

**INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY OFFICE OF SINGAPORE  
PATENT AGENTS QUALIFYING EXAMINATION  
(NOVEMBER 2004)  
INFORMAL SESSION FOR PAPER A**

Mistakes have been made by past candidates in the Patent Agents Qualifying Examination for Paper A. This table summarises the common mistakes highlighted by the speaker, Mr Lawrence Ho.

<u>No.</u>	<u>Common Mistakes</u>	<u>Suggestions</u>
1.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Inappropriate Breadth of Claims</u></p> <p>Candidates failed to draft the correct breadth of the independent and subsidiary claims. Claims which are drafted too broadly risk stepping over the prior art, whereas claims that are too narrow will fail to give sufficient protection to the candidates' clients.</p>	<p>Drafting good claims come from regular practice.</p>
2.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Consistency of Terms</u></p> <p>Candidates had the tendency to switch between lifting terms from the given description and providing substituted terms of their own in between their answers.</p>	<p>Candidates could either use terms as given in the description or provide substituted terms of their own so long as the terms are used consistently throughout their answers.</p>
3.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Weak Subsidiary Claims</u></p> <p>Candidates failed to give sufficient emphasis to the drafting of subsidiary claims. Candidates spent 10% of their time working on the subsidiary claims which is insufficient to obtain good grades in this section.</p>	<p>Candidates are advised to spend more time drafting out the subsidiary claims.</p>
4.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Lack of Fallback Features</u></p> <p>Candidates failed to illustrate sufficient fallback procedures and features in their thinking processes as clearly shown by the quality of the subsidiary claims drafted by the candidates. This is attributable to the lack of time management skills of the candidates. Marks will be deducted for subsidiary claims that are poorly drafted.</p>	<p>Candidates could practise drafting of patent claims and descriptions on a regular basis so that they can estimate and balance the right amount of time to devote to each section.</p>
5.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Poor Writing Skills</u></p> <p>Candidates failed to draft their claims in complete sentences. Marks will be deducted for poor writing skills.</p>	<p>Candidates are advised to write as though they are providing legal advice to their clients.</p>

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6.	<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Poor Time Management Skills</u></p> <p>Candidates spent too much time on drafting the description at the expense of the independent and subsidiary claims, which take up more than half of the marks.</p>	Please refer to paragraph 4.
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