



Pensions Manager Candidate Information

November 2025

The Institute of Cancer Research

About our organisation

We are one of the world's most influential cancer research institutes with an outstanding record of achievement dating back more than 100 years. We are world leaders in identifying cancer genes, discovering cancer drugs and developing precision radiotherapy. Together with our hospital partner The Royal Marsden, we are rated in the top four centres for cancer research and treatment worldwide. As well as being a world-class institute, we are a college of the University of London.

We came second in the league table of university research quality compiled from the Research Excellence Framework (REF 2021). We have charitable status and rely on support from partner organisations, charities, donors and the general public. We have more than 1000 staff and postgraduate students across three sites – in Chelsea and Sutton.

Human Resources Directorate

We know that talented, brilliant, passionate people lie at the heart of the ICR. That's why we provide the policies, procedures, systems and people management infrastructure to recruit, retain, motivate and develop our people to achieve their full potential. We offer both operational and strategic support to teams across the ICR. We are organised across four main functions:

- HR Operations
- Learning and Organisational Development
- Pensions
- Reward, Information and Systems

The ICR's future success depends on recruiting the very best people with the very best skills and our HR strategy ensures that we have the organisational capacity and capability to deliver this.

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Pensions Manager

This role will provide a high quality, professional and customer-focussed pensions service across the employee lifecycle, in line with HR and Pensions policies and procedures and agreed service levels.

Our mission
is to make the
discoveries that
defeat cancer.

Our values

The ICR has a highly skilled and committed workforce, with a wide variety of roles, each requiring different skills. But whether you work as a researcher, or work as part of our corporate team, your work and behaviour is underpinned by these six values. They are what bring us together as one team - as 'One ICR'.



Pursuing excellence

We aspire to excellence in everything we do and aim to be leaders in our field.



Acting with Integrity

We promote an open and honest environment that gives credit and acknowledges mistakes, so that our actions stand up to scrutiny.



Valuing all our people

We value the contribution of all our people, help them reach their full potential, and treat everyone with kindness and respect.



Working together

We collaborate with colleagues and partners to bring together different skills, resources and perspectives.



Leading innovation

We do things differently in ways that no one else has done before and share the expertise and learning we gain.



Making a difference

We all play our part, doing a little bit more, a little bit better, to help improve the lives of people with cancer.

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Our values set out how each of us at the ICR, works together to meet our mission – to make the discoveries that defeat cancer.

They summarise our desired behaviours, attitudes and culture – how we value one another and how we take pride in the work we do, to deliver impact for people with cancer and their loved ones.”

Professor Kristian Helin
Chief Executive

Pensions Manager

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Job description

Department / division: Human Resources

Pay grade / staff group: Professional Services 2

Hours / duration: Part time (30 hours per week), Monday to Friday.

Reports to: Head of Reward, HR Systems and Information

Accountable to:

Main purpose of the job: This role will provide a high quality, professional and customer-focussed pensions service across the employee lifecycle, in line with HR and Pensions policies and procedures and agreed service levels.

Duties and responsibilities:

Execution of Pension Schemes

- To ensure all pension contributions are deducted, reported, and paid in-line with scheme rules and within scheme deadlines.
- To ensure the administration of all pension schemes operating within ICR is completed accurately and within specified deadlines.
- To oversee the collection, recording and reporting of accurate salary information to appropriate parties and within scheme deadlines.
- To ensure all data and financial requirements are completed and submitted securely to all pension schemes accurately and within deadlines.
- To liaise with relevant ICR colleagues/departments to ensure ICR's payroll is programmed to accept and calculate accurate salary and contribution data, identifying areas of concern and suggesting solutions, disseminating and managing necessary pension related changes.
- To take responsibility for ensuring financial control accounts reflect deduction schedules/payments submitted to schemes, and monies returned from schemes, and agreeing balances with the Research Accountants.

