

Biotechnology & Life Sciences Team

Amongst European patent attorney firms, we consider ourselves to be uniquely placed to assist our clients in maximising their patent protection in the field of biotechnology and to provide advice in relation to the rights of others in this field. Our biotechnology and life sciences team provides the firm with a knowledge and experience base for biotech patenting.

Among European firms, Mewburn Ellis LLP has one of the largest groups of patent attorneys specialising in life sciences, especially biotechnology and our attorneys are supported by a substantial team of technical specialists. Because of this, we offer our clients the flexibility to ensure that their work is carried out by an appropriate number of people with suitable expertise and experience, that peaks in workloads can be managed, and that absences are fully covered, usually by an attorney familiar with the caseload concerned.

Our expertise and pro-active approach reflect the high-level work we do for a wide range of clients, from world-renowned biotechnology companies based in the US and Europe, acting either directly or via their outside counsel, to small and medium sized companies, universities, charities and funding bodies. We handle a substantial number of opposition and appeal proceedings at the European Patent Office (both defending and opposing granted patents) and have considerable expertise in drafting and prosecuting patent applications, due diligence work, infringement opinions, portfolio management and advising our clients on their patent strategy. We have been involved in UK and US litigation and US interference proceedings.



Seán Walton - partner

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Seán has an MA in Molecular Biology from the University of Cambridge and joined Mewburn Ellis in 1990. His clients include companies and research institutions involved in immunology, antibody engineering and plant biotechnology. Seán has handled many European oppositions and appeals for his clients, has experience in strategic patent portfolio planning and analysis and has been involved in UK and US litigation and interference proceedings.



Simon Kiddle - partner

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Simon has an MA in Chemistry from the University of Oxford and joined Mewburn Ellis in 1991. His practice covers the fields of biological chemistry, pharmaceuticals and biotechnology. He has extensive experience in assisting clients with strategic portfolio planning and due diligence work for companies and investors. Simon's practice is mainly divided between advising UK and European start-up companies and universities, prosecuting patent applications for US biotechnology companies and handling European oppositions and appeals. His clients include companies and institutions active in the areas of glycobiology, protein engineering, sugar chemistry, microfluidic devices and microarray technology.



Adrian Brasnett - partner

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Adrian has a BSc in Genetics from University College, London and a PhD in Molecular Biology from Imperial College, London. He joined Mewburn Ellis in 1997 after working from 1987 in another firm. Adrian has handled many European oppositions and appeals and has particular experience in the field of biochemistry, molecular biology, genetics and gene-directed enzyme pro-drug technology. He has also been involved in litigation in the UK, Germany and Holland, and in US interference proceedings. Adrian's clients include major UK and US biotechnology companies, small start-up companies, universities and research institutions involved in plant biotechnology, antibody engineering and cell protein technology.



Simon Kremer - partner

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Simon has a BSc and a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Bristol and joined Mewburn Ellis in 1997 after working for a UK Government intellectual property rights department from 1992. He has particular experience in physical biochemistry such as enzymology, but his practice spans molecular biology and other biotechnology-related fields such as diagnostics. Simon's clients include universities, large European and US companies, UK government departments and research institutions. He also sits on the Biotechnology Committee of the Chartered Institute of Patent Agents.



Joanna Cripps - partner

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Jo has a BSc in Biochemistry and Zoology from Cardiff University and a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Cambridge. She joined Mewburn Ellis in 1993. Jo has particular experience in recombinant nucleic acid technology and genetic engineering. Her clients include large UK and US companies, small start-up companies, research institutions and universities involved in technologies such as virology, bacteriology, cancer diagnosis, diagnostic arrays, biomedical research tools and microarray technology. Jo is also a regular visitor to S.E. Asia and carries out drafting and prosecution work for companies and universities in Singapore.



Christopher Denison - partner

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Chris has an MA in Neuroscience from the University of Cambridge and joined Mewburn Ellis in 1996. His clients include major US biotechnology companies, universities and research institutions in the UK, US and Japan, and Japanese biotechnology companies, with interests in protein, nucleic acid and antibody-based therapeutics and diagnostics, genomics, gene manipulation and microbiology. He also has a particular interest in functional foods. Chris has particular experience of strategic planning for large families of highly interrelated patent applications. He was seconded to a Japanese firm in 2001 and has visited Japan regularly since then.



Nicholas Sutcliffe - partner

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Nick has a BSc in Biochemistry from the University of Bristol and a PhD in Molecular Biology from the University of Leicester. He has also worked in industry as a research scientist, involved in gene cloning and the identification of specific micro-organisms using DNA technology. Nick joined Mewburn Ellis in 1997.



Graham Forrest - partner

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Graham has an MA in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford and a PhD in Molecular Biology from Imperial College, London. He joined Mewburn Ellis in 1999. His major clients are UK universities, and biotechnology companies in Europe and the US with particular interests in protein engineering, peptide therapeutics and immunology. As well as drafting and prosecution, Graham's practice involves advising on portfolio management, freedom-to-operate analysis, and both offensive and defensive European opposition work.



