

# Starting your career as a trainee patent attorney

## A message from Wes Jones, Chairman.

“It gives me pleasure to introduce you to the many possibilities that a career at Baldwins offers. I invite you to get to know us, our services, our people and the opportunities that are available for you, to develop your career as an IP professional.

At Baldwins, professional development is encouraged and you will be provided with opportunities to work with trained, qualified professionals in a supportive and stimulating environment. We welcome talented, motivated and enthusiastic graduates to join our successful team.”

## Overview

Patent attorneys are specialised in managing intellectual property, such as trade marks (names and logos), copyright (artistic and literary works), registered designs (shapes of articles and the like), plant varieties (new breeds of plants) and patents (inventions involving new products or processes).

Because inventions often have a technical, scientific or mechanical element, working with intellectual property such as patents, designs or plant varieties, mostly requires a thorough understanding of the relevant subject matter along with knowledge of the legal environment. This is why patent attorneys in New Zealand are often lawyers, in addition to holding advanced degrees in a certain subject, thereby specialising in one of the many scientific or technology disciplines (e.g. biotechnology, electronics, engineering).

## Work scope

The day-to-day role of a patent attorney depends on the stage (protection, commercialisation, enforcement) and focus (trade marks, patents, copyright, designs, plant varieties) of intellectual property in which they specialise. Examples of specialisation are: obtaining and enforcing registrations for trade marks; obtaining and enforcing patents; advising on copyright and designs; licensing; resolving disputes over ownership or infringement of intellectual property rights; trade mark/patent oppositions which involve advising clients on case where a trade mark or patent application is being opposed.

## Qualifications

Baldwins' professional staff are required to register as a patent attorney in New Zealand. This requires passing a series of exams set by the New Zealand Institute of Patent Attorneys. Typically it takes three to four years to complete this qualification. Professional staff without a law degree are also encouraged to qualify as a barrister and solicitor, and obtain a practising certificate.

## Our values

The firm has three core key values that underpin the culture and guide the partnership, staff and our collective behaviour:

- Integrity
- Teamwork
- Professionalism

## Training and development

The firm actively supports and encourages professional development, education, training and formal qualifications to the highest standards.

## Career progression

Your career at Baldwins could progress from professional staff trainee entrant, to associate (four to five years), to senior associate (six to eight years).

## Package

In addition to competitive remuneration packages, which increase as qualifications and experience are gained, we also offer significant employee benefits. These benefits range from leave benefits, financial benefits, health and well-being to appreciation benefits.

## Health and well-being

The firm is committed to providing a healthy and safe workplace and offers a range of wellness programmes. We also encourage work life balance and provide a working environment that can help you achieve this goal. The firm has active social clubs in each office that arrange a variety of activities from sporting events to trips to the theatre and everything in between.



“Working as a patent attorney has given me the opportunity to assist innovative inventors, companies, and universities in protecting and successfully commercialising their cutting-edge inventions. Baldwins is a leading New Zealand intellectual property law firm with a strong international reputation. With training from experienced and highly-regarded senior staff members, I have combined my interest in both engineering and law into a challenging and rewarding career.”

**Ben Halberg**, Senior Associate, BE (Comp Sys Eng) (Hons)