



Insolvency Act 1986

1986 CHAPTER 45

PART IV

WINDING UP OF COMPANIES REGISTERED UNDER THE COMPANIES ACTS

CHAPTER VII

LIQUIDATORS

Liquidator's powers and duties

165 Voluntary winding up.

- (1) This section has effect where a company is being wound up voluntarily, but subject to section 166 below in the case of a creditor's voluntary winding up.
- [^{F1}(2) The liquidator may exercise any of the powers specified in Parts 1 to 3 of Schedule 4.]
- (4) The liquidator may—
 - (a) exercise the court's power of settling a list of contributories (which list is prima facie evidence of the liability of the persons named in it to be contributories),
 - (b) exercise the court's power of making calls,
 - (c) summon general meetings of the company for the purpose of obtaining its sanction by [^{F2}special resolution] or for any other purpose he may think fit.
- (5) The liquidator shall pay the company's debts and adjust the rights of the contributories among themselves.
- (6) Where the liquidator in exercise of the powers conferred on him by this Act disposes of any property of the company to a person who is connected with the company (within the meaning of section 249 in Part VII), he shall, if there is for the time being a liquidation committee, give notice to the committee of that exercise of his powers.

Changes to legislation: Insolvency Act 1986, Cross Heading: Liquidator's powers and duties is up to date with all changes known to be in force on or before 12 April 2024. There are changes that may be brought into force at a future date. Changes that have been made appear in the content and are referenced with annotations. (See end of Document for details) View outstanding changes

Textual Amendments

- F1** S. 165(2) substituted for s. 165(2)(3) (26.5.2015) by [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(c. 26\), ss. 120\(2\), 164\(3\)\(i\)\(i\)](#)
- F2** Words in s. 165(4)(c) substituted (1.10.2007 with application as noted in Sch. 4 para. 41(2) of the amending S.I.) by [The Companies Act 2006 \(Commencement No. 3, Consequential Amendments, Transitional Provisions and Savings\) Order 2007 \(S.I. 2007/2194\)](#), art. 10(1), **Sch. 4 para. 41(1)(b)** (with art. 12)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C1** [Pts. 1-4](#) applied (with modifications) (8.7.2021) by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/716\)](#), reg. 2, **Sch. 1 para. 3** (with reg. 5) (as amended (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2023/1399](#), regs. 1(2), 4)
- C2** S. 165 applied (with modifications) (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), reg. 4(1), **Sch. 2**
- C3** [Ss. 163-167](#) applied (with modifications) (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2021/716](#), **Sch. 1 para. 3** (as amended by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1399\)](#), regs. 1(2), 20)
- C4** S. 165(2) modified by [SI 1994/2421](#) Sch. 3 para. 8A(1) (as inserted (6.4.2017) by [The Deregulation Act 2015 and Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(Consequential Amendments\) \(Savings\) Regulations 2017 \(S.I. 2017/540\)](#), reg. 1, **Sch. 2 para. 7(2)** (with reg. 4))
- C5** S. 165 modified (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), reg. 4(2), **Sch. 3**

166 Creditors' voluntary winding up.

(1) This section applies where, in the case of a creditors' voluntary winding up, a liquidator has been nominated by the company.

[^{F3}(1A) The exercise by the liquidator of the power specified in paragraph 6 of Schedule 4 to this Act (power to sell any of the company's property) shall not be challengeable on the ground of any prior inhibition.]

(2) The powers conferred on the liquidator by section 165 shall not be exercised, except with the sanction of the court, [^{F4}before—

- (a) the company's creditors under section 100 nominate a person to be liquidator, or
- (b) the procedure by which the company's creditors were to have made such a nomination concludes without a nomination having been made.]

(3) Subsection (2) does not apply in relation to the power of the liquidator—

- (a) to take into his custody or under his control all the property to which the company is or appears to be entitled;
- (b) to dispose of perishable goods and other goods the value of which is likely to diminish if they are not immediately disposed of; and
- (c) to do all such other things as may be necessary for the protection of the company's assets.

[^{F5}(4)]

(5) [^{F6}If the directors fail to comply with—

- (a) section 99(1), (2) or (2A), or
- (b) section 100(1B),]

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the liquidator shall, within 7 days of the relevant day, apply to the court for directions as to the manner in which that default is to be remedied.

- (6) “The relevant day” means the day on which the liquidator was nominated by the company or the day on which he first became aware of the default, whichever is the later.
- (7) If the liquidator without reasonable excuse fails to comply with this section, he is liable to a fine.

