

Patent & Trade Mark Salary Survey 2024

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Patent & Trade Mark Attorneys - London

Level of Qualification	Low	Average	High
Trainee Trade Mark Attorney - Graduate entrant	£28,000	£38,000	£43,000
Trainee Trade Mark Attorney with QMU or equivalent	£34,000	£44,100	£47,000
Part Qualified Trade Mark Attorney	£37,000	£52,000	£59,000
2023 Qualified Trade Mark Attorney	£52,000	£63,100	£77,000
Trade Mark Attorney - Associate	£55,000	£78,000	£98,000
Trade Mark Attorney - Senior Associate	£75,000	£94,500	£115,000
Trade Mark Partner	£85,000	£115,000	£150,000+
Trainee Patent Attorney - Graduate entrant	£30,000	£38,000	£44,000
Trainee Patent Attorney with QMU or equivalent	£35,000	£45,700	£54,000
Part Qualified Patent Attorney	£42,000	£56,300	£72,000
Qualified Patent Attorney either CPA or EPA	£58,000	£69,400	£82,000
2023 Dual Qualified Patent Attorney	£69,000	£77,900	£90,000
Dual Qualified Patent Associate	£72,000	£88,400	£110,000
Dual Qualified Senior Patent Associate	£78,000	£99,400	£125,000
Patent Partner	£85,000	£115,700	£150,000+

Patent & Trade Mark Attorneys - Regional

Level of Qualification	Low	Average	High
Trainee Trade Mark Attorney - Graduate entrant	£26,000	£34,000	£40,000
Trainee Trade Mark Attorney with QMU or equivalent	£28,000	£39,900	£46,000
Part Qualified Trade Mark Attorney	£35,000	£48,300	£54,000
2023 Qualified Trade Mark Attorney	£45,000	£60,500	£70,000
Trade Mark Attorney - Associate	£52,000	£72,200	£90,000
Trade Mark Attorney - Senior Associate	£62,000	£88,900	£110,000
Trade Mark Partner	£85,000	£100,700	£140,000+
Trainee Patent Attorney - Graduate entrant	£28,000	£36,300	£42,000
Trainee Patent Attorney with QMU or equivalent	£35,000	£43,700	£48,000
Part Qualified Patent Attorney	£42,000	£52,600	£66,000
Qualified Patent Attorney either CPA or EPA	£52,000	£65,500	£80,000
2023 Dual Qualified Patent Attorney	£65,000	£74,900	£88,000
Dual Qualified Patent Associate	£72,000	£84,300	£105,000
Dual Qualified Senior Patent Associate	£78,000	£95,600	£115,000
Patent Partner	£82,000	£110,000	£150,000+

Patent & Trade Mark Support Staff - London

Level of Qualification	Low	Average	High
Patent / Trade Mark Secretary - up to 2 years experience	£25,000	£33,000	£45,000
Patent / Trade Mark Secretary - 2 to 5 years experience	£32,000	£41,000	£55,000
Patent / Trade Mark Secretary - 5 years plus experience	£36,000	£49,000	£68,000
Formalities Administrator - up to 2 years experience	£25,000	£34,000	£48,000
Formalities Administrator - 2 to 5 years experience	£35,000	£43,000	£55,000
Formalities Administrator - 5 years plus experience	£38,000	£47,300	£65,000
Paralegal – up to 2 years experience	£27,000	£37,400	£ 47,000
Paralegal – 2-5 years experience	£33,000	£46,000	£54,000
Paralegal – 5 years plus experience	£42,500	£50,700	£59,000
Supervisor / Team Leader	£44,000	£65,500	£92,000
Formalities Manager	£48,000	£69,300	£100,000
Head of Formalities	£70,000	£90,000	£120,000

Patent & Trade Mark Support Staff - Regional

Level of Qualification	Low	Average	High
Patent / Trade Mark Secretary - up to 2 years experience	£21,000	£26,700	£34,000
Patent / Trade Mark Secretary - 2 to 5 years experience	£25,000	£33,600	£50,000
Patent / Trade Mark Secretary - 5 years plus experience	£26,000	£37,200	£52,000
Formalities Administrator - up to 2 years experience	£22,500	£29,300	£45,000
Formalities Administrator - 2 to 5 years experience	£25,000	£33,200	£50,000
Formalities Administrator - 5 years plus experience	£30,000	£41,100	£51,000
Paralegal – up to 2 years experience	£22,000	£29,300	£44,000
Paralegal – 2-5 years experience	£26,000	£37,700	£48,000
Paralegal – 5 years plus experience	£34,000	£43,900	£58,000
Supervisor /Team Leader	£34,000	£47,500	£64,000
Formalities Manager	£40,000	£53,500	£70,000
Head of Formalities	£50,000	£66,700	£90,000

