



THE VICTORIAN BAR INCORPORATED

# ENTRANCE EXAM INFORMATION GUIDE FOR CANDIDATES

**EXAM DATE: SUNDAY, 13 OCTOBER 2024**

© COPYRIGHT 2024 – The Victorian Bar Inc.

---

This material is copyright. Subject to the Copyright Act 1968, this and any part of this material may not be reproduced in any form, performed in public, broadcast, transmitted by subscription, cable service, or adapted without the prior written permission of The Victorian Bar Inc.

# CONTENTS

1.	VICTORIAN BAR READERS' ENTRANCE EXAM.....	3
	Important dates.....	3
2.	ELIGIBILITY FOR EXAM .....	4
3.	REGISTRATION FOR EXAM .....	4
4.	System requirements and candidate's responsibility for their device.....	5
5.	IN-PERSON ELECTRONIC EXAM.....	6
	Overview of the Exam – how it will work.....	6
	Security and identification screening.....	7
	Exam venue and instructions for exam day .....	7
6.	Allocation of time for each Exam component.....	7
7.	PASSING THE EXAM .....	7
8.	PREPARING FOR THE EXAM: EXAM MATERIALS AND RESOURCES.....	8
9.	EXAM RULES AND CONDITIONS.....	8
10.	APPLICATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE SITTING ARRANGEMENTS OR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION.....	8
11.	CHEATING, FRAUD, DISHONESTY AND OTHER MISCONDUCT .....	8
12.	WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EXAM.....	9
13.	FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS .....	9
14.	KEY CONTACTS .....	9
	The Victorian Bar .....	9
	EXAMSOFT 24/7 SUPPORT.....	9
	ANNEXURE	
	2024 EXAM RULES AND CONDITIONS.....	10

# 1. VICTORIAN BAR READERS' ENTRANCE EXAM

All persons who wish to begin their career as a barrister at the Victorian Bar must sit the Victorian Bar Readers' Entrance Exam (the **Exam**), participate in the Readers' Course, and complete a reading period with a suitable mentor.

The Victorian Bar is committed to promoting access to the Readers' Course and to the Bar.

To access the Readers' Course, candidates must sit and pass the Exam with the minimum required grade for each of the following three exam components :

- (1) Procedure (Civil or Criminal) of their choosing;
- (2) Evidence; and
- (3) Ethics.

The Exam typically attracts a high number of applicants. Successful candidates are offered a place in the next or following Readers' Course, as set out in regulation 6(7) of the Victorian Bar's [Application and Reading Regulations \(Regulations\)](#) (currently under revision).

The Exam will be delivered in person on **Sunday, 13 October 2024**, at the [Moonee Valley Racing Club](#), Gate 1 Feehan Avenue, Moonee Ponds, on Level 1 (the "Designated Venue").

Following the extensive review conducted by the Victorian Bar in 2024, changes were made to the Exam for the benefit of the Bar's current and future members.

The Victorian Bar intends to convene two exam sittings each year commencing in 2025.

Before deciding whether to register and undertake the Exam, candidates should consider the information in this Guide and the other resources referred to in it and on the Victorian Bar website.

## IMPORTANT DATES

Some important dates for 2024 and 2025 are as follows:

### 2024

Date/Time	Event
Week of 22 July	Exam Reading Guide sent to EOI registrants
31 July	Exam Information Guide, Exam Rules and Conditions, Entrance Exam Policy etc published to VicBar website
31 July	<b>Registration Opens</b> Registrants gain access to Exam materials and resources
Tue, 13 August, 4:30pm	Online Exam Information Session (Webinar)
Week of 19 August	Hear from Past Candidates (Webinar)
<b>Sun, 1 September (midnight)</b>	<b>Registration Closes – no late applications</b> <i>(Within 48 hours, candidates are provided with access to ExamSoft to download Exemplify, complete ExamID registration and access sample exams)</i>
Thu, 12 September, 4:30pm	Chief Examiner's Exam Preparation Session (Webinar)
<b>Sun, 13 October</b>	<b>Exam Day</b>

## 2025

Indicative Dates (TBC)	Event
May 2025	Bar Entrance Examination
3 March 2025 – 10 April 2025	2025 March Readers' Course
8 August 2025 – 25 September 2025	2025 August Readers' Course
October 2025	Bar Entrance Examination

Dates and arrangements for the Exam are subject to change. Candidates should check the [Victorian Bar website](#) for any updates.

