HAWKINS RYAN
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Probate & Estate Administration

Pricing Information

Full Estate Administration Service

We offer a comprehensive Estates Administration Service, which includes obtaining the Grant of Representation for our clients. Our charges are calculated on an hourly rate basis (see below), with the estimated fees depending on the complexity of the estate.

Full Estate Administration	Estimated Fees (Excluding Disbursements and Expenses)	VAT	Total
Simple Estate Administration – No Inheritance Tax Payable	£2,500 to £7,000	£500 to £1,400	£3,000 to £8,400
Standard Estate Administration	£5,000 to £15,000	£1,000 to £3,000	£6,000 to £18,000
Complex Estate Administration	£10,000 to £40,000	£4,000 to £8,000	£14,000 to £48,000
High Complexity Estate Administration	£15,000 to £100,000	£3,000 to £20,000	£18,000 to £120,000

What is a Simple Estate

Cases where no Inheritance Tax is due, however, it may still be necessary to submit an account to HMRC. The range of costs reflects the different scenarios that may arise when applying various Inheritance Tax reliefs.

What is Included?

The following aspects provide a guideline of the work involved. If some stages are not required, the time and cost will be adjusted accordingly:

- **Asset and Liability Enquiries**: Conducting thorough investigations into the estate's assets and liabilities, including contacting banks, building societies, shareholders, and financial advisers.
- **Pension Assets Review**: Consulting and reviewing pension assets.
- **Utility Company Liaison**: Communicating with utility companies related to any properties in the estate.
- **Title Deeds Verification**: Checking title deeds to confirm property ownership.
- **Property Valuation**: Arranging market appraisals to value properties.
- **Beneficiary Identification**: Identifying beneficiaries or those named in the will.
- **Asset Collection and Valuation**: Gathering assets and determining their value.
- **Client Correspondence**: Maintaining communication with clients throughout the process.
- **Probate Application**: Drafting and submitting the probate application.

- **HMRC Reporting**: Reporting the estate to HM Revenue & Customs when an inheritance tax return is required.
- **Tax Matters**: Handling Capital Gains Tax and Income Tax issues, which may involve instructing an accountant (additional fees apply).
- **Liability Settlement**: Discharging any estate liabilities.
- **Estate Distribution**: Distributing the estate assets and preparing final estate accounts, including financial checks against beneficiaries.

Inheritance Tax and Complex Estates

When Inheritance Tax is due, additional steps include applying reliefs, calculating the tax due, arranging for payment, and requesting clearance from HMRC to protect the client's liability.

Complex estates may involve business or farming assets, wealth management, complex tax advice, overseas assets, or intestacy issues (where the deceased had no will and the family is unknown).

Factors Increasing Complexity

- A large number of beneficiaries or difficulty identifying them.
- Numerous assets, such as multiple properties and bank accounts.
- Overseas properties, agricultural or business assets, or shares requiring complex valuation.
- Delays in responses from clients, beneficiaries, or third parties.
- Arranging house clearances.
- Managing and insuring unoccupied properties.
- Involvement in family trusts or complex pension arrangements.
- Unclear historic ownership of assets.
- Frequent communication required by clients and beneficiaries.
- Inheritance Tax issues.
- Third-party disputes, such as HMRC questioning asset values or DWP querying means-tested benefits received by the deceased.
- Beneficiary disputes needing resolution before completing the administration.

Grant Only Services

If a client prefers to handle the estate administration themselves but requires assistance with the technical aspects, we can secure a Grant of Representation for them. This approach is often cost-effective for straightforward estates.

The fees involved will vary based on the complexity of obtaining the Grant of Probate. Factors influencing the cost include the necessary legal documents, whether Inheritance Tax is applicable, and if any Inheritance Tax reliefs are being claimed. Additionally, standard disbursements, such as the Probate Court fee, will apply.

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The process of obtaining a Grant from the Probate Registry typically takes between 4 to 12 months. The duration can vary depending on the applicant and whether the application is submitted online. Paper applications generally take longer, with an estimated timeframe of up to 18 months being more realistic.

