The basis of a UK patent application is a legal document called a specification. Its contents determine whether a patent can be granted. You would be well advised to seek professional assistance when preparing your patent application. A patent specification includes:

- a full description of your invention, plus any drawings referred to within your description
- one or more claims.

This factsheet tells you about the abstract. An example is shown overleaf. Other factsheets in this series explain how to prepare a description, drawings, and claims.

Content

An abstract is a brief summary of your invention, and should include all of the most important technical features of your invention. It is useful to both the Intellectual Property Office and to the public searching in the particular technical field of the application.

The abstract should indicate the technical field to which the invention belongs and be drafted in a manner which allows a clear understanding of the technical problem to be solved and the solution to that problem, namely your invention.

The abstract should have a title, which may be the same as the title of your description. The title should be brief, specific and reflect the nature of the invention. Do not include expressions such as “improvements in or relating to” or “and the like”.

The Abstract is not part of the specification.

You should ensure that all the technical features mentioned in the abstract are also in the description. The information contained within the abstract cannot be relied upon as a disclosure of the invention. This means that you cannot transfer any features from the abstract to the description at a later date and you cannot claim a priority date for any matter contained solely in the abstract.

Start your abstract with the most important essential technical features of your invention. You may then wish to refer to some of the non-essential features you have mentioned in the description.

If your specification includes drawings, you should suggest in writing, below the abstract, which figure you think goes best with the abstract to illustrate your invention. Do not provide a separate drawing specially for the abstract.

If a feature from the figure you suggest is mentioned in your abstract, the reference number for that feature should be given in the abstract as well.

Style and presentation

Head your abstract page ‘ABSTRACT’.

You should type or print the abstract on one side only of a separate sheet of white A4 paper using no more than 150 words.

Leave margins of at least 2.0cm.

The Intellectual Property Office may edit your abstract. The abstract should be in English or Welsh. (The Office will provide a translation of any material filed in Welsh).

IMPORTANT: You must file your abstract within 12 months of your filing date (where no claim to priority is made). If a claim to priority is made, you must file your abstract by the latter of 12 months from your priority date, or two months from your filing date.
Abstract

Bicycle stabilising unit

A bicycle stabilising unit 1 includes attachment means 3,4 for attaching the unit to a bicycle, a ground engaging wheel 6 which can freely rotate about an axis, and cushioning means 7,8 such that the axis of the wheel can be displaced relative to the attachment means.

Figure 1 to accompany abstract