

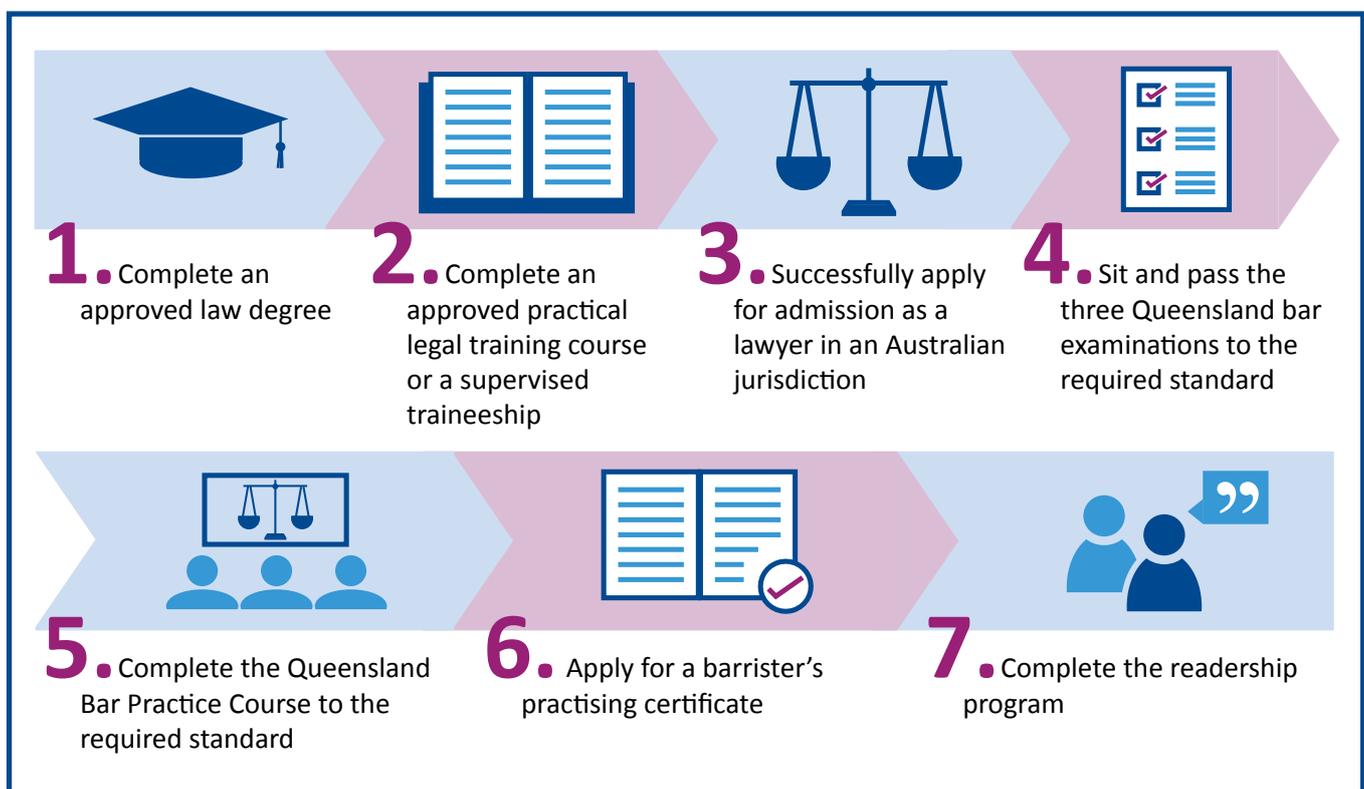
Guide to becoming a barrister in Queensland



Steps to becoming a barrister in Queensland

Working as a barrister is intellectually stimulating and rewarding. For many barristers, the independence and challenge of having to rely on their own skill and reputation to earn a living is a very satisfying aspect of life at the private Bar.