## 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR EXAM

To be eligible to undertake the Exam a candidate **must**:

- be admitted as an Australian Lawyer, or expect on reasonable grounds to become an Australian Lawyer by the time the candidate signs the Bar Roll;
- be of fit and proper standing (refer to Victorian Legal Services Board's [Fit and Proper Person Policy](#));
- be available and willing to undertake either of the next two Victorian Bar Readers' Courses immediately following the Exam (noting that successful completion of the Exam does not guarantee a place in those courses);
- be prepared to Read with an eligible mentor for the required period commencing at the start of the Readers' Course;
- agree to the Exam Rules and Conditions (as set out in the Annexure hereto);
- register and pay the registration fee applicable for each exam component they intend to sit (**non-refundable**).

Candidates should consult the Victorian Bar's [Regulations](#) for further information about their eligibility to undertake the Exam and to apply to become a member of the Victorian Bar.

## 3. REGISTRATION FOR EXAM

Persons interested in registering for the Exam should note that **registration to sit the Exam closes at Midnight on Sunday, 1 September 2024**, and registrations **must** be completed by this date and time. Candidates must register for each exam component they intend to sit.

Candidates will not be permitted to register after registrations have closed. It is **strongly recommended** that interested persons register **well before the deadline**.

To register to undertake the Exam a candidate must:

- complete the [online Exam registration form](#) in the registration period by providing:
  - their **full legal name** as it appears on the proof of identity document;
  - date of birth;
  - residential address;

- email address (use an email address that has no expiry and is checked frequently, as all communications from the Victorian Bar will be sent to this email address);
- telephone contact details; and
- **valid photographic identification for proof of identity** (electronic format) - either current Australian state drivers' licence, passport or government-issued identity document.
- pay the non-refundable registration fee of **\$290 (GST inclusive) for each component** they intend to sit;
- agree to the Exam Rules and Conditions (as set out in the **Annexure** hereto).

Once a candidate has successfully registered, they will receive an automated registration confirmation.

The Victorian Bar does not intend to limit the number of registered candidates who may sit the October 2024 Exam. However, the Victorian Bar reserves the right to limit the number of registered candidates for the Exam and to close registration for the Exam earlier than the advertised registration closure date or to cancel a candidate's registration and refund their registration fee. The Victorian Bar also reserves the right to cancel or reschedule the Exam, if deemed necessary for any reason, at the Victorian Bar's sole discretion.

## 4. DEVICE AND SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

### DEVICE REQUIREMENTS

Candidates are responsible for supplying their own computer device for use in the Exam (whether it is a device they own or have hired or borrowed for the occasion) and for ensuring that it meets the minimum system requirements referred to below. Candidates should familiarise themselves with the minimum system requirements, specifications of the device they intend to use, and the resources that ExamSoft provides.

The candidate's computer device should be a laptop (or similar device) with a screen size up to and no greater than 45 centimetres. Candidates will **not** be permitted to use a separate screen with their device. Candidates will be permitted to use a separate keyboard and mouse but bear the responsibility that these devices will be operable on Exam day.

In undertaking the Exam, candidates must use their own device with a camera that meets or exceeds the minimum system requirements for devices as determined by ExamSoft.

