

VOLUNTARY ARRANGEMENTS

A CREDITORS' GUIDE TO INSOLVENCY PRACTITIONERS' FEES

1 Introduction

- 1.1 In a voluntary arrangement, as in other types of insolvency, the amount of money available for creditors is likely to be affected by the level of costs, including the remuneration of the insolvency practitioner appointed to implement the arrangement. This guide explains how fees are fixed in voluntary arrangements, how the creditors can affect the level of fees, and the information which should be made available to them regarding fees.

2 The voluntary arrangement procedure

- 2.1 Voluntary arrangements are available to both companies and individual debtors. Company voluntary arrangements are often referred to as CVAs, and individual voluntary arrangements as IVAs.

- 2.2 The procedure is similar for both CVAs and IVAs and enables the company or individual to put a proposal to their creditors for a composition in satisfaction of their debts or a scheme of arrangement of their affairs. A composition is an agreement under which creditors agree to accept a certain sum of money in settlement of the debts due to them. A CVA may be used as a stand-alone procedure or as an exit route from an administration. It may also be used where a company is in liquidation, but this is extremely rare. The proposal will be made by the directors, the administrator or the liquidator, depending on the circumstances. A proposal for an IVA may be made by a debtor whether or not he is already subject to bankruptcy proceedings. The proposal will be considered by creditors at a meeting convened for that purpose. The procedure is extremely flexible and the form which the voluntary arrangement takes will depend on the terms of the proposal agreed by the creditors. In both CVAs and IVAs the proposal must provide for an insolvency practitioner to supervise the implementation of the arrangement. Until the proposal is approved by the creditors, the practitioner is known as the nominee. If the proposal is approved, the nominee (or if the creditors choose to replace him, his replacement) becomes the supervisor.

3 Fees, costs and charges - statutory provisions

- 3.1 The fees, costs, charges and expenses which may be incurred for the purposes of a voluntary arrangement are set out in the Insolvency Rules 1986 (rule 1.28 for CVAs and rule 5.33 (previously 5.28) for IVAs). They are:

- any disbursements made by the nominee prior to the arrangement coming into effect, and any remuneration for his services agreed between himself and the company (or the administrator or liquidator, as the case may be) or the debtor (or the official receiver or trustee, where the debtor is subject to bankruptcy proceedings);
- any fees, costs, charges or expenses which:
 - are sanctioned by the terms of the arrangement (see below), or
 - would be payable, or correspond to those which would be payable, in an administration, winding up or bankruptcy (as the case may be).

- 3.2 The rules also require the following matters to be stated or otherwise dealt with in the proposal (rule 1.3 for CVAs and rule 5.3 for IVAs):

- The amount proposed to be paid to the nominee (as such) by way of remuneration and expenses, and
- The manner in which it is proposed that the supervisor of the arrangement should be remunerated and his expenses defrayed.

4 The role of the creditors

- 4.1 It is for the creditors' meeting to decide whether to agree the terms relating to remuneration along with the other provisions of the proposal. The creditors' meeting has the power to modify any of the terms of the proposal (with the consent of the debtor in the case of an IVA), including those relating to the fixing of remuneration. The nominee should be prepared to disclose the basis of his fees to the meeting if called upon to do so. Although there are no further statutory provisions relating to remuneration in voluntary arrangements, the terms of the proposal may provide for the establishment of a committee of creditors and may include among its functions the fixing of the supervisor's remuneration.

5 What information should the creditors receive?

- 5.1 Whether the basis of the supervisor's remuneration is determined at the meeting which approves the arrangement or by a committee of creditors, the supervisor, or proposed supervisor should provide details of the charge-out rates of all grades of staff, including principals, which are likely to be involved on the case.

- 5.2 Where the supervisors' fees are to be agreed by a committee of creditors during the course of the arrangement, the supervisor should provide sufficient supporting information to enable the committee to form a judgement as to whether the proposed fee is reasonable having regard to all the circumstances of the case, and should always provide an up to date receipts and payments account. Where the fee is to be charged on a time basis the supervisor should disclose the amount of time spent on the case and the charge-out value of the time spent, together with such additional information as may reasonably be required having regard to the size and complexity of the case.

and the functions conferred on the supervisor under the terms of the arrangement. The additional information should comprise a sufficient explanation of what the supervisor has achieved and how it was achieved to enable the value of the exercise to be assessed and to establish that the time has been properly spent on the case.

5.3 Where the basis of the remuneration of the supervisor as set out in the proposal does not require any further approvals by the creditors or any committee of creditors, the supervisor should specify the amount of remuneration he has drawn in accordance with the provisions of the proposal in his subsequent reports to creditors on the progress of the arrangement. Where the fee is based on time costs he should also provide details of the time spent and charge-out value to date and any material changes in the rates charged for the various grades since the arrangement was approved. He should also provide such additional information as may be required in accordance with paragraph 5.2.

5.4 Where the supervisor proposes to recover costs which, whilst being in the nature of expenses or disbursements, may include an element of shared or allocated costs (such as room hire, documents storage or communication facilities provided by the supervisor's own firm) they must be disclosed and be authorised by those responsible for approving his remuneration. Such expenses must be directly incurred on the case and subject to a reasonable method of calculation and allocation. Additional information in relation to the policy of Leonard Curtis regarding such disbursements and the basis for their calculation can be found at the end of this Guide.

6 Provision of information – additional requirements

The nominee or supervisor is required to provide certain information about the time spent on the case, free of charge, upon request by specified persons. The persons entitled to ask for this information are –

- any creditor in the case;
- where the arrangement relates to a company, any director or contributory of that company; and
- where the arrangement relates to an individual, that individual.

The information which must be provided is –

- the total number of hours spent on the case by the insolvency practitioner or staff assigned to the case;
- for each grade of staff, the average hourly rate at which they are charged out;
- the number of hours spent by each grade of staff in the relevant period.

The period for which the information must be provided is the period from appointment to the end of the most recent period of six months reckoned from the date of the nominee's or supervisor's appointment, or where he has vacated office, the date that he vacated office.

The information must be provided within 28 days of receipt of the request by the nominee or supervisor, and requests must be made within two years from vacation of office.

7 Effective date

This guide applies where the nominee in relation to the arrangement agrees to act on or after 6 April 2010.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION IN RELATION TO THE POLICY OF LEONARD CURTIS REGARDING FEES AND DISBURSEMENTS

The following information relating to the policy of Leonard Curtis is considered to be relevant to creditors:

Staff Allocation and Support Staff

We take an objective and practical approach to each assignment which includes active director involvement from the outset. Other members of staff will be assigned on the basis of experience and specific skills to match the needs of the case.

Time spent by secretarial and other support staff on specific case related matters, e.g. report despatching, is not charged.

Where it has been agreed by resolution of the secured creditors, a creditors' committee or creditors generally, that the office holders' remuneration will be calculated by reference to the time properly given by the office holders and their staff in attending to matters arising in the appointment, then such remuneration will be calculated in units of 6 minutes at the standard hourly rates given below. In cases of exceptional complexity or risk, the insolvency practitioner reserves the right to obtain authority from the appropriate body of creditors that their remuneration on such time shall be charged at the higher complex rate given below.

With effect from 1 January 2010 the following hourly charge out rates apply to all assignments undertaken by Leonard Curtis:

	Standard £	Complex £
Partner	395	494
Senior Manager	350	438
Manager 1	300	375
Manager 2	260	325
Administrator 1	210	263
Administrator 2	190	238
Administrator 3	170	213
Administrator 4	120	150
Support	0	0

Subcontractors

Details and the cost of any work which has been or is intended to be sub-contracted out that could otherwise be carried out by the office holders or their staff will be provided in any report which incorporates a request for approval of the basis upon which remuneration may be charged.

Professional Advisors

Details of any professional advisor(s) used will be given in reports to creditors. Unless otherwise indicated the fee arrangement for each is based on hourly charge out rates, which are reviewed on a regular basis, together with the recovery of relevant disbursements.

The choice of professional advisors is based around a number of factors including, but not restricted to, their expertise in a particular field, the complexity or otherwise of the assignment and their geographic location.

Disbursements

- a) Category 1 disbursements: These are costs where there is specific expenditure directly referable both to the appointment in question and a payment to an independent third party. These may include, for example, advertising, room hire, storage, postage, telephone charges, travel expenses, and equivalent costs reimbursed to the office holder or his or her staff. Category 1 disbursements may be drawn without prior approval.
- b) Category 2 disbursements: These are costs that are directly referable to the appointment in question but not to a payment to an independent third party. They may include shared or allocated costs that can be allocated to the appointment on a proper and reasonable basis, for example, business mileage. In the event of charging for category 2 disbursements the following items of expenditure are recharged on this basis and are believed to be in line with the cost of external provision:

Internal photocopying	10p per copy
General stationery, postage, telephone etc	£100 per 100 creditors/ members or part thereof
Storage of office files (6 years)	£66.09 per box
Business mileage	45p per mile

Category 2 disbursements may be drawn if they have been approved in the same manner as an office holder's remuneration.