

ICPA: Introductory Certificate in Patent Administration

Patent
Examination
Board

Thursday 22 January 2026

10.00–12.30 UK Time (GMT)

Examination time: 2 hours 30 minutes, plus 15 minutes upload time

The 2 hours 30 minutes is allocated as follows:

- 10 minutes** – Downloading and printing the Question Paper and Resource pack;
- 15 minutes** – Reading time;
- 2 hours** – Answering the questions;
- 5 minutes** – Screen break.

At 12.30, you MUST immediately stop answering the questions. You then have **15 minutes** in which to upload your Answer document to the PEBX system.

You MUST upload your Answer document and form(s) to the PEBX system by 12.45. After 12.45, you will not be able to upload them and your examination will be void.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

This examination pack comprises:

Instructions to Candidates	1 sheet
Question paper	5 sheets
Resource Pack	12 sheets

1. You have 15 minutes reading time at the start of the examination. During this time, you **must not type in the Answer document or write** on the forms, question paper, calendars or annexes.
2. You should attempt **all** the questions in this question paper.
3. The total number of marks available for this paper is 80.
4. Answers must be submitted in the Answer document and forms provided.
5. Do not attempt to change the font style, font size, font colour, line spacing or any other preset formatting in the Answer document.
6. Start each question on a new page. To begin a new page, press the Control key and the Enter key simultaneously.
7. When you begin a new question, type in the question number at the top of the page.
8. A **Resource Pack** is provided. The Resource Pack has a contents page and contains calendars, office closure dates, and forms.
9. Select and complete the relevant form(s) when instructed by the question.
10. Write your answers on the form(s) using black pen.
11. Where a question refers to 'today', assume today's date.
12. Do not state your name anywhere in your answers.

This question paper consists of **6 sheets** in total, including this sheet.

AT THE END OF THE EXAMINATION

13. Upload your Answer document to the PEBX system. You should upload it as a Word document. PEBX will automatically convert it to PDF.
14. Save the PDF(s) of your scanned form(s) to PEBX.

Question 1

What are the three minimum requirements for obtaining a filing date for a direct, non-convention, European patent application?

3 marks

Question 2

You received a Decision to Grant indicating that European patent no. 3735624 granted on 31 December 2025. The language of the patent is French. The client would like to request unitary effect.

a) What steps must be taken to obtain unitary effect?

2 marks

b) What is the deadline for requesting unitary effect? Show your calculations.

4 marks

c) Where will the renewal fees due on the unitary patent be payable?

1 mark

Total 7 marks

Question 3

What is the maximum possible term to defer publication for a design, filed without claiming priority, under the Hague System?

2 marks

Question 4

You filed a UK patent application 2304081.0 on 16 December 2021, claiming two priority dates – one of 17 December 2020 and another of 5 January 2021. A first examination report issued on 9 June 2025 and was responded to on 8 August 2025.

What is the deadline for putting the application in order for grant? Show your calculations.

7 marks

Question 5

You filed a European patent application on 17 December 2025, claiming a priority date of 15 January 2025.

What is the deadline for submitting the priority document, either by filing the certified copy or providing a DAS (Digital Access Service) code? Show your calculations.

3 marks

Question 6

A PCT application was filed at the European Patent Office (EPO) on 22 September 2025, claiming priority from a US provisional patent application dated 23 September 2024. The EPO was selected as the International Searching Authority.

An international search report and written opinion (ISR/WO) was received at your office, dated 19 January 2026. Your client has indicated that they wish to file Article 19 amendments in response to the ISR/WO and have provided you with an amended set of claims and arguments.

Identify the deadline(s) for submitting Article 19 amendments. Show your calculations.

7 marks

Question 7

How might the rights of a patent transfer from the inventor to an organisation? Give two examples.

2 marks

Question 8

A first GB patent application (i.e. not claiming priority) was filed on 27 June 2025. The application contains 40 pages of description and 30 claims. No fees were paid on filing.

a) What is the deadline for filing the inventor details? Show your calculations.

2 marks

b) When is the search request due? Show your calculations.

4 marks

c) What fee(s) are due by the date given in part b)?

3 marks

Total: 9 marks

Question 9

You work for a firm of patent attorneys called Limber Up Patents LLP, based at 14 Evans Road, Little Eaton, Leeds, LS1 2SU, United Kingdom. The firm's contact details are, tel: +44 (0)1139 445532, email: docketing@limberup.com.

One of your patent attorneys, Alex Cooke EPA, sends you this email.

Our client, MechanoLab, Ltd, has instructed us to file a direct EP convention application, claiming priority from GB application no. 2509230.5, filed 4 February 2025 (DAS code D3C6). There will be no additional declaration of priority, so please indicate this on the application form. The applicant is a UK registered company with address, Building 9, Silk Street, London, EC2Y 8DS, United Kingdom. We hold a general authorisation for this applicant at the EPO, #530460.5.

The text is as follows:

Description: 30 pages (numbered 1 to 30)
Claims: 15 claims, over 4 pages (numbered 31 to 34)
Drawings: 5 figures, over 4 pages (numbered 1/4 to 4/4)
Abstract: 1 page (numbered 35). Figure 1 accompanying
Title: Bio Filter

We haven't yet determined the inventor details, so we'll file those at a later date.

The applicant qualifies for fee reductions under Rule 7a(3) and I'll separately send you copies of the search results under R141 for submission on filing. No validation or extension states are to be designated on filing, and we don't require additional copies of documents cited in the search report.

There are no sequence listings or biological material deposits. To expedite prosecution, please indicate waiver of the Rule 70(2) communication.

All fees will be handled by our Accounts team, so there is no need to complete any fee sheets. Our reference is BioPCT1EP.

Complete Form 1001 for filing directly at the EPO, listing me as representative.

12 marks

Question 10

A GB patent application was published on 26 September 2025.

- a) What is the deadline for requesting examination? Show your calculations.

2 marks

- b) The date given in part a) is missed. What can be done and by when to continue with the application. Show your calculations.

6 marks

Total: 8 marks

Question 11

A first patent application (i.e. not claiming priority) was filed in Australia on 4 April 2025.

What is the deadline for filing a direct European patent application claiming priority from the Australian application? Show your calculations.

4 marks

Question 12

A GB patent application was filed on 1 March 2023, and granted on 2 April 2025.

What is the latest date the first renewal fee can be paid without surcharge? Show your calculations.

6 marks

Question 13

List three advantages of filing a PCT application.

3 marks

Question 14

What do the following abbreviations stand for?

- a) IPEA

1 mark

- b) WO-ISA

1 mark

Total 2 marks

Question 15

One of your clients intends to oppose one of their competitors' European patents, EP4567890. The date of publication of mention of grant was 25 June 2025.

- a) **What is the deadline for filing an opposition to this European patent? Show your calculations.**

2 marks

- b) **What must be filed at the EPO by this deadline in order to validly file an opposition?**

3 marks

Total: 5 marks

Total: 80 marks