
CANADIAN PATENT AGENT QUALIFYING EXAMINATION

GUIDE TO WRITING THE PATENT AGENT EXAM

PAPER B – PATENT VALIDITY

These guidelines describe in a general manner the contents and criteria for the Patent Agent Examination - Paper B. Specific content and rating are the responsibility of the Examining Board, based on their considered judgement.

The actual contents of the Examination may change without notice and may differ from the contents of this general guidance document.

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1.0 Introduction

Paper B (Validity) of the Patent Agent Qualifying Examination measures the basic competencies necessary for a patent agent to deal with the legal issues of validity in respect to issued Canadian patents and basic skills for patent agency practice.

The examination is four (4) hours in length.

2.0 Examination Content

The examination consists of two (2) parts:

PART A consists of “long answer questions” and tests a candidate’s ability to provide reasoned opinions on claim validity issues (legal, analytical, knowledge).

PART B consists of “short answer questions” and tests a candidate’s general patent practice-based knowledge necessary to practice as a patent agent.

2.1 PART A – Long Answer Questions

What is tested and rated:

IN PART A, candidates are rated on three categories of competencies:

(1) Legal competencies that require the candidate to exhibit understanding of Canadian patent law, including case law, on the issue of claim validity and more specifically on the various grounds for attacking or defending the validity of claims; for example, reference applicability, anticipation, obviousness, indefiniteness, ambiguity, support by disclosure, etc.;

(2) Analytical competencies that require the candidate to (a) exhibit understanding of the invention subject matter, claim construction and claim scope, to identify analytical issues necessary to deal with, for example: analyzing the effect of prior art on claim validity issues; (b) exhibit understanding of the disclosure content of prior art patents and explain how and why the prior art documents can be considered prior art; (c) explain and predict given the fact patterns how specific sub-issues of claim validity will be dealt with by law; and

(3) Knowledge competencies that require candidates to recall and explain how specific sub-issues of claim validity will be dealt with by law.

Contents of PART A

Part A contains questions relating to specific validity issues or scenarios. Questions elicit responses that require demonstration of the above three competencies.

All questions are framed around a single patent under validity inquiry. Documents (which may or may not constitute applicable prior art) are also provided.

The patent under scrutiny can contain more than one (1) independent claim.

Questions can be set in the context of an opinion provided to a client. If so, candidates are specifically asked to provide recommendations and strategic advice whenever appropriate. Scoring is based on the candidate's reasoned opinions, suitable recommendations for further analysis as required (such as obtaining expert reports or reports from typical persons of skill in the art) as well as the discussion and strategic options provided.

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES

You will be asked to review a background and documents provided, and to prepare an appropriate response to each question. Do not provide extraneous commentary if not directly relevant to the question. For example, if the question requires a determination as to novelty, do not comment on other criteria such as utility, obviousness, etc. Statements of authorities or pertinent law (which may include case law and statutory and regulatory provisions), analysis and argument are required only when requested. Point form answer is acceptable. Do not import your own technical knowledge into the response. Use only the technical data provided in the documentation provided.

Appendix A provides a list of examples of issues that may be tested.

Appendix A is **NOT** comprehensive.

2.2 PART B – Short Answer Questions

What is tested and rated:

For the short answer component, the examination tests knowledge-based issues that are not linked or associated with the long answer component. Statements of authorities or pertinent law (which may include case law and statutory and regulatory provisions), analysis and argument are required only when requested. Point form answer is acceptable. Candidates are rated on the correctness and clarity of the answer and appropriate statutory or case law citation, when appropriate to the answer.

3.0 Mark Distribution

PART A The long answer component represents 70-80% of the overall grade.

PART B The short answer component represents 20-30% of the overall grade.

4.0 Scoring

PART A

Candidates are awarded marks for:

- dealing correctly with key issue(s)
- dealing correctly with all other issues
- clarity of response/answers
- organization and appropriate presentation of arguments, and
- appropriate statutory or case law citation.

PART B

Candidates are rated on the correctness and clarity of the answer and appropriate statutory or case law citation, when appropriate to the answer.

