Category	Question	Answer
AVC / APC	Should Employee APC's also be interfaced to (Additional Contributions List 2) or should they be excluded as they will be interfaced to the FINANCIAL AUDIT data view i.e.is the Additional Contributions List 2 only for Pre 2014 APC purchases? Or all additional contributions (except AVC's)?	We agree that would be best to keep them separate and not include in the Additional Contributions shown on the Add Conts List . This would then allow you to report on both figures separately if required.
CARE	With each successful i-Connect upload, the cumulative CARE value is updated each month along with the period end date.	Correct
CARE	For existing records the start date of CARE screen is 01/04/????, where '????' is relative to the financial year of the period end date within the csv return.	Correct
CARE	For a new starter with no existing CARE line the start date used is the Date Joined Fund from the csv file.	Correct
CARE	I-Connect only updates the top line of the CARE screen. Data can be preserved by entering a new line of data with 0.01	Correct
CARE	We are coming across more instances where an employer has changed payroll provider mid-year. For example school A was paid by a large payroll provider from April to August on employer code ABCDE Then from September to March they became an academy and moved into a trust, thus taking on a new employer code within Altair FGHI. In this scenario both are feeding data into i-Connect. Would this mean that when the new data comes in from employer FGHI it will overwrite the CARE screen data from April to August from employer ABCDE, or is this preserved naturally because the employer codes are different?	I would recommend that any historic processing is done using Designer Interface to avoid i-Connect overwriting data. You could consider imposing penalties on employers or third parties who cannot supply to you on time in justification of the additional effort required to backload the data.
Contributions	Can the scheme contribution rate be '0'	Yes as long as the this period values are also zero or negative (refunds). However if the record is a new starter then the contribution rate must be present.
Contributions	Should we show contracts with no contributions for the period being reported?" If a member has no contributions but, is included on the report does this get ignored in the event reporting and therefore prevent 0.00 being updated to the this period values. Alternatively if the employer removed the members from the report, they would flag as omissions for the relevant period. Is it safer to keep members on the file to avoid manual manipulation by the employer?	They can leave them on and set the financials to zero. We shouldn't update anything with zeros, as there will be no trigger to raise an event. The cumulative totals should stay as they are.
Data Matching	What key fields are used for data matching?	• NI Number • Payroll reference • Surname • DOB • Gender
Data Matching	We are coming across more employers where we hold data in both Ident1 and Ident2. Neither are directly unique on their own but, when combined with the NI provide a unique reference per contract. Ident 1 may be the HMRC number and Ident2 will be a position. However this position could be shared between various staff within a school, such as a Teaching Assistant for example. I've seen in the spec that a combination of Ident1, 2 & 3 can be used for record matching but, wondered if we are restricted only to Ident2.	Your default matching criteria is NI Number and IDENT2. We can set an override up for each employer, based on any combination of the IDENT fields as you have suggested. If the majority of employers are using IDENT1 and 2, I could amend the default match to this, then set an override for the others.
Data Matching	Forenames are showing with no spaces. Will this be rejected by I-Connect? Ultimately I think we will have to go back to the employer on this as they will potentially be overwriting our forename data fields with merged forenames. This in turn would look wrong on any correspondence sent to the member. They need to fix this to avoid concatenated forenames.	They need to fix this to avoid concatenated forenames.
Data Matching	Employer ABC is linked to i-Connect and submitting data monthly. A member has been linked successfully during the initial member matching stage using NI number and Ident 2 Internally a member of staff changes the Ident 2 When the employer submits the next monthly file, would this raise a flag and propose a member match?	No, i-Connect will still update the record, as the NI NO and payroll reference on the payroll extract file will still match the i-Connect database. We use the Altair member ref and employment ref to update members, so we would find the record and update it (even if the NI Number was different on Altair).
Data Matching	Loading an employer's data retrospectively one month at a time will help capture starters and leavers transition	Be mindful that records may now have left the pension scheme and so the CARE and contribution data will be supressed through ICEXCARE and ICEXCONT exception tasks. In addition the member matching will create conflicts that will require resource to resolve prior to any upload
Data Matching	In month 5, an employer clicks on their omitted records link within i-Connect and tick the box to manually break the link for a casual member not paid for a few months. However in month 7 the record re-appears on the payroll extract file with the same payroll reference and NI number credentials. As long as the record hasn't been deleted from Altair, would i-Connect perform a member matching exercise to the original record or instead would a duplicate new starter be created?	i-Connect would, providing that the record is active and the location, NI No and payroll reference match.