Textual Amendments

- F3** S. 166(1A) inserted (S.) (22.4.2009) by [Bankruptcy and Diligence etc. \(Scotland\) Act 2007 \(asp 3\)](#), [ss. 155\(3\)](#), [227\(3\)](#) (with [s. 223](#)); [S.S.I. 2009/67](#), [art. 3\(a\)](#) (with [arts. 5, 6](#)); as amended by [S.S.I. 2011/31](#), [art. 5](#)
- F4** Words in s. 166(2) substituted (26.5.2015 for specified purposes, 6.4.2017 for E.W. in so far as not already in force, 6.4.2019 for S. in so far as not already in force) by [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(c. 26\)](#), [s. 164\(1\)](#), [Sch. 9 para. 40\(2\)](#); [S.I. 2015/1329](#), [reg. 3\(d\)](#); [S.I. 2016/1020](#), [reg. 4\(e\)](#) (with [reg. 5](#)) (as amended by [S.I. 2017/363](#), [reg. 3](#)); [S.I. 2019/816](#), [reg. 4\(c\)](#) (with [reg. 5](#))
- F5** S. 166(4) omitted (26.5.2015 for specified purposes, 6.4.2017 for E.W. in so far as not already in force, 6.4.2019 for S. in so far as not already in force) by virtue of [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(c. 26\)](#), [s. 164\(1\)](#), [Sch. 9 para. 40\(3\)](#); [S.I. 2015/1329](#), [reg. 3\(d\)](#); [S.I. 2016/1020](#), [reg. 4\(e\)](#) (with [reg. 5](#)) (as amended by [S.I. 2017/363](#), [reg. 3](#)); [S.I. 2019/816](#), [reg. 4\(c\)](#) (with [reg. 5](#))
- F6** Words in s. 166(5) substituted (26.5.2015 for specified purposes, 6.4.2017 for E.W. in so far as not already in force, 6.4.2019 for S. in so far as not already in force) by [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(c. 26\)](#), [s. 164\(1\)](#), [Sch. 9 para. 40\(4\)](#); [S.I. 2015/1329](#), [reg. 3\(d\)](#); [S.I. 2016/1020](#), [reg. 4\(e\)](#) (with [reg. 5](#)) (as amended by [S.I. 2017/363](#), [reg. 3](#)); [S.I. 2019/816](#), [reg. 4\(c\)](#) (with [reg. 5](#))

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C3** [Ss. 163-167](#) applied (with modifications) (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2021/716](#), [Sch. 1 para. 3](#) (as amended by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1399\)](#), [regs. 1\(2\), 20](#))
- C6** S. 166 applied (with modifications) (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), [reg. 4\(1\)](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- C7** S. 166(5) modified (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), [reg. 4\(2\)](#), [Sch. 3](#)

167 Winding up by the court.

[^{F7}(1) Where a company is being wound up by the court, the liquidator may exercise any of the powers specified in Parts 1 to 3 of Schedule 4.]

(2) Where the liquidator (not being the official receiver), in exercise of the powers conferred on him by this Act—

- (a) disposes of any property of the company to a person who is connected with the company (within the meaning of section 249 in Part VII) or
- (b) employs a solicitor to assist him in the carrying out of his functions,

he shall, if there is for the time being a liquidation committee, give notice to the committee of that exercise of his powers.

(3) The exercise by the liquidator in a winding up by the court of the powers conferred by this section is subject to the control of the court, and any creditor or contributory may apply to the court with respect to any exercise or proposed exercise of any of those powers.

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Textual Amendments

- F7** S. 167(1) substituted (26.5.2015) by [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(c. 26\)](#), **ss. 120(3)**, **164(3)(i)(i)**

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C3** Ss. 163-167 applied (with modifications) (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2021/716](#), **Sch. 1 para. 3** (as amended by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023 \(S.I. 2023/1399\)](#), **regs. 1(2)**, **20**)
- C8** S. 167 excluded (1.12.2001) by [2000 c. 8](#), **s. 376(12)**; [S.I. 2001/3538](#), **art. 2(1)**
 S. 167 applied (with modifications) (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), **reg. 4(1)**, **Sch. 2**
- C9** S. 167 applied (with modifications) (17.2.2009 for certain purposes, otherwise 21.2.2009) by [Banking Act 2009 \(c. 1\)](#), **ss. 103**, **263(1)(2)** (with [s. 247](#)); [S.I. 2009/296](#), **arts. 2**, **3**, **Sch. para. 2**
- C10** S. 167 applied (with modifications) (6.6.2013) by [The Collective Investment in Transferable Securities \(Contractual Scheme\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/1388\)](#), **Pt. 3 reg. 1**, **Sch. 2 paras. 3**, **5 Table** (with **reg. 24**)
- C11** S. 167 applied (with modifications) (E.W.S.) (8.7.2021) by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/716\)](#), **regs. 2**, **37** (with **reg. 5**) (as amended (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2023/1399](#), **regs. 1(2)**, **4**, **11**)
- C12** S. 167(1) modified (6.4.2017) by [The Insolvent Partnerships Order 1994 \(S.I. 1994/2421\)](#), **Sch. 3 para. 8A(2)** (as inserted by [S.I. 2017/540](#), **reg. 1**, **Sch. 2 para. 7(2)** (with **reg. 4**))

