

Synergy Buy Out Bond

Key features

This is an important document.

Please read it and keep for future reference.

When buying a financial product, it is important that you understand what the product is, how it works, and what a decision to buy could mean for you. Before choosing investment options or products, you should consider the risks of the investment as well as the potential for growth. Standard Life recommends that you seek professional advice.

The key features of our Synergy Buy Out Bond are described in this document, which must be read with:

- **Your Personal Illustration**
- **Self-Directed Options guide (SYSDO1)**
- **Investment Options guide (SYIO1)**

If you are transferring your pension from the UK, you must also read:

- **UK pension transfers guide (SYUKPT1)**

These documents give information required under Schedule 1 of the Life Assurance (Provision of Information) Regulations 2001.

Make sure the policy meets your needs

The Synergy Buy Out Bond is set up with a transfer payment whose primary purpose is to build up a retirement fund. A buy out bond (also known as a personal retirement bond) is a policy where you can transfer your pension fund if you leave a company pension scheme or if the pension scheme is being shut down. The trustees set up the buy out bond for you and put you in control, so they don't have to be involved any more.

Your policy is linked to a mixture of assets. You pay a transfer payment to purchase the policy which gives you rights to receive the policy proceeds or death benefits in accordance with Irish pensions legislation which may be in force at the time.

The amount of money you get back will depend on the investment performance of the assets linked to the policy less charges and taxes applied.

The assets linked to the policy are legally owned by Standard Life.

Taking out a Synergy Buy Out Bond is a long term commitment and you should only enter into this contract if you are satisfied that it meets your retirement needs and circumstances.

Warning: If you propose to take out this policy in complete or partial replacement of an existing policy, please take special care to satisfy yourself that this policy meets your needs. In particular, please make sure that you are aware of the financial consequences of replacing your existing policy. If you are in doubt about this, please consult your insurer or insurance intermediary.

Transfers from a UK pension

Many UK pension benefits can be transferred to an overseas jurisdiction provided the receiving scheme is a Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme. The Synergy Buy Out Bond satisfies the Qualifying Recognised Overseas Pension Scheme rules, and has been registered with His Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

What happens if you want to cash in the policy early?

You cannot normally take pension benefits before age 60 (55 if a transfer from a UK pension, and from 6 April 2028, it's 57) and you cannot surrender a buy out bond for cash. However, you can transfer the value of a Synergy Buy Out Bond to another Revenue approved buy out bond or occupational pension scheme. Transfer values, particularly in the early years of the policy, may be less than your original investment.

Early encashment charge

If you transfer or retire your policy before the third or fifth anniversary of the date your transfer payment is allocated, an early encashment charge may apply, depending on what you've agreed with your financial adviser.

An early encashment charge does not apply in the following circumstances:

- exercising your right to cancel the policy in the cooling-off period (please refer to **Your right of cancellation**)
- a claim on the selected retirement age chosen at the outset of your Synergy Buy Out Bond
- a claim on death
- if agreed with your financial adviser

The early encashment charge is:

Early Encashment Charge within	5 years	3 years
Year 1	5%	3%
Year 2	4%	2%
Year 3	3%	1%
Year 4	2%	
Year 5	1%	

The charge is a % of the value cashed in and is applied on a first in first out basis.

What are the projected benefits under the policy?

Please refer to your Personal Illustration for details.

What intermediary/sales remuneration is payable?

Your Personal Illustration will outline projected benefits, charges and intermediary remuneration applicable to your policy, based on your investment choice and charges/commission agreed between you and your financial adviser. The levels of new business and retention generated through financial advisers may affect an element of some Standard Life employees' remuneration. Standard Life does not give financial advice.

Are returns guaranteed and can the contribution be reviewed?

The figures in your Personal Illustration are only examples and are not guaranteed, they are not minimum or maximum amounts. You could get back more or less than the projected benefits.

What you get back depends on the performance of the assets linked to your policy less charges and taxes applied.

Can the policy be cancelled or amended by the insurer?

We may change the terms of the policy (or issue another in its place) if:

- it becomes impossible or impractical to carry out any of the Policy provisions because of a change in the law or regulatory environment or other circumstances beyond our control, or
- the tax liability of the Life Office is altered or we have to pay a Government Levy
- the type of assets which may be Linked to the Policy is varied with the effect that there may be a different range of assets which the Holdings can be composed of

Before we alter your policy, we will give you at least one month's notice explaining the change and your options.

You must provide any information or evidence which we need to set up and administer the policy. The policy may be ended if you withhold material information or make an incorrect statement.

Information on taxation issues

On retirement, you can take a cash lump sum of up to 25% of your pension fund:

- The first €200,000 will be tax free This is the maximum tax free cash lump sum for all your pension arrangements (Irish and overseas)
- The next €300,000 will be taxed at the standard rate of income tax
- Anything more than €500,000 will be treated as income and taxed under the PAYE system
- Lump sums you've already taken from other pensions (both Irish and overseas) must be taken into account.

