

Part 2 FAQs: Getting a pension

1. The Dalhousie Pension Plan has a normal retirement date of age 65. Am I required to make contributions to my pension plan if I work past age 65? The Dalhousie Pension plan is limited to 35 years of service. Once you have made contributions to that point, you can no longer make contributions to your pension – regardless of your age.
2. If I reach the maximum limit of pensionable service (i.e. 35 years) at age 60 but I plan to continue work until age 65 or beyond, what salary will be used as the basis for calculating my pension?
Your pension is calculated on the basis of the formula:
Average of your best 3 years' annual salary X Years of Service X .02.
In other words, your 'best salary' is unaffected by the fact you have reached the maximum limit of 35 years of pensionable service. Both your salary and your years of service will continue to grow as usual.
3. If I continue to work beyond 65 years, do I continue to make pension contributions if I have not reached the contribution limit of 35 years of pensionable service?
Yes, you will continue to make pension contributions as usual until you hit the maximum of 35 years of pensionable service.
4. If I retire at age 65, do I have to start drawing my Dalhousie pension immediately?
No, you can take a deferred pension from Dalhousie. Revenue Canada rules under the Income Tax Act require that you start to draw your pension no later than the end of the year in which you turn 71.
5. If there is no 'mandatory' retirement, can I still take an 'early' retirement? If so, how does that affect the pension to which I'm entitled?
If you have reached the age of 55 years with at least 2 years of pension plan membership, you may retire at any point before the Normal Retirement Date of 65 years. Depending on the number of years before age 65, there will be a reduction in the amount of pension to which you are entitled. To determine the reduction in your pension entitlement, check the Actuarial Reduction Chart at the Dalhousie Website:
http://humanresources.dal.ca/personne_4291.html

6. I want to ease my way into retirement, can I take a workload reduction under the pension plan?

Yes, you may apply to the Board (through your Dean) for a 'reduced workload arrangement under the pension plan.' Typically, these arrangements are approved for a year at a time (but they can be longer). Under this arrangement, your Full Time Equivalent (FTE) is reduced to a workload percentage of less than 100% but greater than 50%. You continue to make pension contributions based on your 'actual' salary while the Board makes contributions based on your 'nominal' salary rate as well as making contributions on the difference between your nominal and actual salary rate. If you were to take a reduced workload in the last 3 years of your employment, for example, your pension and your years of service would continue to be calculated as though you were on your nominal salary rate.

7. Do I have the option of withdrawing my pension entitlements from Dalhousie at age 65 or later if I choose to continue working for a period?

No. If you continue to work at age 65 and beyond, you can only draw a pension from Dalhousie.

8. If I decide to 'terminate' my employment instead of 'retiring' from Dalhousie, can I withdraw my contributions from the Pension Plan?

Yes, you can withdraw your pension entitlement from Dalhousie (i.e. instead of taking a Dalhousie pension) if you decide to 'terminate' your employment. You can terminate your employment up to the end of the academic year in the year before you turn age 65.

9. What sort of 'retirement benefits' am I entitled to?

If you choose to terminate your employment at Dalhousie you are not 'entitled' to retirement benefits. Members who take 'early' retirement may continue their membership in Medavie Blue Cross for Major Medical Insurance coverage as well as the dental benefit. For more information on benefits on retirement, check the Dalhousie website: http://humanresources.dal.ca/personne_5076.html