

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this manual is to provide detailed, up-to-date guidelines as to the practice and procedures to be followed in the various aspects of the formalities examination of patent applications in accordance with the Patents Act 1977 and the Patents Rules 2007. The guidelines are intended primarily for staff in the Patents Formalities Groups within the Patents Directorate for use as desk instructions in carrying out their daily duties. Most of the circumstances that staff can expect to encounter are covered although situations may arise which are not addressed in the manual in which case advice should be sought from the Head of Administration.

In addition to dealing with normal patent applications filed under s.14 and s.15(9) of the Patent Act 1977 the manual also deals with the practice and procedures to be followed in processing national phase patent applications filed under s.89.

The guidelines do not constitute legal provisions and as such they are not an authority for any action by the Office nor do they impose any particular line of action. The ultimate authority on practice is the Patents Act 1977 and the Patents Rules 2007. For advice on the interpretation of the provisions in the Act and Rules reference should be made to the Manual of Patents Practice and/or Legal Section through the Patents Formalities Manager.

The manual is divided into chapters covering distinct topics and each chapter is further divided into sub-topics identified by subheadings. The paragraphs are numbered sequentially with each number starting with the number of chapter. A list of commonly used abbreviations and terms is included in a Glossary at the back of the manual.

Parts of the manual will be updated when necessary to reflect changes in legislation or practice and to correct any errors. The manual will be available in electronic format on the Office's website. Paper copies will be available to staff and for sale to the public on request.

If anyone wishes to suggest improvements or corrections to the manual they should contact the PFM Editor, Room 1.Y20, Concept House, Cardiff Road, Newport. NP10 8QQ.