168 Supplementary powers (England and Wales).

- (1) This section applies in the case of a company which is being wound up by the court in England and Wales.
- [^{F8}(2) The liquidator may seek a decision on any matter from the company's creditors or contributories; and must seek a decision on a matter—
- (a) from the company's creditors, if requested to do so by one-tenth in value of the creditors;
 - (b) from the company's contributories, if requested to do so by one-tenth in value of the contributories.]
- (3) The liquidator may apply to the court (in the prescribed manner) for directions in relation to any particular matter arising in the winding up.
- (4) Subject to the provisions of this Act, the liquidator shall use his own discretion in the management of the assets and their distribution among the creditors.
- (5) If any person is aggrieved by an act or decision of the liquidator, that person may apply to the court; and the court may confirm, reverse or modify the act or decision complained of, and make such order in the case as it thinks just.
- [^{F9}(5A) Where at any time after a winding-up petition has been presented to the court against any person (including an insolvent partnership or other body which may be wound up under Part V of the Act as an unregistered company), whether by virtue of the provisions of the ^{M1}Insolvent Partnerships Order 1994 or not, the attention of the court is drawn to the fact that the person in question is a member of an insolvent partnership, the court may make an order as to the future conduct of the insolvency proceedings and any such order may apply any provisions of that Order with any necessary modifications.

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(5B) Any order or directions under subsection (5A) may be made or given on the application of the official receiver, any responsible insolvency practitioner, the trustee of the partnership or any other interested person and may include provisions as to the administration of the joint estate of the partnership, and in particular how it and the separate estate of any member are to be administered.]

[^{F10}(5C) Where the court makes an order for the winding up of an insolvent partnership under—

- (a) section 72(1)(a) of the Financial Services Act 1986;
- (b) section 92(1)(a) of the Banking Act 1987; or
- (c) section 367(3)(a) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000,

the court may make an order as to the future conduct of the winding up proceedings, and any such order may apply any provisions of the Insolvent Partnerships Order 1994 with any necessary modifications.]

Textual Amendments

- F8** S. 168(2) substituted (26.5.2015 for specified purposes, 6.4.2017 for E.W. in so far as not already in force, 6.4.2019 for S. in so far as not already in force) by [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015 \(c. 26\), s. 164\(1\), Sch. 9 para. 41\(2\)](#); S.I. 2015/1329, reg. 3(d); S.I. 2016/1020, reg. 4(e) (with reg. 5) (as amended by S.I. 2017/363, reg. 3); S.I. 2019/816, reg. 4(c) (with reg. 5)
- F9** S. 168(5A)(5B)(5C) inserted (1.12.1994) by S.I. 1994/2421, [art. 14\(1\)](#)
- F10** S. 168(5C) substituted (3.7.2002) by S.I. 2002/1555, [art. 15\(2\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C13** S. 168 applied (with modifications) (17.2.2009 for certain purposes, otherwise 21.2.2009) by [Banking Act 2009 \(c. 1\), ss. 103, 263\(1\)\(2\)](#) (with s. 247); S.I. 2009/296, arts. 2, 3, [Sch. para. 2](#) (as amended (13.3.2018) by S.I. 2018/208, regs. 1(3), [5\(3\)](#))
- C14** S. 168 applied (with modifications) (6.6.2013) by [The Collective Investment in Transferable Securities \(Contractual Scheme\) Regulations 2013 \(S.I. 2013/1388\)](#), Pt. 3reg. 1, Sch. 2 paras. 3, [5](#) Table (with reg. 24)
- C15** S. 168(1)-(3)(5) applied (with modifications) (1.12.1994) by S.I. 1994/2421, [art. 8\(3\)\(9\)](#), [Sch. 4 Pt. II para. 20](#)
- C16** S. 168(2) modified (20.4.2003) by [The Insurers \(Reorganisation and Winding Up\) Regulations 2003 \(S.I. 2003/1102\)](#), [reg. 29\(2\)](#) (with reg. 3)
- C17** S. 168(4) applied (with modifications) (17.2.2009 for certain purposes, otherwise 21.2.2009) by [Banking Act 2009 \(c. 1\), ss. 145, 263\(1\)\(2\)](#) (with s. 247); S.I. 2009/296, [arts. 2, 3](#), Sch. para. 3
- C18** S. 168(4) applied (with modifications) (E.W.S.) 8.7.2021) by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency Regulations 2021 \(S.I. 2021/716\)](#), [regs. 2, 37](#) (with reg. 5) (as amended (4.1.2024) by S.I. 2023/1399, [regs. 1\(2\), 4, 11](#))

Marginal Citations

- M1** [S.I. 1994/2421](#).

