

A Career as a Patent or Trade Mark Attorney with Mewburn Ellis LLP

Mewburn Ellis LLP is a firm of Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys with a tradition of providing a sound training for graduate recruits. This information sheet provides an idea of what the jobs of Patent Attorney and Trade Mark Attorney entail, and explains our recruitment process.

Further details on a career as a Patent or Trade Mark Attorney, including profiles of some of our trainees and qualified staff showing what these jobs entail from day to day, can be found at www.mewburn.com.

About Mewburn Ellis LLP

We are a private practice firm of Patent and Trade Mark Attorneys that has been around for over 125 years.

We are one of the largest firms in the UK and Europe, having about 140 staff in all, including 28 partners and 18 other qualified Patent Attorneys, Trade Mark Attorneys and lawyers. We usually have about 12 - 15 people in various stages of training and recruit five to eight new trainees every year.

Our patent work mainly takes place at the European Patent Office, with some at the UK Patent Office. The work comes from the US, Japan and Europe in about equal amounts, spanning all areas of science and technology. Much of our trade mark work is carried out directly with the UK Trade Mark Office and the Community Trade Mark Office, but we also file on behalf of clients in offices around the world.

Why should you consider working for us?

The firm has grown rapidly over the last 10 years and has a young age profile, with many of the partners and qualified staff being under 40.

The firm is a relaxed place to work with an excellent and varied client base, both geographically and in terms of subject matter.

We recruit a large number of trainees compared to many other firms. This means that there is a good support network

among the trainees. We are also able to organise lots of in-house training and have an established programme of tutorials and lectures.

Importantly, we have an excellent record in helping people to pass the difficult professional qualification exams.

The recruitment process

Recruitment is an ongoing process and our annual recruitment drive starts at the end of October and is normally finished by the beginning of March. Our advice is to apply early if at all possible as we fill the vacancies as soon as we find suitable candidates.

Candidates are asked to fill out the enclosed application form, send in their CV and submit some work: for patent applicants there are two pieces, and for trade mark applicants one piece. Full details are given overleaf. Those who are invited for interview are given the opportunity to discuss their CV and, where applicable, scientific achievements, as well as to ask their own questions about the job. The main focus of the interview concerns oral and written descriptive exercises. A second interview is held for candidates who are put forward from the first round.

Each year, new trainees generally start work in September or October.

Training

New trainees start work at Mewburn Ellis LLP with an induction course which provides them with a gentle introduction to the job and a chance to meet and get to know other members of staff.

Each trainee is then assigned to one of the partners or qualified attorneys, with whom they will sit for a placement of about six months. After each six month slot, the trainees move on to another placement, which may be in any of our London, Bristol, Manchester or Cambridge offices. This rotation means that, over the first three years of training, a trainee will have experience working with four or more partners and in two or three of our offices.

After about four years, the trainee will hopefully be a qualified attorney and have their own workload and will have settled in one office.

Vacancies for 2009

We are looking for six or seven patent trainees and one trade mark trainee to start work in late September 2009.

For the patent trainees, we are recruiting from all scientific and engineering disciplines and are particularly keen to hear from engineers and candidates with electronics backgrounds. Our requirements for trade mark trainees are less restricted: although we are particularly interested in graduates in law or languages, we will consider a degree in any discipline. Further details about both jobs are given below.

As we are looking to strengthen our Manchester office, we would particularly welcome applications from people interested in ending up working there.

How to apply

Applications should be made on the application form enclosed. (If you have not received a form, you can obtain one from the Recruitment Partner at the address given below, or by e-mail from: graduate.recruitment@mewburn.com. An application form can also be downloaded from our website if you have the Adobe Acrobat reader installed on your computer.

With your application form, you should also enclose a copy of your CV and the following piece(s) of work:

Patent applicants

A short (no more than 600 words) description of a kitchen implement and not an electrical kitchen appliance such as a toaster or microwave) which explains what the implement does, how it is constructed and works and any clever features it has; and

A single sentence which defines the essential features of a pair of scissors and which distinguishes scissors from a pair of cutting pliers (for example, one might define a "door" as a cover which is positioned by an opening in a wall and which can be moved to vary the extent to which it blocks the opening).

Trade mark applicants

Imagine you are about to launch a new drink. Select a trade mark for it and explain in around 500 words why you have selected it.

Address for applications

Send the completed application to:

Simon Kiddle
Mewburn Ellis LLP
22-24 Queen Square
Bristol
BS1 4ND

Further information

Our website at www.mewburn.com has a large section on graduate recruitment as well as details of many aspects of intellectual property law and practice.

