

Estate Administration and Probate

Our fees

Our fees will depend on the amount of work we undertake and how much of the administration you wish for us to handle. Before we commence work on your behalf, we will therefore provide a proposal of the work involved and what our costs will be. As the administration progresses and if it transpires that more work is required, we will keep you informed and update you of the costs position, before they are incurred.

For your information, our hourly rates are currently:

Grade A	Solicitors, Partners and legal executives with over 8 years of equivalent experience	£430 plus VAT
Grade B	Solicitors or legal executives and fee earners with over 4 years of equivalent experience	£390 plus VAT
Grade C	Solicitors or legal executives and fee earners of equivalent experience	£250 plus VAT
Grade D	Trainee Solicitors, paralegals and other fee earners	£200 plus VAT

VAT is currently charged at 20%.

Given the level of our involvement will determine the fees that are set, it is always difficult to give projections of costs in matters of estate administration at the outset as it will vary on a case by case basis. We will not act without your instructions and therefore you are free to instruct us to do as much or as little of the work as desired. However, as a general indication, where we are instructed to carry out the whole administration from beginning to end, in estates which are worth up to around £750,000 our fees between 2% to 3% of the gross probate value and for estates worth in excess of £750,000 our costs will range between 1% and 2.5%. However, this is not the basis of charging.

For example, if the gross probate value of the estate is around £360,000 our fees may fall between £7,200 plus VAT and £10,800 plus VAT. However, we would provide with a more accurate estimate when we are in a position to make the application for a grant of probate.

Please be aware that unforeseen circumstances may occur which impact the estimate provided. Should this happen, we will let you know at the earliest opportunity with an explanation for the change. We will also provide a revised quote and seek your approval to proceed accordingly.

Other expenses

There will be additional costs that you will need to pay during the administration, known as "disbursements". The most common that are likely to be incurred will be:

1. The probate application fee of £155.00;
2. Sealed office copies of the Grant of Probate at £1.50 each;
3. Unclaimed Assets Register search of £25.00 or a Landmark search of £135 plus VAT;
4. Accounts fee of £60 plus VAT;
5. Creditors' search advertisements or insurance alternative – variable amount;
6. Executors' Bankruptcy searches at £2.00 each;

7. Deceased Bankruptcy search at £2.00; and

8. Beneficiaries' Bankruptcy searches at £2.00 each.

There may also be others which we will advise you of if necessary.

Timescales

Usually, the valuation process and application for probate can be completed within two to four months after receiving your instructions in full. Again, this is more of a guideline as it will depend on how quickly we are able to receive relevant information from the various institutions involved. Following this, we normally expect to obtain the Grant of Probate within two to four weeks depending on whether or not Inheritance Tax is payable. It is difficult to give an accurate estimate of the duration in completing the administration as it will depend on each individual case. We will keep you informed of the progress made during the process and an updated time estimate will be provided once the Grant has been received.

In the event it appears the timescales are not going to be met, we endeavour to give you an update at the appropriate time with reasonings.