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Price transparency

Our fee quotes will vary depending on the complexity of each case and the work that we are instructed to carry out. Quotes and estimates will be provided in advance of us being formally instructed and then confirmed within our engagement letter and terms of business.

We are obliged to provide pricing statements in relation to various areas of work that we undertake. These are employment, probate and debt recovery.

In each of these practices our charges are made up of:

- our fees for the legal work;
- 'disbursements' - disbursements are costs related to your matter that are payable to other people, such as fees for a barrister's opinion. We handle the payment of the disbursements on your behalf to ensure a smoother process.

Where VAT is referred to below please note that this will be charged at the applicable rate, which is currently 20%.

Who will be dealing with my matter?

Your matter will be handled by a trusted member of our team and we will provide full details of their background and qualifications once your matter has been assigned. You can find out more about our lawyers in the about us section.

Regardless of who is working on your case the matter will be supervised by one of our partners.

Employment matters are conducted and supervised by Natalie Thomson, partner and head of our Employment department. Natalie qualified as a solicitor in 2005 and has over 15 years' experience advising companies and senior executives.

Probate matters are overseen by Austin Moore. Your probate matter will normally be conducted by Simran Kaur. Simran qualified as a solicitor in 2020, having worked in Wills and Probate for over five years. Simran completed the LLB (Hons) Law Degree at The University of Derby before completing the Legal Practice Course (LPC) and LL.M at Nottingham Law School.

Debt recovery matters are overseen by Austin Moore. Your debt recovery matter will normally be conducted by Rebecca Del Grosso. Rebecca has been a qualified Corporate and Litigation solicitor since 2016 but started her legal career specialising in consumer and commercial debt recovery. She therefore has in-depth knowledge of the tactics and legal

processes involved in debt recovery as well as a wealth of experience in dealing with the County Court system.

Tribunal Representation and Support

Although our Proactive Service serves to reduce the risk of Tribunal claims, we accept that in the litigious world in which we live, the threat of claims is commonplace.

We will provide you with support both before, during and after the tribunal process. We have experience representing clients in all types of proceedings and undertake the advocacy ourselves wherever possible. We appreciate that the litigation process can be daunting and therefore we work with you to ensure that your case is presented in the best way.

We'll also guide you as to what we consider to be the best outcome for you taking you and the needs of your business into account.

Bringing or defending Tribunal claims can be a costly process and we always recommend our clients check whether they have an insurance policy to cover the litigation costs. In the event that there is no insurance in place, we will normally charge based on the time spent on any aspect of work (charged at our hourly rates) but will agree fixed fees wherever possible.

Our Fees

Our fees may be agreed with you as a fixed sum at the start of your case or will accrue on a time spent basis depending on the time it takes us to handle your case. If it is necessary to charge on a time spent basis, we will give you an estimate of the time we think will be needed for the work being undertaken. Our hourly rate for our Partners ranges between £250 and £350 plus VAT.

The amount of drafting required in each case depends on the claim(s) being presented, guidance in relation to fees for Tribunal assistance and representation is detailed below:

- **A simple case:** £8,000 plus VAT.
- **A medium complexity case:** £10,000-£12,000 plus VAT.
- **A high complexity case:** £15,000-£20,000 plus VAT.

Some clients may wish to attempt to handle some parts of a very straight-forward matter themselves and only have our advice in relation to some of the stages. This can also reduce the cost if your case is one where we're comfortable that this is a sensible approach to take. We therefore also offer fixed fees in relation to some aspects of bringing or defending a claim. We have outlined these aspects and an estimate of fees below:

- **Preparation of an ET1 or ET3** £550 plus vat (up to £750 plus vat if discrimination or whistleblowing complaints are included);
- **Attendance at hearing** £1000-£1500 plus vat per day;
- **Completion of preliminary hearing agenda** £250-£400 plus vat.

Quotes will always be provided and agreed before any work is undertaken.

Disbursements

You may need to pay for 'disbursements' in addition to our fees as described above. In an unfair or wrongful dismissal claim the most common disbursements are for barrister's fees.

