Keyword index

absence, at oral proceedings 84, 131–2, 160
acceleration of opposition and appeal proceedings 162
accompanying persons and permission to speak, oral proceedings 81
adjournment of oral proceedings 79–80, 115–19
admissibility of appeal see appeals, inter partes, filing an admissible appeal
of late submissions, appeal stage see appeals, inter partes, late submissions
of late submissions, opposition stage see opposition stage, late filings
of opposition see opposition stage, filing an admissible opposition
of petition for review see appeals, inter partes, petition for review
ambiguity
ambiguous terms, risk of using, drafting and prosecution stage 9–11
claims with ambiguous (ill-defined) features, opposition stage 49–53
see also clarity
amendments
claim amendments, prosecution stage 17–20
claim amendments, opposition stage see opposition stage, amendment of patent
complexity in new claim requests, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal 113–15
new claim requests, appeal stage 113–15
new claim requests, opposition stage 61
procedural complexity, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) 113–14
anonymously filed third party observation 92–3
appeals, ex parte 153–7
acceleration of proceedings 162
applicant invited to file observations 155–6
burden of proof 156–7
examination of EPC requirements not dealt with by examining division 156
interlocutory revision 154–5
number received by EPO 153–4
prohibition of reformatio in peius 156
statistics, decisions 154
appeals, inter partes 94–152
acceleration of proceedings 162
appeal board composition 96–7
CJEU decisions, non-binding nature of 95
decisions 138–41
decisions, conflicting 141
decisions, Enlarged Board of Appeal, reference to 139–40
drafting errors and consequences 14–16, 17–19
drafting styles, effects of 5–17
first instance proceedings, separation from 95
judicial nature of boards 95
legitimacy of proceedings 95
number received by EPO 97
oral proceedings before boards 130–32
oral proceedings before boards, absence during 131–2
oral proceedings before boards, postponement 131
party disposition principle 95–6
priority application problems 3–5
ratio decidendi 139
statistics, decisions 98
suspensive effect 94, 151
termination of appeal proceedings 151–2
third party intervention see third party intervention
appeals, inter partes, filing an admissible appeal 98–104
admissibility of statement of grounds of appeal 101–3
company dissolved before decision 103–4
drafting grounds by cutting and pasting first instance arguments 102
insufficient to address only part of grounds of appeal 102–3
language requirements 101
legal basis 98–100
non-remediable deficiencies 101–4
party adversely affected by decision 98–9
party as of right 98, 132–3, 161
procedural guidelines 100
remediable deficiencies 100–101
time limits 99, 101
appeals, inter partes, late submissions 104–30
apportionment of costs 158–60
arguments 128–9
claim requests, clear allowability criterion 115–17
claim requests, diverging from previous claim requests 115
claim requests, in response to new point arising in proceedings 119–20
claim requests, procedural complexity of amendment 113–14
claim requests, submitted during oral proceedings 118–19
claims broader than main request before opposition division 112
deletion of claims 117
facts and evidence in reaction to new issues in appeal 127–8
filing new grounds for opposition 105–6
‘forum shopping’ 111
ground filed late in opposition proceedings 105
ground withdrawn in opposition proceedings 105–6
grounds, prima facie relevance 105–6
party’s complete case 106–7
patentee approval for new grounds for opposition 105
procedural economy, need for 114–15
reaction to new objection in preliminary opinion 119
reaction to unforeseeable developments 119
refiling previously withdrawn claim sets 112–13
remittal to department of first instance 100–103, 110, 112–13, 123, 151
submissions not admitted by opposition division 129–30
suspension of first instance proceedings 141
unsubstantiated requests 118
appeals, inter partes, late submissions, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal 106–10
admissibility of claim requests under Article 12(4) 110–13
admissibility of claim requests under Article 13(1) 113–15
admissibility of claim requests under Article 13(3) 115–19
admissibility of facts and evidence under Article 12(4) 121–4
admissibility of facts and evidence under Article 13(1) 124–6
admissibility of facts and evidence under Article 13(3) 126–7
appeals, inter partes, petition for review 141–8
admissibility 141–5
allowability 145–6
causal link between procedural defect and final decision, need for 145
procedure 147
right to be heard 146
successful petitions, examples of 147–8
time limits and prescribed fee 144
appeals, *inter partes*, prohibition of *reformatio in peius* 132–8
exceptions 133–7
opponent as sole appellant 133–7
proprietor as sole appellant 137–8, 151–2
appeals, *inter partes*, reimbursement of appeal fee 147–50
after interlocutory revision 148
after substantial procedural violation 148–50
after withdrawal of appeal 150
application see drafting and prosecution stage
apportionment of costs 158–60
see also fees
authorisations, opposition stage, oral proceedings 73–4, 76
behaviour and attitude, opposition stage, oral proceedings 77–80
boards of appeal
composition 96–7
discretionary power 129
Enlarged Board of Appeal see Enlarged Board of Appeal
judicial nature 95
oral proceedings before 130–32