Richard Clegg - partner

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Richard has an MA in Biochemistry from the University of Cambridge and is a Chartered Biologist. He joined Mewburn Ellis in 2003 having worked in another firm from 1999. His practice covers the fields of molecular biology, biochemistry, biotechnology and pharmaceuticals. He has an active involvement with start-up companies and technology transfer institutions in Europe, the US and South East Asia. In addition to prosecution of European patent applications and European opposition/appeal work Richard often has a strategic involvement with his clients' intellectual property. Richard has particular experience in therapeutics and diagnostics including the fields of nucleic acid ligands (aptamers and SELEX™), virology, inhalation therapeutics, polyketides and cardiac diagnostics. Richard is a regular visitor to China and Singapore.



Rebecca Tollervey - partner

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Rebecca has a BA in Biological Sciences from the University of Oxford and has conducted research into the regulation of expression of transport proteins. She joined Mewburn Ellis in 2000. Rebecca has a particular interest in patent work in the technical areas of molecular and cellular biology, diagnostics and micro-arrays, and therapeutic molecules.



Hilary King - partner

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Hilary has an MBiochem in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford. She has worked in the Microbiology Unit of the University of Oxford, in the Immunology department of the Institute of Molecular Medicine in Oxford and at the Max Planck Institute for Terrestrial Microbiology in Marburg, Germany. She joined Mewburn Ellis in 2001.



Lindsey Woolley - partner

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Lindsey has an MA in Plant Sciences from the University of Cambridge. She also has a PhD in Molecular Biology and Chemistry, obtained while working at Horticulture Research International. Her research there, and subsequent Post-Doctoral research in the Agriculture Sciences department at the University of Bristol, focused on the improvement of plants by genetic modification. She joined Mewburn Ellis in 2002.



Ian Armitage - consulting partner

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Ian has a BSc in Chemistry from the University of Durham and joined Mewburn Ellis in 1967. Since the opening of the European Patent Office in 1978, he has been at the forefront of biotechnology patent prosecution in Europe and has developed enormous experience in EPO opposition and appeal proceedings both offensive and defensive, often involving high profile cases. Most of Ian's time is now taken up with these proceedings and advising clients on strategic matters. He has also been involved in litigation proceedings concerning patents in biotechnology.



Robert Andrews - patent attorney

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Rob has an MBiochem in Biochemistry from the University of Oxford and an MA in Developmental Biology and a PhD in Cell Biology from the University of Cambridge. He conducted his thesis research in the Gurdon Institute in Cambridge, where his work focussed on the mechanisms governing embryonic axis formation. He has also worked in the Genetics and Pharmacology Departments in the University of Oxford. He joined Mewburn Ellis LLP in 2006.



Christopher Casley - patent attorney

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Chris has an MA in Pharmacology from the University of Cambridge and a PhD in Neurochemistry from University College London. He has worked as a research scientist at the genomics company Oxagen, in candidate gene analysis, and as a post-doctoral scientist at the pharmaceutical company Eli Lilly, investigating the role of glial inflammation in Alzheimer's Disease. He joined Mewburn Ellis in 2004.



Katherine Green - patent attorney

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Katherine has a MA and a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Cambridge. She completed her doctorate at the MRC Human Nutrition Unit in Cambridge, where she worked as a MRC Predoctoral Fellow investigating the role of mitochondria in type 2 diabetes. Katherine joined Mewburn Ellis LLP in 2006.



Susan Harrison - patent attorney

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Susie has a BSc in Biochemistry from the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. Prior to joining Mewburn Ellis in 2001, Susie worked in private practice and in an industrial patent department in the pharmaceutical industry. She has particular experience in the fields of pharmaceuticals and biotechnology.



Emily Hayes - patent attorney

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Emily has a degree (MSci) in Natural Sciences and a PhD in Biochemistry in the field of cancer research from the University of Cambridge. Her research was focused on the development of gene therapy to target tumour angiogenesis. Her areas of particular knowledge are tumour biology and gene therapy. She joined Mewburn Ellis LLP in 2005.



Tanis Keirstead - patent attorney

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Tanis has a degree in Microbiology and Virology from the University of Warwick and a PhD in Molecular Biology from the University of Oxford. Her PhD project investigated the amino acids of the PB1 sub-unit of the influenza virus RNA-dependent RNA polymerase that are involved in viral promoter binding. She joined Mewburn Ellis LLP in 2005.



Kathryn Nicholls - patent attorney

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Kathryn has an MA and PhD in Chemistry from the University of Cambridge and joined Mewburn Ellis in 1984. Her practice spans the fields of chemistry, pharmaceuticals and biochemistry, with particular emphasis on small molecule therapeutics. Kathryn has particular expertise in procuring and advising on Supplementary Protection Certificates (SPCs) for pharmaceuticals and plant protection products. Her clients include large and small Japanese and US pharmaceutical companies.



Catherine Sampson - patent attorney

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Cathy has a BSc in Biology and German from the University of Sussex and a PhD in Biochemistry from the University of Cambridge. She has worked as a research scientist at the Biomedical Research Centre of the University of Dundee. She joined Mewburn Ellis in 2001. Cathy works on a range of technologies in the biotechnology field, and has experience of procuring and advising on SPCs.

Contact Us

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