

INFORMATION ABOUT THE EQE

[see EPO website <https://www.epo.org/learning-events/eqe/about.html> and <https://www.epo.org/law-practice/legal-texts/official-journal/2019/etc/se2/2019-se2.pdf>

The European Qualifying Examination (EQE) is designed to establish whether a candidate is qualified to practise as a professional representative before the European Patent Office (EPO).

Syllabus

“Candidates need to show appropriate knowledge of and competency in European patent law, the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT), the Paris Convention, EPO board of appeal case law and certain national laws in so far as they apply to European patent applications and European patents. The content of the examination only relates to legal texts which were in force on 31 December of the year preceding the examination.” (EPO website)

Papers

The EQE is held once a year and comprises five written papers:

- Pre-examination (4 hours): assesses candidates' ability to answer legal questions and questions relating to the drafting of claims. It comprises 20 multiple choice questions: ten on legal aspects and ten on claim formulation.
- Paper A (4 hours): tests the candidate's ability to draft claims and the introductory part of a European patent application on the basis of information normally available to a professional representative for this task.
- Paper B (3½ hours): requires candidates to prepare a reply to an official letter in which prior art has been cited.
- Paper C (5½ hours): involves drafting a notice of opposition to a European patent.
- Paper D (5½ hours): assesses candidates' ability to answer legal questions and to draft legal assessments of specific situations.

The examination papers are drawn up in the three official languages of the EPO (English, French and German). Candidates may be permitted to submit their answers in another official language of a contracting state.

Up to EQE 2016, Paper A and Paper B could be taken either in the chemistry or electricity/mechanics technical fields. Since EQE 2017 this is no longer the case: a single Paper A and a single Paper B is now set.

Passing the EQE

To pass the EQE, it is obligatory to pass all examination papers.

Candidates must first pass the pre-examination before they may enrol for the main examination (papers A, B, C and D). To pass the pre-examination, a candidate must obtain 70 marks or more (out of 100).

For the main examination, the 'pass' mark is set at 50 or more (out of 100) for each paper.

But there is a compensatory system in which a mark of at least 45% but fewer than 50% is classed as a 'compensable fail'. Where a candidate has a 'pass' grade in at least two papers, has not been awarded a 'fail' (a mark below 45%) in a paper, has 'compensable fails' in one or two papers, and has total aggregate marks of at least 200 for all four papers, he/she is deemed to have passed the examination.

Dates of the 20120exams

- Monday 16th March 2020: the Pre-examination.
- Tuesday 17th March 2020: Paper D.
- Wednesday 18th March 2020 Paper A (am) and Paper B (pm).
- Thursday 19th March 2018: Paper C.

Admission and final dates for enrolment

- For the Pre-exam, registered candidates may enrol between 1 February 2019 and 30 April 2019.
- For the main examination, candidates may enrol from 1 April until 12 August 2019.

See

<https://www.epo.org/law-practice/legal-texts/official-journal/2018/12/a108.html>

Revised Rule 28 IPREE

This rule imposes a requirement on trainees to register for the EQE within 2 months of commencing "their professional activities or employment as defined in Article 11(2) REE" <https://www.epo.org/learning-events/eqe/registration.html>