

Private client – Estate administration: our fees

Our fees

For fees purposes, we generally divide the estate administration process into two phases:

Phase 1 – the ‘pre-grant’ phase (work undertaken up to and including the issue of the grant of probate). Our work in relation to phase 1 will typically include:

1. Advising the executors on their role and responsibilities, generally.
2. Corresponding with banks and other asset holders to obtain date-of-death values and balances of the deceased’s assets.
3. Co-ordinating, where appropriate, with valuers regarding valuations of real estate, chattels etc.
4. Preparing an estate summary (which will detail all of the deceased’s assets and liabilities as at the date of death).
5. Calculating the inheritance tax owed and advising you on funding options re the same.
6. Preparing the inheritance tax return.
7. Lodging the application for the grant of probate at the probate registry.
8. Liaising with you, and with the beneficiaries of the estate (as appropriate), throughout.

Phase 2 – the ‘post-grant’ phase (work undertaken from the issue of the grant of probate to wind the estate up). Our work in relation to Phase 2 will typically include:

1. Closing accounts and selling, collecting or liquidating the assets of the estate.
2. Settling liabilities of the estate.
3. Finalising tax reporting for the estate administration period.
4. Advising on any questions raised by HMRC in respect of the estate’s inheritance tax position.
5. Preparing estate accounts.
6. Distributing the estate in accordance with the will.
7. Liaising with the executors, and with the beneficiaries of the estate (as appropriate), throughout.

Scenario A – Simple Estate – no IHT return required

- There is a valid, original will.
- All assets are in the UK.
- There is no more than one property.
- There are accounts at no more than two separate banks or building societies.
- There are no other intangible assets.
- The estate is exempt from inheritance tax, and no inheritance tax return needs to be filed.
- There are no disputes between beneficiaries..

We anticipate that our fees for Phase 1 would be between £5,000 and £10,000 (plus VAT). Our total fees for Phase 2 are likely to be in the region of £2,000 to £3,000.

Scenario B – Simple Estate – IHT payable

- There is a valid, original will.
- All assets are in the UK.
- There is no more than one property.
- There are accounts at no more than two separate banks or building societies.
- There are no other intangible assets.
- The estate is left to, for example, no more than four beneficiaries.
- A full inheritance tax account needs to be submitted.
- There are no disputes between beneficiaries.

We anticipate that our fees for Phase 1 would be in the region of £10,000 and £20,000 (plus VAT). Our total fees for Phase 2 are likely to be in the region of £5,000 to £7,000 (plus VAT).

Scenario C – Complex Estate (UK)

- There is no will.
- All assets are in the UK.
- There are several UK properties and/or corporate interests.
- There are several bank accounts.
- There are substantial lifetime gifts.
- A full inheritance tax account needs to be submitted.
- There are claims for Business Property Relief or Agricultural Property Relief.
- There are no disputes between beneficiaries.

We anticipate that our fees for Phase 1 would be in the region of £15,000 and £25,000 (plus VAT). Our total fees for Phase 2 are likely to be in the region of £5,000 to £7,000 (plus VAT).

Scenario D – Complex Estate (Overseas)

- There is no UK will.
- There are assets in multiple jurisdictions.
- There are several UK properties and/or corporate interests.
- There are several bank accounts.
- There are substantial lifetime gifts.
- A full inheritance tax account needs to be submitted.
- There is a claim for double taxation relief.
- There are no disputes between beneficiaries.

We anticipate that our fees for Phase 1 would be in the region of £25,000 and £50,000 (plus VAT). Our total fees for Phase 2 are likely to be in the region of £10,000 to £15,000 (plus VAT).

Our fees will be subject to an agreed scope of work and we will tell you if we expect the fee to be higher, based on the facts of the particular estate. Third party costs and taxes are not included in our fee estimate.

Our team

Estate administration work is currently handled by the following fee earners:

Title	Title	Hourly rate	Experience
Chris Moorcroft	Partner	£875	16 years
Zoë Camp	Partner	£795	24 years
Andrew Reay	Senior Probate Manager	£380	9 years
Olivia Harris	Associate	£380	3 years
	Trainees/paralegals	£210-235	

Third party costs

We will be required to pay costs to third parties on your behalf. We anticipate that the following third party costs will apply in relation to your probate matter. This list is not exhaustive and other third party costs may apply.

- **HMCTS Probate application fee** – £300 (as at 28 April 2025) plus £1.50 per additional court-certified copy required.
- **Executor's creditor protection** - adverts in the London Gazette and a local newspaper - £100-£200.
- **Electronic money transfer fee** – £10.90 plus VAT per transfer.

Timings

Straightforward estates will usually take between nine and 18 months to conclude. More complex estates could take longer. We provide more accurate timings estimates on a case-by-case basis.