



## VICTORIAN BAR

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### GUIDE FOR OVERSEAS APPLICANTS TO THE VICTORIAN BAR READERS' COURSE

Two places are made available for overseas candidates in the Victorian Bar Readers' Course commencing in September of each year. The Course is of 8 weeks duration and usually commences on the first Monday in September.

To be eligible for consideration for the offer of a place in the Victorian Bar Readers' Course, candidates must satisfy each of the following criteria.

#### *Visa, fees and travel insurance*

- 1) A candidate who is offered a place in the Course is required to provide proof of an appropriate visa to reside in and undertake study in Australia at the commencement of and for the duration of the Course. A copy of the visa is to be provided to the Co-ordinator of the Course, by no later than 1 July of the year in which a successful candidate is to undertake the Course.
- 2) A candidate must ensure that he or she has adequate travel insurance, including medical cover, for the duration of the Course. Proof of insurance must be submitted to the Co-ordinator of the Course before the candidate may commence the Course.
- 3) A candidate who is offered a place in the Course must ensure that he or she has sufficient funds, personal or sponsored, to cover all costs associated with residing in Australia for the duration of the Course. The cost of the Course for successful overseas candidates is waived by the Victorian Bar but you must ensure that you have proper accommodation and resources available for the duration of your stay in Melbourne.

#### *Education*

- 4) A candidate must hold at least a Bachelor of Laws from the University of the South Pacific, University of Papua New Guinea or other recognised tertiary institution. A verified copy of the candidate's academic record, is to be attached to the Application Form.
- 5) A candidate should be admitted to practice or eligible for admission to practice in their home country. Proof of admission and/or eligibility (together with any certificate of good standing) should be attached to the Application Form.



- 6) Candidates should also have at least three (3) years post admission experience as a lawyer. A resume or other explanation of a candidate's professional experience and career to date should also be attached to the Application Form.

#### *Selection Criteria*

- 7) A candidate must submit each of the following:
- a) An essay, of longer than 750 words, setting out in English the reasons why the candidate wishes to attend the Course and how they believe they will benefit from attending the Course. Further, the essay should explain how attending the Course may advance the Rule of Law in their home jurisdiction, benefit the wider community and how they propose to advance advocacy skills in their home jurisdiction after completion of the course (this essay must be attached to the Application Form); and,
  - b) A certificate of competency in English (this document must be attached to the Application Form). A test and certificate may be obtained from the following link <http://ielts.org/default.aspx>
- 8) A designated Committee of the Victorian Bar will consider each application and successful candidates will be notified of their place in the Course by 1 March of each year. A successful candidate may not defer participation in the Course to which they are invited unless exceptional circumstance exist. If a candidate is unable to take their place in the Course to which they have been invited they must immediately notify the Co-Ordinator of the Course.
- 9) The offer of a place in the Course will only be made to candidates who have satisfied each of the criteria set out in this document. An incomplete Application Form, or one in which there is a failure to satisfy each criteria, may be rejected or a candidate may be required to re-submit it, with further information, if time permits.
- 10) The consideration of each application by the Victorian Bar, shall be at its absolute discretion. Unsuccessful candidates will be notified in writing by 1 April of each year and may be encouraged to submit an Application for the Course to be conducted in the following year.
- 11) Reasons will not be provided to unsuccessful applicants.
- 12) In the event that an offer of a place in the Course is made and not accepted by the date set out below, the offer shall immediately lapse.

#### *Participation in the Course*

- 13) While participating in the Course attendance at all classes, sessions and components of the Course is compulsory. A record of attendance is to be completed as required by the Co-ordinator of the Course. At the completion of the Course you will be invited to sign the Bar Roll of Overseas Counsel. If you do not attend the Course as required you may not be permitted to sign the Roll or successfully graduate from the Course. All assignments and moots are to be completed in a timely and professional manner.
- 14) For the sake of clarity, failure to attend all components of the Course, or failure to complete all assessment requirements, shall (in the absence of an extension provided in writing by the Co-Ordinator) be grounds for unsuccessful completion of the Course and/or the immediate termination of the candidate's place in the Course.



*Offers and time line*

- 15) All applications on a completed Application Form, with all required documentation, are to be submitted to the Co-ordinator of the Victorian Bar Readers' Course, Victorian Bar Office, Level 5, 205 William Street, Melbourne, Australia by no later than 1 February of the year in which the candidate would like to apply.
- 16) Offers will be made on or before 1 March of each year.
- 17) Acceptance of the offer must be made in writing and received by 15 March of each year.
- 18) Proof of appropriate Visa and Travel Insurance by 1 July.
- 19) The Co-Ordinator of the Course may also, at his or her discretion, require successful candidates to provide satisfactory proof that the candidate has sufficient financial resources and accommodation to ensure that the candidate is able to participate in the Course.