The minimum system requirements differ according to the operating system for the chosen device. These can be viewed at [ExamSoft Minimum System Requirements](#). A Candidate's device must meet the minimum system requirements that apply for exams with ExamID and ExamMonitor enabled. **Please note: You may not use any virtual camera, audio software, or stereo mixing devices with ExamID or ExamMonitor.**

ExamSoft provides various video tutorials and other resources on the [ExamSoft website](#). Candidates should consult those resources.

Candidates assume all risk and sole responsibility in the event their device does not meet the minimum system requirements as determined by ExamSoft, malfunctions or experiences other technical difficulties that may affect the candidate's performance or ability to access, complete and/or upload the Exam on the day of the Exam.

### SOFTWARE REQUIREMENTS

The Exam will require the use of two software programs provided by ExamSoft: **Exemplify (Version 3.5.0)** and **ExamID**. Candidates who have been granted prior approval from the Victorian Bar Exam Committee for Alternative Sitting Arrangements will also require ExamSoft program, **ExamMonitor**.

Within 48 hours after registrations have closed (see Important Dates above), candidates will receive detailed instructions on how to download the ExamSoft software programs onto the device they intend to use for the Exam. Candidates will receive instructions on the steps required to test their device and its compatibility using the sample exams on ExamSoft. Candidates are strongly advised to do so by **1 October 2024 to ensure** that the software is correctly installed and operating on their device **well before** the day of the Exam. For this reason, candidates must use the **same device** to complete the sample exams and the actual Exam.

In the week commencing 7 October 2024, candidates will receive instructions to download **each encrypted exam component** they have registered to sit. Candidates will not be able to access any exam component until the day of the Exam when they will be provided with the password for each exam component prior to the start time for each component.

## 5. IN-PERSON ELECTRONIC EXAM

### OVERVIEW OF THE EXAM – HOW IT WILL WORK

The Exam will be conducted in person on Sunday, 13 October 2024 at the designated Exam venue using ExamSoft by Turnitin's digital assessment platform on their personal device. The in-person requirement is subject to exceptions as set out in the 2024 Exam Rules and Conditions, and see Part 10 below.

The Exam is an **open-book** exam. Candidates can bring a pen(s) and blank paper to write on. **Candidates may only refer to non-electronic materials** (i.e. printed or hand-written notes and hard copy texts and materials). While undertaking any Exam component, candidates must not have on their person or within reach, and **must not access or consult any electronic materials or other devices** (including phone, tablet, smart watch), and they must not communicate with any person or candidate, save a Victorian Bar staff member or Exam Invigilator. These items, such as phones and smart watches, should be placed into flight mode (if they have such capability), or set to silent or turned off, and be put away prior to starting the exam.

Candidates must access and commence each exam component promptly upon being instructed to commence a component. The exam timer on the ExamSoft software will begin counting down when the first question is displayed on the candidate's device, and will expire at the end of the time allowed for each exam component. This will preclude any further changes to the candidate's answers. A candidate may themselves terminate their session of a particular exam component prior to the expiry of time allowed, which will also preclude any further changes to the candidate's answers.

During the Exam, candidates must **type** their answers for each exam component into the ExamSoft software on their device. **There is no mechanism for candidates to handwrite their answers or for use of dictation software or equipment.**

Hard copies of any exam component will not be available to candidates. There is no separate reading period.

During the Exam, internet access and other features of a candidate's device will be disabled by the ExamSoft software. As the ExamSoft software and the Exam are stored locally on the candidate's device, there is no need for access to the internet or Wi-Fi **during** the Exam, and the ExamSoft software will prevent that access.

**After each exam component is completed**, as a result of time expiry or early termination, candidates **must promptly reconnect to the internet** and upload their exam answers to ExamSoft and must do so before leaving the designated Exam venue. Candidates must inform the Bar's Education Manager if they have been unable to upload their exam answers to ExamSoft so that assistance can be provided. Candidates who fail to upload any exam component answers before leaving the designed exam venue may be **disqualified, forfeit fees paid, and the exam component not uploaded may not be marked.**

## SECURITY AND IDENTIFICATION SCREENING

Security and identification screening measures (including some that are built into the ExamSoft software) will be in place to ensure that only registered candidates may undertake the Exam, and that each exam component is only undertaken during the time allocated for each component on the day of the Exam. Other measures will be in place to prevent and detect cheating.