169 Supplementary powers (Scotland).

- (1) ^{F11}.....
- (2) In a winding up by the court in Scotland, the liquidator has (subject to the rules) the same powers as a trustee on a bankrupt estate.

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Textual Amendments

- F11** S. 169(1) omitted (26.5.2015) by virtue of [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015](#) (c. 26), [ss. 120\(4\)](#), [164\(3\)\(i\)\(i\)](#)

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C19** S. 169 applied (with modifications) (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), [reg. 4\(1\)](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- C20** S. 169 applied (with modifications) (17.2.2009 for certain purposes, otherwise 21.2.2009) by [Banking Act 2009](#) (c. 1), [ss. 103](#), [263\(1\)\(2\)](#) (with s. 247); [S.I. 2009/296](#), [arts. 2, 3](#), [Sch. para. 2](#) (as amended (7.4.2017) by [The Deregulation Act 2015](#), the [Small Business, Enterprise and Employment Act 2015](#) and the [Insolvency \(Amendment\) Act \(Northern Ireland\) 2016](#) (Consequential Amendments and Transitional Provisions) [Regulations 2017](#) (S.I. 2017/400), [regs. 1\(2\)](#), [5\(4\)](#))
- C21** S. 169 applied (with modifications) (6.6.2013) by [The Collective Investment in Transferable Securities \(Contractual Scheme\) Regulations 2013](#) (S.I. 2013/1388), Pt. 3 [reg. 1](#), [Sch. 2 paras. 3, 5](#) Table (with [reg. 24](#))
- C22** S. 169 applied (with modifications) (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2021/716](#), [Sch. 1 para. 3](#) (as amended by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023](#) (S.I. 2023/1399), [regs. 1\(2\)](#), [20](#))

170 Enforcement of liquidator's duty to make returns, etc.

- (1) If a liquidator who has made any default—
- (a) in filing, delivering or making any return, account or other document, or
 - (b) in giving any notice which he is by law required to file, deliver, make or give,
- fails to make good the default within 14 days after the service on him of a notice requiring him to do so, the court has the following powers.
- (2) On an application made by any creditor or contributory of the company, or by the registrar of companies, the court may make an order directing the liquidator to make good the default within such time as may be specified in the order.
- (3) The court's order may provide that all costs of and incidental to the application shall be borne by the liquidator.
- (4) Nothing in this section prejudices the operation of any enactment imposing penalties on a liquidator in respect of any such default as is mentioned above.

Modifications etc. (not altering text)

- C23** S. 170 applied (with modifications) (S.) (6.4.2001) by [S.S.I. 2001/128](#), [reg. 4\(1\)](#), [Sch. 2](#)
- C24** S. 170 applied (with modifications) (17.2.2009 for certain purposes, otherwise 21.2.2009) by [Banking Act 2009](#) (c. 1), [ss. 103](#), [263\(1\)\(2\)](#) (with s. 247); [S.I. 2009/296](#), [arts. 2, 3](#), [Sch. para. 2](#)
- C25** S. 170 applied (with modifications) (6.6.2013) by [The Collective Investment in Transferable Securities \(Contractual Scheme\) Regulations 2013](#) (S.I. 2013/1388), Pt. 3 [reg. 1](#), [Sch. 2 paras. 3, 5](#) Table (with [reg. 24](#))
- C26** S. 170 applied (with modifications) (4.1.2024) by [S.I. 2021/716](#), [Sch. 1 para. 3](#) (as amended by [The Payment and Electronic Money Institution Insolvency \(Amendment\) Regulations 2023](#) (S.I. 2023/1399), [regs. 1\(2\)](#), [20](#))
- C27** S. 170(2) amended (1.7.1999) by [1998 c. 46](#), s. 125, [Sch. 8 para. 23\(1\)–\(3\)](#), (with s. 126(3)–(11)); [S.I. 1998/3178](#), [arts. 2, 3](#) (as amended (28.6.2016) by [The Building Societies \(Floating Charges and Other Provisions\) Order 2016](#) (S.I. 2016/679), [arts. 1\(1\)](#), [6](#))

Changes to legislation:

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Changes and effects yet to be applied to the whole Act associated Parts and Chapters:

- Act amendment to earlier affecting provision S.I. 1986/1999, art. 3, Sch. 1 Pt. 2 by [S.I. 2017/1119 Sch. 3 para. 1](#)
- Act savings and transitional provisions for amendments by S.I. 2022/1166 by [S.I. 2022/1172 Regulations](#)

Whole provisions yet to be inserted into this Act (including any effects on those provisions):

- s. 41HB(2) words substituted by [2018 c. 14 s. 1\(3\)\(b\)](#)