

**PEB Qualifying Examinations Final Diploma
Unit 3: Amendment of Specifications
For first examination in the October 2025 session**

Unit Title: FD3 Amendment of Specifications

1 Aims of the PEB Final Diploma

The aim of the PEB Final Diploma is to assess whether a candidate has built on knowledge gained at the Foundation level and reached the minimum level of competency at which the candidate will be safe to practice and be admitted to the Register as a patent attorney.

The four Final Diploma examinations are designed to ensure that candidates meet the requirements of IPReg as to the knowledge, understanding, skills, values and attitudes that a patent attorney should possess. These attributes are those set out in the versions of the Admission and Authorisation requirements in the IPReg Standard Operating Procedure that are in force at the time of the assessment.

In order to achieve the aims of the qualification candidates will have to pass each of the following examinations which meet IPReg's core requirements and so are mandatory to qualification as an attorney:

FD1 (P2) Advanced IP Law and Practice

FD2 (P3) Drafting of Specifications*

FD3 (P4) Amendment of Specifications*

FD4 (P6) Infringement and Validity

* Information on the EQE examinations that IPReg recognises for exemption purposes can be found at <https://ipreg.org.uk/>.

2 About this Unit

In order to pass the FD3 examination, candidates will need to demonstrate:

- understanding of the law and practice of patents for inventions in the UK;
- understanding of the examination procedure and the amendment and correction of patent applications; and
- the ability to draft an effective response (including amended claims) to a UK examination report and to justify their choice of action to a lay client.

3 Qualification Level

The level descriptors shown in the table on page 2 below are those used for Level 7 in the Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Levels 4-8 are intended to be consistent with the five levels within the Framework for Higher Education Qualifications in England, Wales and Northern Ireland (FHEQ).

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RQF Level 7	Knowledge descriptor (the holder ...)	Skills descriptor (the holder can ...)
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 Reformulates and uses practical, conceptual or technological knowledge and understanding of a subject or field of work to create ways forward in contexts where there are many interacting factors. 2 Critically analyses, interprets and evaluates complex information, concepts and theories to produce modified conceptions. 3 Understands the wider contexts in which the area of study or work is located. Understands current developments in the area of study or work. 4 Understands different theoretical and methodological perspectives and how they affect the area of study or work. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Use specialised skills to conceptualise and address problematic situations that involve many interacting factors. b. Determine and use appropriate methodologies and approaches. c. Design and undertake research, development or strategic activities to inform or produce change in the area of work or study. d. Critically evaluate actions, methods and results and their short- and long-term implications.

The table on page 3 below shows the FHEQ Level 7 Descriptor.

- The shaded areas in the table are those elements of the Level 7 Descriptor that the candidate who has passed all four Final Diploma examinations would not have evidenced. However, they could potentially have evidenced them in a training programme undertaken as part of relevant employment.
- The unshaded areas in the table are those elements of the Level 7 Descriptor that the candidate who has passed all four Final Diploma examinations would have achieved.

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FHEQ Level 7	<p>Students will have demonstrated:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a systematic understanding of knowledge, and a critical awareness of current problems and/or new insights, much of which is at, or informed by, the forefront of their academic discipline, field of study or area of professional practice • a comprehensive understanding of techniques applicable to their own research or advanced scholarship • originality in the application of knowledge, together with a practical understanding of how established techniques of research and enquiry are used to create and interpret knowledge in the discipline • conceptual understanding that enables the student: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to evaluate critically current research and advanced scholarship in the discipline ○ to evaluate methodologies and develop critiques of them and, where appropriate, to propose new hypotheses.
	<p>Typically, holders of the qualification will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • deal with complex issues - both systematically and creatively, make sound judgements in the absence of complete data, and communicate their conclusions clearly to specialist and non-specialist audiences • demonstrate self-direction and originality in tackling and solving problems, and act autonomously in planning and implementing tasks at a professional or equivalent level • continue to advance their knowledge and understanding, and to develop new skills to a high level.
	<p>And holders will have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the qualities and transferable skills necessary for employment requiring: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the exercise of initiative and personal responsibility ○ decision-making in complex and unpredictable situations ○ the independent learning ability required for continuing professional development.

4 Prior knowledge, skills or understanding

The Final Diploma is the final stage of professional training prior to admission as a patent attorney in accordance with the Rules for the Examination and Admission of Individuals to the Registers of Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys 2011 (“Examination and Admission Rules”) which are currently found at <https://ipreg.org.uk/pro/regulations/rules-for-examination-and-admission-of-individuals-2011>

In order to be eligible to undertake any of the PEB Final Examinations candidates must have passed either:

- the Foundation Certificate examination FC1 (set by the PEB); or

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- the Foundation level Qualifying Examination(s) provided by any other examination agency approved by IPReg listed in Rules for Examination and Admission of Individuals 2011 (link above).

5 Notional Learning Time

Under the QAA's Credit Framework, 1 credit is equivalent to 10 hours of study/notional learning hours. The table below shows the credits and the notional learning hours that candidates are expected to undertake before sitting the FD3 examination.