## EXAM VENUE AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR EXAM DAY

Candidates will receive detailed instructions about the venue and instructions for the day well prior to the day of the exam.

## 6. ALLOCATION OF TIME FOR EACH EXAM COMPONENT

Candidates will be afforded the allocation of time noted below to read and complete their answers for each exam component they have registered to sit:

EXAM COMPONENT	DURATION	SCHEDULE	
PROCEDURE	90 minutes	Start: 9:30am	End: 11am
ETHICS	45 minutes	Start: 11:15am	End: 12:00pm
EVIDENCE	90 minutes	Start: 1:00pm	End: 2:30pm

**Arrival time at Exam venue:** Candidates will receive instructions about this by email after exam registration closes.

## 7. PASSING THE EXAM

To access the Victorian Bar Readers' Course, all candidates require a 75% pass mark, for **each** exam component. This means that candidates must obtain:

- a minimum of 30 marks out of 40 marks to pass the 'Procedure' component; and
- a minimum of 15 marks out of 20 marks to pass the 'Ethics' component
- a minimum of 30 marks out of 40 marks to pass the 'Evidence' component; and

Candidates may undertake one or more exam components at each Exam sitting. To pass the Exam, candidates must pass all exam components within a "Permitted Exam Period", which is four consecutive Exam sittings convened by the Victorian Bar (ie approximately 2 years). Candidates will retain credit for components passed for the duration of the Permitted Exam Period and may sit or re-sit for any exam component that has not been passed.

The marking process will be explained during the Chief Examiner's Exam Information Seminar for Candidates, which will take place on **13 August 2024 at 4:45 pm**.

The Victorian Bar's grading of a candidate's Exam is final. Candidates do not have any right to have any exam component reassessed, reviewed or re-marked. The Victorian Bar retains copyright in all exam components and ownership of the exam answers completed by candidates. Candidates will not receive a copy of any exam components they have completed.

A successful candidate will be entitled to access the Readers' Course, but not necessarily the next Readers' Courses or the Readers' Course of their choosing. The Readers' Course is subject to capacity constraints, and regulation 6(7) of the [Regulations](#) provides details on the process for offering places in the next available Courses.

## 8. PREPARING FOR THE EXAM: EXAM MATERIALS AND RESOURCES

The Victorian Bar will make the 2024 Exam Reading Guide and other materials and resources available to potential exam candidates prior to registering to sit the Exam. This is to assist any potential candidate in their decision whether to sit any or all exam components on 13 October 2024.

Registered candidates will then also be provided with further information and access to resources to assist in preparation.

In 2024, the Victorian Bar separated the Exam into exam components. Exam papers from previous years (which covered all areas) may not directly illustrate the exam components in 2024.

## 9. EXAM RULES AND CONDITIONS

Candidates must agree to accept and comply with the Exam Rules and Conditions (as set out in the Annexure hereto) when registering for the Exam.

Failure to comply with any of the Exam Rules and Conditions will result in a candidate's disqualification from the Exam, and other possible consequences (referred to below under "Cheating, Fraud, Dishonesty and Other Misconduct").

## 10. APPLICATIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE SITTING ARRANGEMENTS OR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

Candidates should refer to the Victorian Bar Entrance Exam Policy available via the [Victorian Bar Entrance Exam webpage](#), which sets out the circumstances for applying for an Application for Alternative Sitting Arrangements and/or an Application for Special Consideration and the timing and process for making an application.