Duplicate Records	The error message reads as: 'The payroll file contains duplicate members that are linked to the same employment on line(s): 126,202'	This isn't a normal duplicate. This error implies that you have two members on the payroll extract file that are pointing to one employment in Altair. This usually happens when a record has been aggregated and the employer leaves the leaver on the payroll extract file following the aggregation. The i-Connect database is changed so that the new starter has the same employment reference as the Altair record that was processed as a leaver. This works fine, unless the leaver is left on, in which case both the incoming members will be pointed to the same record in Altair. The employer will need to remove the leaver from the file in order for it to be processed.
Format	What happens to the file format if a field is missing from the data	I-Connect files are saved as CSV. A header row must be present on the first row of the extract file. As long as all headers are present on the spreadsheet and it is saved as a CSV, then commas will separate the field entries.
Format	We have an employer that have 17 active members over 10 employers. Could they use an online submission given they have different employer codes?	They would have to submit 10 separate online returns, as there isn't an MPP version. They might find it easier to complete an MPP file upload instead. They could maintain the Excel spreadsheet manually.
Format	An employer has supplied a file where all of the addresses do not start in Address Line 1. Wil this cause a problem?	No this will be ok. 2 out of any of the 5 address fields are mandatory along with the post code. May look odd with letters unless using Word integration solution.
FTE Final Pay	If an employer was to send through this field as part of their I-Connect monthly submission, as an annualised amount (e.g £21,000) for each monthly submission, how would this be held on Altair? This reason we were interested is that we wondered if Altair would hold 12 individually dated amounts of the £21,000 in say a new holding screen or a hidden alternative? In turn would this then roll up and feed into the Pensions Remuneration screen as one averaged value for the year.	The value held in the full time equivalent final pay field is always written back as at 31/03/#### (#### being the current scheme year). This means we will overwrite the value held on altair each month, until we move into the new scheme year, then we simply create a new line with the date set 1 year greater (e.g. 31/03/2018). In your example you would only have one entry written back to the right-hand side of the remuneration data view of: 31/03/2017 £21,000 You would not end up with 12 identical entries.
FTE Final Pay	In the field Full Time equivalent Final pay I have entered 0.00, is this OK	A value will be required before 31 March each scheme year to enable Staffordshire Pension Fund to issue annual benefit statements.
FTE Final Pay	In the column Pensionable Pay, if an Assumed Pensionable Pay figure is held in Resourcelink, I'm outputting the Assumed value instead of the Pensionable Pay figure, is this correct?	Correct, pensionable pay should include any APP. Please also repeat this for the cumulative CARE pay.
FTE Final Pay	"Please enter the member's annual final pay, based on the LGPS 2008 definition of pay for the current financial year."Can you confirm is this just be the members basic full time pay or is a more complex calculation needed? If it a more complex calculation, if you could provide a few examples, that would be much appreciated.	Referred to Final Pay definition from intranet
FTE Final Pay	In column 54 – FTE final pay – do you require us to supply employees FTE spinal column point amount plus the FTE for any other permanent pensionable payments ? So the figure supplied to you will be their FTE permanent pensionable pay.	For your FTE pay question, the Full Time Equivalent Final Pay is based on the 2008 definition of pay and therefore excludes non contractual overtime and non pensionable additional hours.
Gender	Is the gender column a mandatory field?	Gender has always been a mandatory field for new starters and existing members.
Leavers	Where an employee transfers jobs from A to B and we had a leave date in the A job, the following months our report will still picking them up as they have cummulative figures for this job in the tax year, although the this period figures are nil. In these cases if their this period figures are nil do we need to take them off the report before we upload it or should we leave it on or does it make no difference ?	In the scenario you have described below, we believe that the best option would be to remove the leaver records from your report. However you need to be sure that no further payments are due to the particular job, such as arrears. You could use the following criteria to help identify records to be removed Cumulative pay is greater than £0.00 Pensionable pay this period equals £0.00 Date of leaving is greater than 62 days (2 months chosen as safety because job may leave on 1st July but not be paid until arrears until 31st August) If you choose to combine records then, the employer cannot have both job A and job B on any further payroll extracts. It will cause the file to reject. Option A is to leave the records on for 1 month after the date of leaving (to cater for arrears payments) and then combine the records (Shropshire workaround) Option B is to leave the records on for the full year then combine the records at Year End. This however causes increased workloads at end of year.
