be better if it were more concise."

Female, 50, £27-30k, SME

Our sample group was also quick to judge the language used in both version of the letter. For example, the word 'joining' in relation to the scheme jarred with the perception that they actually had no choice.

2. Personalisation to improve motivation

Both styles of communication – formal and informal – on their own failed to make our sample group feel as though the messages were personal to them.

So, we included as part of the less formal communication (Letter B) an illustration leaflet. This by itself got by far the most positive response from our sample. It also stood out positively from the usual types of financial communication.

And even though it wasn't personalised to each individual, the illustration showed an example of what the contribution increase would mean to someone – an illustration that made the benefit very tangible.

It used strong visuals and colour, and encouraged the majority of our sample to focus on the projected value.

Most significantly, many in our sample found it provoking and for some, it changed how they felt about the amendments made to the letters.



“Really good! So if you were thinking: I can't really afford it, or what's the point, it puts it into context... there's obviously a big difference, so it's good.”

Female, 24, £22-27k, large employer



“So this bottom part... that's what I wanted to see, that calculation, so it's really helpful. It has a bigger impact that I would have realised.”

Female, 35, £22-27k, large employer



“(The letter) is just kind of telling you what's happening, but this is putting it down to a familiar situation and I think that's more relatable.”

Female, 24, £27-30k, SME



“I think that's the figure (pot value) that most people would be interested in... I wasn't thinking: Oh God! It's going to be £54 a month now off my wages! I was more thinking: Oh - that's cool. I'm actually doubling what I'm giving a month.”

Male, 27, £27-30k, SME



“Yes, very (useful) - it's amazing... it's so inspiring when you see the amount and it's in black and white - there's no messing about, it's completely obvious, it's using someone as an example and giving facts.”

Female, 38, £22-27k, medium employer

Around half of our sample was motivated by the potential growth. A minority was worried about the increase in contributions and some were still carried along by inertia.

So, when we combine this strong positive reaction with the insight around tone and length, our findings conclude that modifying a communication to include the example illustration and strengthening the benefit messaging overall should have the strongest impact on engagement and behaviour.

Based on the findings of this research – and the feedback received as part of this study – we’ve developed an employee letter template to help employers communicate the auto-enrolment minimum contribution increases.

Standard Life clients will soon be able to access employee letter templates for the 2019 auto-enrolment contribution phasing and these will be available through your regular point of contact.

3. The power of delivery through the right channel

Getting the tone and layout right is crucial – but the right delivery is just as important. Overall delivery channels that offer personalisation and tools that help people model scenarios are the most effective.

In this particular scenario, our sample thought that a letter was the best channel – alongside a website portal that allowed them to calculate the impact of different contribution levels.

What we’ve learnt

- It’s clear that a style which is noticeably different from a familiar financial communication has more immediate impact – and the potential to encourage better engagement (letter B).
- However, it’s important to ensure that the increased informality of the context doesn’t impact on the perceived importance of the communication – and diminish quick and easy take-out of key messages.
- Tone of voice is key to building trust and credibility. While a degree of informality can increase accessibility and encourage reading, it’s important that perceived professionalism is not compromised. Any suggestion of ‘being marketed to’ is considered inappropriate for this type of communication.
- The strongest feature of the letters is the illustration that supports letter B. It gives an example of the potential of the benefit of increased contributions – and serves both to educate and to make the pension itself more tangible as a personal asset.
- The study revealed that people don’t understand how pensions work, or tax relief.
- The majority of respondents claimed that, having seen the potential value of their pension through the vehicle of the illustration, they were inclined to stay opted in. Some recognise that their own inertia would compound this. Those on the lowest incomes, and/or with strong alternative demands on their finances are likely to evaluate in the context of their personal situation – but probably not until 2019.

Here’s an example of one of our final employee letter templates

<Add relevant mail merge fields here>

Dear <insert name>

From 6 April 2018, the minimum amount saved into your workplace pension, both by you and by us, will increase. This change is required by law.

What are the increases?


Between 6 April 2018 and 5 April 2019 the total minimum pension contributions will increase. Rates will rise again from 6 April 2019. Here’s how the new combined contributions will work.

	Before Prior to 6 April 2018	Now 6 April 2018 to 5 April 2019	In the future From 6 April 2019
Employee’s minimum contribution	1%	3%	5%
Employer’s minimum contribution	1%	2%	3%
Total minimum contribution	2%	5%	8%


Minimum contribution levels based on qualifying fund earnings.

What do you have to do?

Nothing, the increase will happen automatically.

 **Tip:** Log in to your workplace pension account and use “Project my retirement income” tool to track your progress towards reaching your retirement goals.

