

The Japan Patent Office's Quality Policy on Examination



The Japan Patent Office (JPO) established this Quality Policy to further improve the quality of its examination on patents, designs and trademarks.

This Quality Policy outlines the fundamental principles of the JPO's quality management on examination. Based on the common recognition that conducting globally reliable examination of high quality and properly granting rights are two important factors that support companies to smoothly expand their businesses worldwide, which leads to promoting innovation, and maintaining the healthy order of business transactions, the JPO is dedicated to achieve examination of the fastest and utmost quality in the world by maintaining and improving the quality of its examination in accordance with this Quality Policy.



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Quality Policy on Patent Examination

Globally reliable patents of high quality are important for supporting smooth business expansion worldwide and promoting innovation.

This quality policy outlines the fundamental principles of quality management in patent examination* in order to grant the aforementioned high-quality patents. Based on this quality policy, the Japan Patent Office (JPO) is committed to achieving patent examination that is the utmost quality in the world. Under the leadership and participation of the top management, all staff involved in patent examination perform their work in compliance with the following fundamental principles, demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility and motivation.

* Patent examination means examination of inventions (including international searches and international preliminary examinations) and establishment of Reports of Utility Model Technical Opinion.

● We grant robust, broad and valuable patents:

In order to enhance intellectual property protection worldwide, the JPO grants robust patents that will not be invalidated afterward; broad patents that have coverage matching the extent of the technical levels of inventions and their disclosure; and valuable patents that are recognized around the world.

● We meet wide-ranging needs and expectations:

The JPO understands and respects broad-ranging needs of and expectations for patent examination so that it may contribute to the benefit of Japanese society and the satisfaction of people connected with the patent system. All staff involved in patent examination perform patent examination with fairness, transparency, and consistency in accordance with principles such as treaties, laws, regulations and guidelines, communicating with applicants, patent attorneys and other persons concerned in a positive manner.

● We all dedicate ourselves to improving quality, cooperating with concerned persons and parties:

The JPO raises awareness on improving the quality of patent examination in all staff involved in patent examination and promotes initiatives that improve quality, in which all staff play an active role. Furthermore, the JPO maintains cooperative relationships with all persons and parties connected with the patent system, collaborating with them to uphold and improve the quality of patent examination.

● We contribute to improving the quality of patent examination globally:

The JPO contributes to the improvement of quality in terms of patent examination globally through actively promoting international initiatives on patent examination and providing foreign patent offices with useful information on patent examination conducted at the JPO.

● We continually improve operations:

In order to continually provide patent examination of the utmost quality in the world, the JPO improves operations by staying aware of current situations and taking a flexible approach to planning and proposing various measures.

● We raise the knowledge and capabilities of our staff:

The JPO raises the level of knowledge and capabilities of all staff involved in patent examination not only through cultivating human resources, by having all staff conduct their daily work and participate in training, but also through encouraging them to learn on their own.

The JPO periodically reviews this policy on quality, so as to always maintain and even further improve its rationale and effectiveness.



Quality Policy on Design Examination

Globally reliable design rights of high quality are important for supporting smooth business expansion worldwide and promoting innovation.

This quality policy outlines the fundamental principles of quality management in design examination in order to grant the aforementioned high-quality design rights. Based on this quality policy, the Japan Patent Office (JPO) is committed to achieving design examination that is the utmost quality in the world. Under the leadership and participation of the top management, all staff involved in design examination perform their work in compliance with the following fundamental principles, demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility and motivation.

● We grant robust, broad and valuable design rights:

In order to enhance intellectual property protection worldwide, the JPO grants robust design rights that will not be invalidated afterward; broad design rights that have coverage matching the extent of the creative levels of designs; and valuable design rights that are recognized around the world.

● We meet wide-ranging needs and expectations:

The JPO understands and respects broad-ranging needs of and expectations for design examination so that it may contribute to the benefit of Japanese society and the satisfaction of people connected with the design registration system. All staff involved in design examination perform design examination with fairness, transparency, and consistency in accordance with principles such as treaties, laws, regulations and guidelines, communicating with applicants, patent attorneys and other persons concerned in a positive manner.

