

Dear Mr Gowers,

We write as a group of academics, industrialists and others with a commitment to university intellectual property education. We appreciate the commercial, societal, economic and ethical significance of intellectual property rights, and their management, and we endorse your current efforts to review legal provision in the area of UK IPR.

Currently, the majority of students, including from engineering, science and technology, and creative disciplines, complete their undergraduate studies without being introduced to IPR. They graduate unaware of the benefits and constraints concerning use of their own IPR, and the benefits and risks of using IPR created by others. They are ignorant as to how to secure their registrable, and unregistrable, rights. They are unsighted as to the value in the information available from non-commercial and commercial databases of registered rights.

University curricula are notoriously overcrowded, and it is never easy to find time space and resource to include key, but not core, topics. Nevertheless some notable efforts are being made by enthusiastic academics who succeed in persuading their colleagues of the relevance of including IPR in the syllabus. The UK Engineering Council statement endorsing the importance of IP awareness for engineering accreditation has been a welcome, if unusual, development.

What would be most useful and encouraging would be for the Gowers Review report to highlight the importance of including IPR awareness and competence education in university curricula across the disciplines. Not just as part of the 'enforcement' agenda [avoiding rip offs, counterfeits and illegal downloading] but as part of the 'enterprise' agenda. This would help ensure a rising generation of IP literate graduates able fully to contribute to ensuring the value in their research and innovation outputs.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Ruth Soetendorp

Centre for Intellectual Property Policy & Management, Bournemouth University

David Babington-Smith,

Managing Director, Epigeum Ltd, Imperial College, University of London

Dr Phil Clare

Research and Commercialisation Manager

Centre for Research and Knowledge Transfer, Bournemouth University

Carl Calvert,

Calvert Consulting and Bournemouth University

Dr Graham Christ

Tanaka Business School, Imperial College University of London

Janice Denoncourt

Law School, The University of Buckingham

Mandy Haberman

Inventor and Entrepreneur

Dr Robert A. Heverly

University of East Anglia | Norwich Law School

Dr Peter R Lewis

Dr P. R. Lewis & Associates Ltd and Technology Faculty, Open University

Dr Robert MacLaughlan

Faculty of Engineering, Sydney, Australia

Professor Jim Roach

School of Design, Engineering & Computing, Bournemouth University

Faculty of Engineering, University of Technology, Sydney

Clive Savory

Technology Faculty, The Open University

Dr Terry Winnington

Faculty Computing Engineering & Mathematical Sciences University of the West of England