## 11. CHEATING, FRAUD, DISHONESTY AND OTHER MISCONDUCT

Candidates for the Exam must not cheat or engage in any forms of fraud, dishonesty, or other misconduct in connection with registering for or taking the Exam. The Victorian Bar has a zero tolerance policy for cheating. Candidates who engage in cheating will be disqualified from the Exam and may face additional consequences.

Prohibited conduct includes (without limitation):

- Using or accessing a prohibited item while undertaking the Exam (e.g. mobile phone, tablet, smart-watch, electronic file or other materials);
- Accessing ChatGPT or other Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms during the Exam;
- Using or wearing earbuds or headphones (whether electronic or not);
- Communicating or attempting to communicate with any person or candidate while undertaking the Exam;



- Copying or attempting to copy answers to any questions on the Exam from another candidate or person, or giving such information to another candidate or person;
- Accessing the any exam component other than while undertaking it on the day of the Exam during the Specified Window;
- Providing any false or misleading information in connection with the candidate’s application to the Victorian Bar for admission to the Bar Roll, registering for the Exam, taking the Exam or making any Application for Alternative Sitting Arrangements and/or Application for Special Consideration;
- Any other conduct which the Victorian Bar considers to be in contravention of the Exam Rules and Conditions (as set out in the Annexure hereto) or otherwise contrary to the ethical standards that may reasonably be expected of a person who seeks admission to practise as a member of the Victorian Bar.

The penalties for candidates who are found to have engaged in such conduct include:

- Disqualification from the Exam, and nullification of Exam results;
- Disqualification from taking future Exams;
- Reporting the candidate to relevant bodies for professional misconduct.

## 12. WITHDRAWAL FROM THE EXAM

Candidates who decide to withdraw from the Exam must promptly notify the Victorian Bar in writing by email to ([exam@vicbar.com.au](mailto:exam@vicbar.com.au)). The registration fee is non-refundable.

## 13. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Candidates should consult the “Frequently Asked Questions” on the [Victorian Bar website](#).

Questions about the exam registration process or about applying for Alternative Sitting Arrangements or Special Consideration should be communicated in writing and sent by email to [exam@vicbar.com.au](mailto:exam@vicbar.com.au).

Candidates who have questions about the ExamSoft software, including issues related to device compatibility and software operation, should visit the ExamSoft website before communicating with ExamSoft Support (contact details below).

## 14. KEY CONTACTS

### THE VICTORIAN BAR

---

Michelle James, Education Manager

Email: [exam@vicbar.com.au](mailto:exam@vicbar.com.au)

Golam Kibria, Education Coordinator

Tel: +61 (0)3 9225 7924 or 7985

### EXAMSOFT 24/7 SUPPORT

---

**Email:** [support@examsoft.com](mailto:support@examsoft.com)

**Telephone:**

**Australia:** (03) 8594 1209

**International:** +1 954 429 8889, ext. 1

## ANNEXURE

### 2024 EXAM RULES AND CONDITIONS

Each candidate for the Exam agrees to be bound by and comply with the following rules and conditions:

1. The candidate must read the 2024 Exam Information Guide for Candidates, the Victorian Bar Entrance Examination Policy, the Protocol for Review of Exam Results and Supplementary Assessment, the Protocol for Readers' Course Deferral Requests and the [Application and Reading Regulations](#), and comply with all requirements therein.
2. The Victorian Bar reserves the right to refuse the candidate's application for registration and/or entry to the Victorian Bar Roll of Counsel and to cancel the candidate's registration.
3. The registration fee is non-refundable.
4. The candidate must provide proof of identity, being either a current passport, government-issued identity document or a current drivers' licence issued by an Australian state.
5. The candidate will be solely responsible for supplying their own device for use in the Exam and ensuring that the device meets the minimum system requirements as determined by ExamSoft.
6. The candidate will be solely responsible if their device does not meet the minimum system requirements as determined by ExamSoft, or if it malfunctions or experiences other technical difficulties that may affect the candidate's performance or ability to access, complete and/or upload the Exam on the day of the Exam.
7. The candidate bears sole responsibility for ensuring that the ExamSoft software is correctly downloaded onto their device and that it is operating correctly for the purposes of the Exam.
8. The candidate must accept the [End User Licence Agreement for ExamSoft software Worldwide, Inc](#) and such other conditions for use of the ExamSoft software as may be required by ExamSoft or the Victorian Bar.
9. Candidates whose principal place of residence is a distance of 100km or more from the Exam venue may make an Application for Alternative Sitting Arrangements to be permitted to sit the Exam remotely. At the time of registration, candidates must provide proof of their residential address and provide a completed Application for Alternative Sitting Arrangements form.
10. The candidate making an Application for Alternative Sitting Arrangements under the Victorian Bar Entrance Exam Policy to sit the exam remotely bears sole responsibility for ensuring that the location in which they undertake the Exam (e.g. own home, office) is conducive for that purpose at the time of the Exam, and for the entire duration of the Exam.
11. The candidate must download the Exam onto their device prior to the day of the Exam, and must only access the Exam (via password) and undertake the Exam on the day of the Exam.
12. The candidate must access and commence each exam component promptly upon being instructed to commence a component.
13. The candidate will have a maximum time limit to complete each exam component, commencing at the time the candidate accesses the Exam (via password). The time limit for each exam component is set out in paragraph 6 of the Exam Information Guide for Candidates.
14. During the Exam, the candidate:
  - a) must type their answers directly into the ExamSoft software on their device;
  - b) may have available, and may refer to, any hard copy or printed materials (i.e. non-electronic materials); for example, printed or hand-written notes, printed texts, commentary and legislation;
  - c) must not access or consult any electronic materials or resources including any Artificial Intelligence (AI) platforms;
  - d) may make notes by hand on hard copy paper (for personal reference and not as any part of the candidate's response to the Exam);
  - e) may consume water from a container that will not leak if knocked over;



- f) must not have on their person or within reach, and must not access any electronic devices (including any phone, tablet, smart-watch), except for the device used for the Exam with the ExamSoft software installed;
  - g) all personal electronic devices apart from the computer used to sit the exam must be placed into flight mode if they have that capability;
  - h) must not wear earbuds or headphones (whether electronic or not);
  - i) must not move from their table/desk, save only in the event of an unavoidable toilet break or a medical episode or other emergency;
  - j) must not communicate with any person or candidate by any means, save only in the event of a medical episode or other emergency or to communicate with an Exam Invigilator;
  - k) must not receive or give assistance to/from any person or candidate in relation to any exam component on the day of the Exam;
15. At the conclusion of the Exam, the candidate must reconnect to the internet, upload their completed exam component on the ExamSoft platform. This must be done promptly upon completion of each exam component and before leaving the Exam Venue. The Victorian Bar reserves the right not to accept or mark an Exam submitted after that time, in its absolute discretion.
16. The candidate acknowledges and agrees that:
- a) any failure to comply with any of the Exam Rules and Conditions may attract adverse consequences, including disqualification from the Exam or nullification of the Exam result, and may constitute professional misconduct;
  - b) all decisions of the Victorian Bar, including the Chair of the Exam Committee, Chief Examiner, Honorary Secretary, Bar Readers' Course Committee and Executive and Bar Council, in relation to the candidate's application for registration, the Exam and any Application for Alternative Sitting Arrangements or Special Consideration are final and binding and shall not be open to challenge or review in any way;
  - c) the completed and uploaded exam components using the ExamSoft software are the property of ExamSoft and the Victorian Bar and may be reviewed, used and retained by ExamSoft and/or the Victorian Bar;
  - d) will comply with all requests for information and/or documents and will attend and participate in any interview and take any such further step as the Victorian Bar may require in its absolute discretion, in connection with the candidate's Exam and/or application for entry to the Bar Roll, including for the purpose of ascertaining whether the candidate has complied with the Exam Rules and Conditions.