chemical product, public prior use 38
CJEU (Court of Justice of the European Union) decisions, non-binding nature of 95
claimed subject matter, distinguishing from prior art 36–7
clearance
after amendment of patent, opposition stage 63–5
clearance of prior art 5–6
clarity versus sufficiency, opposition stage 49–53
see also ambiguity
closest prior art
inventive step 41–3, 45–6
see also prior art
company
company-generated papers and lack of novelty 34
dissolved before decision 103–4
opposition transferred from one company to another 30–31
composition
appeal boards 96–7
opposition division 23–4
confidentiality agreement, public prior use 40
costs, apportionment of see apportionment of costs
death or legal incapacity of opponent, opposition stage 92
decisions
causal link between procedural defect and final decision, need for 145
CJEU decisions, non-binding nature of 95
Enlarged Board of Appeal, reference to 139–40
in *inter partes* appeals 138–41
in opposition 86–9
opposition stage, oral proceedings 72–3, 75–6, 80, 82, 84
party adversely affected by 98–9
deletion of claims, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) 117
dependent claims, introduction of, opposition stage 63
disclosure
explicit versus implicit, and lack of novelty 36, 39
sufficiency of see opposition stage, opposition grounds, sufficiency of disclosure
distribution of appeal decisions, statistics 98, 154
drafting and prosecution stage 3–20
ambiguos terms (vagueness), risk of using 9–11
‘borderline’ claim restrictions 18
claim’s original wording, reverting to after error 14
drafting errors and consequences in opposition and appeal 14–16, 17–19
drafting styles, effects on opposition and appeal 5–17
fall-back positions, necessity of creating 7–8
generality level, use of appropriate 11–13
intermediate generalisation 12–13
inventive step objections 12
‘jargon’, avoidance of 15
optional or essential feature 15–17
priority application problems in opposition and appeal, avoidance of 3–5
priority validity criteria 6
prosecution with eye on opposition and appeal 17–20
restriction applied during examination of application 18
technical text checks, need for 15
e-mails, public availability, lack of novelty 35
Enlarged Board of Appeal composition 96
conflicting decisions 141
no suspensive effect 147
petition cases see appeals, inter partes, petition for review
reference to, inter partes appeals 139–40
reimbursement fee, petition for review 147
reopening of appeal proceedings, petition for review 147
see also boards of appeal

errors
drafting, and consequences in opposition and appeals 14–19
wrong name or address of appellant 100–101
wrong name or address of opponent 29
evidence and facts
admissibility, appeal stage, see appeals, inter partes, late submissions
admissibility, opposition stage, late filings 57–61
in reaction to new issues in appeal, late submissions 127–8
Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) see appeals, inter partes, late submissions, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA)
ex parte appeals see appeals, ex parte
ex tunc effect, revocation 92
examination of EPC requirements not dealt with by examining division, ex parte appeals 156
extension in opposition stage beyond content of application as filed 69–70
patent may not be amended in such a way as to extend the protection it confers 65–9
protection not extended, ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ 66–7, 69
facts see evidence and facts
fall-back positions, necessity of creating 7–8
fees
appeal fee 99
opposition fee 26–7
petition for review fee 144
reimbursement see appeals, inter partes, reimbursement of appeal fee
see also apportionment of costs
first instance proceedings
inter partes appeals, separation from 95
remittal to, opposition stage 90–91
handwritten amendments 80–81

