

# **MERCER ASPIRE INVESTMENT BOND**

**CUSTOMER BROCHURE**



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## MERCER AND ZURICH: COMBINING OUR STRENGTHS TO PROVIDE YOUR MERCER ASPIRE INVESTMENT BOND

**Mercer** is one of the world's leading providers of pension and investment services and has designed the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond. Mercer's financial planners will provide you with advice where needed on the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond. Mercer's investment consulting and investment management businesses design the asset allocation and select investment managers for the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond.

**Zurich Life** is one of Ireland's most successful life insurance companies. It has been providing pensions in Ireland for over 30 years. At Zurich Life, we're committed to the provision of excellent customer service and the streamlined administration of your Mercer Aspire Investment Bond. You can access key information about your Investment Bond, such as the value, via **[www.zurichlife.ie/aspire](http://www.zurichlife.ie/aspire)**.

**August 2015 edition**

# 1 YOUR MERCER ASPIRE INVESTMENT BOND



Hello, my name is John. I have managed to save some money, and now want to invest it with a view to trying to make higher returns than I could get from cash deposits.

I won't need access to the money I invest any time soon and can afford to take a long term view. I know that the value of investments can fall as well as rise, but my aim is to increase the value of my initial investment over a period of several years. I have enough money in short-term deposits to cope with any cash needs that should arise in the near future.

I am investing through the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond because:

- I believe Mercer can find the most suitable fund managers globally to run the different parts of my investment
- The Mercer Aspire Investment Bond gives me an easy way to diversify between different types of underlying investment assets
- Mercer are providing me with valued advice on my long-term financial goals.

This brochure explains the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond, and aims to give you the information you need to decide if it's the right option for you.

This brochure does not constitute advice or a recommendation of any sort. You should get financial advice before investing in the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond.

## IS AN INVESTMENT BOND THE RIGHT OPTION FOR YOU?

If you are considering an Investment Bond, feel free to contact the Mercer Financial Planning helpline on **1890 375 375** or email **Financial.Planning@mercer.com** for advice.

# INVESTMENT BONDS EXPLAINED

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## WHAT IS THE MERCER ASPIRE INVESTMENT BOND?

An Investment Bond provides a means of investing lump sums. The Investment Options available within the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond have different characteristics and objectives, but in general the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond is suitable for people who wish to generate returns in excess of those available from short-term deposits, and who are willing to take some risk for the opportunity to generate those returns.

## WHAT ARE THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE MERCER ASPIRE INVESTMENT BOND?

**Choice** - between a range of different Investment Options, all run by managers selected, monitored and where necessary replaced by Mercer.

**Diversification** - Available within the Help Me Do It Portfolios, or by mixing different Investment Options.

**Risk monitoring** - Mercer will monitor the risk taken within the Help Me Do It Portfolios.

**Flexibility** - You can switch between different Investment Options at any time.

**Option for regular income** - You can take a regular income from the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond.

**Tax dealt with automatically** - under current rules, any tax due on returns from the Investment Bond will be deducted and paid to Revenue automatically.

## HOW DOES IT WORK?

Your Mercer adviser will ask you about your circumstances, your aims, and your tolerance of risk in order to establish whether the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond is suitable for you or not. Your adviser will also suggest which Investment Option might be suitable for you. You will need a minimum of €5,000 to invest. You will be asked to complete an application form, and the investment money will be sent to Zurich Life, the administrator of the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond, for investment in your chosen Investment Options. You will receive formal updates at least once per year, but you will also be free to monitor online the daily performance of your Investment Bond. Over time, you can anticipate growth on your investment - but see below on Risk and Return.

## RISK AND RETURN

In order to aim for a return in excess of that available from cash deposits, it is necessary to take some level of investment risk. Usually, the greater the return that you wish to aim for, the higher the level of risk it may be necessary to take. A Mercer adviser can take you through which Investment Options may be suitable for you - it should be possible to select one or more Investment Options to match the level of risk that you wish to take.

# 2 GROWING YOUR INVESTMENT BOND



**If you decide to invest in a Mercer Aspire Investment Bond, you have two investment approaches to choose from.**

## Help Me Do It



If you choose this approach:

- Your Investment Bond will be invested in a way that reflects your tolerance of risk in relation to potential reward.
- You do not need to make ongoing time consuming or complicated investment decisions yourself. Mercer will handle ongoing choices between different investment managers and asset classes in a manner consistent with the risk tolerance you have chosen.