Or consult the *Inside Careers Guide to Chartered Patent Attorneys*, published in association with the Chartered Institute of Patent Agents

Open days

Our Open Days (see page 3) give you the chance to find out what the job involves on a day to day basis. If you want more information on these days, please see our website. To reserve a place, e-mail Rebecca Tollervey at openday@mewburn.com giving your name, degree discipline, university, postal address and the date of the day you wish to attend. Rebecca will contact you to confirm your place: if you have not heard from her within two weeks, please call her on 0117 945 1234.

A Career as a Patent Attorney with Mewburn Ellis LLP

What is a patent attorney?

A member of a specialised legal profession qualified to write, obtain and advise clients about patents. A patent is a monopoly granted for a new scientific invention, relating to anything from computers and electronics to useful gene sequences.

Patent Attorneys often advise clients about other intellectual property rights: trade marks, designs and copyright.

What you need to be a patent attorney

A good science or engineering degree and broad based interest in science and technology—have you ever taken something apart to see how it works?

- Excellent communications skills, especially in writing.
- Good people skills to deal with clients and explain complex technical ideas and legal advice to them.
- The ability to work to tight deadlines and to handle several projects simultaneously.
- Commercial sense.
- Some aptitude for foreign languages is helpful, especially French, German and Japanese.

Don't bother if...

- You can't string three words together.
- You find it difficult to deal with detail as well as seeing the big picture.
- You don't want a pressured job.

The job

Patent Attorneys work in firms (just like solicitors) or are employed "in-house" by companies.

The training takes four or five years and requires the trainee agent to pass three sets of exams to qualify as a UK Patent Agent and a European Patent Attorney. The exams are hard and the pass rates are low. The number of jobs in the field is small and there is strong competition for training places.

The clients who want patents might be individual inventors, large companies or startups. A good Patent Attorney needs to be adaptable to deal with these different clients and be quick to learn new technologies.

Best bits

- Variety of work.
- Intellectually stimulating work
- Very financially rewarding, especially when qualified.
- A job that enables you to use your science and not to be stuck at the lab bench.

Worst bits

- Stiff competition for jobs.
- Tough exams to pass.
- Long hours on occasion.
- Constant deadlines set by clients and patent offices

Open days

We offer the opportunity for students to visit our offices and learn more about the job of Patent Attorney by attending one of our open days. These days are held in November and December each year and dates are posted on our website, www.mewburn.com.

A Career as a Trade Mark Attorney with Mewburn Ellis LLP

What is a trade mark attorney?

A member of a specialised legal profession qualified to advise clients about protecting and enforcing their trade mark rights. A trade mark can take many forms, e.g. word, logo, colour(s), slogan, jingle, shape; it can be virtually anything that distinguishes one person's goods or services from those of another.

Trade Mark Attorneys often advise clients about other intellectual property issues such as copyright, design, assignment and licensing matters.

The job

The training usually takes three to four years and requires the trainee attorney to pass five Foundation Level exams and then two Advanced Level exams to qualify as a Trade Mark Attorney. The exams are hard and very few pass first time; however they are "modular", which eases the burden.

Our clients cover a broad spectrum from sole traders to multinationals. These clients might sell anything from T-shirts to nuclear reactors. A good Trade Mark Attorney needs to be adaptable to deal with these different clients.

What we look for in a trade mark attorney

- A good degree, a good helping of common sense and a good "feel" for language - candidates with a penchant for crosswords and Scrabble® are not discouraged!
- Excellent communications skills, especially in writing. Good people skills to deal with clients and explain often quite complex legal points to them.
- Confidence.
- The ability to work to tight deadlines and to handle several projects simultaneously.
- Commercial sense and awareness of what is happening in the marketplace. It helps to be the kind of person who reads the labels in supermarkets and notices advertising campaigns.

Best bits

- Variety of work.
- Intellectually stimulating work
- Very financially rewarding, especially when qualified.
- Being in at the beginning of a new product launch and seeing one of "your" trade marks up on the posters, and achieving recognition.
- Being on the winning side at a tribunal; generally helping a client with problems.

Don't bother if...

- You can't string three words together.
- You find it difficult to deal with detail as well as seeing the big picture.
- You don't want a pressured job.

Worst bits

- Tough exams to pass.
- Long hours on occasion.
- Constant deadlines set by clients and Patent/Trade Mark offices.

This information is simplified and must not be taken as a definitive statement of the law or practice. For more information on Mewburn Ellis LLP and other intellectual property matters, please contact us or visit our website at www.mewburn.com.

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