

## Pay Reference Guidance

The Pay reference is a key data matching field. This is set at the point of submitting the starter form to the SPPA. If the pay reference is changed, any subsequent data forms submitted for the member will fail to load to the member record.

Members can have multiple contracts with an employer. It is essential that data submitted is correctly matched to the correct contract. To do this, each contract must hold a unique pay reference number. Importantly, it must be unique within the first 10 characters.

Each employer devises the structure of Pay references differently, however to assist with the process, we have created this guidance to provide a best practice.

### Pay Reference Requirements

- Minimum Length – 1 character
- Maximum Length - 15 characters
- Unique within first 10 characters
- Alpha-numeric references are recommended

### Examples:

Example 1	
Pay Reference based on the Surname. Mrs Jones has three part time contracts:	
Contract 1:	Pay Reference JONES1 or A
Contract 2:	Pay Reference JONES2 or B
Contract 3:	Pay Reference JONES3 or C

Providing the reference is unique this would be sufficient.

Example 2	
SPPA are aware that some surnames can exceed 10 characters, so you could use the first few characters. For example, Mr Nazarbayev has 1 part time contract and 1 supply:	
Contract 1:	Pay Reference NAZA1 or A
Contract 2:	Pay Reference NAZA2 or B

Example 3	
You could use National Insurance number for example:	
Contract 1:	LLNNNNNNL1
Contract 2:	LLNNNNNNL2

### Example 4

Unique reference that you have stored for the member (that does not change for various reasons as above) for example:

Contract 1:	123456A
Contract 2:	123456B
Contract 3:	123456C

Providing each contract is unique in the first 10 characters.

These are just some possible examples. The SPPA strongly recommends that Pay References are alpha-numeric and do not start with a zero, as leading zeroes can be lost when data is formatted on CSV files.

When a member takes on an additional contract, you are obliged to submit a new Starter form with a different pay reference number.

### Changing Pay Reference Numbers

The SPPA recommends that the Pay Reference numbers are not changed once an STPS01 Starter form is issued. If there is a requirement to change this reference mid contract, please contact the SPPA to discuss further.