● We all dedicate ourselves to improving quality, cooperating with concerned persons and parties:

The JPO raises awareness on improving the quality of design examination in all staff involved in design examination and promotes initiatives that improve quality, in which all staff play an active role. Furthermore, the JPO maintains cooperative relationships with all persons and parties connected with the design registration system, collaborating with them to uphold and improve the quality of design examination.

● We contribute to improving the quality of design examination globally:

The JPO contributes to the improvement of quality in terms of design examination globally through actively promoting international initiatives on design examination and providing foreign intellectual property offices with useful information on design examination conducted at the JPO.

● We continually improve operations:

In order to continually provide design examination of the utmost quality in the world, the JPO improves operations by staying aware of current situations and taking a flexible approach to planning and proposing various measures.

● We raise the knowledge and capabilities of our staff:

The JPO raises the level of knowledge and capabilities of all staff involved in design examination not only through cultivating human resources, by having all staff conduct their daily work and participate in training, but also through encouraging them to learn on their own.

The JPO periodically reviews this policy on quality, so as to always maintain and even further improve its rationale and effectiveness.



Quality Policy on Trademark Examination

A trademark is a mark to distinguish one's goods and services from any other persons' goods and services. It guarantees a certain level of quality of goods and services and serves as an advertisement for goods and services.

It is imperative for the JPO to conduct trademark examination to determine the existence or not of distinctive features, similarity of filed trademarks and so on, with consistency and objectivity in accordance with laws, regulations and the Trademark Examination Guidelines. The JPO also must conduct trademark examination by sufficiently researching the actual status of the commercial transactions related to such trademarks. Consequently, trademarks are able to fulfil their roles based on business operators utilizing their trademark rights, and doing so makes smooth consumption by consumers possible based on trust in the trademarks.

This quality policy outlines the fundamental principles of quality management in terms of maintaining and upgrading the quality of trademark examination and contributing to the protection and enhancement of brands and the smooth consumption of goods and services.

Under the leadership and participation of top management, each and every staff member involved in trademark examination in the JPO is to perform work in compliance with the following fundamental principles, demonstrating a strong sense of responsibility and motivation.

We contribute to the protection and enhancement of brands and the smooth consumption of goods and services: The JPO performs appropriate trademark examination and grants trademark rights, enabling trademarks to fulfil their role based on the adequate utilization of trademark rights by their rights holders and contributing to the protection and enhancement of brands and the smooth consumption of goods and services by consumers.

● We conduct consistent and objective trademark examination:

The JPO conducts trademark examination to determine the existence or not of distinctive features, similarities and so on, with consistency and objectivity in conformity to treaties, laws, regulations and the Trademark Examination Guidelines; and by sufficiently researching the actual status of commercial transactions.

● We promote the utilization of the trademark system by closely communicating with applicants:

In order to enhance the transparency and predictability of trademark examination, the JPO constantly reviews the guiding principles of the Trademark Examination Guidelines. Individual examiners formulate logical and persuasive written notifications that anyone can easily understand, supporting the acquisition of rights. Based on these points, the JPO enhances close communication with applicants, etc. and promotes the utilization of the trademark system.

● We actively share information with relevant persons inside and outside Japan in order to improve the quality of trademark examination:

The JPO shares information with people connected with the trademark system and works to implement initiatives for improving the quality of trademark examination by putting such information to practical use.

● We consistently improve operations:

Each and every staff member involved in trademark examination continually deliberates and evaluates the operations of trademark examination and examination management to improve our operations, never feeling satisfied with the status quo.

● We raise the knowledge and capabilities of our staff:

The JPO cultivates human resources involved in trademark examination by having them conduct their daily work and attend training programs. At the same time, each and every staff member involved in trademark examination is to raise the level of knowledge on and capabilities in trademark examination by initiating his/her own voluntary efforts.

The JPO periodically reviews this policy on quality, so as to always maintain and even further improve its rationale and effectiveness.