The notional learning hours are based on the amount of study that an average candidate would be expected to undertake before successfully completing the examination. There may, however, be variations in the time spent by each candidate.

Notional learning hours includes all time expected to be spent by a student in pursuit of the qualification. This may include:

- on-the-job training
- work in professional practice
- independent/self study and reading
- attendance at training courses
- coursework, revision and assessment (formative and summative).

Unit	Title	Credits/notional learning hours
FD3	Amendment of Specifications	15 credits/150 notional learning hours

It is recommended that candidates:

- participate in supervised training that includes practical experience of dealing with examination responses, including at least five responses in the course of one year, a significant proportion of which are before the UK IPO;
- devote a minimum of 1,000 notional learning hours, **over at least two years**, to preparing for the four Final Diploma examinations.

Candidates should view preparing for the Final Diploma as a whole: study for one examination will support preparation for the other examinations.

The Final Diploma examinations assess candidates' professional competence: experience gained in day-to-day professional practice (including effective feedback from the supervisor) provides numerous learning opportunities and forms an essential part of preparation for the examinations.

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6 Syllabus Content

Learning Outcomes The successful candidate will:	Assessment Criteria The successful candidate can: For a UK patent application	Knowledge and understanding
1. apply knowledge and understanding of patent law and practice	a. Apply the law and practice governing patentable inventions to a case b. Evaluate the prior art c. Compare the claims of an application to the prior art to determine what might be patentable	Patents Act 1977 PA 1 – Patentable inventions PA 2 – Novelty PA 3 – Inventive step PA 4 – Industrial application PA 125 – Extent of invention

Syllabus provisional pending consultation

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Learning Outcomes The successful candidate will:	Assessment Criteria The successful candidate can:	Knowledge and understanding
2. critically analyse and evaluate information from a range of sources	a. Incorporate the wishes and priorities of the lay client into the response and amended claims where possible, and refer to the PReg principles of independence, integrity and honesty b. Assess the validity of the objections raised in the examination report c. Evaluate the possibility of amending a patent application to achieve the grant of the patent d. Determine the appropriate procedure for amending the patent application e. Assess the implications of amending the patent application, including any issues relating to priority, if a priority claim is present	Patents Act 1977 PA 5 – Priority date PA 18 – Substantive examination and grant or refusal of patent PA 19 – General power to amend PA 76 – Amendments of applications and patents not to include added matter PA 117 – Correction of errors in patents and applications Patent Rules 2007 PR16 Single inventive concept PR105 Correction of errors

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Learning Outcomes The successful candidate will:	Assessment Criteria The successful candidate can:	Knowledge and understanding
3. independently synthesise information and ideas to create a response to a problem	Ensuring any amendments deal with valid objections raised by the examiner: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Analyse an invention for essential and inessential features b. Draft an amended independent claim(s) which is of sufficient breadth to cover the lay client's interest, contains all the essential features, and is distinguished from the prior art c. Draft an amended set of dependent claims with an appropriate hierarchy and providing suitable fall back positions if independent claim(s) fail(s) during prosecution or enforcement 	Patents Act 1977 PA 19 – General power to amend PA 76 – Amendments of applications and patents not to include added matter PA 117 – Correction of errors in patents and applications Patent Rules 2007 PR 12 Application for the grant of patents under sections 14 and 15 PR 105 Correction of errors Manual of Patent Practice (2016) UK IPO section 14 IPO Code of Practice section 7.16 Responding to examiner's objections

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Learning Outcomes The successful candidate will:	Assessment Criteria The successful candidate can:	Knowledge and understanding
4. proficiently communicate the results of the analysis	Based on the amended claims: a. Draft a response to the UK examination report including arguments in favour of patentability b. Summarise conclusions drawn from the analysis c. Communicate to the lay client the actions taken and amendments made with justification and identify any other desirable actions (including the possibility of filing a divisional application where necessary)	Patents Acts 1977 All sections listed above and PA6 – Disclosure of matter etc., between earlier and later applications IPReg’s Core Regulatory Framework Chapter 1 Overarching Principles Chapter 2 Code of Conduct

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7 Form of Assessment

This unit is assessed by a 3-hour closed-book examination.

The examination tasks will assess all the learning outcomes. All tasks will be compulsory.

The maximum available mark is 100.

Candidates are awarded either a Pass or a Fail result.

The pass mark is set for each examination based on the difficulty of the examination using the Minimum Pass Descriptor.

7.1 The Examination

The examination will require candidates to use information provided in a set of documents to prepare a letter of response to the UK Intellectual Property Office, amended claims and notes on which advice to the lay client will be based. The documents may include a communication from the client, an Examination report, the client application and the prior art.

7.2 Minimum Pass Descriptor

Once the mark for the script has been determined, the script should be reviewed against the Minimum Pass Descriptor to determine whether it demonstrates sufficient knowledge, understanding and skills to be awarded a Pass in the examination. The elements of the pass descriptor are generic and must be applied in the context of the unit syllabus content.

