This chapter assesses the ownership of patents. Teams of researchers often work together towards a common goal. This means that there are sometimes disputes about who actually invented the product or process covered by a patent. Resolving these disputes is of significance because under patent law the owner possesses the right to grant licences to make use of the patented invention in exchange for a fee or royalties, and the right to sue for infringement. Before deciding who is entitled to the ownership of an invention it is first necessary to examine what is meant in law by the word ‘inventor’. Having examined the criteria used by the courts to identify an inventor, one must now consider the special statutory rules concerning employee-inventors. Once it has been decided who owns an invention, there is a scheme of compensation for employee-inventors.
16. Ownership of patents

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