5.0 Examination Rules

The link to access the examination will be sent to you via e-mail at the date and time specified in the Admission e-mail. Unless you specify an alternate e-mail address, the exam will be sent electronically to the e-mail address provided on your Class 3 Licence Agent Application Form.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your environment is adequate for testing (see below). The exam will be provided in both official languages. The exam will be administered in the official language as selected by you on the exam registration form.

You are responsible for managing your time accordingly when answering the questions. Any time missed due to late start will be deducted from the total examination time.

As this is an individual exam, you are strictly forbidden from consulting any other individuals. It is strongly recommended that you isolate yourself to complete your exam. **Your exam will be remotely proctored by a live proctor through the MonitorEDU exam platform (see below).**

The **only resources allowed** while completing the written exam are:

- the [Patent Act](#);
- the [Patent Rules](#); and
- a hardcopy dictionary (English, French, English/French).

You are NOT allowed to consult any other resource. A secure browser will prevent you from accessing other resources on your computer.

All information and data disclosed to you by the College of Patent Agents and Trademark Agents in this written examination shall be treated as confidential and shall not be disclosed or made known to any other person or entity. All written or recorded materials provided to you or prepared by you pursuant to this written examination are deemed the property of the College of Patent Agents and Trademark Agents of Canada.

Logistics

The 2021 Patent Agent Qualifying Examination will be electronically administered and remotely proctored by MonitorEDU/Paradigm Testing. Please review the following information to ensure that your computer systems meet the requirements. Additional detailed information regarding the protocol for logging in will be provided to exam candidates closer to the exam dates. Exam candidates will also be able to login prior to the exam and practise with a few previous exam questions to become familiar with the system.

To become familiar with the process please watch this video below:

<https://youtu.be/cInMjEaH1q0>

To test your equipment and to see frequently asked questions please visit:

<https://monitoredu.com/faq>

A few additional notes:

For your exam we recommend you use the internet browser Google Chrome for the best experience. If your computer does not already have this browser, you may download it here: <https://www.google.com/chrome/>

Please make sure you have disabled all popup blockers.

Chrome Mac

- 1) Click on the 3 Dots in the Upper-Right Hand Corner
- 2) Click on "Settings" on the dropdown menu
- 3) Click on "Privacy and security" on the left side menu
- 4) Click on "Site Settings" in the center menu
- 5) Click on "Pop-ups and redirects" in the center menu (May need to scroll)
- 6) Ensure the first radial button is selected "Sites can send pop-ups and redirects"
- 7) Click on "Add"
- 8) Copy this URL: <https://paradigmtesting.excelindia.com/> and paste it into the box

Chrome PC

- 1) Click on the 3 Dots in the Upper-Right Hand Corner
- 2) Click on "Settings" on the dropdown menu
- 3) Click on "Privacy and security" on the left side menu
- 4) Click on "Site Settings" in the center menu
- 5) Click on "Pop-ups and redirects" in the center menu (May need to scroll)
- 6) Ensure the first radial button is selected "Sites can send pop-ups and redirects"

If you are testing on a Mac computer, please have the most up to date OS operating system on your device. We require High Sierra 10.13 or higher for your exam.

If you have tested with them before please delete and reinstall the newest version of the secure browser:

<https://clients.paradigmtesting.com/remote-proctoring-files/>

Before connecting with your proctor please make sure the following programs are not running in the background on your computer.

- 1) Skype
- 2) Microsoft Teams
- 3) Slack
- 4) GoToMeeting
- 5) Zoom Meeting
- 6) Cisco Webex
- 7) Team Viewer

APPENDIX A

Examples of Legal, Analytical and Knowledge Issues

The following are examples of issues that may be tested.
Appendix A is NOT comprehensive.

ISSUE
Prior Art – Citability of references
Construction of Claims
Prior Art – Obviousness
Prior Art – Anticipation/Novelty
Case Law
Statutory subject matter
Claim covering inoperable embodiments
Claim overly broad in view of disclosure
Claim indefinite
Improper inventorship
Lack of unity of invention