Leavers	Pay Award arrears are due to 60 members that are back dated approximately 6 months	We can't automate the process in i-Connect when it happens months later and leaving leavers on the payroll extract file for longer than two months may cause problems when processing post changes. Leaving leavers on for two months is good practice and if the employer doesn't have post changes you could get them to leave all leavers on the file until the back dated pay award has come through. However, if there are likely to be post changes, it will be much easier for the employer to send you a separate report with the relevant adjustments for each member for manual updating in Altair. This will probably be quicker than processing all the exception workflows that will be created (see comments below). You could also consider using one of the existing ALCARE or NEWCTD interfaces if the numbers are high.
Leavers	Is it ok for an employer to present future dated leavers on their payroll extract?	Yes as long as the status of the record in Altair remains as a 2, CARE and contributions will continue to be uploaded. If the status changed to either a 4 or 5, then the data would be supressed to an ICEXCARE or ICEXCONT task to be applied manually.

Leavers	"Is it ok to keep leaver records on the i-Connect file once they have left?" Heywood response: "Yes, so long as the financial fields have 0.00 and are not blank. This will ensure no event updates are triggered. The CARE end date line will still update with the latest period end date. Originally employers were unable to report records with no pay and this is why the omitted records entry was created". Can I just check with you, does this assume that the leaving record continues to remain separate and does not become aggregated on Altair? We have found some instances on recent retrospective data uploads (we are in June 2020 but, uploading April 2020) that if we have since aggregated a record, there are now 2 records on i-Connect trying to point to the same 1 record on Altair.	You're right about aggregation and leaving the old post on the file. I added the following section to the Admin Authority guide a few years ago: Duplicate Members An error message will be output on the Recent Activities section of the Dashboard if duplicate members are detected at the file upload stage after processing one or more re-matches: It will not be possible to proceed with the file upload until the duplicate records are identified and deleted from the payroll extract file. Duplicate members are reported if a member has been re-matched on the target system, but the member still has two records on the payroll extract file, both with the same NI Number, but one with the previous post number (processed as a leaver on the payroll system), and the second as the new active post with the new payroll reference.
Marital Status	On the latest file, I've manually 'blanked' out the marital status data. Am I right in thinking that 'blank' will not overwrite data in Altair? The reason for me asking is that every record shows an Event update. However I guess this is because last month, every record would have had a code of some sort, whereas this month, I'm blanking the data out. Therefore i-Connect records the event but won't actually update the record with anything.	You're absolutely right, i-Connect won't overwrite the marital status if the payroll extract file value is blank. The hashcode value will be different though, which is why you have so many events.
Omitted Records	During a provisional upload, If I check the omitted tick box to break the link to a record, what will happen if the upload is cancelled?	The link will remain broken unless the upload file is cancelled. Upon cancelling the file i-Connect reverts back to the previous settings, hence the omitted record will return. The record will only become permanently deleted from i-Connects database if the file itself is processed for real.
Omitted Records	Will i-Connect accept records on a monthly return with no CARE or contributions for the period, such as casuals?	Yes, so long as the financial fields have 0.00 and are not blank. This will ensure no event updates are triggered. The CARE end date line will still update with the latest period end date. Originally employers were unable to report records with no pay and this is why the omitted records entry was created.
Omitted Records	Records are showing as omitted even though the leaving date has been supplied on the previous submission	Reason records are omitted The April file that was used for member matching contained these records with future leaving dates present. At the time of member matching, the records on Altair were also inactive and so were matched to an inactive record. During syncronisation data from Altair is given a hash code and stored in Heywood database. As the records on Altair were already inactive, the leaving dates matched those supplied on the member matching file Therefore the hash code generated during syncronisation of Altair data, matches to the hash code of the April 2019 submission. As a result no event is triggered. In turn because no event leaver event was triggered in April, When May is loaded, i-Connect thinks no leaving data was supplied and results in becoming omitted. Solution You can break links once data has been checked. Be aware that any records that subsequently appear on future uploads will no longer match and a duplicate record will be created.
Opt Out	Could you just clarify when employees opt into the pension scheme, we have to manually add in the opt in date to the spreadsheet, is it ok for us to just add the opt in date on the first month spreadsheet or do we need to put the opt in date on every month ?	The main test we covered was in month1 adding an opt-in date to the spreadsheet and uploading the file. A new starter is created as expected. In month 2 we removed the opt-in date and applied the file. Again the record was accepted and cumulative values were uploaded to the record. So in summary it does look as if you would not need to keep manually keep adding in the opt- in date past the 1st month.
Opt Out	With regards to people who have 'opted out' of the pension scheme during the year, do we still need to record this on the spreadsheet if: • Opted out but had a refund from us • Opted out but we have sent a PEN LV1 form to yourselves	Opt outs remain on the extract until they have left employment. In this scenario the member would have an opt out date populating field 51 and then negative values in the this period CARE and conts to account for the payroll refund. If the member has opted out and a PEN LV1 form has been sent through, you can add a date of leaving to field 23. This would in turn make the record a leaver if not done so already via the manual form. On the following months submission, this member would then no longer need to be included.
Opt Out	Do career breaks need to be included on the report?	Career breaks can be inlcuded on the report along with any other breaks in service, such as strike, maternity or paternity breaks. Enter the relevant dates into the fields Suspension Start Date and Suspension End Date.
Opt Out	A record opts out of the pension scheme but remains with the employer.	In principal I-Connect identifies starters and leavers by comparing the current extract with the previous. So say for example record 12345 was present on your March file but, not on your February file then I-Connect would create a new record. Similarly if a record appeared in February but, not in March I-Connect wants to assume that record has now left. However in order to complete this successfully there must be a 'date left' present on the February file. I think this is where the problem lies. In our scenario if we were to remove the opt out records from your payroll extract, I-Connect would think they have left but, because there is no leaving date on the previous file, they would be considered as 'Omitted' records Prior to processing your file each month, there is an option to review these (see screenshot above) and you can delete / break the link with I-Connect so the records will no longer be flagged.
Part-Time	Is a Part-time Indicator of 'Y' required for casual employees (0 contract hours)?	You need to enter a 'C' for casuals and also include a part-time hours effective date. Both WT and PT Hours fields should be left blank. It would be useful for Staffordshire Pension Fund if you could suppress any casual staff from appearing on the payroll extract file for the first time until they have been paid. It's not uncommon for casuals to never work and active records are left on the system without any pay or contributions.

Part-Time	Could you clarify for our term timer who works 25 hrs per week term time but is paid 20.41 hrs per week (every month) do we return 25 hrs on the monthly pension return ?	Part time hours must be pro rated for term-time employees. Given your scenario below I am assuming that the figure of 20.41 is the pro rated value of their term time calculation. Therefore 20.41 should be recorded and not 25.00
Part-Time	Regarding the part time indicator/hours, what should we do in the situation where someone works 37 hours but not 52 weeks/year? For payroll purposes they are PT; should we report them as FT on iConnect, or downscale their PT hours based on their weeks?	When liaising with colleagues in the office over your part time hours scenario, it was agreed that the best practice would be to downscale the members hours based on their weeks. For example if a member worked 37 hours out of 37 hours but not for 52 weeks it may calculate something like this 37.00/37.00 x 45.00/52.14 = 31.93
Part-Time	Please can you confirm the following; •Part time hours field should be filled with the actual part time hours and not pro rata down for annual weeks worked as has been required on SPF previous year ends and leaver papers. •FTE field is members FTE salary pro rata down for annual weeks worked and not there FTE based on all year round as has been required on SPF previous year ends and leaver papers. Many thanks Nichola	Hello, the hours should be pro-rated by the Term Time weeks and the WTE pay should be a notional scaled up amount the TT employee would never get, Q & A below: •Part time hours field should be filled with the actual part time hours and not pro rata down for annual weeks worked as has been required on SPF previous year ends and leaver papers. oAnswer, The hours field should be the contractual hours pro-rated down by the term time paid weeks e.g. 46.66 paid TT weeks / 52.14 * 15 contractual hours = 13.42/37.00 •FTE field is members FTE salary pro rata down for annual weeks worked and not there FTE based on all year round as has been required on SPF previous year ends and leaver papers. oAnswer, The FTE salary should be the WHOLE YEAR, WHOLE WEEKS amount, i.e. a notional amount for a TT employee. We have always required the hours / FTE pay in the manner described in the answers above, if they have been provided in the way of their description we will have calculated the FTE averages wrongly. Other funds may work the opposite but we have always held pro-rated down hours but held a Whole time whole year pay for final salary.