**To find out more, go to page four.**

## Leave Me To It



If you choose this approach:

- You will mix, match and choose from a broad range of Investment Options yourself.
- Mercer can advise you on your selection if you wish, but no changes will be made to your mix of Investment Options without your intervention.

**To find out more, go to page six.**

### REST ASSURED, WHICHEVER OPTION YOU CHOOSE...

- Mercer will choose, monitor and (where necessary) replace specialist investment managers within all Aspire Investment Options.
- You can log in to your personal online Investment Bond account to keep up to date with your Mercer Aspire Investment Bond, monitor its value and alter your Investment Options.
- If you have any questions about your Mercer Aspire Investment Bond, just call the Mercer Financial Planning Helpline on 1890 375 375.
- Your Mercer Aspire Investment Bond will be administered by Zurich Life.

### NEED MORE?

You can find out more details about the Investment Options available in the **Investment Options Guide** for the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond.



# HELP ME DO IT

## INVESTMENT MADE EASY

**The Mercer Aspire Investment Bond makes it easy if you would like to make an investment decision based on your personal goals but you're not quite sure where to start.**

**To help you decide on what to invest in, a Mercer adviser can conduct a factfind with you to ascertain your circumstances, and then recommend a Portfolio that most closely suits your aims and risk tolerance. Once you make your decision, Mercer will then take care of the rest, making sure - as far as possible - that your Investment Bond is well diversified and matches the level of risk you are comfortable with.**

## 'HELP ME DO IT': HOW IT WORKS

# 1

### **CHOOSE THE PORTFOLIO FOR YOU**

You may not wish to devote the time needed to monitor and rebalance a mix of Funds continually, or you may feel that you are not expert enough to do this. The **Help Me Do It** approach enables you to select the Portfolio that best suits your aims, circumstances and risk tolerance, after which Mercer will take care of the more difficult and time consuming investment decisions.

# 2

### **MERCER WILL OVERSEE YOUR CHOSEN PORTFOLIO**

Your Portfolio will be invested in asset classes considered appropriate given Mercer's understanding of your risk tolerance. Mercer designs each portfolio to target a given level of risk over the long term. Mercer will select the most suitable and cost effective investment managers available to manage the different elements of the Portfolios. Mercer will monitor these investment managers on an ongoing basis and replace them where we think it is sensible to do so.

# 3

### **YOU WILL RECEIVE REGULAR UPDATES ON YOUR PORTFOLIO**

It is important to review your Investment Bond regularly. You will have online access to information about your Investment Bond, including its value, and you will receive annual statements from Zurich Life. If your financial plans or your risk tolerance change, you can switch to a new Portfolio, or to any of the Funds described in the **Leave Me To It** section on page six.

#### **NEED MORE?**

If you need help deciding which Portfolio might be right for you, call the Mercer Financial Planning Helpline on 1890 375 375.

# COMPARING YOUR PORTFOLIO OPTIONS



ALTERNATIVE PORTFOLIO OPTIONS	MOST LIKELY TO BE SUITABLE FOR
Aspire Protection Portfolio	People who want their money in a cash based investment that should not experience significant ups and downs in value (before withdrawals are taken into account)
Aspire Defensive Portfolio	People who want part of their Investment to be invested in long dated Eurozone government bonds.

## These Investment Options are subject to change.

To view the current range of Investment Options available, visit [www.zurichlife.ie/aspire](http://www.zurichlife.ie/aspire). For full details on the Portfolio options available please consult the **Mercer Aspire Investment Bond Investment Options Guide**.

The descriptions of the Portfolios detailed here represent Mercer's view and do not carry any investment guarantees. Before choosing an Investment Option, you may wish to talk to a financial advisor about whether it is suitable for you given your own tolerance to risk.

## WARNINGS

- **Warning: The value of your investment may go down as well as up.**
- **Warning: If you invest in this product, you may lose some or all of the money you invest.**
- **Warning: This product may be affected by changes in currency exchange rates.**
- **Warning: The income you get from this investment may go down as well as up.**





# LEAVE ME TO IT

## MAKING YOUR OWN INVESTMENT CHOICES

You may feel comfortable selecting and monitoring your own mix of Investment Options. The Leave Me To It approach enables you to do this, and to receive the benefit of Mercer's selection, monitoring and where necessary replacement of investment managers in each Investment Option. Mercer can provide you with advice on your initial mix.