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- To conduct employer consultation exercises with all staff under the instruction of USS and/or NHSPS.
- To develop, review, communicate, and implement HR and Pension policies, procedures and guidance documents, ensuring adherence to scheme rules, legal compliance, and best practice.
- To be responsible for the management and payment process of all ex-gratia pension payments

Expertise and Guidance

- To keep up to date with all pension issues as they relate to pension scheme membership within ICR and the Trustees of the ICR Pension Scheme.
- To liaise with other departments within ICR to ensure the effective running of all pension services.
- To ensure the provision of professional and timely information and guidance to staff on complex pension issues, including redundancy, retirement, dismissal, death-in-service, and ill-health situations, HMRC regulations, and proposed scheme changes, initiating and/or participating in formal meetings as appropriate.
- To prepare complex pension related calculations, manage complex casework, and participate in formal meetings in all pension related areas, including sickness / maternity leave of absence, redundancy, dismissal, and death-in-service.
- To identify, prepare and disseminate information on new and updated scheme rules and pension related legislation to staff and members of the HR/Pensions/associated teams as appropriate, providing guidance and training where required.
- To establish effective working relationships with staff and relevant ICR teams, taking a proactive approach to the management of pension related issues, and encouraging and coaching staff and teams to engage with scheme rules and legislation early.
- To prepare and present in-house training sessions and seminars in areas such as pension scheme membership, legislative and scheme changes, and Retirement Planning.
- To prepare, review, and amend pension scheme information for ICR recruitment and appointments, liaising with ICR's recruitment and HR teams to ensure up-to-date information is provided in advertisements, to applicants, and in contracts of employment.
- Attend training/seminars held by outside providers, including USS and NHSPS and the advisers to ICRPS, and advise on implications for ICR, the ICRPS Trustees, and scheme members.

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- Provide full support and co-operation to ICR's internal auditors in relation to the running of ICR's Pensions Team as required.
- To carry out project work and associated tasks to support the work of the department in delivering the HR strategy.
- To undertake any other duties, consistent with the nature and grade of the post that may be required to deliver the organisational and HR/Pension strategies.

ICR Pension Scheme Responsibilities

- To be Scheme Secretary of the ICR Pension Scheme (a closed scheme).
- To manage the ICRPS Internal Disputes Resolution Procedure, providing external advisers and the Pensions Ombudsman with all relevant information as required.
- To review all ICRPS policies and procedures regularly to ensure compliance, relevance and accuracy, updating the Scheme Reference Document as necessary.
- To lead on the recruitment and appointment process of ICR Pension Scheme Member Nominated Trustees.
- To provide support to the ICR's Head of Corporate Governance in the appointment of Lay Trustees of ICR Pension Scheme.
- To act on behalf of and as representative of the Trustees and foster a close working relationship with the Chair of Trustees.
- To provide technical and governance support to the Trustees, working closely with, and challenging where necessary, external advisers on their behalf.
- To liaise with the ICR Director of Corporate Governance on the appointment of lay-Trustees to the scheme.
- To liaise with the Chair of Trustees in the run-up to formal Trustee meetings, anticipating agenda items, obtaining relevant information and flagging relevant issues in advance.
- To be responsible for setting up and running all sub-committees of the Trustees as requested, preparing the Terms of Reference in line with Trustee requirements.

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- To review appointments made by the Trustees, bringing review dates to their notice and discuss if re-tendering is required.
- To be responsible for reviewing, preparing and distributing all documentation (including the Invitation to Tender paper), processes and appointments associated with all tendering exercises for external advisers to the scheme as requested by the Trustees.
- To be responsible for managing internal and external complaints made to the Trustees
- To be responsible and accountable for providing a robust governance framework that adheres to The Pension Regulator codes of practice.
- To be responsible for managing Scheme Adviser relationships and monitoring scheme performance.
- To liaise with all Scheme appointed external advisers to provide information and support to the Trustees of ICR Pension Scheme, judging when and to whom to circulate relevant information, and co-ordinating responses as appropriate.
- To identify, prepare and manage the updating of relevant documentation relating to the ICRPS, including revision to the Scheme Trust Deed and Rules, Scheme Guide to Deferred Members, and the Scheme Reference Document.
- To maintain accurate and up-to-date records of Trustee appointments and identify relevant training needs and opportunities for them, maintaining and reporting accurate records of this on an annual basis.
- To ensure all ICR Pension Scheme charges are paid from the appropriate budget, maintaining an accurate record of the payments and reporting on them when required.
- To be responsible for reviewing the ICR Pension Scheme risk management process, updating and presenting to the Trustees the ICR Pension Scheme risk log at six monthly intervals.
- To be responsible for the contents and annual updating of the ICR Pension Scheme Reference Document, presenting it to the Trustees of the ICRPS on an annual basis.
- To identify, prepare, and submit agenda items and papers for inclusion in formal ICR Pension Scheme Trustee Board meetings.
- To attend and participate in all ICRPS Trustees meetings, to provide support to the Trustees, ensuring all actions agreed at the meetings are implemented in a timely and professional manner.

