

Standards and Criteria for QPIP Training Accreditation

Framework for QPIP Accreditation

Muriel Bourgeois

Aldo Burton

Jan Forsberg

Aalt van de Kuilen

Barbara Miller

Catrin Sandelin

Grayce Shomade

Heike Schwanbeck

Frank Verbeke

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Accreditation serves as an indication of quality by providing standards against which all the QPIP training courses can be measured. It has been set up to provide the highest standards of professional development learning for QPIP examination candidates.

Together, standards and criteria are needed to inform a valid accreditation process. Therefore, courses need to meet the criteria proposed in this QPIP Framework for accreditation document. There are no main and secondary requirements as all have equal weighting.

We rely heavily on the information, data and statements provided to us by the training course provider(s). Therefore, integrity is very important to the QPIP accreditation process (QAP) and we expect all applicants to adhere to the highest ethical standards of integrity, fairness, honesty, openness, non-discriminatory, respect and trustworthiness.

According to the Articles of The International Standards Board for Qualified Patent Information Professionals (ISBQPIP), the duty of the Accreditation Committee (AC) consists of “reviewing applications for accreditation for training or courses and making recommendations to the Supervisory Council to accredit training or courses that provide suitable content of sufficient level as defined in the Rules to prepare candidates for the examination”. The course submitted for accreditation should give some indication for what (group of) skills/knowledge, from the [Schedules](#), the content of a course/training is suitable, and also provide an indication of the course level. However, although candidates will not be able to pass the QPIP examinations with beginners or entry-level courses alone, such courses will still be eligible for QPIP accreditation. It is therefore the aim that the vast majority of the courses given QPIP accreditation will be suitable for preparing candidates to sit the QPIP examination.

1.1 Accreditation Process

Gaining QPIP accreditation for training courses is a 2-step process for course providers:

1. Request for accreditation is made using the included QPIP training accreditation request form ([Annex A](#)) or at the discretion of the Accreditation Committee, who may consult the Supervisory Council and/or other members of the patent information community during its review. For instance, the Accreditation Committee may exercise its discretion to accredit some freely available courses (e.g. provided by the EPO, USPTO and WIPO). The aim of this process is to assess the nature of the training/course, how it is delivered, gain information about the expected attendees and for the course provider to understand the key objectives of the QPIP Course Accreditation Process (QCAP) and the main steps for a course to become accredited.
2. Once an application and supporting documentation have been received it will be assessed by the Accreditation Committee and notification of the outcome will be sent to the course provider once complete. The assessment of the course will need to be done on original language supporting documentation. However, **English, French and German** would be considered acceptable under our original language submission criteria, whereas all other languages would need to be accompanied by an English translation (human or machine translation) of at least a summary of the

course contents, syllabus, indication of Schedules covered etc. It will not be possible to include several courses in a single application request. The course materials (**in original language**) typically required for assessment are not restricted, and may include presentation slides, handouts, and any additional course notes. Each QPIP training course is benchmarked against our assessment criteria to ensure the required standards are met across a number of different areas.

In accordance with ISPQPIP rule 3.2g, accreditation of courses will only be for a duration of 3 years.

1.2 Education and Training Schedules

The syllabus (listing of required skills and knowledge required to prepare for the QPIP examinations are described in the [Schedules](#):

- Schedule I: Search Skills Syllabus
- Schedule II: Patent Law and Analysis Skills Syllabus

All courses should contain content that addresses the knowledge and skills of Schedule I and/or Schedule II. In addition, the course level proficiency metric beginner / intermediate / advanced is intended to denote the following:

- Beginner course refers to knowledge that the participant should already have acquired in the course of their work/activities.
- Intermediate level is what is required to prepare for the exam.
- Advanced is the level required to pass the exams.

1.3 Conflict of Interest

Although there can be commercial interest/sponsorship in the provision of courses considered for accreditation, this does not extend to training providers offering training content that may include disparaging views or comments about a rival or competitor course provider. Nor does it extend to courses primarily aimed at sales/marketing pitches. Applicants will be required to confirm that there is no conflict of interest on the part of any sponsor or commercial interest.

1.4 Ethical values

We expect that accredited course providers are committed to the highest ethical standards, including integrity, fairness, honesty, trustworthiness, respect and openness. Training course providers are expected to maintain a practice of regular programme reviews and perform their activities in accordance with standard ethical practices.

2.0 ACCREDITATION AIMS

The following are the aims of the accreditation process, which are reflected in the standards and criteria:

- To ensure that the content of the training course(s) is relevant for candidates of the QPIP examination.
- To increase the awareness of the learning to be gained in order to become a QPIP-certified patent searcher
- To minimise bias and conflicts of interest.
- To encourage evaluation and review of the training courses.
- To maintain a published list of QPIP accredited training courses that are aligned to the skills and knowledge defined in the [Schedules](#).
- To provide a thorough and administratively simple and flexible process.

