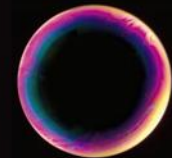


A Career as a Patent Attorney

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My Career

- | | |
|----------------------|---|
| 1999-2003 | 1 st Class Degree in Chemistry, Oxford University |
| 2003-2006 | DPhil in Organic Chemistry, Oxford University
(supervisor: Jeremy Robertson) |
| 2006-2007 | Post-Doctoral Research Assistant, École
Polytechnique , Paris (supervisor: Samir Zard) |
| 2008-2010 | Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, University of York
(supervisor: Paul Clarke) |
| 2010-2013
(Apr) | Trainee Patent Attorney, HGF Leeds |
| 2013 (Apr)-
today | Patent Attorney, HGF Leeds |



What is a Patent Attorney?

A lawyer with a scientific background who specialises in the field of patents (and other intellectual property)

- entry requirement - at least a 2.1 BSc in a technical or scientific discipline
- most attorneys have no previous legal experience
- private practice or in-house

We advise clients on:

- how to protect their innovations using patents
- how other people's patents affect their business



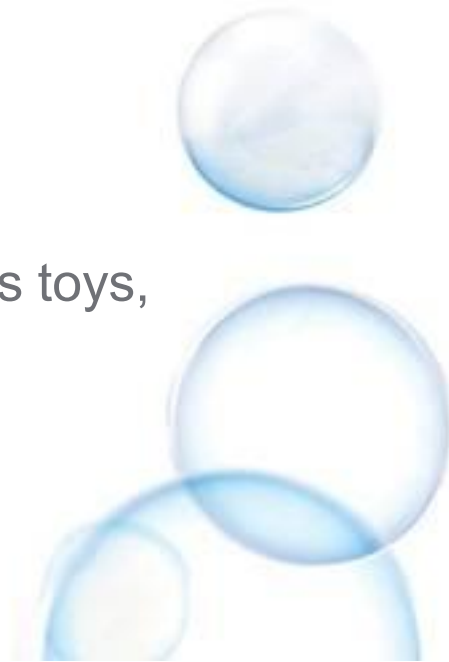
What is a patent?

A patent is a monopoly over an invention which is granted by the state for a limited term

The invention and the extent of the monopoly is described in a published document

Patents can be granted for a wide range of technologies:

- I mostly work on: drug molecules, pharmaceutical formulations, synthetic processes, new materials, green technologies
- but I have also worked on: camping equipment, children's toys, bike locks



What is a patent?

To be granted/enforced a patent must be:

- novel, i.e. never previously disclosed to the public
- inventive, i.e. not obvious in light of what has been previously disclosed to the public



Typical work – Advising a client

A patent attorney will advise on patentability, filing strategy, prosecution strategy, on freedom to operate/infringement issues, due diligence, litigation, licensing...

You must understand:

- the science/technology
- the law
- the commercial situation

and then...

Find the best solution for the client

Skills and Abilities

Common sense – empathy – problem solving – communication – ability to influence



Typical work and skills - Drafting

- Talk to the inventors to understand how their new ideas work
- Define and describe the invention as clearly as possible
- Advise on filing strategy

Skills and Abilities

- Quickly gain understanding of the science behind the invention
- Excellent written communication skills
- Legal understanding



Typical work – Getting it granted

- Review previous published documents
- Present arguments to patent office examiners – in writing, by telephone and in hearings

Skills and Abilities

- Analytical skills/attention to detail
- Oral and written communication skills
- Problem solving
- Negotiation



Pros of the job

The opportunity to gain new skills, such as legal skills, whilst retaining contact with science

- Every day is different - there is a large variety of work
- Working at the cutting edge of technology
- Financially rewarding
- Intellectually stimulating
- Client facing



Cons of the job

- Lots of exams!

8 final exams to qualify in the UK and Europe
plus foundation exams, university courses, pre-qualification
it takes at least 3.5 years to qualify
- Deadlines, responsibility for valuable patents
- Entry is competitive – a small profession – around 100-140 entrants each year in the UK
- Client facing



Resources

- Inside Careers – Chartered Patent Attorneys
- Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys
- UK Intellectual Property Office
- Harrison Goddard Foote LLP



Any Questions?

Dr Dan Woollaston

Harrison Goddard Foote LLP
Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys

