

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Preface to the 2023 Edition	xi
About the Authors	xii
Acknowledgement	xiii
Abbreviations and Acronyms	xiv
Part A General Information	1
Chapter 1 Introduction	3
1.1 Structure of the book	3
1.1.1 Tables with key topics	3
1.2 European Qualifying Examination	4
1.2.1 Pre-Examination	4
1.2.2 EQE Paper D	4
1.2.3 Preparation for sitting the EQE	4
1.2.4 Questions and answers	5
1.3 European patent administration certification	6
Chapter 2 Reference Books and EQE- and EPAC-related Study Material	7
2.1 EPC	7
2.2 EPO brochures	7
2.3 WIPO	7
2.4 PCT – EPO	7
2.5 UP and UPC	7
2.6 Books in relation to the Pre-examination	8
2.6.1 Reference books for the Pre-Exam	8
2.6.2 Questions and answers for the legal questions of the Pre-Exam	8
2.7 Books in relation to EQE Paper D	8
2.7.1 Reference books for Paper D	8
2.7.2 Methodology books for Paper D	8
2.7.3 Questions and answers for Paper D	9
2.8 Books in relation to the EPAC examination	9
2.8.1 Reference books for the EPAC examination	9
Part B Overview of the Key Topics	11
Chapter 1 Overview of the Key Topics	13
Chapter 2 Time Schedule for Studying in Preparation for the EQE	16
Chapter 3 Time Schedule for Studying in Preparation for the EPAC Examination	18
Part C Topic-Related Index to the EPC, PCT, Unitary Patent and UPC	21
Chapter 1 EPC: General and Institutional Provisions; Languages and Representation	23
1.1 Interpretation of the EPC	23
1.2 Principles of the EPC	25
1.3 Institutional provisions	26
1.3.1 The European Patent Organisation	26
1.3.2 The European Patent Office	27
1.3.3 Legal Division	28
1.3.4 Boards of appeal and Enlarged Board of Appeal	29
1.3.5 Technical opinion at the request of a national court	30
1.3.6 The Administrative Council	31
1.3.7 Financial provisions of the Organisation	31
1.3.8 Fees	32
1.4 Languages and translations	32
1.4.1 Languages of the EPO	32

1.4.2	Reduction of fees under the language arrangements	34
1.4.3	Languages in written proceedings	34
1.4.4	Languages in oral proceedings	35
1.5	Representation before the EPO	36
1.5.1	General principles of representation	36
1.5.2	Representation before the EPO	37
1.5.3	Authorisation of representative	38
1.5.4	Institute of professional representatives before the EPO	39
Chapter 2	Patentability: Inventions; Exceptions to Patentability and Medical Uses; State of the Art, European Prior Rights and Non-Prejudicial Disclosures	40
2.1	Patentable and non-patentable inventions	40
2.2	Exceptions to patentability	43
2.3	Medical uses	44
2.4	Second non-medical use	45
2.5	Industrial application	45
2.6	State of the art	46
2.6.1	Availability of information to the public	46
2.6.2	Means of disclosure	47
2.6.3	Extent of disclosure	47
2.7	Content of a European patent application	48
2.8	European prior rights	49
2.9	Non-prejudicial disclosures	50
Chapter 3	Patentability: Novelty and Inventive Step	51
3.1	Novelty	51
3.1.1	State of the art	51
3.1.2	Examination of novelty	52
3.1.3	Selection inventions	52
3.1.4	Disclaimers	53
3.2	Inventive step	53
3.2.1	State of the art	53
3.2.2	Person skilled in the art and common general knowledge	54
3.2.3	Problem-solution approach	55
3.2.4	Examination of inventive step	56
3.2.5	Secondary indications	56
Chapter 4	Unity of Invention; Disclosure and Claims; Right of Priority	57
4.1	Unity of invention	57
4.2	Disclosure of the invention	59
4.3	Claims	60
4.3.1	Form and content of claims	60
4.3.2	Disclaimers	62
4.3.3	Support of claims by the description	62
4.4	Right of priority in the EPC	63
4.4.1	Priority right	63
4.4.2	Claiming priority	65
4.4.3	Effect of priority right	68
4.4.4	Re-establishment of rights for the priority period	68
4.5	Right of priority in the Paris Convention	69
4.5.1	National treatment and right of priority	69
4.5.2	Cross-references between priority provisions in the EPC and the Paris Convention	70
4.6	Right of priority in the Patent Cooperation Treaty	71
4.6.1	Claiming priority	71
4.6.2	Priority document	72
4.6.3	Correction or addition of priority claim	73

