

*These notes refer to the Pension Schemes Act (Northern Ireland)
2021 (c.6) which received Royal Assent on 9 August 2021*

Pension Schemes Act (Northern Ireland) 2021

EXPLANATORY NOTES

BACKGROUND AND POLICY OBJECTIVES

3. This Act makes provision for Northern Ireland corresponding to provisions of the Pension Schemes Act 2017 which was passed by the Westminster Parliament.
4. The Pension Schemes Act (Northern Ireland) 2021 aims to build on reforms such as automatic enrolment in workplace pensions. Since completion of the roll-out of automatic enrolment in 2018, 10.2 million people are newly saving or saving more for their retirement. This Act seeks to ensure that savers are appropriately protected, regardless of the sort of pension scheme they are saving in, by increasing the regulation of Master Trusts.
5. Following the coming into force of the pension freedoms in April 2015, many members of pension schemes aged 55 and over were able to access their retirement savings more flexibly. The Westminster Government sought to protect these people from excessive exit charges through the Bank of England and Financial Services Act 2016, which gave the Financial Conduct Authority powers in this respect from April 2017. This Act seeks to provide members of occupational pension schemes with a level of protection equivalent to that of members of personal pension schemes.