

Overseas Assessment FAQ's

Does the Board need original documents for sighting or will a certified copy of documents be enough?

The Board DOES NOT require original documents in order to complete an assessment or reassessment. Please only forward certified copies of any documents provided in support of any application.

Who can certify my documents?

A Justice of the Peace or a Notary Public, i.e. an officer of the law who is able to certify or authenticate documents under an official seal in order to render them acceptable to Australia, can certify documents to be provided in support of an application for assessment or reassessment. A solicitor, lawyer, or attorney qualified in a jurisdiction other than Australia is not sufficient.

I need my application translated into English. How do I do that?

You need to have your documents translated by a Certified Translator. The Board's assessors will only assess or re-assess documents that have been translated into English.

What is a 'Certified copy of official descriptions of academic law subjects (course outlines)' and where can I get these from?

Please contact your University for your subject course outlines which are the 'official descriptions' of law subjects you have completed as part of your academic qualifications. These outlines need to detail the components/details of the subjects you studied when completing your law degree or legal qualifications. If the outlines you provide are not thorough, the opportunity for you to gain exemption from having to complete additional areas of knowledge (referred to as the Priestley 11) will be reduced. These documents are sometimes referred to as course outlines, subject handbooks, or unit overviews. They are published by the institution you attended and will include information such as learning outcomes, content that was taught, what was assessed and how it was assessed. Our assessors require this information so that they can compare the course that you have completed with an approved Australian course in order to identify the areas of knowledge that are lacking.

I found my 'course outlines' on my University website. Can I simply provide a printed copy?

Yes you can. However, any course outlines need to include the insignia of your University and will still need to be certified by a Justice of the Peace or Notary Public. This can be achieved by a Justice of the Peace or Notary Public viewing the document on the relevant website.

Is there a deadline to submit my documents for assessment or re-assessment?

There are no deadlines. We recommend however that you provide your application and copies of any documents at the same time to prevent material being misplaced.

How long will my assessment/re-assessment take?

Your assessment or re-assessment can take anywhere between 10 to 12 weeks to complete depending on whether you provide all required material. In a situation where the Board's assessors disagree with the results of an assessment/re-assessment, the process may take a further 2 to 4 weeks. Once an assessment/re-assessment has been completed, it needs to be submitted to the Board for approval at a Board meeting. You should be aware that the Board meets 8 times each year, with approximately 6 to 8 weeks between each meeting.

How will I know when my assessment/re-assessment is complete?

The Board's staff will forward the original finalised assessment/re-assessment to the postal address you provide on your Forms after the Board meeting at which your assessment/re-assessment is approved. We will also provide you with a scanned copy by email. We have a high volume of overseas applications for assessment/re-assessment, and your patience is appreciated.

What do I do with the finalised assessment/re-assessment?

You should give the finalised assessment/re-assessment to a university of your choice (anywhere in Australia) in order to ascertain which subjects correspond to the area/s of knowledge in which you are required to complete additional study so that you can enroll in the relevant subjects. Please keep a copy of your assessment/re-assessment for own records as a copy will need to be submitted when you apply for admission to the legal profession.

How can I pay the Board's fee?

In general, we accept payment of fees by cheque, money order, or credit card via a secure payment link. Please ensure all payments are in Australian dollars. All cheques and money orders need to be made payable to the 'Legal Practitioners Admissions Board'. Once your application is received, the Board's staff will issue a secure payment link to your email address to arrange payment of the fee by credit/debit card.

Do I need to pay the fee for my overseas assessment now, or will the Board forward my applications and documents for assessment to the Board's assessors before I pay you?

We will not, under any circumstances, forward your application to the Board's assessors until we have received the Board's fee.

Is it the same process for an overseas Barrister?

Yes. The process for assessment of solicitors, barristers, and advocates admitted overseas is the same.

It should be noted that once you have been admitted to the legal profession in Queensland, if you want to practice as a Barrister, you will need to complete the pre-course examination at the Bar Association of Queensland ('BAQ'), the BAQ's Bar Practice Course, and obtain a practicing certificate as a Barrister from the BAQ. Further information in respect of these requirements can be obtained from the BAQ website at www.qldbar.asn.au.

Can I arrange an interview or meeting with someone at the Board to go over my application?

No. Please read the Board's information pack and the Uniform Principles which are available on the Queensland Law Society and Law Council of Australia websites at the following links:

http://www.qls.com.au/For_the_profession/Your_legal_career/Become_a_solicitor

<https://www.lawcouncil.asn.au/resources/law-admissions-consultative-committee/documents-about-present-admission-policies>

After reviewing the available information, if you have any further questions, you can direct them to the Board by emailing admissions@qls.com.au. Please note that email is our preferred option for any communication.

I know someone who completed their degree at the same University as me who has already had an assessment/reassessment completed by the Queensland Board. Does this mean we will have the same results?