4.6.4	Restoration of the right of priority by the receiving Office and effect before designated Offices	74
4.6.5	Restoration of the right of priority by the designated Office	76
Chapter 5	Right to and Effect of the European Patent or Application; Information from the EPO	77
5.1	Right to the European patent	77
5.2	Entitlement proceedings	78
5.2.1	European patent applications where the applicant is not entitled	78
5.2.2	European patents where the patent proprietor is not entitled	80
5.3	Designation of the inventor	80
5.4	Rights conferred by a European patent and by an application	81
5.4.1	Effect of granted European patent	81
5.4.2	Equivalence of European filing with national filing	82
5.4.3	Protection conferred by a European patent application	83
5.4.4	Effect of revocation or limitation of a European patent	83
5.5	Interpretation of the European patent	84
5.5.1	Extent of protection	84
5.5.2	Authentic text of a European patent application or European patent	85
5.6	Infringement and sanctions	85
5.7	Transfer and assignment of European patent applications and patents	86
5.8	Licences and other rights	87
5.9	The European patent application as an object of property	87
5.10	European Patent Register	88
5.11	File inspection	88
5.12	Periodical publications	89
5.13	Exchange of information between EPO and national offices	89
Chapter 6	EPC Procedural Law: Filing the Application, Date of Filing and Formalities Examination; European Search	90
6.1	The European patent application, examination on filing and formalities examination	90
6.1.1	The European patent application	90
6.1.2	Fees on filing the European patent application	91
6.1.3	The abstract	91
6.1.4	Filing a European patent application; forwarding of European patent applications	92
6.1.5	Filing a divisional application	94
6.1.6	Date of filing	97
6.1.7	The Receiving Section	98
6.1.8	Examination on filing; accordance of date of filing	99
6.1.9	Filing missing parts of the description or missing drawings	99
6.1.10	Correction of erroneously filed application documents or parts	101
6.1.11	Examination of formal requirements	104
6.1.12	Consequences if deficiencies are not rectified in due time	104
6.1.13	Applications relating to nucleotide and amino acid sequences	106
6.1.14	Applications relating to biological material	106
6.2	Search, search opinion and European search report	107
6.2.1	Search divisions	107
6.2.2	European search	107
6.2.3	Unity of invention	109
6.2.4	European search report	109
6.2.5	Search opinion and Extended European search report	110
6.2.6	Approval of the abstract by the search division	110
6.2.7	Response to the search opinion	110

Chapter 7 EPC Procedural Law: Publication of the Application, Substantive Examination, Grant or Refusal; Amendments and Correction of Errors	111
7.1 Publication of the patent application	111
7.1.1 Types of publication	112
7.1.2 Effect of publication	113
7.2 Designation of States; Extension and Validation States	114
7.2.1 Designation of Contracting States; designation fee	114
7.2.2 Extension and Validation States; extension and validation fee	115
7.3 Request for examination including payment of the examination fee	116
7.4 Invitation to provide information on prior art and results of earlier searches	117
7.5 Substantive examination	118
7.5.1 Examining divisions	118
7.5.2 The first stage of the substantive examination	119
7.5.3 Acceleration of the substantive examination (PACE programme)	120
7.5.4 Examination of replies of the applicant and further stages of examination	121
7.5.5 Auxiliary requests	121
7.5.6 Final stage of the substantive examination	122
7.6 Decision to grant or refuse	124
7.6.1 Grant of the European patent	124
7.6.2 Effect of grant	125
7.6.3 Publication of the specification of the European patent	126
7.6.4 Types of publication	127
7.6.5 Refusal of the European patent application	127
7.6.6 Effect of refusal	127
7.7 Amendments and correction of errors	128
7.7.1 Amendments	128
7.7.2 Correction of errors	133
Chapter 8 EPC Procedural Law: Opposition, Intervention, Limitation and Revocation; Appeal Proceedings; Enlarged Board of Appeal	135
8.1 Opposition	135
8.1.1 Persons entitled to oppose	135
8.1.2 Notice of opposition and parties to opposition proceedings	135
8.1.3 Grounds for opposition	137
8.1.4 Opposition divisions	138
8.1.5 Examination for deficiencies in the notice of opposition	139
8.1.6 Substantive examination of the opposition	140
8.1.7 Decisions in opposition proceedings	142
8.1.8 Publication of a new specification of the European patent	143
8.1.9 Apportionment of costs	144
8.2 Intervention of the assumed infringer	145
8.2.1 Notice of intervention	145
8.2.2 Intervention during appeal proceedings	146
8.3 Limitation or revocation proceedings	147
8.3.1 Request for limitation or revocation	147
8.3.2 Examination of the request for limitation or revocation	147
8.4 Appeal	149
8.4.1 Decisions subject to appeal	149
8.4.2 Persons entitled to appeal and parties to appeal proceedings	150
8.4.3 Notice of appeal and grounds of appeal	151
8.4.4 Interlocutory revision	151
8.4.5 Boards of appeal	152
8.4.6 Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal	153
8.4.7 Examination of appeals	157
8.4.8 Decisions in appeals	158
8.4.9 Reimbursement of appeal fees	159

8.5	Enlarged Board of Appeal	160
8.5.1	Decision or opinion of the Enlarged Board of Appeal	160
8.5.2	Petition for review by the Enlarged Board of Appeal	161
Chapter 9	EPC Procedural Law: Common Provisions, Periods, Remedies and Fees; Conversion, Revocation and National Rights	163
9.1	Common provisions governing procedure	163
9.1.1	Right to be heard and basis of decisions	163
9.1.2	Examination by the EPO of its own motion	164
9.1.3	EPO may disregard facts or evidence not submitted in time	165
9.1.4	Observations by third parties	166
9.1.5	Oral proceedings	168
9.1.6	Consultations	171
9.1.7	Taking of evidence by the departments of the EPO	172
9.1.8	Unity of the European patent application or European patent	173
9.1.9	Reference to general principles	173
9.1.10	Communications and notification	174
9.2	Periods	176
9.2.1	Periods fixed in the EPC or specified by the EPO	176
9.2.2	Calculation of periods	176
9.2.3	Extension of periods	177
9.2.4	Late receipt of documents	178
9.2.5	Interruption of proceedings	179
9.2.6	Consequences of non-observance of periods	180
9.3	Further processing and re-establishment of rights	180
9.3.1	Loss of rights	180
9.3.2	Further processing of the European patent application	181
9.3.3	Re-establishment of rights	185
9.4	Fees	186
9.4.1	Fees for applications and patents	186
9.4.2	Due date for fees and payment in due time	188
9.4.3	Reduction of fees	190
9.4.4	Refund of fees and crediting of fees	191
9.4.5	Renewal fees	192
9.5	Conversion, revocation and national rights	193
9.5.1	Conversion into a national patent	193
9.5.2	Revocation of European patents before a competent (national) authority of a Contracting State	194
9.5.3	Relations between European and national patents	194
9.5.4	Territorial extent of the European patent application and European patent	195
9.5.5	Unitary patents	195
Chapter 10	PCT: General Provisions; Filing the International Application, International Filing Date and Formalities Examination; EPO as Receiving Office	197
10.1	Introduction to the PCT	197
10.1.1	Definitions	197
10.2	General provisions	198
10.2.1	Types of protection and regional patent treaties	198
10.2.2	Administrative provisions, revision and amendment	199
10.2.3	Agents and common representatives	200
10.2.4	Time limits	202
10.2.5	Delay in meeting certain time limits	203
10.2.6	Review by designated Offices	204
10.2.7	Withdrawals	205
10.2.8	Rectification of obvious mistakes in documents	206
10.2.9	Correspondence	207

10.2.10	Recording of changes concerning the applicant, inventor, agent or common representative	207
10.2.11	Keeping of records and files	208
10.2.12	Access to files	208
10.2.13	Schedule of fees	209
10.3	Filing the international application	209
10.3.1	Requirements for filing the international application	209
10.3.2	Description, claims and drawings	211
10.3.3	Languages of the international application	212
10.3.4	Fees due when filing an international application	213
10.3.5	Claiming priority	214
10.3.6	The applicant	215
10.3.7	The receiving Office	215
10.4	International filing date and formalities examination	218
10.4.1	Accordance of the international filing date	218
10.4.2	Filing missing parts and missing elements	219
10.4.3	Correction of erroneously filed elements and parts	220
10.4.4	Formalities examination by the receiving Office	221
10.4.5	Transmittal of the international application by the receiving Office to the International Bureau and the international searching authority	222
10.5	The EPO acting as receiving Office	222
10.5.1	Application of the PCT to the EPC	222
10.5.2	The EPO as receiving Office	223
10.5.3	Correction of erroneously filed elements or parts before the EPO as receiving Office	226
Chapter 11 PCT: International Search, International Publication and International Preliminary Examination; EPO as ISA, as SISA and as IPEA		227
11.1	International search	227
11.1.1	Objective of the international search	227
11.1.2	International Searching Authority	228
11.1.3	Subject-matter not required to be searched	228
11.1.4	Unity of invention before the ISA	229
11.1.5	Written opinion of the ISA	230
11.1.6	International search report	230
11.2	The EPO acting as International Searching Authority	231
11.3	Amendment of the claims after receiving the international search report	233
11.4	Supplementary international search	234
11.5	The EPO as ISA carrying out supplementary international searches	236
11.6	International publication	237
11.6.1	Content of the international publication	237
11.6.2	Types of international publication	238
11.6.3	Languages of publication	238
11.6.4	Preventing publication	239
11.6.5	Postponing publication	239
11.6.6	Effect of publication	239
11.6.7	Confidential nature of the international application	240
11.7	Third-party observations and licensing indications	240
11.8	International preliminary examination	242
11.8.1	Demand for international preliminary examination	242
11.8.2	Fees in relation to international preliminary examination	243
11.8.3	International Preliminary Examining Authority	243
11.8.4	Objective of the international preliminary examination	244
11.8.5	Procedure before the IPEA	244
11.8.6	Unity of invention before the IPEA	245
11.8.7	Subject-matter on which IPEA is not required to carry out examination	246
11.8.8	International preliminary examination report	246

