

Singapore Patent Agents Qualifying Examination 2008: Informal Session for Paper A

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| Speaker | Dr Wolfram Schiweck |
| Date | 15 August 2008 |
| Time | 9.00 am – 10.00 am |
| Venue | IPOS Promise Room |

The highlights below are intended to assist candidates in their preparation for the Singapore Patent Agents Qualifying Examination.

Preparation for the Paper

- Proper and intensive preparation is needed for the examinations.
- Candidates should prepare for the examination by practising on past Papers, under examination conditions. This would give them a better idea of the timeframe they can expect to face in the actual examination.
- They should do at least about 4-5 Papers under examination conditions for sufficient practice. Doing Papers from the UK / European / Australian patent agent qualifying examinations would also be useful.

Requirements of the Paper

- Paper A tests candidates' understanding of the invention.
- Candidates are required to draft a novel and inventive claim which is enforceable. They will need to extract information from the client's letter, compare the invention to prior art and see how broadly they can protect their client's invention.
- Candidates should read the client's instructions carefully and note the features of the invention which he says are important to him. Many candidates failed in the past because they apparently failed to read the Paper properly.
- The prior art given in the question should be taken as exhaustive.
- Terminology in the description must be consistent with that used in the claims.

- Candidates should keep a legal mindset when drafting the specification, including the claims. The entire specification they draft must meet the requirements of the Singapore Patents Act.
- Examiners are open to candidates who identify new inventive concepts, as long as the claims drafted are clear and directed to novel and inventive subject matter.
- Candidates should follow the one “independent claim per category” approach, unless it is clear from the client’s instruction/invention disclosure that two or more independent claims of the same category are required. Candidates should however be aware that it may be very well required to draft one independent claims of different category, for example, one independent device claim and one independent method claim (see 2006 Paper A, for example) to provide the adequate protection for the client’s invention.
- Notes to the examiner are not encouraged because they may be misleading. The only case where they may be acceptable is when there is a true problem arising on unity of invention, meaning if the invention disclosure indeed requires to draft several independent claims (of same or different category) in order to fully cover all aspects that the client wants to protect and these claims do have share a common technical feature that provides patentability.
- Candidates must remember to bring glue and a pair of scissors to cut out and paste the drawings of the invention. They should not forget to leave the drawings out of their answer scripts since without drawings their specification may very well not be regarded to provide the enabling disclosure required by the Singapore Patents Act (see Examiner’s report of Paper A of 2006).