



Indicative fess for administering an Estate

where there is a Will and no
Inheritance Tax is payable

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Indicative fees for administering an Estate

(where there is a Will and no Inheritance Tax is payable)

You may be an Executor or a Beneficiary named under a Will; you may be a family member or friend of someone who is recently deceased; you may not know at this point in time if there is a Will.

Whatever your circumstances, we are very experienced in dealing with this kind of work and sensitive to the challenges that you and your family may be facing. We are happy to work to your timetable, subject to any formal key dates for tax, etc. and to take on as much, or as little, of the work as you need. It is usual to have an initial call or meeting to understand the details of your situation and to explain how we can help.

We appreciate that having to deal with the administration of a loved one's estate is never easy. Aside from the emotional difficulties associated with the task, there may be practical challenges to face – perhaps the deceased lived in a different part of the country and there is a vacant property that needs to be taken care of. It can, depending on the complexity of the estate, be time-consuming and quite daunting for those having to go through the process for the first time.

Please remember:

If you are an Executor, then you will have a formal responsibility arising from the Will on death.



“An above and beyond service was delivered by the team in administering my father's estate. You were thoroughly professional whilst always being caring and sympathetic.”

Client

In experienced hands

You can always be assured that your matter is being handled by someone who is suitably qualified and experienced in dealing with this kind of work. [More details about individual lawyers are shown on their profile page](#). We use the term "lawyer" to refer to anyone undertaking fee-paying work for our clients. This includes solicitors, chartered legal executives (CILEx), licensed conveyancers, those training to become solicitors, CILEx or licensed conveyancers, and paralegals. The term "paralegal" is used to refer to someone part-qualified or without a legal qualification, but who may have a number of years' relevant experience.

Giving you peace of mind

We take supervision very seriously and operate team structures where junior lawyers' work is supervised by a senior member of the team. By working in this way, we endeavour to offer a cost-effective service while ensuring a consistently high level of client care. You may therefore work with more than one individual during the course of the matter. Occasionally a member of the team may leave, or be away from the office for an extended period. If this is the case, we will tell you as soon as we can and will advise you if the fees are likely to change. We will not charge you for the time spent by a new member of the team reading into your file.

Understanding the need to manage costs carefully

This document is intended to give you an outline of our fees in a particular scenario – **where there is a Will, but the estate is not taxable**. Once we have been in touch with you to understand the details of your particular matter, we can provide a specific estimate, tailored to your situation. Whilst we can take care of everything, we also know that costs are an important consideration. We are happy to discuss with you ways in which we can work together to help keep costs down. An example may be where you wish to instruct us to obtain a Grant of Probate for you as an Executor, but then wish to deal with the collection and distribution of the assets personally.

How long will it take?

On average, estates similar to that set out will usually take at least 6 months or more to administer. Typically you have up to 6 months from the date of death to make the first payment of Inheritance Tax to HMRC. Upon confirmation of receipt from HMRC, you can then apply for the Grant of Probate, which takes a further 8-12 weeks. Collecting assets then follows, which can take between 4-6 weeks (where no property sale or transfer is required). Once this has been done and clearance has been obtained from HMRC for all taxes owing on the estate, we can finalise the estate accounts and distribute the assets, which normally takes 4 weeks.

Timeframes would be extended if any of the complexities set out under 'Our charges' applied. For example, it is usually prudent to wait 6 months from the date of the Grant before making any final distributions to beneficiaries. We are happy to discuss the reasons for this when we meet or on the telephone.

The basis of our charging

Estate administration work undertaken by us is charged at hourly rates. These are dependent on the level of seniority and experience of the lawyer doing the work for you. For our regional offices (i.e. outside London) the range of our hourly rates, excluding VAT, is:

Level	Rate per hour
Partners, Legal Directors and Consultants	£315 to £410
Solicitors and Legal Executives (depending on experience)	£165 to £260
Paralegals, Legal Assistants and Trainee Solicitors	£100 to £190

The range of hourly rates for estate administration work undertaken at our London office is:

Level	Rate per hour
Partners, Legal Directors and Consultants	£345 to £545
Solicitors and Legal Executives (depending on experience)	£210 to £390
Paralegals, Legal Assistants and Trainee Solicitors	£125 to £235

We do not charge a premium (as a percentage of total fees) for administering estates where members of this firm have been appointed to act as Professional Executors. Our fees are calculated based on hourly rates, which currently range from **£315 to £545 plus VAT** (£378 to £654 including VAT).

