



VICTORIAN BAR

Readers' Course Entrance Exam

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Basic competencies

The aim of the entrance exam is to ensure that those admitted to the Victorian Bar Readers' Course have basic levels of competence and can demonstrate aptitude for the skills required of a barrister.

Exam features

- 3 hour partially open-book exam (extracts of legislation provided in exam)
- Topics: civil/criminal procedure, evidence and ethics
- Types of questions:
 - “pure rule” and “application” (most questions are of the “application” type)
 - multi-choice, short-answer, and long-answer questions
- Pass mark 75%

Examinable material

- **Reading Guide** specifies all examinable material, including:
 - examinable sub-topics within each general topic;
 - prescribed texts;
 - prescribed legislation (all examinable provisions are listed);
 - cases.
- This document is to be regarded as the primary reference point for working out what is examinable (i.e. what subject-matter candidates need to study).

Legislation booklets

- **Legislation excerpts containing all examinable provisions provided to candidates in exam room.**
- **Available to download from Victorian Bar website early approximately one month before the exam.**
- **Legislation excerpts published on Bar website remain ‘static’ up to day of examination (i.e. any actual legislative amendments that do not appear in the published legislation are to be ignored)**

Exam Preparation Seminar

- Chief Examiner to conduct seminar on preparing for the exam on date to be advised.
- Seminar aims to provide guidance as to how to prepare for and answer questions in the exam.
- Time and venue to be announced on Victorian Bar website.

One week before the exam

- Instructions relating to the exam will be emailed to registered candidates approximately **1 week** before the exam which will provide further guidance as to:
 - the general format of the exam;
 - the number of questions in the exam;
 - the number of marks allocated to the examinable general topics;
 - general instructions.
- **Note**: The general format of the exam will be similar to that of previous exams (available online)

Assessment of exams

- Citation of case names not necessary.
- Candidates may paraphrase rules and principles.
- Standard of expression, spelling, punctuation, grammar, conciseness and writing legibility taken into account.
- All first-examined “fails” second-marked by different examiner. Borderline first-instance or second-instance fails marked by third examiner. Candidates receive benefit of highest mark.
- Double-blind marking (examiners unaware of candidate’s name; second and third examiners unaware of previous marks except for fact of fail).

Notification of exam results

- Candidates are notified of whether they have passed the exam and been offered a place in the Bar Readers' course approximately 6 weeks after the date of the examination.
- Candidates who are unsuccessful will also be notified in writing of:
 - the final mark they received (the highest received from any of the examiners);
 - the mark they received for Part A (out of 50) and the mark they received for Part B (out of 50).
- **Note:** Candidates who pass and are offered a place are not advised of their marks.



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Questions

