

CHANGING ACCOUNTANTS



Exceeding expectations & going that step further ...

Finding the right accountant is essential to running your business. Having your financial information in order provides you with access to regular meaningful management information and assists you with credit control and supplier management, allowing you to concentrate on growing your business.

If you have experienced any of the following it may be time to change your accountant:

- You feel your accountant doesn't listen to you
- You feel your accountant does not fully understand your business
- Your accountant is unapproachable
- You are unhappy with the service
- You do not understand your fees
- You receive penalties for late filing of returns
- Your company has grown and the current accountant cannot cater for your expanded needs

Steps to change accountant

Once you have found your new accountant the steps to be followed are:

- Advise accountant that another accountant has been appointed to deal with your affairs
- Advise HMRC that there is a new accountant dealing with your affairs
- Obtain information from your previous accountant about your accounts and tax affairs

At Alexander Marshall we aim to minimise the hassle and disruption involved in changing accountants. If you do not wish to contact your accountant we will inform them of your decision. We will also request all necessary information about your accounts and tax affairs to ensure a smooth transition and will notify HMRC that we are acting on your behalf. All you will be required to do is sign 2 forms.

What are handover Fees?

It would be very unusual for your existing accountant to make a charge for handing over. If your existing accountant is a Chartered, Certified or other professionally qualified accountant, they will be bound by their regulatory body to fully cooperate with the transfer of your accounts and tax information and any papers belonging to you within a reasonable time.

CHANGING ACCOUNTANTS continued ...



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Potential Problems and Issues on a transfer

The most common problem when transferring accountants is a fee dispute. There may be outstanding fees for work already done or your accountant may be seeking to charge a fee which, for whatever reason, you may think is not appropriate and refuse to pay. In such circumstances, your existing accountant may refuse to cooperate in dealing with the handover.

They should not refuse "Professional Clearance" on the basis of a fee dispute alone, although they are entitled to advise your new accountant of the circumstances and it will then be up to your new accountant to consider whether or not they should take on your case in the circumstances. Your new accountant may be able to assist in resolving the problem but should all else fail and you believe your existing accountant is behaving in an unreasonable manner, you could always file a complaint against him with his professional body.

Another problem may be that your existing accountant does not respond, perhaps because they are no longer in business, have disappeared or are unqualified or simply refuse to answer correspondence.

If any of the above mentioned problems arose, we would help in trying to resolve the dispute with the previous accountant and if it was not possible to do that we would make every effort to ensure that your affairs were kept up to date using all the information available to us and that you can provide.