Whilst the academic and admission requirements for barristers and solicitors are the same, to obtain a barrister's practising certificate in Queensland you must:



1. Complete an approved law degree

The first step to becoming a barrister is to complete a **recognised law degree**. Interstate and overseas degrees or courses are recognised in Queensland, however an applicant for admission to the legal profession may be required to undertake further study. Please contact the **Legal Practitioners Admissions Board** if you require more information on admission to the legal profession in Queensland.



2. Complete an approved practical legal training or a supervised traineeship

If you wish to be admitted to the legal profession, you must obtain a graduate diploma in **practical legal training** which replaces the old system of articulated clerkships, or undertake a **supervised traineeship**.



3. Successfully apply for admission to the legal profession



Once you complete practical legal training or a supervised traineeship, you may apply for admission to the legal profession. The Supreme Court of Queensland governs the admission of lawyers to the legal profession, with the assistance of the Legal Practitioners Admissions Board. The process of admission is set out in Part 2.3 *Legal Profession Act 2007* (Qld) and the *Supreme Court (Admission) Rules 2004* (Qld).

Once admitted, you may apply to the Queensland Law Society for a solicitor's practising certificate, or you may wish to undertake the further study required to become a barrister, which includes undertaking the Bar Practice Course.

4. Undertake the Queensland Bar exams

If you wish to be considered for a place in the Bar Practice Course, you must successfully complete the Bar Exams which are undertaken by the Bar Association of Queensland ("Association"). There are three examinations, held twice per year, focusing on legal ethics, practice and procedure, and evidence. Applicants must sit and pass all three examinations. The pass mark for each exam is 65%.



For more information about the examination requirements, including the examination fee, refer to the **Information for Applicants** booklet and the **Frequently Asked Questions** on the Bar Association of Queensland's website.

5. Satisfactorily complete the Bar Practice Course



The Bar Practice Course is a full-time, six week course and is run twice a year by the Association. Successful completion of the course depends upon attendance at, and satisfactory participation, in all sessions. All sessions are practical in focus and are substantially conducted by members of the Bar, the Judiciary and the Magistracy.

Attendees, known as 'Pupils', are required to undertake assessment which may be in the format of oral or written work, or participation in exercises such as mock hearings. To pass assessment to a satisfactory level, Pupils are required to show a level of competency to a standard of a junior barrister, required in such matters, that demonstrates an ability to adequately represent a client.

Upon satisfactory completion of the Bar Practice Course, you may apply to the Association for a practising certificate.

For more information about the course, including the course fee, refer to the **Information for Applicants** booklet and the **Frequently Asked Questions** on the Association's website.

6. Apply for a Practising Certificate

The Association is the issuing authority under the [Legal Profession Act 2007 \(Qld\)](#) for barristers' practising certificates in Queensland. The Association issues two main types of practising certificate:

- Practising certificates for the private Bar (known as 'A Class'); and
- Practising certificates for the employed Bar (known as 'B Class').



Once you have successfully completed all of the academic and vocational training pre-requisites (as outlined above) you may apply to the Association for the grant of a practising certificate.

Applications for grant of a local practising certificate are governed by:

- Part 2.4, [Legal Profession Act 2007 \(Qld\)](#); and
- Part 1, [Administration Rules of the Bar Association of Queensland](#).

You must complete an [Application for Practising Certificate](#) and attach all supporting documents. Please see the website for further details of the [supporting documentation](#).

Once your completed application has been approved, the Association will invoice you for the fee. Your practising certificate will be issued after payment of the appropriate fee has cleared.

All barristers at the private Bar are prohibited from practising unless they have current professional indemnity insurance for at least \$1.5 million, inclusive of defence costs, with an insurer approved by the Association.

Please also refer to the [Practising Certificates - Frequently Asked Questions](#) document for more information about applying for a practising certificate.

Upon being granted a Private Bar practising certificate, you will be required to undertake readership for a period of not less than 12 months.