Patent & Trade Mark Attorneys and Support Staff - In-house

Level of Qualification	Low	Average	High
Trainee Trade Mark Attorney with QMU or equivalent	£32,000	£44,000	£48,000
Part Qualified Trade Mark Attorney	£36,000	£50,000	£57,000
2023 Qualified Trade Mark Attorney	£55,000	£65,000	£75,000
Trade Mark Attorney	£68,000	£85,000	£105,000
Senior Trade Mark Attorney	£88,000	£98,000	£125,000
Manager / Head of Department	£100,000	£130,000	£160,000
Trainee Patent Attorney with QMU or equivalent	£32,000	£45,000	£49,000
Part Qualified Patent Attorney	£49,000	£57,000	£65,000
Qualified Patent Attorney either CPA or EPA	£50,000	£67,000	£76,000
Dual Qualified Patent Attorney	£62,000	£80,600	£110,000
Dual Qualified Senior Patent Attorney	£76,000	£98,000	£125,000
Manager / Head of Department	£110,000	£146,000	£192,000
Formalities Administrator—up to 2 years experience	£28,000	£38,000	£48,000
Formalities Administrator—2 to 5 years experience	£35,000	£42,000	£51,000
Formalities Administrator—5 years plus experience	£50,000	£53,000	£60,000

Patent & Trade Mark Salary Survey 2024

During the past 12 months, demand has remained high in IP recruitment for good candidates across the profession and the market has remained competitive. Salaries continue to stay in the spotlight with employees paying particular attention to not only their basic salary but bonuses and an increasing range of 'softer benefits' too. We are still seeing significant salary discrepancies across the market as well as in the way in which employee pay is structured but hope that the following document will help to make some sense of this.

Whilst we recognise that basic salaries will always be of interest, it is very rarely the only factor considered. The additional information following the salary tables is designed to give an insight into working conditions across the IP sector, as well as reflecting on points of interest raised by clients and candidates alike. We are again delighted to have been able to include an in-house / industry salary table as we have continued to see a significant increase in movement within this sector.

Candidates remain keen to look at both job offers and their current package in its entirety, taking into account more than basic salary alone. We are seeing bonuses, earning potential and, increasingly, flexibility and work-life balance being important factors for a candidate to consider. We expect this thought process to continue now that hybrid working policies are commonplace and well-established. Nevertheless, remuneration remains an important factor in both attracting and retaining the best quality people.

As you will see from the salary figures, the bandings are quite wide and there are a number of factors that impact on where an IP professional could fall within the banding.

What Impacts on Salary Banding?

Salary Reviews and Areas of Practice:

This year there have been salary reviews with almost every business awarding increases, 96% in private practice and 100% in industry. These increases in most cases have been linked to remaining in line with comparable businesses, the cost of living and employee performance, with some firms including their financial performance overall too. We've seen steady increases across the IP sector at all levels of experience and qualification.

Whilst good Attorneys remain in high demand across all disciplines, we have continued to see a busy market for Life Sciences Attorneys with higher remuneration (basic and bonuses where applicable) being offered to both attract and retain top talent. In contrast to previous years however, most firms pay consistently across all areas of technology.

Location:

Over recent years we have seen a steady increase in regional Attorney salaries and, aside of within some law firms, the gap is closing with London as many firms look to reduce their London office overheads and grow bigger regional teams of Attorneys. IP firms more often pay the same salaries in both their London and regional offices

to attract both existing employees and lateral hires to their regional offices. This in turn pushes the average up in the area as traditionally 'local' firms have to increase what they are paying in order to remain competitive. Where Attorneys are choosing to work more remotely from London, whether at home and / or in a regional office, there is unlikely to be a significant difference in salary.

Increases and Bonuses for Attorneys Passing Exams:

The majority of private practices still review salaries when exams are passed, with these reviews being separate to their firm-wide annual salary review which most commonly take place in January, April, May or July. Of the firms that offer salary reviews to reflect exam passes and a change in qualification, only a handful offer 'spot' bonuses. In contrast, our in-house clients tend to incorporate an increase for passing exams into the Attorneys' annual salary review.

