

The ICPA course and examination is aimed at paralegals with at least one year's experience in the industry. The course builds on this experience. Whilst the course starts each module from basics, it is not necessarily a substitute for experience in the workplace. The examination focusses on practical scenarios, where workplace experience is helpful.

This question paper tested a range of competencies on subjects within the syllabus. Candidates are reminded that questions can be asked on any topic in the course materials. These questions can be worded for interpretation by candidates applying their knowledge. If an answer is deemed an appropriate response to the question, marks are awarded.

Knowledge of calculation of dates is required. Management software cannot necessarily be relied upon in the workplace – incorrect entry of a start date will result in incorrect due dates. Candidates should be able to calculate and identify correct dates, in order to validate dates calculated by software packages.

Only a minority of candidates showed good knowledge of procedures for Designs.

Candidates are advised that the answer for each question should start on a new page. This aids the readability of the answer and totalling the marks.

This year, a significant number of candidates struggled with filling in the form. Mark schemes of earlier papers can aid candidates to see how forms should be filled in. The paper versions require identical information to on-line forms for completion.

Those candidates who achieved higher marks demonstrated knowledge across all areas of the syllabus. Candidates are reminded that where calculations are requested, full marks are likely to be awarded only where full calculations are set out clearly in the answers. Use should be made of the calendars provided.

Marks could not be awarded for what appeared to be typographical errors or mistakes in calculations.

Overall, a significant proportion of candidates who sat the examination this year did well and are to be congratulated.

Question number	Comments on questions
Question 1	PCT Demand Candidates were required to demonstrate knowledge that the deadline for filing a Demand is the later of 22 months from earliest priority or 3 months from the mailing date of the ISR. Some candidates were confused regarding what set the period running and the period itself, and so arrived at an incorrect deadline. Good candidates showed full workings of both possible deadlines, then selected the later of the two. Use of the calendar indicated no 29 February 2025, so the 3 month date would fall on 28 February. This question was answered reasonably well.
Question 2	EPO Appeal Calculations are needed to obtain full marks, and most candidates set out these calculations clearly. Candidates are reminded to check calendars for weekends.

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Question 3	EPO Decision to Grant – Unitary Patent Candidates with knowledge of the EPO and UPC answered this question well, including showing workings for date calculations.
Question 4	PCT Fees Candidates with good knowledge of PCT procedures answered well, but a large minority appeared uncertain regarding which fees were due and the deadline.
Question 5	Obtaining a European Patent This question was generally well answered.
Question 6	Minimum requirements for a UK Design This question was mostly answered well. Some candidates confused the requirements for securing a filing date of a patent with those of a design.
Question 7	Language for an EP Patent Application This question related to languages accepted by the EPO for an EP patent application. Some candidates provided incorrect answers based on PCT Receiving Offices. Good candidates were aware of EP language rules, together with the due date for filing the translation.
Question 8	UK Design Publication Only a minority of candidates answered this question correctly. To gain full marks, it was necessary to state that you should request publication and pay the fee, together with the date calculation.
Question 9	UK Patent Renewals As with other questions where candidates are asked to show their calculations, full marks could only be awarded where candidates include those calculations in their answer. Many candidates failed to roll the date to the end of the month.
Question 10	EPO Form 1200 Only a few good candidates were able to complete this form correctly, with many making errors. Section 1 – Applicant – Address for correspondence should be left blank. Box 2 was required for the Representative. Section 2 – Candidates failed to enter the name of the representative. The address should include the Country (UK/United Kingdom etc). Section 3 – General authorisation number and check box. The first two boxes in 6.1 should be checked for the claims amendments Section 12 - No Early Processing was instructed therefore 12.1 should not be checked

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	Section 15 – name of representative required. Place (any reasonable place accepted, for example United Kingdom). The date as specified in the question is 15 February 2025. The table for Section 6 (pages) was incorrectly completed by the majority of candidates.
Question 11	UK Patent Application Examination Request This was well answered by most candidates.
Question 12	EP Office Action The term “Article 94(3)” did not seem to cause confusion. Part a) was a standard question relating to response deadlines, and was answered well. Note, however, that it stated “assuming no extensions of time”, and therefore no calculations were required for an additional 2 months in a) or b). Parts b) and c) related to further processing and the requirements and timelines. Whilst most candidates answered this question well, some candidates were clearly not familiar with the further processing requirements.
Question 13	PCT Receiving Office This question was correctly answered by most candidates.
Question 14	Duty of Care Candidates generally answered this well. Note that duty of care does not relate simply to not making mistakes on forms or in date calculations. Good candidates explained how the duty of care relates to the work they do and how they act towards clients.
Question 15	EP Renewal This question tested candidates’ knowledge of the renewal regime close to the grant date, and was not well answered. The due date for the renewal fee (7 January 2025) falls before the grant date (8 January 2025), so the fee must be paid at the EPO, despite the ability to pay that fee at the end of the month (or at the end of the grace period), i.e. after the grant date. This situation is occurring more and more in practice.
Question 16	EP R.71(3) Most candidates answered this question well. Marks could not be awarded if not all the steps needed for grant were included. The date calculations were generally done well, but candidates are reminded to look at the calendars provided to check for national holidays, and to make sure that the correct calendar is checked – i.e. UK or EPO calendars.
Question 17	EP Publications Well-prepared candidates correctly identified the publications received during prosecution of an EP patent application.

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Question 18	GB Compliance Marks could not be awarded if a candidate failed to specify the later of 4 years and 6 months from earliest priority date or 12 months from the date of the first substantive examination report.
Question 19	GB Examination Report GB examination reports specify a deadline for response – in this case 5 February 2025. Some candidates re-calculated the response date from the date of the examination report (03 October 2024). This was incorrect. A 2-month extension is available as-of-right. (Any further extensions would be at the discretion of the UKIPO.) Use of the calendar indicated that the date for response of 5 April 2025 fell on the weekend and would therefore roll over.