3.0 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

The standards are qualitative characteristics which define the evidence required from training providers and against which course provision or performance can be evaluated. The criteria describe what is required from training providers to meet the standards.

3.1 Educational and Competence Standards

Target Audience

There should be a clearly defined target audience, including level and any pre-requisite knowledge.

Learning aims

There should be clearly defined learning aim(s) which reflect the overall purpose of the course.

Training content and structure

There should be a clear statement, for prospective participants, outlining the content, structure and suitability of the training course for QPIP accreditation.

Delivery methods

Delivery methods should be appropriate to the learning aims that were set for the participants.

Supporting information

Course support information and material(s) should be clear, appropriate and accessible to participants for a suitable period of time after the course.

Trainer expertise

Training provider should demonstrate that the training staff qualifications and experience are appropriate to deliver the training course

Evaluation and quality assurance

A defined quality assurance process is an important part of accreditation of activities for QPIP purposes. Therefore, the provider should include an assessment process that evaluates the intended training course; for example, this could include participant evaluation/feedback forms, surveys, benchmarking etc.

Training provider's details

Training providers should have relevant expertise and facilities to conduct the course.

Ethical values

Training course providers are expected to perform their activities in accordance with the ethical practices of integrity, fairness, honesty, openness, respect and trustworthiness. As it would be difficult to evaluate and enforce these practices, the relationship between the Accreditation Committee and the course provider(s) should be based on trust.

Correct and timeliness of content

Training course providers are expected to maintain a practice of regular programme reviews to ensure that their content remains accurate and up-to-date.

Commercial sponsorship

There can be commercial interest/sponsorship in the provision of courses considered for accreditation. However, the training programme offered should not be influenced or biased by commercial organisations such that there is a conflict of interest on the part of any sponsor or commercial interest. This is to avoid training providers offering training content that may include disparaging views or comments about a rival or competitor course provider.

Courses primarily aimed at sales/marketing pitches will not be accredited.

Administrative arrangements

Course providers should have in place an efficient and transparent administrative process such as a record of all attendees so that they can verify attendance at least two years after the course is held.

3.2 Criteria to meet the standard for QPIP accreditation

- a) The course provider provides a description of the course content/scope, including duration, agenda, syllabus, exams, contact hours, cost/fees etc
- b) The course provider has clearly stated goals/objectives for the participants of the course.
- c) The course provider provides support services suited to the needs of its participants, including a process for student feed-back.
- d) The course provider provides the infrastructure and resources necessary to support effective teaching and learning.
- e) The course provider has practices/policies that assure the quality of the course
- f) The course provider maintains a practice of regular programme reviews.
- g) Courses and programmes should be current, up-to-date and require levels of performance by participants appropriate to the QPIP-certificate awarded.
- h) Course clearly indicates any pre-requisites (knowledge, skills, qualifications)
- i) Courses should be in-line with the QPIP exam requirements as set out in schedule [1](#) and [2](#), with the part of the [schedule](#)(s) covered by the course clearly indicated.
- j) The language of the course, and any supporting material, is at the discretion of the provider on the understanding that the QPIP examination will be held exclusively in English (*QPIP rule 10.1 – All examination questions shall be in English*).
- k) Each course participant receives a (digital) syllabus.
- l) Participants should receive a certificate of attendance. A certificate of attendance should be available for participants of accredited courses, even if the accredited course is offered free of charge. The certificate would act as proof of the attendance at an accredited course.

- m) All instructors should be appropriately qualified and linked to the profession. For the avoidance of doubt, this should mean that they have some patent information 'link', or connection, whether through academic achievement or industry experience. It will be the responsibility of the course provider to ensure the expertise of trainers conducting the courses.
- n) Instructors are accessible for inquiry.
- o) If applicable, any limitations to course access based on age, gender, cultural, social or educational background, or other requirements, are clearly stated.
- p) Accredited course providers/instructors are committed to the highest ethical standards of integrity, fairness, honesty, non-discrimination, openness, respect and trustworthiness.
- q) Course providers applying for accreditation should confirm that there is no conflict of interest on the part of any sponsor or commercial interest in order to avoid training providers offering training content that may include disparaging views or comments about a rival or competitor course provider.
- r) The course provider should apply (using the QPIP Training Accreditation Request Form – see Annex A) for accreditation at least **eight weeks** prior to the training start date. *Applications for accreditation received less than eight weeks will be considered on a case by case basis, and could lead to delay in receiving the accreditation.*
- s) An attendance register for each training should be maintained and retained for a period of at least two years. The attendance register should be available for viewing by the Accreditation Committee, or the ISPQPIP, on request.
- t) Instructors/trainers should have/follow their own Code of Ethics. This is based on trust. However, it is hoped both providers and instructors follow a personal ethics code, which may or may not be written down.
- u) Training providers/instructors should maintain a practice of regular programme reviews. This is dependent on how often a course is held. However, one would expect the course content to be reviewed, so that it remains accurate and up-to-date for the commencement of the course.
- v) The intended audience and content level must be clearly specified.

Annex A

Instructions for applicants: Please complete this form in English, detach and send with supporting documents to accreditations@qipip.org

Annex A - QPIP Training Course Accreditation Request Form

Training Provider Details

Name:	Click or tap here to enter text.
Name of Organisation (if applicable):	
Address:	
City, Postal/Zip Code:	
Country:	
Email:	
Telephone (Fixed):	
Telephone (Mobile):	
Website (if applicable):	
Type of organisation (e.g. company, university, not-for-profit, sole practitioner, self-employed):	
Have you previously applied for QPIP accreditation?	Tick one box: YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, please provide details	

Training course details

Course title:
Course date(s) and duration:
Venue/website URL:
Attendance fee(s):
Number of participants expected:
Please provide details of course structure, content, language and timetabling.
Please attach and tick <input type="checkbox"/> to confirm the finalised course details are attached.

Educational content of course

Who is the target audience?	
Please tick to indicate the course level(s):	
<input type="checkbox"/> Beginner (no pre-requisites required) <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate (please attach any pre-requisite skills list) <input type="checkbox"/> Advanced (please attach any pre-requisite skills list)	

What schedule <u>1</u> and/or <u>2</u> and/or part of the <u>schedule</u> (s) does the course seek to address?	
What are the main learning objectives?	
What will be the language of instruction of the course?	
Are there any other language options available for this course?	
How will the course be delivered?	
In which country or countries will the course be delivered?	

Please provide a short biography, not exceeding one page, that includes current position title, education and experience for each instructor.

This information will be used to assess whether the instructor(s) has/have the expertise to deliver the training content.

Please tick to confirm that you follow/have a Code of Ethics for Trainers/Instructors.

Sponsorship and Conflict of Interest

Please tick to confirm that there is no conflict of interest on the part of any sponsor or commercial interest, or if so, provide details below.

Please tick to confirm that the course content is not biased in favour of a sponsor or other commercial interest, or if so, please provide details below.

Please indicate in what form any sponsorship has been provided, or any conflict of interest:

Evaluation, review and feedback

How will the quality of teaching and learning be evaluated? Attach any feedback/evaluation form that will be used.

Please tick to confirm that you have attached a copy of the feedback/evaluation form.

Please tick to confirm the course content is regularly reviewed for accuracy and currency.
Indicate date of last course content update:

Confirmation of applicant

Please tick this box to confirm that, to your knowledge, the information provided in this form is accurate, truthful and that the responses given represent those of the applicant.

Name:

Job Title:

Date:

Privacy Notice

The QPIP Course Accreditation Committee is part of The International Standards Board for Qualified Patent Information Professionals (ISBQPIP), a not-for profit organization established under the authority of the KVK Netherlands Chamber of Commerce.

We are committed to protecting and respecting your privacy. In accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) legislation, the lawful basis for collecting and processing this data is “Legitimate Interests”. This means that the data is necessary to enable us to fulfil the objectives of the QPIP Course Accreditation Committee in processing your request for accreditation, and that it is data that would reasonably be expected for us to hold and use. We will never collect sensitive personal information about you without your explicit consent. For the avoidance of doubt, we are collecting and processing data from you for the following one or more purposes:

- (i) - assessing your application and supporting documentation in order to accredit the training course in line with requirements for persons to become a Qualified Patent Information Professional [hereinafter QPIP] in accordance with the Articles and Rules of the ISBQPIP;
- (ii) – maintaining a register of QPIP Training Course Accreditation applications;
- (iii) - reviewing any complaints made about your QPIP Training Course Accreditation application and any information you provide in response in accordance with the Articles and Rules of the ISBQPIP.

The AC or ISBQPIP will not provide your personal data to third parties unless it is required to do so by law or it is necessary to do so for one or more purposes stated above. Before any personal information is provided by the AC or ISBQPIP to a third party, the AC or ISBQPIP will first obtain your consent by providing you with the identity of the third party, the nature of your personal information that will be provided and the specific purpose(s) for which your personal information will be provided by the AC or ISBQPIP to the third party.

Therefore, please provide explicit consent in accordance with GDPR by ticking the boxes to confirm the following two questions:

I confirm that my details can be kept for administrative and communication purposes related to the activities of the QPIP Course Accreditation Committee.

By providing personal data to the ISBQPIP you acknowledge that you have read and understood this privacy notice and that you have, of your own free will, given your personal information to the ISBQPIP for one or more of the purposes stated above.

You therefore consent to your personal data being processed by the ISBQPIP, including its Supervisory Council members, committee members and personnel as required in order for the ISBQPIP to act on the information you have provided for one or more of the purposes stated above.

If you wish to withdraw your consent at any time, please send an email to the ISBQPIP Data Protection Officer (info@qip.org) specifying whether the withdrawal of your consent is in relation to all or a part of the personal information you have provided and in respect of which of the above stated purposes to enable the ISBQPIP to act on your request.