A barrister may be instructed for a Tribunal hearing if your case is not settled before this time (which can often occur). Barrister's fees tend to be in the region of £1500 plus vat for a one-day hearing including preparation. We will however guide you on this as and when external costs need to be incurred.

Other costs to consider

Normally you do not have to pay your opponent's costs in an employment claim, but we will guide you further if we feel that you are at risk of this at any stage.

Key stages of your claim

The examples of typical costs above cover all of the work in relation to the following key stages of an unfair dismissal or wrongful dismissal case:

- Taking your initial instructions, reviewing the papers and advising you on your prospects of success in the claim and the likely compensation, although this is likely to be revisited throughout the case and subject to change.
- Entering into pre-claim conciliation with ACAS where this is mandatory to explore whether a settlement can be reached.
- Preparing your claim or response.
- Reviewing and advising on the claim or response from the other party.
- Exploring settlement and negotiating a settlement throughout the process.
- Preparing or considering a schedule of loss.
- Preparing for and attending a Preliminary Hearing.
- Exchanging documents with the other party and agreeing a bundle of documents.
- Taking witness statements, drafting statements and agreeing their content with witnesses.
- Preparing bundles of documents for the final hearing.
- Reviewing and advising on the other party's witness statements.
- Agreeing a list of issues, a chronology and/or cast list.
- Preparation and instructions to the barrister (if this is not being done in-house by us) for the final hearing.

It would not normally be necessary to undertake other work or incur other costs other than those described above. However, we would be very happy to provide you with a more tailored quote for all stages of your particular case once we know about your specific circumstances.

How long will my case take?

The time it takes from your initial instructions to the end of your case depends largely on the stage at which it is resolved. If a settlement is reached during pre-claim discussions, your case is likely to take 3 - 4 weeks. If your claim proceeds to a final hearing, your case is likely to take 25- 36 weeks. This is just an illustration and we will be able to give you a more accurate timescale once we have more information from you and as the case progresses.

Probate

Grant of Probate only

If you would like to deal with the estate administration yourself and instruct us to obtain the Grant of Probate, we estimate our fees to be £500 - £700 plus VAT. There will also be a fee of £158 which is payable to the Probate Registry plus £1.50 for each sealed copy of the Grant of Probate required.

Grant of Probate and Administration of Estate

If you would like us to deal with the administration of the estate (which includes obtaining the Grant of Probate, collecting, and distributing the assets) we anticipate that in our experience our fees often fall within the following price ranges:

- **For estates where no Inheritance Tax is payable** – £1,500 - £3,000 plus VAT
- **For estates where Inheritance Tax is payable** – £3,000 - £5,000 plus VAT

Our fees for dealing with an estate depend on individual circumstances. The above provide an indication for 'straightforward' estates where:

- 1) There is a valid Will
- 2) There is only one property
- 3) There are no more than four bank or building society accounts
- 4) There are no foreign assets
- 5) There are no more than four beneficiaries
- 6) There are no disputes between beneficiaries
- 7) The estate value is within the general nil rate band amount of £325,000 and therefore no inheritance tax is payable therefore the executors do not need to submit a full account to HMRC
- 8) No formal or capital gains tax return is required during the estate administration period
- 9) There are no claims against the estate

If the administration of an estate falls outside of the 'straightforward' criteria it is likely our fees will be higher. In these cases, we can provide an accurate quote once we have full details.

Disbursements

Disbursements are costs related to a matter which are payable to a third party. When dealing with an administration of an estate the following disbursements will be payable:

- 1) **Probate application fee** - £158
- 2) **Sealed copies of the Grant of Probate** - £1.50 per copy
- 3) **Bankruptcy search fee** - £2.00 per beneficiary in the UK
- 4) **Trustee Act Notice fees** – in the region of £200

Other costs to consider

Dealing with the sale or transfer of any property in the estate is not included. Remember also that if this is not a 'straight forward' matter (see the factors listed above) then costs would vary so do get in touch for a more accurate quote.

How long will this take?

Generally speaking, 'straight forward' estate matters such as these can normally be dealt with within 9 to 12 months. This is broken down into the following stages, with rough time estimates for each stage as follows:

- obtaining the grant of probate: 8-10 weeks;
- collecting assets: 8-12 weeks;
- statutory notice period: 2 months;
- distributing the assets: 3-4 weeks.

