



Victorian Bar Entrance Examination

Sunday 25 October 2020

25 August 2020

**Exam Information
Webinar FAQs**

Prior to the Exam

1. What time commitment is required to study for the exam?

This will vary between individual candidates and is dependent on the individual's study habits and techniques.

2. Can I print the Exam Reading Guide materials?

Prior to the exam, candidates may choose to print any of the Reading Guide materials to bring into the exam. You may print and prepare any hard copy materials you wish to bring into the exam room with you. This includes any notes, text books, print outs etc. You cannot print during the exam.

3. Will accessibility features, such as Text to Speech, work during the exam?

Examplify will block access to all other features during the exam. In extenuating circumstances, candidates may make an application for alternative sitting arrangements either when registering or by [email](#) up to five full business days prior to the exam. Late applications will not be accepted.

4. Can I have access to the Reading Guides for previous exams?

Access to the Reading Guide will be provided on registration. As there are differences in examinable material from exam to exam, candidates should refer to the specific guide for the exam they intend to sit.

5. Will model answers for the practice exam be provided?

No, the practice exam is an unassessed exam. Model answers are not available. You will have access to past exams and model answers in pdf format on the google drive. A sample exam is also provided on the website.

6. Can the ExamSoft software be downloaded (and used) on a device that isn't my own personal device?

You may use any single device you choose, provided it meets the minimum system requirements, whether it is your own, borrowed or rented. You should ensure you have administrative access, as you will need to disable anti-virus software prior to the exam. However, you may only choose one single device to download the program, as the software licence is device specific.

7. To what date is legislation examinable?

Legislation up to 25 September 2020 will be examined. Changes after this date will not be factored into the exam.

8. How many times we can access the practice exam?

The practice exam will be accessible up to 50 times.

9. Will there be specific questions involving sex offences that oblige candidates to prepare in relation to specific sex offence provisions?

No.

10. Does the Bar provide any financial hardship assistance for exam candidates?

No. The Victorian Bar Inc is a not for profit, member organization. Exam fees are set on a cost recovery basis. Being a barrister can be an incredibly rewarding career. The VicBar's brochure '[Becoming a barrister](#)' may help you to assess whether this is the right time to join the Bar.

During the Exam

11. Will I have allocated reading time for the exam?

There is no separate reading time, however, allowance for reading time is "in built" into the examination time.

12. Can I use a secondary electronic device as a timer during the exam?

No. Only the electronic device you use for the exam is permitted. Any additional electronic devices are strictly prohibited.

13. Can I use a monitor that is not the device's primary monitor? I.e. a second bigger monitor?

The software allows for only one monitor to be used during the exam. If you use a second larger monitor, you may set it as your default monitor to use during the exam, prior to commencing. However, as different systems may behave differently you should test this using the practice exam well before exam day. You will not be able to switch between monitors during the exam.

14. Are Bluetooth keyboards and mice permitted?

Yes, you will be able to use your Bluetooth keyboard and mouse, this is considered part of your chosen "device". Candidates should test that their device works properly using the practice exam provided.

15. Do I need to have stable internet connection throughout the exam?

There is no need to access the internet during the exam. The Exemplify program will block the device's internet access once the exam begins until completion. Internet connection is required only prior to the **Permitted Time Window** to download the exam file and again after the exam is completed for uploading the exam files.

16. Can I use my phone for wi-fi hotspot?

During the exam you may not use your phone for any purpose, except in case of emergency technical support. Wi-fi is unnecessary during the exam. (*refer to FAQ #15.*)

17. Will the exam platform have spell check or dictionary capabilities?

Exemplify offers various tools within the program, including spell check, copy and paste (from within the program itself), calculator and word count.

18. Can I download or print exam materials during the exam?

You cannot print during the exam, but the program will allow you to view attachments to questions that are included in the exam. You will not be able to download any such attachments.

19. Will there be toilet breaks allowed during the exam?

Similar to previous Bar exams, there are no allowances for breaks during the exam. If a toilet break is unavoidable, the time taken for the break will reduce your exam writing time. If you

leave the room in which you are completing the exam for any reason, you will also be required to explain this in your post-exam declaration.

20. Can I make hand-written notes on a separate piece of paper during the exam?

Yes, you may bring note paper and writing materials to make notes during the exam.

21. Does the exam need to be done in silence? i.e. can I listen to music?

The device you use to take the exam will be blocked, so music cannot be accessed. You are not permitted any other electronic devices.

22. Can I speak during the exam?

If you find it helpful, you may speak to yourself during the exam. Contact in any form with another individual is strictly prohibited. The invigilation software records both video and audio throughout the exam.

23. What is the preferred answer format for essay questions/types required, generally?

Answers must be expressed in writing and in English. Complete sentences are preferable. Expressed ideas in your answers must be succinct and coherent. Examiners will not give you the benefit of the doubt if your ideas are not expressed clearly.

24. Are there penalties for typos or spelling errors? Can abbreviations be used?

Typos or spelling errors are not penalized provided the answer can be clearly understood by the assessor. Common abbreviations are permitted.

After the Exam

25. Will the standard of marking be higher for this exam, given that it is open book?

The standard of this exam and assessment level will be similar to past years. An open book exam is not “easier”. Candidates must still achieve a pass mark of 75% or greater. The method of grading will differ with this year’s exam. Previously, two examiners marked each exam as whole, with the higher overall mark awarded to the candidate. For this exam, several examiners will be allocated a set of specific questions to mark. Candidates will be given the benefit of the higher grade for each question. Any questions that make reference to earlier questions will be marked by the same assessor.

26. Are we given a simple pass/fail, or a grade?

Unsuccessful candidates are advised of the highest grade achieved out of 100. Successful candidates are advised of a pass but are not given a numeric mark.

27. How many places are available at the next Readers’ Course?

It is difficult to predict how many places will be available as it is not a fixed course size. However, there is no current waitlist, save for a very small number of deferred applicants.

28. When will exams be set for 2021?

Exams for 2021 will be confirmed later this year. The number of exams offered is contingent on the number of successful applicants for the October 2020 exam.