11.9 The EPO acting as International Preliminary Examining Authority	248
Chapter 12 PCT: National/Regional Entry; EPO as Designated or Elected Office; Processing the Euro-PCT Application	250
12.1 National phase	250
12.1.1 National requirements	250
12.1.2 Patent Prosecution Highway	251
12.1.3 Processing prohibition and early entry on express request of the applicant	251
12.1.4 Amendment of the application before designated/elected Offices	252
12.1.5 Communication to designated/elected Offices	253
12.1.6 Entry into the national phase before designated Offices	254
12.1.7 Entry into the national phase before elected Offices	255
12.1.8 Reinstatement of rights after failure to duly enter the national phase	256
12.2 Regional entry before the EPO as designated or elected Office and processing of the Euro-PCT application	256
12.2.1 EPO as designated or elected Office	256
12.2.2 The Euro-PCT application as a European prior right	258
12.2.3 Equivalence between the international search report and the European search report	258
12.2.4 Supplementary European search	259
12.2.5 Procedural requirements for entry into the European phase	260
12.2.6 Consequences of non-fulfilment of certain requirements	262
12.2.7 Early processing of the Euro-PCT applications	264
12.2.8 Claims fees	265
12.2.9 Examination of certain formal requirements by the EPO	265
12.2.10 Response to the written opinion prepared by the EPO as ISA or to explanations given by the EPO as SISA or to the IPER prepared by the EPO as IPEA	268
12.2.11 Amendment of the Euro-PCT application where the EPO did not act as ISA or SISA in the international phase	269
12.2.12 Accelerated processing of the Euro-PCT application	270
12.2.13 Further searches and unity of invention where the EPO did not act as ISA or SISA	272
12.2.14 Unity of invention and further searches where the EPO acted as ISA, as SISA or as ISA and IPEA	274
12.2.15 Substantive examination of the Euro-PCT application	276
12.2.16 Decision to grant or refuse	276
Chapter 13 Unitary Patent and Unified Patent Court	277
13.1 European patent with unitary effect ('Unitary Patent')	277
13.1.1 Legal framework for the European patent with unitary effect	277
13.1.2 European patent with unitary effect; effects	278
13.1.3 Request for unitary effect	279
13.1.4 Translations with respect to the Unitary Patent	280
13.1.5 Representation before the EPO with respect to the Unitary Patent	281
13.1.6 Renewal fees for European patent with unitary effect	282
13.1.7 Administrative tasks of the EPO for unitary patents	283
13.1.8 Entry into force of the Unitary Patent regulation	284
13.2 Unified Patent Court (UPC)	285
13.2.1 Agreement on a Unified Patent Court and the UPC; Competence	285
13.2.2 UPC Sources of law; Rights conferred; Effect of a patent; Limitations; Prior use	290
13.2.3 Organization and procedural provisions	292
13.2.4 Parties and representation	293
13.2.5 Language of proceedings at the Court	294
13.2.6 Proceedings before the Court	294
13.2.7 Powers of the Court	295
13.2.8 Appeals	295
13.2.9 Decisions	296
13.2.10 Transitional provisions; Opt-out and Opt-in	297
13.2.11 Entry into force	298

Part D Tables of Legislation	299
Chapter 1 References to EPC Articles and Rules	301
Chapter 2 References to PCT Articles and Rules	311
Part E Indexes	315
Chapter 1 Indexes	317
1.1 EPC Articles	317
1.2 EPC Implementing Regulations	319
1.3 Rules relating to Fees	322
1.4 Arrangements for deposit accounts and automatic debiting	322
1.5 Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal	323
1.6 Decisions/opinions of the Enlarged Board of Appeal	323
1.7 PCT Articles	324
1.8 PCT Rules	325
1.9 Unitary Patent regulation and Translation Arrangement	327
1.10 Agreement on a Unified Patent Court	327
1.11 Paris Convention	327
1.12 TRIPS	328
Chapter 2 Keyword Indexes	329
2.1 European Patent Convention	329
2.2 Patent Cooperation Treaty	365
2.3 Unitary patent and Unified Patent Court	379
2.4 Paris Convention	383
2.5 EQE and EPAC related topics	383