Yours sincerely
<insert name>

Saving a little more now will ensure you prosper 

The power of saving just a little bit more now

John 37

Assumptions
Current Pensionable Salary*: £27,000 Retirement age: 65

Example 1:
John saves 2% into his pension. His employer contributes 2%, until age 65. (The employer does not legally have to increase their payment to 2% until 6th April 2019).

Monthly contributions:
John contributes: £22.50 (John receives £4.50 of a tax relief)
Employer contributes: £22.50
Total contributions: £45

Projected value of John’s pension pot with current savings levels:
£20,700

Example 2:
John saves 2% into his pension. His employer contributes 2%, until age 65. (The employer does not legally have to increase their payment to 2% until 6th April 2019).

Monthly contributions:
John contributes: £67.50 (John receives £13.50 of a tax relief)
Employer contributes: £45
Total contributions: £112.50

Projected value of John’s pension pot when saving just 2% more:
£51,900

Example 3:
John saves 5% into his pension. His employer contributes 3%, until age 65. (The employer does not legally have to increase their payment to 3% until 6th April 2019).

Monthly contributions:
John contributes: £112.50 (John receives £22.50 of a tax relief)
Employer contributes: £67.50
Total contributions: £180

Projected value of John’s pension pot when saving 5% more:
£83,100

* John would pay tax of £4.50 if he didn’t make a pension contribution. * John would pay tax of £13.50 if he didn’t make a pension contribution. * John would pay tax of £22.50 if he didn’t make a pension contribution.

Other assumptions:

Salary will increase each year (and contributions in line with this) by 4%	Investment is to the Active Plus II Universal S&P	Average yearly growth rate 1.0%	Average yearly cost of plan and investment charges 0.75%
--	---	---------------------------------	--

To help you understand the value of your investment in the future, we have allowed for inflation in our calculations. In the early 1980s, we have reduced all growth rates by 2.5% to allow for inflation. Some types of investments or savings plans, for example a savings account or a cash ISA, do not take account of inflation, so may have more attractive than they actually are if you’re comparing them to this illustration. The value of investments can go down in value as well as up, so you could get back less than you invest.

Your employer deducts your pension payment from your salary after National Insurance has been calculated but before your income tax has been worked out. Because your payments are taken from your “before tax” (Gross) salary, tax relief is at the highest rate of tax that you pay. * Current Pensionable Salary is the amount of your salary which is used in the calculation of your pension contributions.

 If you have any questions about auto-enrolment minimum contributions increases, please contact: <insert your contact details here>

Standard Life Assurance Limited is a company registered in Scotland (SC146620) or, if registered in the UK, it is a company registered in England (01454716). Standard Life Assurance Limited is a company registered in England (01454716).



Conclusions

The most important learning to take from this research, from an engagement and behaviour perspective, is how important it is to adapt to the way people want to engage with their pension. Different message types may need different approaches. And the most damaging thing we can do is impose our assumptions – without checking that we've got the right tone and channel for our audience.

More often than not (as in the case of contribution phasing) regulation is the catalyst for change. But unless we combine this with a carefully considered communication strategy, it won't be easy for that change to happen.

The younger generation have the most to gain from auto-enrolment over the long term. And by working together to bring our collective insight and capability to this challenge, we can successfully build a savings culture for them – and for everyone.

Standard Life

There's a lot to look forward to

Standard Life Assurance Limited is owned by the Phoenix Group and uses the Standard Life brand under licence from the Standard Life Aberdeen Group. You can find more information about Standard Life Aberdeen plc's strategic partnership with Phoenix at www.standardlife.com/partnership

Standard Life Assurance Limited is registered in Scotland (SC286833) at Standard Life House, 30 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2DH.

Standard Life Assurance Limited is authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority. www.standardlife.co.uk

'1825' is the brand for Standard Life Aberdeen Group's UK financial planning and advice business.

'1825' is a trading name used by Pearson Jones plc, which is part of the Standard Life Aberdeen Group (Standard Life Aberdeen plc and its subsidiaries). Pearson Jones plc is registered in England (01447544) at 14th Floor 30 St. Mary Axe, London, England, EC3A 8BF and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority. www.1825.com

Vebnet Limited is registered in Scotland (SC207389) at Standard Life House, 30 Lothian Road, Edinburgh EH1 2DH and is an appointed representative of Pearl Group Management Services Limited. Pearl Group Management Services Limited is registered in England (3588063) at 1 Wythall Green Way, Wythall, Birmingham B47 6WG, and is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

Vebnet Limited is owned by the Phoenix Group and uses the Standard Life brand under licence from the Standard Life Aberdeen Group. You can find more information about Standard Life Aberdeen plc's strategic partnership with Phoenix at www.standardlife.com/partnership

Pearl Group Management Services Limited is also a member of the Phoenix Group. www.thephoenixgroup.com