Increases and Bonuses for Support Staff Passing Exams:

The majority of clients we work with now offer financial rewards to Patent / Trade Mark Administrators who have passed the CIPA / CITMA Paralegal Course, which can vary from £500 - £1,000.

Trade Mark Attorney Salaries

Salaries still vary in this sector more than in any other Attorney category, making it hard to advise on Trade Mark salaries in any way other than giving bespoke advice. By way of example, those at Associate level are being paid anything from £52,000 through to £98,000. Interestingly though, these gaps have narrowed since our findings last year, notably too with newly qualified Trade Mark Attorneys which falls in line with the more moderate increases we've seen across the profession.

What is Causing Such a Range?

Newly qualified Attorneys can still be held back from stepping into a more independent Associate level position straight away. Many recently qualified Trade Mark Attorneys tell us that despite being officially qualified, they haven't seen an immediate change to their 'day job' and they are still being closely supervised.

There are also more Trade Mark Attorneys who are qualifying in the profession via the Paralegal or Support route and again this has an impact on salaries in the sector. Historically, Trade Mark Attorneys joined their firm as a graduate and the speed at which they moved through their training and their exams was predominantly dictated by their employer. Now, we are seeing Trainees joining firms and already being part-qualified by exam, because they have self-funded the QM (or an equivalent) and are keen to commence the Nottingham Course as soon as possible without having necessarily gained that much practical experience.

We also see many Trade Mark Administrators / Trade Mark Paralegals who have either self-funded or been financially supported by their employer to qualify as a Trade Mark Attorney and who find themselves passing the exams without having had 'true' Attorney experience. There are UK registered Trade Mark Attorneys who are still effectively operating in a Paralegal capacity despite their professional qualification. Their employer either hasn't got the volume of Attorney work to provide or they simply don't recognise them as a qualified Attorney which is reflected in the salary that they are able / prepared to pay. Often, we see these Attorneys being in a catch-22 position as it is hard for them to move to another firm, because even with their qualification, a potential employer isn't confident that they will be able to perform at the level that they would expect of their own newly qualified Attorneys.

We must bear in mind that some businesses simply pay more than others and that remains true in any sector. There is still stiff competition for the few in-house Trade Mark Attorney roles that are available, which can mean that base salaries are lower in industry. However, this can be offset by additional enhanced benefits and a more generous bonus scheme which tends to be dictated by both company and individual performance instead of being based on hours and / or billings.

Attorney vs Senior Attorney

There can be a significant difference in salaries between Attorneys and those who are operating at Senior Attorney level. Occasionally, the difference merely reflects time served, however, in most businesses the move to Senior Attorney is a considerable promotion and those in that role take on additional responsibilities beyond the 'day job'. This could include business development, management, training and / or taking a lead on particular projects e.g. implementation of new systems. Often, these are the people who have their eye on their next step up the career ladder, be that a move towards Partnership, Directorship or into a 'Head of IP' role.

Equally, in both the Patent and Trade Mark sectors, there are a lot of very experienced, skilled Attorneys who simply enjoy their fee-earning role and have no desire to take on additional responsibilities. Whilst in some cases, salaries for these professionals may plateau by comparison, within the especially busy sectors, they can be very highly valued with firms paying a premium for them, without any expectation beyond them delivering a strong fee-earning performance.

The variety in titles within different firms at this "Senior Attorney" level remains inconsistent, making it challenging when Attorneys are looking to move from one firm to another. We always advise to look beyond the title, not just at the salary banding within each firm, but also at the level of additional responsibility expected, in order to accurately compare and contrast what each role offers both in terms of remuneration and career progression.

Trainee Patent and Trade Mark Attorney Salaries

For graduates entering both professions, whilst there is still a wide range between the lowest and highest salaries, there is less of a difference between London and the regions overall.

Support Staff Salaries

The difference between London and the regions remains, however, the gap is closing at the mid to senior end of the market as London-led practices open more offices in regional cities. Many firms pay their support staff the same in their regional offices, especially where the cost of living is comparable to that in London. As this has

extended further North, it has increased competitors' salaries in order to attract the talent they need. Experienced Patent and Trade Mark support professionals continue to be in high demand and whilst existing employers may pay significant salary increases to keep them, it rarely solves any wider issues or frustrations. Instead, it can put these candidates' salaries beyond market rate which can then potentially limit future career choices. That said, smaller firms are often able to pay more, or increase offers more due to fewer 'internal politics'.

