1. Being a pre-1994 pension member, every year my pension statement has the final salary date when I am 65, can you confirm that the pre 1994 member agreement where as a woman I can still retire with no detriment to my University pension still stands.

A: Yes, for a female (pre-1994) member retiring from service before age 65, pension and lump sum benefits are not reduced for early payment if retirement takes place between the ages of 60 and 65.

For a male (pre-1994) member retiring from service before age 65, the same applies only to pension and lump sum benefits for pensionable service completed after 17 May 1990 (pension and lump sum benefits for pensionable service completed before 17 May 1990 would be reduced for early payment).

1. If a pre-1994 member, for any reason (either by choice or redundancy), was to leave the University before their 60th birthday, would they still be entitled to their full pension rights at the age of 60?

A: For a female (pre-1994) member who leaves the University before their 60th birthday, pension and lump sum benefits are not reduced for early payment if the member requests the commencement of pension payments to take place between the ages of 60 and 65. This is subject to the consent of the Trustees.

For a male (pre-1994) member who leaves the University before their 60th birthday, the same applies only to pension and lump sum benefits for pensionable service completed after 17 May 1990 (pension and lump sum benefits for pensionable service completed before 17 May 1990 would be reduced for early payment). This is subject to the consent of the Trustees.

1. As one of the members with the right to retire at 60 (pre-1994), does anyone know if the university will credit us with the extra five years contributions financially, or is it just that we can go with no detriment?

A: The option available to pre-1994 members is to retire between the ages of 60 and 65 without having their pension amount reduced for early payment, as outlined in the answers given above. A pre-1994 member retiring between the ages of 60 and 65 would not be entitled to a credit of additional contributions or service.
2. Voluntary severance/retirement has reduced the Scheme’s membership by 47 members. How does this affect the viability of the scheme going onward?

A: This does not affect the viability of the Scheme. The Scheme remains open to new members and continues to be supported by the University.
3. Could we have updated figures on the value of the fund as at March 2016? As the markets have been up and down since July 2015

A: The latest funding update was done with an effective date of 30 April 2016. The funding level at that date was 91%. The funding level at 30 April 2015 was 94%.

The fund value at 30 April 2016 was £120,634,000 compared with £123,414,000 at 30 April 2015.

1. Prior to 6th April 2016, our NI contributions were reduced because we were contracted out. Because of this, we were entitled to a lesser state pension on retirement.
Now that we have had to increase our contributions to the standard rate, does this mean that we are entitled to the full state pension?

A: In order to receive a full State Pension an individual must have 35 qualifying years on their National Insurance Record under the new single tier (‘flat-rate’) system.

Any years where they were contracted out will reduce this total of qualifying years therefore members of the Scheme who were contracted are unlikely to receive the full single tier State Pension. See <https://www.gov.uk/new-state-pension/how-its-calculated> for further details.

1. In the Income & Expenditure section of the Short Report, why is the employee contributions figure so low in comparison to the employer contributions figure?

A: The Scheme uses a Salary Sacrifice arrangement which is an agreement between an employer and an employee whereby the member’s gross salary is reduced by an amount equal to the relevant pension contribution. The employer then makes an additional contribution equal to this salary adjustment. These contributions are classified as employer contributions. Scheme members are eligible to join this arrangement after three months membership and most do, as the reduction in gross salary results in a reduction in the amount of National Insurance contributions they pay. The employee contribution figure only relates to contributions from members who have not joined this Salary Sacrifice arrangement.