

HGF Life Sciences Team

HGF is one of the UK's top patent and trade mark firms and we have one of the most extensive and experienced teams of attorneys providing patent and IP legal services to the biotechnology and pharmaceutical industries worldwide.

The Team is headed by Richard Williams (rwilliams@hgf.com). Richard has a substantial contentious practice focused on EPO oppositions and appeals. He frequently attends oral proceedings at the EPO. Richard acted for the patentee in relation to the referral to the EPO Enlarged Board of Appeal (G2/04) of questions relating to the transferability of oppositions.



Richard Williams – Partner & Head of Life Sciences Team

Richard heads our Life Science group and specialises in biotech and pharmaceutical patent matters and has particular experience in areas such as genetic engineering, recombinant proteins, antibodies, methods of gene sequencing and genetic analysis, GeneChip® Technology, contraceptive pills, pharmaceutical formulations and medical devices. Richard's practice focuses on "difficult" contentious and non-contentious cases before the European Patent Office (EPO) where he also handles numerous opposition and appeal cases and appears regularly at oral proceedings.



Iain Armstrong – Senior Associate

Iain's practice covers a wide range of biotechnological inventions, particularly specialising in inventions relating to the therapeutic application of biotechnology. He has experience in a number of technical fields, including wound healing, cancer therapies, vaccine development and stem cell technologies.



Paul Banford – Consultant

Paul's practice covers a wide range of life science technology clients, ranging from start-ups to multinationals. He provides his clients with proactive, strategic advice and a significant proportion of his time is spent assisting start-ups (particularly academic spin-outs) to develop the type of patent portfolios that will attract private investment and satisfy the requirements of parties to initial public offerings on stock exchanges.



Maria Daraban – Patent Assistant

Maria is a US Patent Attorney and UK solicitor whose practice focuses on all aspects of intellectual property protection and enforcement, including prosecution, licensing, litigation, and patentability and infringement opinions. She has experience in a wide range of fields including pharmacology, nanotechnology, immunology, diagnostics, telecommunications and magnetic storage and recording media. Maria also has experience in trade mark prosecution and enforcement.



Rachel Jones – Trainee Attorney

Rachel's professional interests lie in the field of biotechnology, biochemistry and pharmaceuticals. Her degree provided her with specialist knowledge of biochemistry along with a broad grounding in the other molecular biosciences. In her final year at university, Rachel used X-ray crystallography to successfully determine the atomic structure of the protein phosphoglucose isomerase.

Her doctoral research focused on the role of RNA binding proteins in the developing nervous system and led to two publications, including a contribution in a text book describing RNA interference in model organisms. Rachel's PhD project utilised a wide range of biochemical techniques including recombinant DNA technology, cell culture and immunohistochemistry.



Lisa Markham – Senior Associate

Lisa's professional interests are principally in the areas of biotechnology. She specialises in drafting and prosecuting patent applications relating to gene therapy, diagnostic markers for cancer, candidate therapeutic screening techniques, transplant products, dental products, transgenic plants and animals and medical device patents. Lisa's clients are wide ranging, including international corporations, SMEs, universities, spin-outs and start-up companies.



Karen Russell – Senior Associate

Karen's practice covers a wide range of biotechnological and biochemical clients, ranging from start-ups to multinationals, in the UK, Europe and the US. She has particular experience in molecular diagnostics and therapeutics (including personalised medicine), genomics and enzymology.

Karen has significant experience in prosecuting life science related patent applications before the EPO and PCT authorities and has also dealt with prosecution in the UK, the US, and Australia. She has handled both direct and agency work as well as acting as a tutor for candidates preparing for their UK and EQE exams.



Punita Shah – Senior Associate

Punita specialises in the fields of biotechnology and chemistry and has particular experience in the areas of pharmaceuticals, genetics, plant biology and molecular biology. Punita also has first-hand experience of foreign patent systems, having worked in Australia and prosecuted, opposed and defended applications before the Australian and New Zealand Patent Offices.



Kate Taylor – Partner

Kate handles a diverse portfolio of technologies in the life sciences and biopharmaceutical fields, including diagnostic and therapeutic targets, SNPs, antisense nucleic acids, GMOs, antibody and peptide therapeutics.

Kate has considerable experience of drafting patent applications and developing IP filing strategies in the life sciences field. Kate co-ordinates global patent portfolios for UK universities, spin out companies and international corporations. She has a substantial prosecution practice and is highly experienced in acting before the European Patent Office in prosecution, opposition and appeal matters, including attending oral hearings. She has particular in-depth knowledge of the complex legal issues surrounding the enabling nature of deposited biological material.



Siobhán Ward – Senior Associate

Siobhan has considerable experience in biotechnological patent prosecution including the principal areas of gene expression technology, gene delivery technology and cancer gene therapy.

Siobhan has been involved in all aspects of patent work, including the preparation and prosecution of UK, European and overseas patent applications. She has been actively involved in a number of European Opposition and Appeal Proceedings and has attended a number of oral proceedings at the European Patent Office in Munich. Her work has also provided a valuable insight into US prosecution and she has attended several interviews with US examiners at the US Patent Office in Washington, DC.



Andrew Wells – Partner

Andrew's patent practice is principally in the pharmaceutical and chemical fields. He has extensive experience in securing patent protection for pharmaceuticals and specialises in drafting and prosecuting patent applications covering new chemical entities, salts, polymorphs, formulations (including advanced drug delivery technologies), manufacturing processes, medical uses, and medical devices.

Outside of the pharmaceutical field, Andrew's practice encompasses polymer chemistry, petroleum additives, catalytic compositions, separation chemistry and biosensors. He acts for a diverse range of clients, including international corporations, universities, start-up companies and associate patent attorney firms based outside of the UK.



Gary Wilson – Partner

Gary's expertise covers the chemical, pharmaceutical and mechanical fields.

He has advised clients on numerous technologies including medical devices, polymer materials, fabric related technology, new drugs, drug delivery, chemical synthesis, cosmetics, catalysis, petrochemicals, semiconductors, fuel cells, solar cells, optics, nanotechnology and renewable energy.

Gary provides commercially focussed advice to a range of organisations including international blue chip companies, universities, government-funded organisations, R&D groups, Venture capitalists and SME's. This has included advising on all aspects of patent filing strategies, freedom to operate, infringement and validity matters, due diligence, licensing issues and enforcement of patent rights.