

European Qualifying Examination – Introduction Seminar

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Patlib Centre, AGH University of Science and Technology

European Qualifying Examination (EQE)
as a part of a European Patent System

Introduction

EQE – European Qualifying Examination

- The European qualifying examination (EQE) tests candidates' knowledge and aptitude to represent applicants in EPO proceedings
- Established in 1979, it is widely regarded as one of the most demanding professional examinations
- It has been passed by more than 7000 candidates already

Basic regulations

- Art. 133 EPC:
 - (1) *Representation of natural or legal persons in proceedings established by this Convention may only be undertaken by professional representatives whose names appear on a list maintained for this purpose by the European Patent Office.*
 - (2) *Any natural person who*
 - *is a national of a Contracting State,*
 - *has his place of business or employment in a Contracting State and*
 - *has passed the European qualifying examination**may be entered on the list of professional representatives*

Basic regulations

- Art. 133 EPC: (*Grandfathers*)
 - (3) *During a period of one year* from the date on which the *accession* of a State to this Convention takes effect, entry on that list may also be requested by any natural person who
 - *is a national of a Contracting State,*
 - *has his place of business or employment in the State having acceded to the Convention and*
 - *is entitled to represent natural or legal persons in patent matters before the central industrial property office of that State. Where such entitlement is not conditional upon the requirement of special professional qualifications, the person shall have regularly so acted in that State for at least five years.*

Basic regulations

- Regulation on the European qualifying examination for professional representatives - Supplementary publication - Official Journal EPO 2/2014
 - REE - Regulation on the European qualifying examination
 - IPREE – Implementing Provisions to REE
- Announcement of the European qualifying examination 2017 - pre-examination and main examination
- See: <http://www.epo.org/learning-events/eqe.html>

EQE Supervisory Board

- Composition
 - 2 members from the EPO
 - 2 members from the epi (Institute of Prof. Representatives)
- Duties
 - Evaluates examination papers
 - Decides on list of material that can be used during exam
 - Decides on pass/fail of each candidate, based on the marks proposed by the Examination Committee

EQE Examination Board

- Composition
 - 4 members from the EPO
 - 4 members from the epi (Institute of Prof. Representatives)
- Duties
 - Determines nature, structure & number of exam papers
 - Monitors and evaluates exam results
 - Draws up IPREE

EQE Examination Committees

- Composition
 - Equal numbers of EPO and epi members
- Duties
 - Prepare examination papers
 - Mark answers (each paper marked by 2 examiners separately)

EQE Examination Secretariat

- Composition
 - EPO employees
- Duties
 - Prepare and organize the exam
 - Decide on registration and enrolment of candidates

How to enrol for the exam?

- Pre-requisites
- Training
- Pre-examination
- Main examination

Education level required to begin professional activity

- a university-level scientific or technical qualification, or
- an equivalent level of scientific or technical knowledge – at least 10 years experience

- the professional activity starts only after the qualification is obtained

University-level technical qualification

- a university-level scientific or technical bachelor's degree, or any equivalent academic degree,
- in one of the subjects or any subjects equivalent to these: biology, biochemistry, chemistry, construction technology, electricity, electronics, information technology, mathematics, mechanics, medicine, pharmacology and physics
- a full-time course with a minimum duration of three years

Professional experience

- Required to be complete at the date of the main examination (pre-exam: 1 year earlier)
- as a European patent attorney assistant
OR
- as a representative of the employer before the EPO
OR
- as a patent examiner at the EPO
(can be aggregated)

Professional experience

- European patent attorney assistant

- the European patent attorney must have been entered on the list for the entire duration of training period
- a full-time training period of at least 3 years
- in one of the EPC contracting states
- taking part in a wide range of activities pertaining to European (and national) patent applications or patents

Professional experience

- representative of the employer before EPO

- a full-time work for a period of at least 3 years
- in one of the EPC contracting states
- taking part in a wide range of activities pertaining to European (and national) patent applications or patents

Professional experience - patent examiner at the EPO

- full-time
- for at least 4 years

Reduction of the period of professional activity

- Reduced by 6 months after completing one of the courses:
 - "Diplôme d'études internationales de la propriété industrielle ("cycle long")" from CEIPI in Strasbourg
 - "Advanced Master in Intellectual Property Law and Knowledge Management" from Maastricht University

Timely enrolment

- Pre-exam 2017 (6 March 2017)
 - enrolment from 1 April 2016 till 2 June 2016
- Main exam 2017 (7-9 March 2017)
 - enrolment from 14 July 2016 till 8 September 2016
- Only via web portal: www.epo.org/eqe

Exam fees

- Must be paid till the end of the enrolment date
 - by bank transfer (not by deposit account)
- Basic fee: 200 EUR
 - for registration and enrolment
 - for the pre-exam
 - for each of the 4 main exam papers
- Fee increase:
 - 150% for sitting a paper for a third time
 - 200% for sitting a paper for a fourth time
 - 400% for sitting a paper for a fifth time

Exam fee subsidy

- For candidates permanently resident and working in: AL, BG, HR, CY, CZ, EE, MK, GR, HU, LV, LT, MT, PL, PT, RO, RS, SK, SI or TR
- 75% of the fee
- Request must be filed **before** submitting the application to sit the EQE.
Check the deadline at the Secretariat!

Registration as a student

- Obligatory for candidates sitting exam in 2018 and onwards
- Candidates shall register once they have commenced their professional activities or employment
 - or else the professional activity period is not taken into account (only 2m immediately before registration)

Get prepared... and good luck!

Any questions?

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