Grant Only Services	Estimated Fees (Excluding Disbursements and Expenses)	VAT	Total
Obtain Grant – No Inheritance Tax is due, and no submission to HMRC is necessary	£1,200 to £1,650	£240 to £330	£1,440 to £1,980
Obtain Grant – No Inheritance Tax is due, but a full submission to HMRC is required	£1,800 to £3,000	£360 to £600	£2,160 to £3,600

What is included?

Personal Consultation: A face-to-face meeting with a specialist from our team to guide you through the process and advise on the necessary steps to draft the Application for the Grant and Inheritance Tax paperwork.

Inheritance Tax Documentation: Drafting the Inheritance Tax papers, calculating any payable Inheritance Tax, and submitting the documents to HMRC if required.

Payment Assistance: Helping ensure that any relevant Inheritance Tax payments are made to HMRC.

Grant of Probate Application: Drafting and submitting the Application for the Grant of Probate to the Probate Court.

Additional Complications: For more complex situations, such as domicile issues (where the deceased lived abroad) or the need for additional supplementary documents (e.g., claims for certain Inheritance Tax reliefs), we will handle this extra work on an hourly-rate basis. These additional fees will be in addition to the quoted fees, with estimates provided in advance.

What is not included?

The following services are not included in the price ranges provided. If required, they will incur additional charges, for which we will provide a separate estimate:

- Registering the deceased's death and/or arranging the funeral.
- Administering any trusts resulting from the terms of the will.
- Preparing Deeds of Variation.
- Conveyancing for the sale or transfer of the deceased's property.
- Tracing a missing will or missing executors.
- Handling any tax returns related to before or after the deceased's death.
- Addressing tax planning issues related to the estate of any predeceased spouse.
- Resolving disputes over entitlements under the will or dealing with any claims against the estate.
- Reviewing retrospective care funding matters concerning the deceased.
- Managing insolvency issues.

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Additional Costs

Disbursements refer to costs related to your legal matter that are payable to third parties (e.g., court fees). We handle disbursement payments on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

There may also be additional expenses which we will make in addition to our fees, such as an Electronic ID fee.

Examples of additional costs that relate to estate administration:

Estate Administration Costs	Amount	Additional cost	VAT	Total
Probate court fees (correct as of May 2024)	£300.00	£16.00 per sealed copy	-	£300.00
Bankruptcy searches	£6.00	Per search	£1.20p	£7.20
Copy of registered title to a property (each one)	£7.00	-	£1.40p	£8.40
Asset searches	£165.00	-	£33.00	£198.00
Share Valuations	£6.00	-	£1.20	£7.20
Digital Asset Search	£35.00	-	£7.00	£42.00
Statutory advertisements (to protect PR's), actual cost depends upon the cost of placing a Legal Notice in the local paper. This can vary greatly.	£300.00	-	£60.00	£360.00

VAT will also be added to our fees and disbursements, where indicated, at the prevailing current rate of 20%.

When there is work involved that falls outside of our remit, we will always recommend a referral to a trusted third party. For example, Accountants to aid with complex Tax Returns for Income or Capital Gains Tax. This would be an added expense.

There may be other expenses payable dependent upon the needs of the estate. These may include instructing asset valuations, estate agents, stockbrokers, accountants, genealogists or financial advisor fees, the fees to obtain a legal opinion from a barrister or external lawyer's fees to deal with assets overseas.

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Our Charges

Our charges are based upon hourly rates which are reviewed annually from 1 November.

Our current hourly rates are:

Position	Hourly Rate	VAT	Total
Members	£375	£75	£450
Senior Solicitors	£315	£63	£378
Solicitors and Legal Executives with over 3 years' experience	£280	£56	£336
Solicitors and Legal Executives with under 3 years' experience	£250	£50	£300
Apprentice Years 4-6	£210	£42	£252
Apprentice Years 1-3	£175	£35	£210
Senior Caseworker	£175	£35	£210

Every estate is unique, and we will only charge for the work necessary to properly administer the estate.

If you choose to instruct us, we will detail the relevant hourly rates in our Client Care Letter.

Timescales

The duration of estate administration varies based on factors such as the estate's complexity, whether inheritance tax is payable, and interactions with external agencies like HMRC. It is difficult to give an accurate estimate of the time it will take to complete the work for you but on average straightforward estates could be dealt with within 18 months.

For further details on any of the above please contact us at: privateclient@hawkinsryan.com