Key stages of your case

The precise stages involved vary according to the circumstances.

The guidance on our fees above covers all of the work in relation to the following key stages a 'straight forward' probate process:

- Identify the executors and beneficiaries
- Check the type of Probate application you will require
- Obtain the relevant documents required to make the application
- Complete the Probate Application and the relevant HMRC forms
- Make the application for probate
- Obtain the Probate and distribute copies as necessary
- Collect and distribute all assets in the estate

It would not normally be necessary to undertake other work or incur costs other than those described above. However, we would be very happy to provide you with a more tailored quote for all stages of your particular case once we know about your specific circumstances.

Debt Recovery

Our fees

In debt recovery work the legal fees often vary depending upon how much work is needed to recover the debt and at what stage of the process the debt is recovered. We therefore will only usually charge minimal fixed fees throughout the process, with a collection fee that is charged once the debt has been recovered.

Stage One – Pre-Action Correspondence

Initial Letter to debtor - £25 (+VAT)

The first letter to the debtor confirming we have been instructed by you to recover the debt on your behalf.

Letter Before Action where the debtor is a company - £75 (+VAT)

Letter Before Action where the debtor is a sole trader- £100 (+VAT)

A more comprehensive letter prepared in line with the Court's Pre-Action Conduct and Protocols. This letter is sent in the anticipation that Court proceedings shall follow if payment is not received in the prescribed timeframe of 7 or 14 days. We will calculate any contractual or statutory interest and late payment compensation you may be due in addition to the debt.

Ongoing correspondence with the Debtor - £50 (+VAT) per letter

Where a debt is disputed, we will give you the option for us to correspond with the debtor on your behalf with a view to reaching a settlement.

Some cases may be more complicated and require us to charge on a different basis and may take longer than usual. Contact us for a quote tailored to your circumstances.

Collection fee

Where we successfully collect your debt in whole or in part within Stage One, our collection fee in addition to the fixed costs shall be 5% of the amount recovered.

Stage Two – Issuing Court Proceedings

Issuing a Claim

If the debt has not been recovered during Stage One, the next step will be to issue proceedings against the debtor in the County Court Money Claims Centre. We will prepare the claim form, including the 'particulars of claim' to be annexed to it, and file this with the court. Our costs will only be revised in circumstances where the claim is particularly complex and therefore requires an additional amount of work to that which is ordinary for a claim of similar value.

Debt*	Court Fee**	AMP Fixed Cost (+VAT)
Up to £300	£25	£150
£300.01 to £500	£35	£150
£501 to £1,000	£60	£150
£1,001 to £1,500	£70	£150
£1,501 to £3,000	£105	£200
£3,001 to £5,000	£185	£250
£5,001 to £10,000	£410	£300
£10,001 to £25,000	4.5% of debt	£350
£25,001 to £50,000	4.5% of debt	£500
£50,001 to £75,000	4.5% of debt	£650
£75,001 to £100,000	4.5% of debt	£800
£100,000.01 to £200,000	5% of debt	<i>Fee to be agreed on case-by-case basis</i>
More than £200,000	£10,000	<i>Fee to be agreed on case-by-case basis</i>

Entering Judgment

Requesting judgment in default - £50 (+VAT)

If the debtor fails to file a defence within 14 days we will make an application for a County Court Judgment to be issued against them for the full amount claimed. Post-claim interest will also be calculated and applied for.

Requesting judgment in admission - £100 (+VAT)

It is also possible to apply for judgment where the party that owes money admits what is owed. Submissions can be made to the court as to what payment schedule should be accepted if the debtor claims they cannot pay all at once.

Letter to debtor once judgment obtained - £50 (+VAT)

Once we have received a copy of the County Court Judgment from the courts, we will write to the debtor enclosing a copy of the Judgment and setting out the consequences should they fail to pay within 28 days.

If we are successful in obtaining judgment for you but payment is still not received then we will advise you on the next steps at that time, such as enforcement action and what the likely costs would be (see below).

Collection fee

Where we successfully collect your undisputed debt in whole or in part within Stage Two our collection fee in addition to the fixed costs shall be **10%** of the amount recovered.