If you adopt this approach, while Mercer will take care of manager selection, you will retain control over the mix of Funds and Portfolios used in your Investment Bond. Market movements will cause the initial balance of Investment Options chosen to shift, so it is important that you monitor the progress of your Investment Bond regularly. If you do not wish to monitor your chosen investments frequently the Help Me Do It approach may be more suitable for you.

There is a broad range of Investment Options to choose from in the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond, and more detail can be found in the Aspire Investment Bond Investment Options Guide. Mercer may periodically alter the options available when this is deemed appropriate.



In the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond you are free to mix and match any combination of the Funds available with the Portfolios described on page five.

You can switch your choice of Portfolios and Funds as often as you wish - in general this is free, but there is a charge if you make more than four switches in a year (currently €20 per additional switch).

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# 3

## IMPORTANT INVESTMENT BOND INFORMATION

**If you are considering investing in an Investment Bond, this section contains useful questions and answers, and more detail about tax, charges and withdrawals that you should be aware of.**

### **IF I DECIDE TO INVEST IN AN INVESTMENT BOND, HOW CAN I KEEP TRACK OF HOW IT'S PERFORMING?**

You can check the value of your Investment Bond at any time by logging onto Zurich Life's secure website **[www.zurichlife.ie/aspire](http://www.zurichlife.ie/aspire)**.

You will be sent login details shortly after your Investment Bond has been set up. If you ever lose or forget your login details, you can email **[aspire@zurich.com](mailto:aspire@zurich.com)**.

### **CAN I WITHDRAW MONEY FROM MY INVESTMENT BOND?**

You can withdraw some, or all, of the value of your Investment Bond at any time. Where your Investment Bond has grown in value, Exit Tax (of 41% as of 2015) will be applied to the growth (but not to the initial investment amount) where withdrawals occur. Exit penalties may apply to withdrawals in the first five years, unless your withdrawals are taken in the form of a regular income.

### **WHAT HAPPENS TO MY INVESTMENT BOND IF I DIE?**

If you die, your Investment Bond will be encashed when your death is notified to Zurich Life. The proceeds will form part of your estate for inheritance purposes.

### **WHAT TAX APPLIES TO MY INVESTMENT BOND?**

The current government levy on investment bonds is 1% (July 2015) - this is applied on a once-off basis on the creation of your policy. Exit Tax (of 41% as of 2015) will be applied to any growth on the earlier of encashment or every eighth anniversary of investment. Where exit tax is deducted on an eighth anniversary, and your Investment Bond subsequently falls in value, you will be entitled to a refund of any tax paid.

# USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

If you wish to apply for the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond simply complete a Mercer Aspire Investment Bond Application Form and return it to Zurich Life.



**Need to contact someone about the Mercer Aspire Investment Bond?**

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO DO	HOW DO YOU DO IT
Update your contact details	Contact Mercer on <b>1890 375 375</b> , or <b>Financial.Planning@mercero.com</b>
Reset your login details	Contact Zurich Life at <b>aspire@zurich.com</b>
Check your policy value	Log on at <b>www.zurichlife.ie/aspire</b>
Check your current investment choices	Log on at <b>www.zurichlife.ie/aspire</b>
Check out information on your Investment Options including the latest Fund Descriptions or the Aspire Investment Bond Investment Options Guide	Go to <b>www.zurichlife.ie/aspire</b>
Change your Investment Options	Log on at <b>www.zurichlife.ie/aspire</b>
Set up regular withdrawals, or take a once off withdrawal	Contact Zurich Life at <b>aspire@zurich.com</b>

## NEED MORE?

If you have questions about making your investment decisions, or want advice on taking out a Mercer Aspire Investment Bond you may wish to call the Mercer Financial Planning helpline on **1890 375 375** or email **Financial.Planning@mercero.com**.



## MERCER AND ZURICH: COMBINING OUR STRENGTHS TO PROVIDE YOUR MERCER ASPIRE INVESTMENT BOND

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### August 2015 edition

**Intended for distribution in the Republic of Ireland.**

The information contained herein is based on Zurich Life's understanding of current Revenue practice as at August 2015 and may change in the future.  
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