



# Science Innovation – A Career as a Patent Attorney

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European Patent & Trade Mark Attorneys

# What is my background?

- MA (Hons) Natural Sciences (Biological) at University of Cambridge – double 1<sup>st</sup> class
  - Joined Appleyard Lees after graduating in 2010
  - Qualified as a chartered patent attorney (CPA) in Summer 2014
  - Appleyard Lees is a northern based specialist IP firm
  - 150 years old
  - Covering all technical specialisms
  - Medium size (30 attorneys)
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# What is a Patent Attorney?

- Type of lawyer
  - protect inventions by writing patent applications and prosecuting before the UK and European Patent Offices
  - attack patents by filing oppositions or revocation actions
  - Deal with patent infringement
  - Conduct strategy analyses such as freedom to operate, due diligence, and patent landscaping
  - Some design, trademark and copyright work
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# Requirements to become a patent attorney

- A science/engineering degree – at least a 2:1 often a 1st
  - Likely at least a masters degree, often a PhD
  - Industry experience is helpful, especially from a large R+D company in your field
  - Language skills are sought after – german/french/japanese/mandarin
  - Writing skills are sought after – English/Lit qualifications, societies
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# How to get a trainee position

- Read a copy of the inside careers guide to being a patent attorney
  - Prepare a CV and covering letter – get different people to check it
  - Ask around for work experience, uncommon but you may be lucky
  - Look on the CIPA website for jobs as well as firm websites
  - Usually no restriction on hiring, as and when
  - Send out speculative applications to HR and the relevant partner of firms
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# Route to Qualification

- There are a lot of exams to pass
  - Within first year – take 5 foundation UK exams/take a year long course
  - Within second to third years – take 4 advanced UK exams and 1 pre-European exam
  - Within third to fourth year – take 4 European exams
  - Become UK qualified (CPA) and European qualified (EPA) at 4-7 years.
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## Day to Day job as a trainee

- Usually 'belong' to a certain partner who trains you
  - Will not be asked to make coffee or photocopy!
  - Will be thrown in at the deep end with every day tasks for a mixture of clients
  - May be asked to take new enquiry calls/meetings
  - Will be your partner's right hand man – checking emails and managing deadlines when they are away, generally supporting them
  - Will be expected to learn on the job and manage own study/attendance of courses/entry for exams
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# Career progression

- Trainee (1-7 years) ~ £25-50k
- Associate (next 2-4 years) ~ £50-70k
- Senior Associate (next 2-4 years) ~ £70-90k
- Partner ~ £90-£300k
- Salary increases fairly quickly when training in line with the exams
- Bonuses are also available



## Other Perks of the Job

- Professional job yet rarely work outside 9-5 hours
- Varied and stimulating
- Travel (Germany, USA, Canada, Australia, Japan, China, Korea, Malaysia etc)
- Conferences and events
- Company cars/phones are common
- No lab work (!)



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