incentives, inventive step 45–6

independent claim, patent application containing more than one in same category 70–71

industrial application, invention not susceptible of 47

insufficiency/sufficiency of disclosure see opposition stage, opposition grounds, sufficiency of disclosure

inter partes appeals see appeals, inter partes

interlocutory revision

ex parte appeals 154–5

reimbursement of appeal fee 148

intermediate generalisation 12–13, 54

internet disclosures, public availability 33–4

intervention see third party intervention invention

not susceptible of industrial application 47

same invention 3, 5–6

inventive step

drafting and prosecution stage 12

opposition stage see opposition stage, opposition grounds, inventive step

‘jargon’, avoidance of 15

see also drafting and prosecution stage; language

judicial nature of boards 95

lack of novelty

as a new ground, opposition stage, late filings 57

opposition grounds see opposition stage, opposition grounds, lack of novelty

language

claim’s original wording, reverting to after error 14

‘jargon’, avoidance of 15

opposition not filed in EPC language or that of contracting state 27–8

requirements, inter partes appeals 101

lapsed patent, opposition stage 91–2

laptop use, opposition stage, oral proceedings 80–81, 83

late submissions

appeal stage see appeals, inter partes, late submissions

opposition stage see opposition stage, late filings

legal incapacity of opponent, opposition stage 92

library documents, public availability 33

listening to division or board, importance of, opposition stage, oral proceedings 79

memory, speaking from, opposition stage, oral proceedings 77–8

minutes, opposition stage, oral proceedings 89

new arguments, admissibility of, inter partes appeals, late submissions 128–9

new claim request, admissibility of, opposition stage 61–2

new claim requests, admissibility of, appeal stage 110–20

complexity of amendments, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) 113–15

diverging from previous, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) 115

submitted during oral proceedings 118–19

see also appeals, inter partes, late submissions

non-remediable deficiencies

inter partes appeals 101–4

oppositions 26–9

see also remediable deficiencies

non-technical distinguishing feature, inventive step 44

novelty see lack of novelty
number of appeals received by EPO 97, 153–4

opponent as sole appellant, *inter partes* appeals, prohibition of reformatio in peius 133–7

opposition stage 21–93
  acceleration of proceedings 162
  admissibility problems, avoidance of 24–31
  admissibility problems, avoidance of, legal basis 24–6
  death or legal incapacity of opponent, continued proceedings 92
  decisions in opposition 86–9
  drafting errors and consequences 14–19
  drafting styles, effects of 5–17
  *ex tunc* effect 92
  extent of opposition 31
  main procedural steps 21–2
  opposition after grant, EPC provision 24–6
  opposition division 21–3
  opposition division composition 23–4
  opposition filed against the patent as a whole 31
  patent cannot be opposed by its own proprietor 30
  patent has been surrendered or has lapsed in all designated contracting states 91–2
  patent revoked 4–5, 8, 61, 83, 86–92, 99, 102, 112, 132, 134, 145, 148
  patent revoked, no approved text of patent 91
  priority application problems 3–5
  product-by-process claims, extent of opposition 31
  proprietor no longer approves text of patent 91
  ratio decidendi 90–91
  rejection of opposition 17, 21, 86–7, 99
  remittal to department of first instance 90–91
  special situations 91–2
  straw man opposition 30

substantial procedural violation 88–90
third-party observations 92–9
transfer of opposition from one company to another 30–31
withdrawal of opposition, continued proceedings 92

opposition stage, amendment of patent 62–72
clarity of claims 63–5
extension beyond content of application as filed 69–70
extension of protection conferred ‘beyond reasonable doubt’ 66–7, 69
intermediate generalisation 12–13, 54
introduction of dependent claims 63
more than one independent claim in same category 70–71
occasioned by ground for opposition 62–3
patent maintained in amended form 19–20, 71, 128, 133–5, 137–8, 151
patent may not be amended in such a way as to extend the protection it confers 65–9