Minimum Pass Descriptor

The minimally competent script will:

- a. evidence adequate ability to apply legal reasoning to practical situations;
- b. present appropriate solutions to problems;
- c. demonstrate the ability to assimilate data and information provided to extract most of the major issues;
- d. usually differentiate between different forms of evidence and information;
- e. discern the primary points but not always the overall picture;
- f. show adequate familiarity with appropriate and accurate legal and technical language;
- g. provide written work that generally advises and informs the client, with proposals that are largely practicable and achievable;
- h. present most key information;
- i. provide argument that is comprehensible, structured and reasoned;
- j. contain written material which mostly suits requirements (e.g. letter, brief, recommendation, statement of facts).

A candidate who achieves the level of minimal competence:

- a. will have met all the major learning outcomes of the assessment as evidenced by a general knowledge and application of fundamental aspects of law and practice within the script but not necessarily within every answer;

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- b. demonstrates a satisfactory performance overall, weaknesses are limited to areas such as patchy coverage of relevant material, minor inaccuracies and irrelevancies;
- c. will not have produced fundamentally contradictory statements, or other statements, that would undermine advice provided or a client's rights;
- d. will not have produced unethical advice, proposals or statements.

7.3 Results

Candidates are advised in a results letter of their Pass/Fail result and the percentage mark achieved.

7.4 Law and Technical Content

Each year the PEB publishes the Law Changes update on the PEB website <https://www.cipa.org.uk/patent-examination-board/>.

The PEB Qualifying Examinations are based this year on legal texts and case law which were in force on **1 April preceding the examination**.

Candidates will not be penalised for basing their answers on any amendments to the law enacted after 1 April, or any case law published after 1 April, and before the date of the examination. However, candidates must be consistent in their application of any recent changes in the law and are advised to mention in their answer if they are relying on provisions of law enacted or published after 1 April in the year of the examination.

When answering questions in the Final Examination papers, candidates should not need to use technical knowledge which extends beyond that provided in the question paper i.e. the examination scenario is to be taken in context and external knowledge is not to be used.

8 Suggested Resources

8.1 PEB website <https://www.cipa.org.uk/patent-examination-board/>

The following resource materials are available on the PEB website:

PEB Policies and Procedures

Syllabi for next session (FD1, FD2, FD3 and FD4)

Examination Information

Past Examination Materials

Sample Assessment Materials

Examination Guidance (FD1, FD2, FD3 and FD4)

8.2 Reading

The Acts and Rules referred to in this unit syllabus are essential reading.

The CIPA Journal is a useful source.

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Suggested reading: Other books and resources can be used to support your study. This list is not exhaustive.

Amendment of Specifications Paper CIPA FD3 Study Guide (2020) Tim Allsop, pub CIPA <https://www.cipa.org.uk/product/amendment-of-specifications-paper/>

The CIPA Study guide for FD2 (2023) Iain Russell, pub CIPA [CIPA Study Guide to FD2: Drafting of Specifications - CIPA](#)

Manual of Patent Practice (2016) UK IPO [Updates - Manual of Patent Practice - Guidance - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

The Patents Rules 2007 and Patents (Fees) Rules 2007 ([The Patents Rules 2007 and Patents \(Fees\) Rules 2007 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#))

The Patents Training Manual (2022) Gwilym Roberts and Debbie Slater, pub CIPA [Patents Training Manual - CIPA](#)

A Practical Guide to Drafting Patents (2023) Gwilym Roberts, pub CIPA [A Practical Guide to Drafting Patents - CIPA](#)

Fundamentals of Patent Drafting (2006) Paul Cole, pub CIPA [Fundamentals of Patent Drafting - CIPA](#)

CIPA Guide to the Patents Acts (2022) Ed. Paul Cole, pub. Sweet and Maxwell (The Black Book) [CIPA Guide to the Patents Acts - Hardback and Paperback | Intellectual Property | Sweet & Maxwell \(sweetandmaxwell.co.uk\)](#) (available on Westlaw)

Study Guide to the Patents Acts (2023) Doug Ealy, pub. CIPA <https://www.cipa.org.uk/product/study-guide-to-the-patents-acts/>

IPO Code of Practice <https://ipres.org.uk/sites/default/files/IPO-Code-of-Practice.pdf>

8.3 Training

The PEB is an examination-only agency and does not provide training for the Final Diploma examinations. It is expected that FD3 candidates will be employed as a trainee patent attorney and that their employer will provide a formal training programme. Candidates should seek guidance on preparing for the examinations from the person who has responsibility for training in their organisation.

In listing organisations that offer training in the field of IP, the PEB is not providing endorsements or making recommendations. Candidates should seek guidance from their training lead as to whether attending external training would be appropriate.

The Chartered Institute of Patent Attorneys (CIPA) <https://www.cipa.org.uk/events/> offers support for trainees through the “Informals”, an informal association of younger, unqualified members of the profession. All student members of CIPA automatically become part of the Informals. The Informals provide a UK-wide support network for trainees, organising lectures and tutorials directed towards the examinations;

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FICPI <https://ficpi.org/>

JDD Consultants <https://jddcourses.co.uk/>

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