



Rated by Experts

Leading the market in
clarity and transparency



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Overview

Our product ratings use a set of 'red line' criteria to calculate an underlying score for each product, which translates to a star rating. Products can achieve between one and five stars.

To achieve a five-star rating, products must meet all of our red line criteria. We focus on core product features, and don't give extra marks for unnecessary features or optional extras.

Our current red line criteria are contained in the following pages.

Online Will Writers

Red Line 1 - Legal Advice

If legal advice is provided as part of the service then the provider passes this red line. If legal advice is provided then the customer will be receiving the necessary information and checking of the documents.

If legal advice is not being provided then the following information must be made clear:

- It must be made clear to the customer during the purchase process that the service does not constitute legal advice. This must be displayed clearly on the main page or within the journey and not just in the terms and conditions or FAQs.
- It must be made clear that the product might not be suitable for them if they have complex needs, for example if they own a business or foreign assets. This can be achieved by either a warning at the start of the journey or a set of triage questions that stop the journey and prompt the customer to give them a call. This is important to make sure the customer is informed and is making a will which is valid.
- It must be made clear whether the company is regulated or not by the Solicitors Regulation Authority (SRA). This should be on the main page, not in the terms or FAQs and can be achieved by text or a logo. This is important so the customer knows where they may be able to complain and receive redress.
- The customer must be sent instructions on how to store their will. If a storage service is not provided the customer must be warned that their will must be kept in a safe secure location where it cannot be damaged. I.e. a fireproof box. and that they must let the executor know where they can find it.

- The customer must be shown a warning or a tick box to confirm that they are of sound mind and have capacity to make the will. This is important as a safeguard to help the customer consider this and make sure the will created is valid.

If all five of these conditions are met then the provider will pass this red line.

Red Line 2 – Do they make themselves executors?

To pass this red line, online will writers must not make themselves your executors. Some online will writers will make themselves an executor and in exchange, take a percentage of your estate. Where this is optional this is fine so long as the options are presented fairly and equally but if it is the only option we believe this is unacceptable so anyone doing this will fail this red line.

Red Line 3 – The fees for making the will writer the executor of the will must be clearly displayed

Where it is optional to choose the will writer as the executor of the will the fees for doing so must be made clear. The Fixed fee or % charge must be stated at the point of selection, it is not enough to simply state “there will be a fee” or similar. If this is not made clear customers may select a professional executor without realising this could involve significant costs to their estate and customers must be able to make an informed decision before selecting.

Red Line 4 – Does the provider explain the instructions for signing the will, including who may and may not witness the signature?

To pass this red line, online will writers must send clear instructions to the customer on how to sign their will, including who and who may not be a witness. This is important to ensure they are creating a valid will after it has

been purchased. Best practice will also present this information clearly on the website.

Red Line 5 – Liability and professional indemnity insurance?

The will writer must be covered by professional indemnity insurance of at least £2million. This ensures the firm will be able to compensate customers who suffer any damages.

The will writer must also not limit their liability for damages resulting from issues to the amount the customer has paid for the will or less. Some firms will limit their liability from damages to the amount the customer has paid for the will and we do not feel that this is acceptable.

Red Line 6 – Fee for retrieval of will

The will writer must not charge a fee for retrieving a will must. The majority of brands in the sector do not charge for this so we have set the red line at £0.

Contact Fairer Finance

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