opposition stage, filing an admissible opposition
admissibility and public prior use 28–9
non-remediable deficiencies 26–9
opposition not filed in EPC language or that of contracting state 27–8
opposition not filed or opposition fee not paid within required time period 26–7
opposition notice, form and content 26, 29–30
oppositions with at least one admissible and at least one inadmissible opposition 30
remediable deficiencies 26, 29–30
opposition stage, late filings 55–62
admissibility 56–7
admissibility of late-filed arguments 61–2
admissibility of late-filed claim requests 61
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Keyword</th>
<th>Page(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>admissibility of late-filed facts and evidence</td>
<td>57–61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>definition of late submissions</td>
<td>55–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of novelty as a new ground</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late claim requests that could already have been filed in opposition proceedings</td>
<td>110–13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prima facie relevant</td>
<td>56–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in reaction to previous issue raised by other party or opposition division</td>
<td>58–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA), relevance of</td>
<td>59–60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposition stage, opposition grounds, clear and unambiguous derivability, amendments</td>
<td>53–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposition stage, opposition grounds, inventive step</td>
<td>41–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closest prior art</td>
<td>41–3, 45–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>closest prior art, modifying teaching to arrive at claimed subject-matter</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of inventive step</td>
<td>32, 46, 57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-technical distinguishing feature</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>objective technical problem determination</td>
<td>42–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>problem-and-solution approach</td>
<td>41, 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skilled person involvement and incentives</td>
<td>45–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposition stage, opposition grounds, lack of novelty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>company-generated papers, public availability</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>documents available on paying, public availability</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e-mails, public availability</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>explicit versus implicit disclosure</td>
<td>36, 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feature distinguishes claimed subject-matter from prior art</td>
<td>36–7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>internet disclosures, public availability</td>
<td>33–4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library documents, public availability</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral disclosure</td>
<td>37–8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oral disclosure, proof beyond reasonable doubt</td>
<td>37, 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘ordinary meaning’ in claim construction</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prior art process automatically leads to certain product feature</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public availability</td>
<td>33–5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public prior use</td>
<td>38–40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public prior use, chemical product</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public prior use, confidentiality agreement</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>public prior use, proven ‘up to the hilt’</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>written disclosure, public availability</td>
<td>33–7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposition stage, opposition grounds, sufficiency of disclosure</td>
<td>47–53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>burden of proof</td>
<td>51–2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claims with ambiguous (ill-defined) features</td>
<td>49–53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claims with ambiguous (ill-defined) features, ‘non-workable embodiments’</td>
<td>52–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>claims with functional features</td>
<td>47–9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lack of clarity not ground for opposition</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>opposition stage, oral proceedings</td>
<td>72–86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absence of party during</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accompanying persons and permission to speak</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adjournment</td>
<td>79–80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>behaviour and attitude</td>
<td>77–80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>decisions</td>
<td>23–4, 72–3, 75–6, 80, 82, 84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deliberation</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>further oral proceedings, request for</td>
<td>72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>handwritten amendments</td>
<td>80–81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laptop use</td>
<td>80–81, 83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>legal basis</td>
<td>72–3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>listening to division or board, importance of</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>minutes</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>postponement reasons</td>
<td>85–6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>practical aspects</td>
<td>76–81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preliminary opinion, importance of</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
preparatory meeting 24
public attendance 75
representative authorisations 73–4, 76
sound recording 83
speaking from memory 77–8
structure 73–6
summons 22, 55, 72, 77, 82, 84
technical equipment 83–4
technical experts 81
unexpected, dealing with 74
witnesses 81–2
oral disclosure, opposition grounds, lack of novelty 37–8, 40
oral proceedings
absence during 131–2
adjournment, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) 115–19
apportionment of costs, unannounced absence at oral proceedings 160
inter partes appeals 130–32
new claim requests submitted during, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal 118–19
opposition stage see opposition stage, oral proceedings
postponement 131
unannounced absence, apportionment of costs 160
‘ordinary meaning’ in claim construction 36