We do not presently offer fixed fees as a matter of course as this can be high risk before knowing the extent of the work involved. For this reason we have offered an indication of the expected range based on a typical scenario. Normally, we would arrange to meet with you to help you understand what is going to be involved in administering the estate and allow you to make an informed decision about how best to deal with it. Should you wish to engage us, we will update the quote to reflect the precise nature of the estate, providing milestones as necessary. We will update you on fees routinely during the course of our instructions.

Disbursements and other costs

In addition to our fees above, disbursements are the third-party costs we need to pay in the course of your instructions. Once we are instructed we can be more specific but, based on the scenario above and by way of illustration, these may include:

- Dormant Assets Search £155 plus VAT (£186 including VAT)
- Probate Court fees £155 plus £1.50 per additional copy of the Grant (no VAT payable)
- Statutory advertising £200 plus VAT (£240 including VAT) estimate
- Bankruptcy Search £2 per person (no VAT payable)

Additional Fees

- Electronic money transfer fee (CHAPS) £35 plus VAT (£42 including VAT)

There will also be additional costs should any of the following be required – individual costs can vary significantly and may include:

- Funeral expenses
- Property management fees (insuring, securing, clearance, maintaining or renovating)
- Property sale or transfer fees
- Accountancy fees for tax returns.

Our charges

Obtaining the grant of probate and undertaking full estate administration (where there is a Will, no inheritance Tax payable and an IHT 400 is not required).

Kathryn dies, permanently resident in the UK where all of her assets and property are located. She is survived by her husband, Simon, to whom she leaves in her simple Will assets worth £50,000 (cash in two bank accounts and her car). Their house, worth £300,000 in total, was owned 50-50, with no mortgage, and Kathryn's half-share passes automatically to Simon. There are no shares/investments or complicated assets. Simon is dealing with her State and occupational pensions independently. Kathryn did not make any significant gifts to anyone in the 7 years before she died.

There are no issues or concerns about her Will, which is straightforward and was professionally drafted. There are also no disputes about the estate amongst her family.

As the estate passes to Kathryn's surviving spouse, there is no Inheritance Tax payable. A Grant of Probate is required in order to deal with the cash assets and Simon (also appointed as her Executor) is able to provide all information required to complete the Probate application paperwork in a timely manner. Probate is granted expediently by the Court.

Once the Grant issues, the cash assets are called in and paid out to Simon, as beneficiary. Simon has contacted the DVLA and sorted out the transfer of the car to himself.

Based on the above, we would expect our fees to be between £4,000 and £5,500 plus VAT (between £4,800 and £6,600 including VAT).

Any work undertaken by members of the team in London will be subject to an uplift of approximately 30% - please see 'The basis of our charging' below.

Things that would make the estate more complex and therefore increase our fees may include:

- The deceased party's residence and domicile is non-UK (or uncertain)
- There are multiple potentially-unknown beneficiaries. These may include beneficiaries, who may not be adults, where the operation of law gives rise to a trust - for example, where a child is a beneficiary
- The estate's assets are extensive, unusual or uncertain. For example, there may be:
 - more than one property
 - (and/or) the property's condition might require further work or investigation
 - significant investments and/or multiple shareholdings
 - business interests
 - shares not quoted on the Stock Exchange
 - foreign assets
 - extensive digital assets
 - an interest in a lifetime trust or un-administered estate
 - pre-owned assets that fall within the reach of tax
- The deceased party had undertaken sophisticated tax planning during their lifetime and there may be subsisting pre-death tax liabilities or issues to resolve
- Post-death planning may be required - for example, a deed of variation
- The Will or intestacy creates an ongoing trust
- There is a potential legal challenge to the estate
- The client prefers not to meet in Blake Morgan's offices



"I would like to thank you for the prompt and efficient way in which you conducted our business and for making such a complex issue so clear to us. The whole process was certainly much easier than we had thought it was going to be."

Client



Offices in:

London
Cardiff
Reading
Oxford
Southampton

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December 2020 Public