

Probate and Administration of Estates - cost and service information for uncontested estates in the UK

Our Services

As one of the leading UK private client firms, Boodle Hatfield has a wealth of experience in helping clients with the collection and distribution of money, property and other assets belonging to a person following their death.

Our advice and assistance generally includes the following actions:

- Advice on the valuation of the estate and obtaining valuations of the estate assets and liabilities when required to do so;
- Completion and submission of the papers required to obtain the Grant of Probate or Letters of Administration (the 'Grant') including the inheritance tax account and executors' or administrators' oath;
- Collecting in the estate assets and paying liabilities and administration expenses;
- Advice on carrying out the terms of the Will and distribution of the residuary estate; and
- Completion of estate accounts if required.

Please see our [Overview](#) for a fuller summary of the key stages involved and the likely timescales.

Our Team

We have an experienced team of lawyers available to help with the administration of estates.

A Partner in our Private Client team will have overall responsibility for each matter and will supervise the work of the team. The day to day work will usually be handled by an Associate with support from Legal Assistants or Trainee solicitors as required. All Partners and Associates of the firm are fully qualified solicitors.

We will provide you with details of the experience and qualifications of the team dealing with your probate matter when confirming our appointment.

The details of the full Private Client team can be viewed on our website [here](#).

Our Fees

Our fees for probate and administration of estate work are based on the time we spend on the matter at the applicable hourly rates in force at the time; they are not dependent on the size of the estate. When a Boodle Hatfield Partner acts as a personal representative of the estate, his or her time will be charged in addition to the time spent dealing with the administrative and legal work on the estate. See our Terms of Business [here](#) for more information.

Our hourly rates depend on the level of experience and seniority of the person undertaking the work. We always seek to have work carried out at the appropriate level to be as cost-effective as possible for our clients. Our current hourly rates for this type of work where the assets are in the UK and the matter is not contested range between the following amounts:

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| • Partners | £460 - £545 |
| • Associates | £285 - £405 |
| • Trainee solicitors | £175 - £190 |
| • Legal assistants | £145 - £165 |

All rates are subject to the addition of VAT at 20% where applicable.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs related to a matter that are payable to third parties, such as court fees. We handle the payment of the following disbursements on behalf of clients on typical estate administration matters to ensure a smoother process and these are charged in addition to our fees:

- Court fee on application for the Grant: £155
- Additional copies of the Grant (one per asset usually): £0.50 each
- Swearing the oath (per executor/administrator): £5 plus £2 for each Will/Codicil
- Bankruptcy-only Land Charges Search (per beneficiary): £2
- Advertisements in the London Gazette and a local newspaper: £150 (plus VAT) typically (to protect against unexpected claims from unknown creditors)

The following costs may also be payable which are additional to the charges for our services and the disbursements mentioned above:

- Valuation costs (where it is not possible to obtain a valuation free of charge, for example from an estate agent)
- Inheritance tax (if this is payable - the amount will depend on a variety of factors and we will give full advice on this)
- Costs of dealing with the sale or transfer of any property in the estate
- Costs of dealing with any re-organisation or variation of the Will or intestacy provisions
- Costs of the re-organisation or administration of any trusts created by the Will or intestacy
- Costs of: preparing final lifetime income tax returns; preparing self-assessment trust and estate tax returns during the administration period; and arranging payment of any associated tax liabilities
- Costs of tracing missing beneficiaries
- Costs of assisting with any more personal issues, for example assisting with the registration of the death.

Typical costs

We do not charge fixed fees for this type of work. The costs (and length of time it will take) will depend upon how complex the deceased's affairs are. The following ranges are given as a guide for budgeting purposes only:

Up to (and including) obtaining the Grant:

- For a straight-forward estate (with, say, a single UK property, a modest number of standard investments, bank accounts and other personal assets) our fees range from around £8,000 to £10,000 + VAT and disbursements;
- For a more complex estate with an extensive range of assets including, for example, business interests our fees would range from £10,000 to £25,000 + VAT and disbursements.

Once the Grant is issued, the cost of the work to complete the estate administration, will range from:

- Around £6,000 to £8,000 + VAT and disbursements if the Will is straightforward and uncontested;
- For a more complex uncontested estate fees might range from between £10,000 and £50,000 + VAT and disbursements.

These figures may however vary according to the circumstances of each matter and are not fixed. That is why we always provide an individual cost estimate at the start of each matter taking into account the features of the case. If complications arise, we will endeavour, where possible, to advise on the potential impact on costs before any additional charges are incurred.

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