'Capping' of Salaries for Support Staff

Experienced, good quality Secretaries and Administrators are almost in as high demand / short supply as Attorneys, and it is not uncommon for us to see some being paid more than the junior fee earners within the same firm.

We continued to see a more considered approach with salaries on offer for new positions. Salary brackets are commonly provided at the outset, and these are closely adhered to, with clients prepared to walk away from even the most exceptional of candidates if they are seen to be demanding too much. The only way around this in some cases is to bring reviews forward if the starting salary can't be increased.

That said, if a Secretary / Administrator is thought to be absolutely invaluable to a business and they are consistently performing at a level that is beyond the norm, then their salary review will reflect this. Some firms have caps on support staff salaries, to prevent long term employees receiving annual increases for doing the same job year in and year out, with the result that they are being paid more than they would be considered worth in the wider market.

We are increasingly seeing firms moving towards recognising and rewarding those who are performing well with an individual / discretionary bonus instead of the traditional, annual increase. By attaching the bonus to a particular project or increase in responsibility that the employee has taken on, it helps to manage everyone's expectations by linking remuneration more closely to specific performance as opposed to simply "time served".

Individual Skills & Capabilities

Exceptional candidates continue to be rewarded beyond what could be expected within the market based on:

- Sector Specialism
- Management Input
- Business Development
- Client Management
- Fee Earning
- Project Delivery

More usually it is a combination of the above. We also see people who work and perform beyond their 'PQE' being treated, both financially and in other ways, as someone of more seniority.

Bonuses and Benefits

Bonuses:

The vast majority of employers now offer a form of employee bonus although the way that they are structured and the rewards they can bring vary greatly. Most businesses now also offer a bonus to all staff, not just fee-earners and these are most commonly awarded in November or December followed by May and July.

Most bonuses reflect a combination of individual and company performance. Over half of firms still offer a Christmas bonus or equivalent gesture. Typically, support staff bonuses tend to be discretionary whereas Attorneys will either be rewarded for their performance against an hours or billings target, or a target based on a multiple of their base salary. Hours targets vary but typically will be between 900-1100 hours in IP firms. Targets in law firms tend to be higher, in some cases 1200-1600 hours. Multiples of salary targets tend to be 3-4 x salary and in some cases, particularly at more senior levels, performance based bonuses will include recognition for other contributions beyond fee-earning.

In industry, a significant amount of an employee bonus will often be attributed to the company's financial performance that year and the remaining element which that employee can directly influence will reflect their performance against set personal objectives. These tend to be paid in April and typically range between 10-25% of base salary. This year we have seen bonuses of up to £40,000+, with the average range for qualified Attorneys being anywhere between £1,000 to £25,000.

Basic salaries do differ amongst firms, and we tend to see those who offer a more modest basic salary combining it with a stronger bonus structure. Those who offer a higher basic tend to have a less sophisticated, or a harder to achieve, bonus structure. It is then for the Attorney to decide what motivates them more.

Welcome Payments:

'Golden Hellos' and relocation allowances are more prevalent now within high demand areas in firms. These are often used as a way of enticing people on board and can be combined with guaranteed bonuses for a specified period of time.

Private Medical Insurance:

The vast majority of larger, mid-tier and smaller firms now offer health insurance to their employees. There is usually an option to cover other family members for an additional but competitive cost as well as some firms covering pre-existing conditions too.

Pensions:

Auto enrolment was introduced in 2017 and the current minimum contributions are 3% from employers and 5% from employees. Some firms offer a further enhancement on statutory minimums, but these vary greatly:

- London / national firms - we have seen ranges vary from 3-10%
- Mid-tier and boutiques - there is much greater variance but as an average we see firms paying up to 5% and employers often require their contributions to be matched.
- Industry - pension schemes can be very generous in-house, with some employers paying up to 20%. Although this isn't the case everywhere, industry pensions do tend to be higher than practice offerings.

Death in Service Benefits:

Many firms do offer this benefit, but the amount varies significantly and often smaller practices don't offer it, the average being 4 x salary. In some cases this can be enhanced via flexible benefits packages, and in some it is linked to membership of the Pension Scheme.

Critical Illness Cover and Income Protection:

These benefits are also often part of a flexible benefits package which an employee can choose to contribute toward.

Working From Home / Hybrid Working:

Hybrid working is clearly here to stay across private practice and industry, as employers continue to find a balance between structure and flexibility. Unsurprisingly the majority are offering a 3/2 or 2/3 split with some firms offering a 50/50 split. However, still nearly a quarter of those responding offer more flexibility, from one day a week in the office, to fully remote working or coming into the office as and when required at the managers' discretion. There's more clarity and confidence in hybrid working now and many businesses haven't felt the need to change their policy in the past year.

