

GUIDE FOR OVERSEAS APPLICANTS APPLYING FOR ASSESMENTS OF FOREIGN QUALIFICATIONS

Introduction

As a foreign graduate or lawyer wishing to practise Australian Law, you must first apply to the Victorian Legal Admissions Board (**VLAB**) for a skills assessment. Applications are made online via the VLAB website. Dependent upon your academic and/or relevant work history, VLAB will seek additional academic study and/or practical legal training (PLT) be undertaken as part of any assessment.

All applications are assessed against the Legal Profession Uniform Admission Rules 2015 (the Admission Rules); in particular rules 5, 6 and 11 and Schedules 1 and 2.

<https://legislation.nsw.gov.au/view/html/inforce/current/sl-2015-0240>

The Uniform Principles for Assessing Qualifications of Overseas Applicants to the Australian Legal Profession (Uniform Principles) is a guide to what the likely prescribed requirements may be. The Uniform Principles should be consulted prior to seeking application for assessment.

<https://www.lawadmissions.vic.gov.au/foreign-applicants/uniform-principles-for-assessing-overseas-qualifications>

How to make an application for assessment of your foreign qualifications

Applications are made online through the VLAB website:

<https://www.lawadmissions.vic.gov.au/online-applications>.

Application types and fees

Foreign Lawyers – Applicants admitted in a foreign jurisdiction as a lawyer

- Foreign Lawyer – Academic and practical legal training assessment - \$640
- Foreign Lawyer – Academic assessment only - \$320
- Foreign Lawyer – Practical legal training assessment only - \$320

Foreign Graduates – Applicants not admitted in a foreign jurisdiction

- Foreign Graduate – Academic and practical legal training assessment - \$640*
- Foreign Graduate – Academic assessment only - \$320
- Foreign Graduate – Practical legal training assessment only - \$320*

- * If as a foreign graduate you have completed any practical legal training in your home country, in order for it to be recognised by VLAB it must be an approved PLT course that leads to admission in that jurisdiction and which enables you to acquire, or obtain, practical legal training qualifications which are substantially equivalent to those required of an Australian-trained applicant (see Schedule 3 of the Uniform Principles).

If you have completed an approved PLT program and are yet to be admitted to practise law, you can apply for your PLT to be assessed. The cost for assessment of your PLT is \$320.

Any paid or voluntary work experience or supplementary legal study will rarely be considered as equivalent to any of the skills, values and practice areas contained in Schedule 3. It is not required that you make application for an assessment of your PLT unless you can show that you have acquired and demonstrated an appropriate understanding of, and competence in, certain skills, practice areas and values required of all who apply for admission in Victoria. The Competency Standards for Entry-Level Lawyers are set out in Schedule 3 of the Uniform Principles.

What documents you should produce with your application for assessment

- A certified copy of your academic transcript, setting out marks and results obtained in law subjects. Any degree other than your academic law degree is not required to be submitted and will not be formally assessed.
- If any result shows a mark of less than 50%, an official statement from the relevant institution that adequately explains its marking policy and the relative knowledge and competence signified by the result must be included in your application.
- Information about the precise content of every academic subject which the applicant wants VLAB to assess.
- Certified copy of your academic degree certificate.
- Certified copy of your admission certificate (foreign lawyers only) and proof of PLT when applicable.

Uniform Principles

Your application will be assessed in accordance with the Admission Rules and the Uniform Principles. You may use the Uniform Principles as a basis for a self-assessment. A copy of the Uniform Principles can be viewed at:

<https://www.lawadmissions.vic.gov.au/foreign-applicants/uniform-principles-for-assessing-overseas-qualifications>

Experienced Legal Practitioners Admitted to Practice Law in a Foreign Jurisdiction

Any applicant who wishes to be considered in this category needs to provide documentary evidence which:

- explicitly sets out how the applicant's experience corresponds with the common considerations set out in Schedule 5 of the Uniform Principles;

- sets out any other relevant additional considerations; and
- is corroborated by evidence from the applicant's employer or any other person with whom the applicant has been associated with in practice.

This information can be uploaded in the 'further information' tab of your application.

Assessment letter

At the conclusion of your assessment, VLAB will provide you with an assessment letter detailing the additional requirements you must complete in order to be admitted as an Australian lawyer. The letter will include:

- further academic requirements you must complete (as applicable);
- further practical legal training requirements you must complete (as applicable); and
- the time frame in which you must make an application for admission.

Variations

VLAB may review, vary or set aside any decision made by VLAB on your assessment. If you disagree with your assessment, you can apply to have it varied.

In order to make an application for a variation of your assessment send the following information:

- why you are seeking the review including specified section/s of the assessment you are seeking review of;
- how you believe the assessment should be amended; and
- evidence to support the reason for variation, noting that any previously supplied evidence will not be reconsidered unless it is determined that VLAB have not accurately applied exemptions based upon previously supplied information – this can include a testimony from a manager or colleague, transcript of post graduate study, copy of resume etc.

All applications for variation should be sent by email to:

overseas@justice.vic.gov.au