7. Undertake Readership

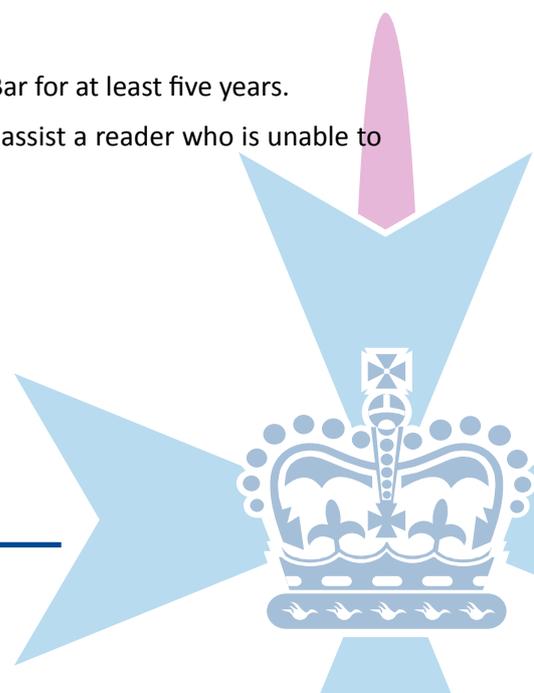
Readership is one of the most important requirements of professional development at the private Bar. The Association's readership program is designed to provide barristers with practical training, guidance and mentoring under the supervision of two experienced barristers. Readership is undertaken for a period of not less than twelve months and will appear as a condition on the reader's practising certificate.



A reader must have two mentors:

- A senior mentor, being a Queen's Counsel; and
- A junior mentor, being a barrister who has been at the private Bar for at least five years.

Whilst a reader will generally nominate a mentor, the Association is able to assist a reader who is unable to nominate a senior or junior mentor.



READERSHIP REQUIREMENTS

Readership is governed by Part 3 of the Association's Administration Rules.

Below is a short summary of some of the requirements.

- The Association keeps a register of readers. The register must be completed and signed before a barrister commences practice.
- Readers must meet their mentors within two weeks of commencing practice to plan and commit to the readership year.
- Readers must meet either their senior or junior mentor at least once a month to discuss their progress at the Bar.
- There are minimum hourly requirements for court-orientated work. The hours spent in court must be recorded and details must be provided to the Association when readership has been completed.
- Readers must attend compulsory reader continuing professional development seminars and any other events as directed by the Association.
- Readers are prohibited from accepting a brief directly from a client without an instructing solicitor (known as direct access or direct briefing), without first obtaining the approval of his or her senior or junior mentor and submitting that approval to the Chief Executive.
- If a reader has not completed all readership requirements within a 12 month period, he or she may apply to the Bar Council for an extension of time within which to complete any outstanding requirements.

Please see Part 3 of the Association's [Administration Rules](#) for detailed information.

Upon successful completion of readership, the condition of readership will be removed from the barrister's practising certificate. Whilst there is no longer a requirement to be mentored or undertake a minimum number of court-orientated work, a barrister must still undertake continuing professional development (CPD).

CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Barristers (including Readers) are required to comply with the CPD rules in Part 4 of the [Administration Rules](#), as well as the Association's CPD Policy.

Each year, a barrister must accrue at least ten (10) CPD points in each of the following four (4) categories:

1. Ethics and Professional Responsibility;
2. Practice Management and Business Skills;
3. Substantive Law, Practice and Procedure and Evidence; and
4. Barrister's Skills.

The Association's CPD seminar program is provided free to all members as a key member benefit. The CPD program covers a broad range of activities from mandatory requirements in ethics, advocacy and practice management to updates on substantive law, trends and new developments in law and practice.

The Bar Association of Queensland

Ground Floor Inns of Court
107 North Quay
Brisbane Qld 4000
Tel: 07 3238 5100
readership@qldbar.asn.au

www.qldbar.asn.au