Defended and More Complex Claims

If a debtor submits a defence to your claim or the case is otherwise more complicated, we will normally charge you an hourly rate for the time which we spend on your case. The hourly rate depends upon the experience of the fee earner handling the matter:

Fee Earner	Hourly Rate
Partner/ Director with 8 years post qualification experience ('PQE')	£250-£350 (plus VAT)
Solicitor with more than 4 years PQE	£230 (plus VAT)
Solicitor with less than 4 years PQE	£200 (plus VAT)
Trainee/Paralegal	£100 (plus VAT)

Timescales for defended and more complex cases are more difficult to predict. Sometimes matters can be resolved within a matter of weeks by reaching an early settlement, but others can take much longer. Contact us for more tailored guidance on your circumstances.

Stage Three – Enforcement

It may be necessary to take further enforcement action if a County Court Judgment has been obtained but the debtor has not paid the judgment sum within the time specified (usually 14 days). We will advise you on suitable methods of enforcement.

Court Enforcement

Method of Enforcement	AMP Fixed Costs (+VAT)	Disbursements
Warrant of Control and instructing Bailiff (<i>Debt up to £5000</i>)	£150	£77 - £110 (court fee)
Writ of Control and instructing High Court Enforcement Officer (<i>Debt over £5000</i>)	£200	£66 (court fee) £75 (abortive charge if debt not recoverable)
Third party debt order*:	£400	£110 (court fee)
Charging order over property*: - Application - Register interim charge - Final charging order hearing - Register final charge	£400 £50 £400 (<i>if in local court</i>) £50	£110 (court fee) £40 (land registry fee) £40 (land registry fee)
Application for an order to obtain information	£400	£55 (court fee) £110 (fee if service by Bailiff required)

**For complex disputed orders different fees may apply*

Insolvency Proceedings

Insolvency Process	AMP Fixed Costs (+VAT)	Disbursements
Statutory Demand <i>(only suitable for undisputed debts where liability has been admitted)</i>	£250	£115 (process server)
Bankruptcy Petition	£650*	£1270 (court fee and insolvency service deposit) £115 (process server) £2 (bankruptcy search fee)
Winding-Up Petition	£950*	£1880 (court fee and insolvency service deposit) £115 (process server) £66.60 (Gazette fee)

**Our fixed costs do not include representation at Court. We shall advise on these costs separately.*

Collection fee

Where we have used enforcement or insolvency proceedings to successfully collect your debt within Stage Three, our collection fee in addition to the fixed costs shall be **15%** of the amount recovered.

Further Information

Disbursements

You will need to pay for 'disbursements' in addition to our professional costs as described above. In a debt recovery matter the most common disbursements are Court fees and the current cost for these are listed above.

If your claim is disputed and you require representation at a Court hearing, we may advise that we instruct a barrister (sometimes called 'Counsel') on your behalf. Barrister's fees can be anywhere from £75 to £500 per hour depending on their experience. We will however guide you on this as and when such costs need to be incurred.

Key stages of your case

The costs described above cover all of the work in relation to the following key stages a debt recovery process:

- Discussing your case with you and, where appropriate, reviewing documents you provide;
- Performing relevant checks and searches;
- Sending a letter before action (see above);
- Receiving payment and forwarding payment to you or, if a debt is not paid, drafting and issuing court proceedings;
- If no response is received, applying to the Court for Judgment in Default, subject to the additional costs for doing so as detailed above being paid;
- If Judgment in Default is received, writing to the other side to demand payment; and
- If payment is still not received within the specified timescale, providing you with guidance on the next steps and likely costs.

It would not normally be necessary to undertake other work or incur costs other than those described above. However, we would be very happy to provide you with a more tailored quote for all stages of your particular case once we know about your specific circumstances.

Additional Services

Debtor Tracing - £50 to £100 (+VAT)

A professional tracing agent can be instructed to locate sole traders or directors to ensure court proceedings are issued at the correct address.

Preparing Internal Credit Control Letters – from £50 (+VAT) per letter

We will review your terms of business and prepare a bespoke letter or letters to use internally as part of your credit control process.