With the balance, subject to Revenue rules, you can buy:

- a guaranteed pension income for life (an annuity) or
- invest in a Approved Retirement Fund (ARF) or
- draw down the entire fund as taxable cash or
- choose a combination of these options

Alternatively, you can take a cash lump sum of up to 1.5 times your final salary, depending on your length of service. If you avail of this option, you must use the balance of your pension fund to purchase an annuity. The service/salary based option is not available to pension benefits transferred from the UK.

The annuity income, taxable lump sum and ARF withdrawals are all treated as income and taxed under the PAYE system. If all your pension arrangements at retirement exceed €2,000,000, a chargeable excess tax (currently 40%) is applied.

If you have taken benefits from a pension already, then talk to your financial adviser as the limits that apply to you may differ.

Any death benefit payable may also be subject to Inheritance Tax in the hands of the beneficiary.

If this policy is set up with a UK pension transfer, and within 5 years of the transfer you become tax resident outside the Republic of Ireland, and you don't take your pension with you, a UK overseas tax charge (25% of your policy's value) will be deducted and paid to HMRC. For more information, refer to Your guide to UK pension transfers (SYUKPT1).

Tax legislation may change in the future.

Additional information in relation to your policy

You can invest in a choice of:

- Funds, or
- Self-Directed Options, or
- a combination of the above

Please refer to your Investment Options guide (SYIO1) and Self-Directed Options Guide (SYSDO1) for more information.

If you only invest in funds, all charges will be made from those funds.

If you choose to invest in a Self-Directed Option, a policy cash account will be set up to manage the charges and investment transactions.

The policy cash account

If you invest in a Self-Directed Option, a policy cash account will be set up within your policy to facilitate your Self-Directed Options and from which payments are credited and deducted. The policy cash account is a deposit provided by a third party. We may alter the provider of the policy cash account from time to time. Please contact your financial adviser or Standard Life should you wish to know the details of the policy cash account provider at any time.

Deductions from the policy cash account

The following will be deducted from the policy cash account if applicable to your investments:

- Switches between investment options
- Policy cash account management charge
- Deposit management charge
- Execution-only stockbroking management charge
- Allocation rate charge
- Fund based charge
- Switch charge
- Early Encashment charge
- Policy fee

Please refer to your Personal Illustration and the Self Directed Options Guide (SYSDO1) for more information on charges.

Credits to the policy cash account

The following may be credited to the policy cash account if applicable to your investments:

- Switches between investment options
- Interest payments on balances in the policy cash account
- Interest payments on balances on deposits
- Annual management charge rebate

The interest rate payable on balances in the policy cash account is variable. Depending on economic circumstances, it is possible that interest will not be payable on money held in the policy cash account.

It is also possible that instead of interest being payable you may be charged to operate the policy cash account. This may be because, for example, the policy cash account provider may charge Standard Life to operate the policy cash account. If an additional charge is payable by you we will give you as much notice as possible. We may not be able to give you one month notice if the policy cash account provider changes the terms without giving Standard Life sufficient notice.

To find out the current rate of interest on the policy cash account, please contact your financial adviser or Standard Life.

Maintaining the policy cash account

It is important to keep a balance in the policy cash account to cover the costs of managing the investments held in your policy.

There is a minimum balance set by Standard Life to be held in the policy cash account. It depends on which investment option you choose and the commission you have agreed with your financial adviser. The relevant minimum balance required at any time is available by contacting Standard Life.

If the policy cash account falls below the minimum set by Standard Life, we may sell some of the assets in your policy in order to bring the policy cash account up to the minimum balance set by Standard Life.

Risks

All investment choices are made at your own risk so it is important to seek appropriate financial advice.

Standard Life is not responsible for the performance or solvency of the providers of the investments available through the policy.

Should you invest in a Self Directed Option, or have money in the policy cash account, we will not be liable for any loss suffered by you in the event that a provider defaults. This means that you bear the risk in the event of default of a provider of the Self Directed Options or the policy cash account.

External investment managers are responsible for the management of funds, including what they invest in. This means that Standard Life is not responsible for the performance of these funds, or the solvency of the external investment manager.

In order to maintain fairness between those remaining in and those leaving a fund, we may, in exceptional circumstances:

- change the pricing basis of a fund to reflect cashflows in and out. If it's a property based fund, due to the high transaction charges associated with the assets, this can result in a significant movement of the fund price
- we may also wait before we carry out your request to switch your funds, transfer or cash in your policy. This delay could be for up to a month. But for some funds, the delay could be longer, for example, if it's a property based fund, it may be up to 12 months because property and land can take longer to sell

If we have to delay switching, transferring or cashing in, we'll use the fund prices on the day the transaction takes place – these prices could be very different from the prices on the day you made the request.

