

PCG Quality Umbrella

An overview

Protecting and promoting the interests of freelance consultants and contractors

The last few years have seen a significant growth in the number and scope of umbrella company activities, with many current and potential members asking the Professional Contractors Group (PCG) for advice on how to select an umbrella company that complies with the requirements of HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC). It was a natural development that, as the leading representative body for freelancers, PCG should introduce a “quality” umbrella scheme.

The PCG Quality Umbrella, PCG (QU), was developed and is delivered in association with Parasol, who are one of the UK’s leading and most respected providers of employment services for contractors, freelancers and knowledge-based workers. Parasol cares about providing a truly professional service for new and experienced contractors, taking care of their best interests financially and with ongoing professional development.

What is PCG (QU)?

PCG (QU) is a scheme that offers contractors the following facilities:

- Award-winning Parasol service
- Inclusive PCG standard membership (excluding Professional Expenses Insurance (PEI))
- Inclusive Personal Legal Expenses (PLE) insurance policy
- Inclusive CHAPS transfer
- Discounts on other useful services.

What does it cost?

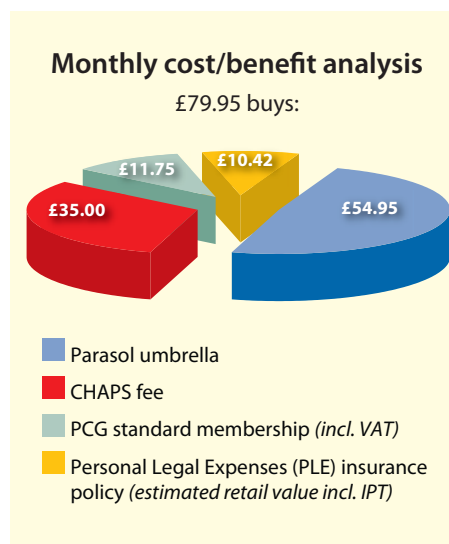
Depending on whether you are weekly or monthly paid, the following deductions are made:

- **Weekly paid** – weekly administration deduction of just £39.45 for each week, or part week, that you use the facility
- **Monthly paid** – monthly administration deduction of just £79.95 for each month, or part month, that you use the facility

In addition to this, you will also have the standard statutory deductions such as tax, National Insurance and any attachment of earnings that Parasol is instructed to take, such as student loans.

Additional payments in the same payment period that require Parasol to recalculate and send a balancing payment again will attract a supplementary fee to cover bank costs.

Using the monthly fee of £79.95 as an example, PCG (QU) gives you a valuable package of services that would cost you around £112 a month to buy:



Benefits for contractors

The PCG (QU) scheme offers a comprehensive suite of umbrella services, with fast contractor set-up and priority processes. Excellent payment and contract terms include:

- Secure 24/7 online access to enter your timesheet, expenses and details
- Payroll processing every working day
- Automatic invoice generation and forwarding
- Immediate payment via CHAPS of your recognised received funds
- Automatic confirmation of timesheet entry, invoices and payments
- Self-billing processing (if relevant)
- No termination fee
- Free confirmation of earnings letter for mortgage and loan purposes.

The PCG (QU) service charter outlines the obligations of both parties, and further added value is offered through:

- Standard PCG membership (excluding Professional Expenses Insurance) included in the package
- Personal Legal Expenses insurance policy, including jury service expenses insurance cover
- Free independent financial advice for mortgages, pensions and insurance
- Professional Indemnity, Employers’ Liability and Public Liability insurance included for IT and other contractors
- Legal, tax and VAT advice lines
- Access to the PCG member forums.

PCG (QU) offers superb customer service and query resolution, as well as access to discounted products and services negotiated by PCG for its members or by Parasol, such as training, healthcare insurance, cars, travel, hotels and a wide range of other goods and services.

What is an umbrella? Getting started

An umbrella company acts as a single limited company for a large number of contractors who operate within the Pay As You Earn (PAYE) scheme.

Its purpose is to make life simpler for contractors while maximising their earnings, by taking responsibility for their administrative affairs and compliance and ensuring that allowable business expenses are claimed correctly.