Flexible Working:

Whilst formal flexi-time was relatively commonplace across the IP sector before the Covid pandemic, with many firms offering 'core hours' e.g. 10.00am to 4.00pm, the advent of hybrid and flexible working has largely made this redundant. The balance between offering an entirely bespoke working hours structure for every individual and ensuring effective collaboration between colleagues and clients who may work different hours or patterns, continues to be a challenge which typically requires compromise, but trust and communication are key and technology typically ensures that who's doing what and when is easy to see.

Maternity / Paternity Benefits:

This has remained in the spotlight with enhanced provisions becoming increasingly common, although what's offered varies enormously. We have continued to see encouraging progress, with most firms offering enhanced provisions for maternity leave and over half for paternity leave. Many of the larger or national firms typically offer between 12-26 weeks full maternity pay, or up to 50% pay for weeks 6-26. Paternity leave generally ranges from 1 week's full pay and the 2nd week statutory, to 2 weeks' full pay. In addition, we have seen some firms pay full maternity and / or paternity leave for 39 weeks for those with 2 years' continuous service.

Generally, enhanced maternity / paternity benefits will be linked to a minimum length of service (1-2 years) and some form of repayment scheme in the event that a specified time period of up to 12 months is not completed following return from the leave.

Holiday Entitlement:

The majority of firms offer 25 days leave as standard. Some firms offer increases based on time served and / or level of seniority and in some firms, employees have the option to buy and sell days. The lowest allowance seen was 20 days for support staff and the highest was up to 35 (based on length of service). Some firms offer up to 5 days unpaid leave and the most generous purchasing scheme allows up to 10 days to be bought throughout the year. There are clear differences in entitlement depending on title / role with support staff being given less leave than qualified Attorneys and/or Managers at some firms.

Other Financial Benefits:

- Income Protection Insurance
- Private Medical Insurance / Dental Insurance
- Enhanced Sick Pay Scheme
- Voluntary Critical Illness Cover
- Travel Insurance
- Introduction Rewards
- Season Ticket Loans / Parking / Travel / Electric Vehicle Scheme
- Discount Schemes
- Discounted Legal Advice

Wellbeing:

As well as the more traditional financial rewards, there has been particular focus on employee wellbeing and mental health care more recently.

This may include things such as:

- Wellbeing programmes, e.g. access to financial advice, GPs, psychological support, stop smoking clinic, mental health champions in the workplace etc
- Wellbeing committee
- Mental health first aid training
- Adjusted working hours, e.g. the option to take a longer lunchbreak especially in Winter to ensure access to daylight
- On-site massages
- Free lunch
- Gym allowance / gym on-site, Ride-to-Work salary sacrifice schemes
- Access to Perkbox or similar
- Easter eggs, Advent calendars, birthday cards / gifts / birthdays off
- Sabbatical leave (unpaid / paid)
- Corporate social responsibility days
- Flu vaccination health screening
- Occupational health
- Fruit bowls

The importance of employee wellbeing is increasingly a major consideration for employees in deciding where they work and how long they stay there. It is encouraging to see so many employers actively embracing this and reviewing their benefits to ensure that they remain competitive. We anticipate that this area will remain in sharp focus as “standard” working practices continue to evolve, so regular benefits reviews will help employers at least keep up with, or stay ahead of the curve. In particular, employer engagement and colleague interaction continue to be vital to maintain good communication both within the office and when working remotely.

Get in touch with one of our specialist consultants today...

Established in 2006, the Sacco Mann team is a leading name in Patent and Trade Mark recruitment. Acting for clients throughout the UK, our experienced consultants work with a huge variety of businesses, from Patent and Trade Mark practices to IP departments within law firms, boutique IP practices to In-House teams within innovative start-ups through to household name companies.

Advising such a range of clients on their recruitment and retention strategies provides us with a broad overview as well as an in-depth knowledge of the market at every level of qualification. Part and fully qualified Patent Attorneys, Trade Mark Attorneys, IP Solicitors, Secretaries, Administrators, Paralegals, Partners and Directors come to us for our expertise and confidential guidance throughout their careers.

All salary information included in our Salary Survey reflects basic salary information only; guaranteed bonuses, car allowances and other benefits which could be deemed to have a financial value have not been included in the data provided.