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- To liaise with procurement to ensure the annual Trustee Indemnity Insurance is up to date.
- To provide support and assistance to the appointed Scheme advisers and Trustees in the preparation, completion and reporting of the Triennial Actuarial Valuation.
- To provide support and assistance to the appointed Scheme Auditors in the preparation, completion and reporting of the annual Independent Auditor's Report to the Trustees of ICRPS.
- To judge when and where to consult with and involve external professional advisers and monitor expenditure to ensure service quality and value for money.
- To arrange meetings, prepare and issue supporting packs, production of draft minutes, and following up on the action points.
- Maintain and update the risk register, prepare the annual budget and timetable and ensure the conflicts of interest register is kept up to date.

Line Management

- To be responsible for the line management of the Pensions Officer and Pensions Contribution Officer, including their ongoing performance and development via regular 1-1s and annual appraisals.
- To respond promptly and appropriately to customer feedback relating to pension service provision, acting where necessary to investigate issues arising, and identifying ways in which pension service provision can be improved, in consultation with external advisers, Pension and HR colleagues and other departments as appropriate.
- To provide cover for Pension Team colleagues as required.

General

All staff must ensure that they familiarise themselves with and adhere to any ICR policies that are relevant to their work and that all personal and sensitive personal data is treated with the utmost confidentiality and in line with the General Data Protection Regulations

Any other duties that are consistent with the nature and grade of the post that may be required.

To work in accordance with the ICR's Values.

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To promote a safe, healthy and fair environment for people to work, where bullying and harassment will not be tolerated.

This job description reflects the present position and is subject to review and alteration in detail and emphasis in the light of future changes or development.

Workforce Agreement

The ICR has a workforce agreement stating that Postdoctoral Training Fellows can only be employed for up to 7 years as PDTF at the ICR, providing total postdoctoral experience (including previous employment at this level elsewhere).

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Person specification

Education and Knowledge

Robust working knowledge of current pension law and best practice	E
Strong working knowledge of the Universities Superannuation Scheme and/or the NHS Pensions Scheme	E
Good working knowledge of Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution pension schemes	E
Fully qualified Member of the Pensions Management Institute or the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development	D
Educated to degree level or equivalent	D

Skills and Experience

Extensive pension advisory experience to include: all aspects of contribution and benefit provision; the management of complex pension related casework across a full spectrum of an employee's lifecycle	E
Experience of working and communicating with members, colleagues, scheme providers and appointed advisers on pension benefit provision	E
Experience of using an integrated HR / Payroll database and reporting packages	E
Experience of managing a high-volume workload and working to tight deadlines	E
Experience of developing, implementing and reviewing pension policies and procedures	E
Experience of conflict resolution.	E
Experience of first-line management.	E
Experience of working within service level agreements.	E
Extensive experience of manipulating large quantities of data using Microsoft Excel	E
Experience of using the Agresso Integrated HR / Payroll database	D
Ability to communicate effectively with managers and staff at all levels of the organisation	E
Demonstrable evidence of the ability to influence management and key stakeholders	E
Excellent interpersonal skills which enable the post-holder to quickly develop effective working relationships and establish credibility	E
Ability to manage staff effectively	E
IT skills to include Microsoft Office including Excel	E

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Ability to produce work to a high standard	E
Excellent attention to detail and accuracy	E
Experience of preparing and presenting seminars	D

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Benefits

We offer a fantastic working environment, great opportunities for career development and the chance to make a real difference to defeat cancer. We aim to recruit and develop the best – the most outstanding scientists and clinicians, and the most talented professional and administrative staff.

The annual leave entitlement for full time employees is 28 days per annum on joining. This will increase by a further day after 2 years' and 5 years' service.

Staff membership to the Universities Superannuation Scheme (USS) is available. The USS is a defined benefit scheme and provides a highly competitive pension scheme with robust benefits. The rate of contributions is determined by USS and details of the costs and benefits of this scheme can be found on their website. If staff are transferring from the NHS, they can opt to remain members of the NHS Pension Scheme.

We offer a range of family friendly benefits such as flexible working, a parents' group, and a maternity mentoring scheme. Other great benefits include interest free loans for discounted season tickets for travel and bicycle purchases, access to the NHS discounts website, a free and confidential Employee Assistance Programme which offers a range of well-being, financial and legal advice services, two staff restaurants, and access to a gym and sporting facilities at our Sutton site.

Further information

You may contact **Mohammad Rehman**, Head of Reward, HR Systems and Information for further information by emailing mohammad.rehman@icr.ac.uk. This job description reflects the current position and is subject to review and alteration in detail and emphasis in the light of future changes or development.