Pensionable Pay	What figure are you expecting in the Column 39 annual pensionable pay? (whole year or prorated for term time weeks?) We are currently reporting an annual actual basic pay figure, without including any additional pay elements, should this be the period pensionable pay, annualised (including additional contractual/ pensionable elements) Also this field states optional on the spec, however should this be 'conditional'	I would just stress that in field 39 we require the annualised figure based on part time / term time paid weeks rate. This is based on the 2014 LGPS Final Salary definition so would not include overtime. For example Whole Time £20,000 Part Time £10,000 Term Time £8,000 We would like the £8,000 to be displayed on your report for applicable members in this field.
Refunds	If an employer have a few employees with negative pay in field 39 (Pensionable Pay) where an employee has opted-out and presumable received a refund. The notes specify only numbers and decimal points can be entered.	You can enter negative values in all financial fields, other than the cumulative CARE pay fields (52/53). The payroll extract file specification does state that negative values are acceptable, but we will revisit the wording to make sure this is more clear in a future version.
Refunds	If an employee does receive a refund within the 3 month period due to opting-out should they be using the Pensionable Pay field to record this information?	Employers can use negative values in data item 39 and data items 47/48 (Employee's contributions), to show that a refund of pay and contributions has been made. Unfortunately the cumulative values for CARE pay (52/53) and contributions (55/56), cannot be amended, as the adjusted values would be zero, which i-Connect ignores. Please note the member's status changes from '1' to 'O' when we process an opt out with less than three months service.
Refunds	Will the file fail to upload if there are any negative figures on the file i.e. for refunds of pension ? or is it ok for current month negatives but not cumulative negatives ?	The only fields that would cause a record to be rejected with a validation error if negatives are present are the cumulative CARE pay fields (52/53).
Service Breaks	Would any paid service breaks be overwritten if an employee elected for an APC to cover the period and the break commencement date remained on the payroll.	I-Connect only detects incremental changes i.e once the date has appeared once it will ignore it on any further submissions.
Status	If marital status updates from the iConnect file, does this trigger a task?	A change of marital status will create a workflow case or task if you have workflow configured for the Member Details Update event. Please note that the following personal details changes will also generate a workflow: • SURNAME • FORENAMES • SEX • DOB • TITLE • JOB TITLE
Status	For which record status will i-Connect upload data for?	• 1 - Active (Yes) • 2 - Undecided Leaver (Yes we treat these as active. However we would suppress the leaver event if the date of leaving was the same as Altair). • 4 - Deferred (Suppressed to exception tasks). • 5 - Pensioner (Suppressed to exception tasks).
Status	If the link is broken to a record will it automatically re-match the next period	Only if the status on Altair is 1 - Active
Status	Could I just check a scenario with you regarding status of a member From previous discussions I know i-Connect will try to upload data to any status 1 or 2 records. Does this change if we manually amend a record status to 2, outside of any i-Connect upload? Scenario i-Connect file for August is processed with record 12345 still showing as active. CARE and conts uploaded successfully Record 12345 is then manually changed to status 2 in Altair. When the September file is uploaded does i-Connect recognise the status as 2 (Altair) or 1 (i-Connect cloud Aug file) Would this difference cause I-Connect to not link and result in a duplicate record being created?	It's the status of the Altair record that is checked by the API, so if you manually amend a record to 2 the same processing will take place. We do record status on the i-Connect database, but this isn't the same as the status list on Altair. On the i-Connect database we have: ACTIVE OMITTED_ACTIVE OPTOUT OMITTED_OPTOUT MATCHED_OPTOUT OMITTED_MATCHED_OPTOUT INACTIVE_LEAVER
Status	I understand that i-Connect will attempt to post data to status 1 and 2 but, wondered what happens when the status on Altair is changed manually?	The APIs check the member's status in Altair, which means it's not an issue if the status is changed manually.
Workflow	What tasks are generated for opt-out records	i-Connect will not generate workflow cases or tasks in the following circumstances: • New starter – if the member opts out in the same pay period as joining • Leaver opt-out – if the opt-out occurs with three months of joining