

Introduction

General comments

The course and examination are targeted at candidates with at least 6-12 months' work experience, and this work experience is vital to complement the course.

The aims of the qualification are to develop:

- the knowledge and skills necessary to deal with the filing and prosecution formalities of GB, EP and PCT patent applications
- an awareness of design formalities
- the ability to review correspondence to identify formalities deadlines and actions required
- an understanding of the critical importance of meeting legal requirements and deadlines.

Candidates are advised that the answer for each question, but not each section of a single question, should start on a new page. This aids the readability of the answer and totalling of the marks.

Candidates had some difficulties with the form question this year, which was generally not well answered, and in the questions on subject matter from within the syllabus that had not been recently tested in previous papers. Candidates and mentors are reminded that the examination can test any area of the syllabus. The strongest candidates were able to demonstrate a wide range of knowledge across all areas.

Past question papers are available online and these are a great resource to aid with revision and preparation for the exam, but subject matter that has not appeared in recent previous question papers may also be tested, and so relying on past papers alone will not provide a sufficient range of knowledge to achieve the higher marks.

For the form questions, candidates should familiarise themselves with completing the paper version of the forms, which can feel quite different to entering data on an IPO portal, for example Online Filing 2.0 from the EPO.

Overall, a large proportion of candidates had clearly prepared well for the examination and performed well.

The mean marks for all questions can be found below the feedback on individual questions.

Questions

Question number	Comments on questions
Question 1	This was a routine question about minimum filing requirements to obtain a filing date for a European patent application. As would be expected, most candidates answered this confidently.
Question 2	This question was about Unitary Patents. Candidates generally showed good understanding in this area, though several were under the impression that a translation into English and German was required – probably confusing this with 71(3) rules.

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Question 3	This question related to deferment period for a Hague Design, and in particular, the maximum possible deferment allowed. A significant number of candidates used the UK deferment deadline, but that would only have applied specifically if the UK was designated.
Question 4	This required calculation of the deadline for putting a UK application in order for grant. This question was answered well by almost all successful candidates. A small number failed to indicate the final deadline being the “later of” the two calculations.
Question 5	This related to the deadline for submitting a priority document at the EPO. This question was answered reasonably well, though more candidates than expected were unaware of the correct calculation here.
Question 6	This tested candidates' knowledge of Art. 19 amendment deadlines. This had not been tested in recent previous papers as often as some other questions and this was reflected by a proportion of candidates seemingly not being aware of how to calculate the deadline. More successful candidates were able to distinguish their scripts as higher level.
Question 7	This question was about how the rights of a patent may transfer from an inventor to an organisation. This was very well answered with a significant proportion of candidates receiving maximum marks.
Question 8	This was a question about GB patent application formalities deadlines and requirements. Candidates generally scored highly here, though some missed out on full marks by not identifying how many claims fees were payable. It was noted that the filing fee would also be due at this stage, and a mark was available for this point.
Question 9	This was a 1001 EPO paper form question. This form had not been tested in recent examinations, and overall, candidates scored quite low across all sections. Candidates are reminded to cover all forms listed in the syllabus in their revision. A high proportion of marks are available for the form question, so it is important to be thoroughly prepared for any form and to be careful when completing these. Many candidates could not be awarded an available mark because they did not enter the address details in the top left box on the “receipt for documents” page.
Question 10	This question tested GB examination deadlines and requirements. Whilst it was generally answered well, some candidates lost one or two marks in part b) by not indicating that a fee was required for both the examination request and separately for the extension of time request. Some candidates confused UKIPO rules with EPO, for example referencing further processing.
Question 11	This was fairly routine question about Convention deadlines on which most successful candidates scored highly.

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Question 12	This question tested knowledge of GB renewal deadlines and was answered well for the most part. However, some candidates did not identify that the deadline was payable to the end of the month and that there is a one-month free extension.
Question 13	Candidates were required to list advantages of following the International Phase route. This was answered reasonably well, though some candidates listed requirements rather than advantages and so could not achieve available marks.
Question 14	This tested knowledge of common abbreviations on which the vast majority of candidates scored maximum marks.
Question 15	This tested knowledge of EPO opposition deadlines and requirements and was answered very well with most candidates demonstrating strong knowledge in this area.

Mean Marks by Question

ICPA	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10	Q11	Q12	Q13	Q14	Q15	Total
Mark available	3	7	2	7	3	7	2	9	12	8	4	6	3	2	5	80
Mean mark	2.6	5.6	1.1	5.6	2.1	4.8	1.6	7.5	7.4	5.4	3.5	4.8	2.1	1.6	4.4	60.1