The value of investments linked to this policy may be affected by fluctuations in interest rates, exchange rates and/or economic and political situations.

Transfer payment and Switching

At the start of your policy, you decide on the proportion of the transfer payment to be invested in your choice of investments.

These proportions and the allocation rate are shown on your Personal Illustration. You can change these proportions for your existing investments at any time.

Please refer to your Investment Options guide (SYIO1) for more information on your investment choices.

The policy can only accept one transfer payment. This payment can only be paid by cheque, bank draft or credit transfer.

Charges

The charges that apply to your policy are outlined in your Personal Illustration.

Please refer to the Self Directed Options Guide (SYSDO1) if you have invested in Self Directed Options.

Switching between assets is free for the first 12 switches in any 12 month period. Currently, each subsequent switch within the same period costs €60.

If you choose to retire or transfer out within five years of the transfer payment being allocated, there may be a charge. Please see 'What happens if you want to cash in the policy early?' for more information.

If you invest in funds, an annual management charge will be deducted each day before the fund price is calculated.

Please refer to your Investment Options guide (SYIO1) for the charge that applies.

We will also deduct charges based on the type of commission you have agreed with your financial adviser:

- An allocation rate charge may apply
- A fund based charge may be payable

These charges are shown in your Personal Illustration.

These are our charges as at December 2024. We regularly review our charges and sometimes we need to increase them to reflect changes in our overall costs or assumptions. Any increase will be fair and reasonable and we will notify you of such changes.

Annual management charge rebate

This rebate, if applicable, applies to funds and Self Directed Options and the policy cash account.

Pension benefits

On retirement, subject to Revenue rules (and for UK transfers, HMRC rules as well) you can take a cash lump sum of up:

- to 25% of your pension fund; or
- up to 1.5 times your final salary, depending on your length of service, (not available on pension benefits transferred from UK)

and, with the balance, you can:

- buy a guaranteed pension income for life (an annuity)
- invest in an Approved Retirement Fund
- draw down the entire fund as taxable cash
- choose a combination of these options. If you choose a lump sum based on your salary and service, you must use the balance of your pension fund to purchase an annuity

Death benefit

On your death, we will pay the value of your policy to your estate.

Your right of cancellation

If you take out a Synergy Buy Out Bond and you change your mind about keeping it, you can cancel the policy within 30 days from when you get your policy schedule and statement of reasonable projection and a refund will be paid to your original pension provider.

If the value of the assets linked to your transfer payment has fallen between the time the transfer payment was invested and your instructions to cancel are received, there will be a deduction to cover this fall in value. If applicable, the deposit or stockbroking provider may also deduct their early withdrawal charge or dealing charge before we make any payment.

Handling complaints

If you have a complaint please write to the Operations Director, Standard Life, 90 St Stephen's Green, Dublin, D02 F653. If you want information on our complaint handling procedure, please ask us.

If you aren't satisfied with our reply, you can refer your complaint to the Financial Services and Pensions Ombudsman. This won't affect your legal rights.

Data Protection Notice – Using your personal information

We're committed to maintaining the trust and confidence of our customers. Our Privacy Policy explains how we use our customers' personal information. It explains when and why we collect personal information about our customers, how we use it, the conditions under which we share it with others and how we keep it secure. It also explains how you can obtain details of the information we hold about you, and the choices you have about how we use that information. You can get a copy of our Privacy Policy on our website: standardlife.ie/privacy

General information

The Synergy Buy Out Bond is underwritten by Standard Life International dac in Ireland.

Standard Life International dac is part of the Phoenix Group.

Phoenix Group has an asset management partnership with the abrdn Group. You can find out more at thephoenixgroup.com

During the term of your policy, Standard Life will tell you if we change:

- Our name,
- Our legal form,
- Our main address, or
- Your policy, (with the exception of taxation issues, please refer to the earlier section **'Information on Taxation issues'**)

Each year, we will send you a statement detailing the value of your policy.

The Synergy Buy Out Bond is subject to the laws of Ireland. This Key Features document aims to give information on the main features, benefits and risks of the Synergy Buy Out Bond.

Terms and conditions of your policy will be contained in your policy schedule, policy provisions (SYBOB60) and statement of reasonable projection, which you will receive when the policy is set up.

All references to tax and legislation are based on Standard Life's understanding of law and practice as at December 2024.

Find out more

Talk to your financial adviser about how to plan for your future, they'll give you the information you need to get you started. Also, you can call us or visit our website.

(01) 639 7000

Calls may be monitored and/or recorded to protect both you and us and help with our training. Call charges will vary.

[standardlife.ie](https://www.standardlife.ie)

Standard Life International dac is regulated by the Central Bank of Ireland. Standard Life International dac is a designated activity company limited by shares and registered in Dublin, Ireland (408507) at 90 St Stephen's Green, Dublin, D02 F653.

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