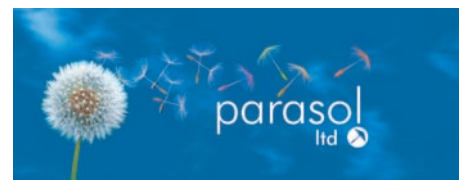
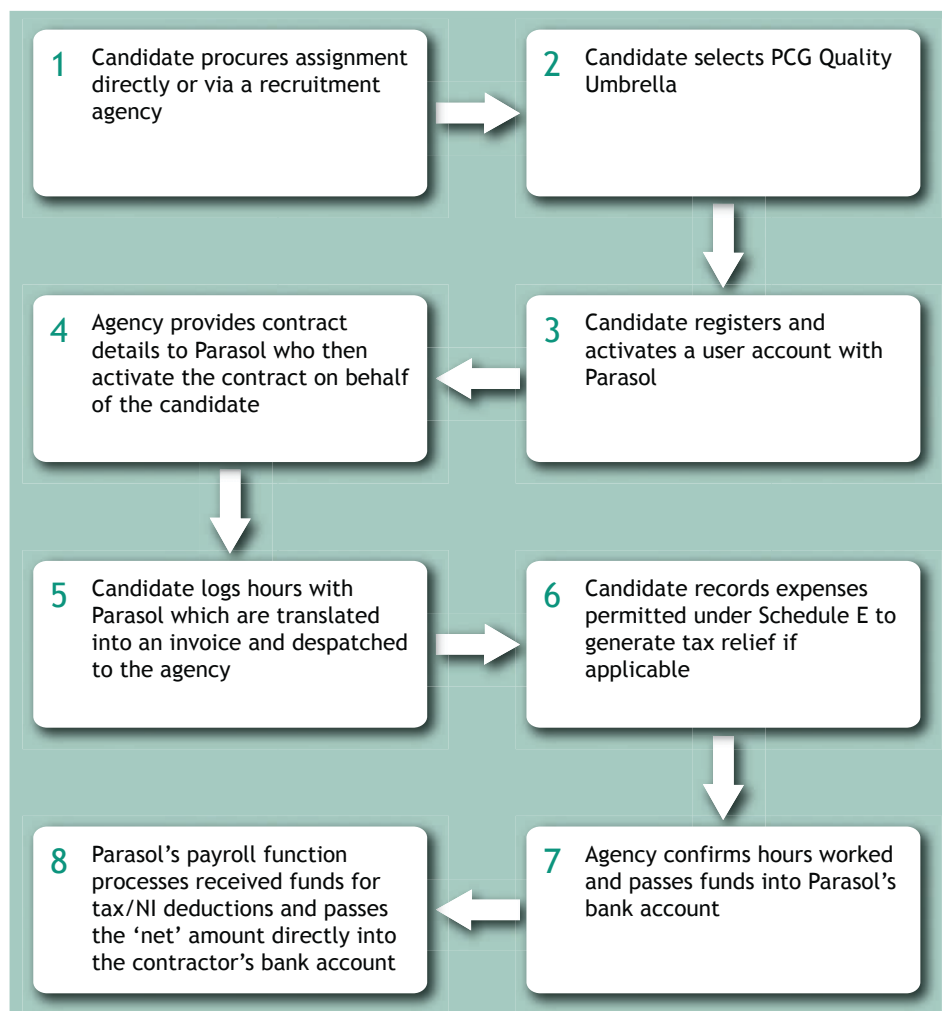
Some offer a lot of benefits, whilst others offer nothing different from standard temporary employment. As explained on PCG's website, an umbrella may be suitable for contractors in certain situations; if you have any doubts, you should seek independent advice from a qualified accountant before signing up.

Joining the PCG (QU) scheme and working as a consultant is very simple. First of all, you need to check the "Can I Use Your Service?" FAQ on PCG's website.

Then visit the "Getting started" page, and from the link provided, register online. Once you have entered your personal details, Parasol will email you a starter pack to guide you through the process of getting a new or existing contract raised for your work via Parasol Limited.

Send your signed terms and conditions back to Parasol, with a valid proof of your identity, and arrange for a P45 from your accountant or previous employer.

There are no set-up charges and the process is easy, quick and cost-effective.



Parasol

Parasol is part of the Parasol Limited group of trading brands and provides a professional employment service to contractors and recruitment agencies.

Formed in April 2000 to provide umbrella facilities, Parasol was based on the amalgamation of an established IT consultancy business and a well-established chartered accountancy practice. Now one of the UK leaders in umbrella company services, Parasol is the organisation behind NetPay Xtra, a comprehensive online professional employment services product.

Parasol has worked with over 15,000 contractors and provides a high quality service to contractors working across a range of industries who want the advantages of freelancing without the hassle and risks. The highlights of its proposition include:

- High earnings derived in a safe and responsible manner
- Industry leading online and offline service and training solutions
- Safety, reliability and a sense of belonging to an organisation that is here for the long term
- Trusted by over 2000 leading recruitment companies
- Inclusive supporting insurances
- A professional approach that includes contractors' ideas, requirements and needs.

Parasol's online based system is supported by a dedicated head office team in Warrington, committed to delivery quality, innovation and high service standards.

www.parasolgroup.co.uk

To find out more

PCG (QU) enquiry line: 0800 583 6000

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