party
absence of party during oral proceedings 84
adversely affected by decision, inter partes appeals 98–9
complete case, late submissions, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal 106–7
disposition principle 95–6
as of right, filing an admissible appeal 98, 132–3, 161
patentee approval for new grounds for opposition 105
person skilled in the art, inventive step 45–6
petition for review see appeals, inter partes, petition for review
postponement of oral proceedings 85–6, 131
preliminary opinion, importance of, opposition stage 77
prima facie relevance
inter partes appeals, late submissions 105–6
opposition stage, late filings 56–9
prior art
closest prior art, opposition grounds, inventive step 41–3, 45–6
feature distinguishes claimed subject-matter from prior art, opposition stage 36–7
priority
problems in opposition and appeal, avoidance of 3–5
same invention 3, 5–6
problem-and-solution approach, opposition grounds, inventive step 41, 44
product-by-process claims, extent of opposition, opposition stage 31
prohibition of reformatio in peius see reformatio in peius prohibition
proof, beyond reasonable doubt
extension of protection conferred, opposition stage 66–9
extension of subject-matter beyond application as filed, opposition stage 69
feature is clearly and unambiguously derivable from application as filed 55
lack of novelty and oral disclosure 37, 40
public prior use, proven ‘up to the hilt’ 41
proof, burden of 51–2, 156–7
proprietor
no longer approves text of patent, opposition stage 91
patent cannot be opposed by its own proprietor 30
as sole appellant, prohibition of reformatio in peius 137–8, 151–2
prosecution stage, and drafting see drafting and prosecution stage
protection extension, opposition stage, amendment of patent 65–9
public attendance, opposition stage, oral proceedings 75
public availability
documents available on paying 35
e-mails 35
internet disclosures 33–4
library documents 33
opposition stage, lack of novelty 33–5
public prior use
chemical product 38
confidentiality agreement 40
opposition stage, admissibility 28–9
opposition stage, lack of novelty 38–40
proved ‘up to the hilt’ 41
see also prior art

ratio decidendi
inter partes appeals 139
opposition stage 90–91
reformatio in peius prohibition
ex parte appeals 156
inter partes appeals see appeals, inter partes, prohibition of reformatio in peius
reimbursement of appeal fee see appeals, inter partes, reimbursement of appeal fee
remediable deficiencies
inter partes appeals, filing an admissible appeal 100–101
opposition stage 26, 29–30
see also non-remediable deficiencies
representative authorisations, opposition stage, oral proceedings 73–4, 76
review petition see appeals, inter partes, petition for review
revoked patent, opposition stage 4–5, 8, 61, 83, 86–92, 99, 102, 112, 132, 134, 145, 148
right to be heard, inter partes appeals, petition for review 146

Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA)
late submissions see appeals, inter partes, late submissions, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA)
opposition stage, late filings 59–60
skilled person, inventive step 45–6
sound recording, opposition stage, oral proceedings 83
speak from memory, opposition stage, oral proceedings 77–8
permission to, by accompanying persons, opposition stage 81
straw man opposition 30
submissions, late see late submissions
sufficiency of disclosure see opposition stage, opposition grounds, sufficiency of disclosure
summons, opposition stage, oral proceedings 22, 55, 72, 77, 82, 84
surrendered patent, opposition stage 4–5, 8, 61, 83, 86–92, 99, 102, 112, 132, 134, 145, 148
right to be heard, inter partes appeals, petition for review 146

technical issues
experts, opposition stage, oral proceedings 81
non-technical distinguishing feature, inventive step 44
objective technical problem determination, inventive step 42–5
technical equipment, opposition stage, oral proceedings 83–4
text checks, need for 15
termination of appeal proceedings 151–2
third party intervention 160–61
after expiry of opposition period 160
during ongoing appeal proceedings 161
during opposition proceedings 160–61
time limits
appeal notice filed and appeal fee paid after time limit 100
opposition not filed within opposition period 26–7
petition for review 144
reimbursement of appeal fee, inter partes appeals 150
transfer, opposition transferred from one company to another 30–31
unsubstantiated requests, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal (RPBA) 118

vagueness see ambiguity
withdrawal
main request withdrawal, opposition stage, oral proceedings 75–6
of opposition, continued proceedings 92
reimbursement of appeal fee 150
withdrawn claim sets, refiling, Rules of Procedure of the Boards of Appeal 112–13
witnesses, opposition stage, oral proceedings 81–2