Not necessarily. Each assessment/reassessment is considered on its merits and based on the information provided by an applicant, the applicant's results, and whether the applicant is admitted or has any experience in practice. The results of an assessment/reassessment can also depend on when you completed your degree as the syllabus may have changed.

Can you tell me from past experience with applicants such as myself, how many areas of knowledge I will be required to further study?

No. The Board's staff are unable to advise you as to what additional study you may be required to complete. You must submit an application for assessment and wait for the results.

Perusal of the Uniform Principles may give some idea as to the areas of knowledge in which you may have to complete additional study. However, you should not rely on the Uniform Principles as providing a

definitive result as to the outcome of your assessment as each application is assessed on its merits. You can download the Uniform Principles from <http://www.lawcouncil.asn.au/LACC/index.php/ct-menu-item-3/documents-about-present-admission-policies>

What does ‘Certified documentary evidence that the completed academic qualifications would qualify for admission in the jurisdiction in which the qualification was completed marked “C” mean’? Where can I get this document from?

It is your responsibility to show the Board’s assessors that the degree you have completed overseas would qualify you for admission in the jurisdiction where you completed that degree. Generally, you can obtain a letter confirming this from the admitting authority of the jurisdiction in which you completed your law degree or legal qualifications, for example; if you completed your degree in England, you should approach the Solicitors Regulatory Authority in England/Wales to obtain the relevant document. If you are unable to obtain the relevant confirmation, we will accept a statutory declaration from you confirming that your degree leads to admission in the jurisdiction in which it was completed.

I am not satisfied with the result of my assessment and would like a re-assessment. How do I go about this?

The Board and its assessors review applications with care and diligence. As outlined in part 9 of the Uniform Principles, **applicants will not be entitled to a gratis reassessment of any assessment previously performed by the Board where ‘an application is incorrect or incomplete; or if appropriate and sufficient information is not provided in an initial application’**. It is also to be noted that in part of the 9 of the Uniform Principles, **‘an Admitting Authority is not obliged to seek further information from an applicant if an application is incorrect or incomplete’**. When applicants submit their Form 12 or 13 applications, they have verified that they have provided all of the required documents and evidence to complete the assessment.

The Board applies, and relies very heavily on, the principles outlined in the Uniform Principles. Schedule 2 of the Uniform Principles outlines the additional study required by graduates and lawyers who have completed their academic qualifications in certain jurisdictions. The Board will make a determination against the Uniform Principles and the information applicants provide in their assessment applications.

If an applicant requires the Board’s assessors to reconsider its assessment of any academic qualifications and/or PLT practical legal training and **experience in practice based on additional information not provided in the original application, the applicant will need to submit and pay for a new application (a new Form 12 or Form 13)**, and provide compelling and relevant information to support any exemptions being given. As a general guide, the assessment process, including new reassessments, takes between 8 to 12 weeks.

If an applicant has provided all the relevant information as required by the Uniform Principles and believes there has been a **genuine error** in the interpretation of the evidence provided with their application or of the Uniform Principles, the applicant can email admissions@qls.com.au outlining the arguments for the review. The Board will not accept additional documentation for such reviews as this will constitute a reassessment and will attract the fee as outlined herein. Documents that should have been provided in the original application cannot be provided to the Board for a review after an assessment has been made. Consideration of new documentation in support of an application for re-assessment takes the same amount of time to complete as an initial assessment.

What is an ‘assessment criteria’ and why do I need to provide one?

If you have received marks of below 50% for any subject you completed as part of your law degree or legal qualifications, you will be required to provide a copy of your university or tertiary institution’s assessment criteria with your application.

An assessment criteria is an official statement by a university or tertiary institution explaining the marking policy of the institution, and the standard of knowledge and competence indicated by your result. Please note the assessment criteria is NOT the grading scale of your university. The Board’s assessors need to be satisfied that your result is equivalent to a pass mark (of 50% or more) from an approved Australian educational institution.

Can my experience in practice count towards receiving any academic exemption?

Yes. The Board has a broad discretion to exempt some of the additional areas of knowledge (or practical legal training) usually required under the Uniform Principles based on an applicant's experience in practice. This discretion can be exercised in favour of an experienced legal practitioner from an overseas jurisdiction where the Board considers the applicant's experience in practice to be relevant, substantial and current.

Please refer to part 5 and schedule 5 of the Uniform Principles which outlines what is required to seek an exemption on this basis and satisfy the Board that the discretion should be exercised.

Can I complete my PLT subjects prior to or simultaneously as my Academic Subjects? No.

Unfortunately you are not able to enroll in a PLT program in Australia until you have completed the approved academic qualifications required for admission to the legal profession in Queensland, or another state or territory.

Can my PLT subjects be credited towards my assessment of my Academic Qualifications?

The academic qualifications for admission and the practical legal training requirements are two completely separate requirements. This is true for most, if not all, jurisdictions. The two separate requirements do not overlap; the academic requirements for admission focus on theoretical aspects of the law, whereas the practical legal training requirements focuses on vocational aspects of practicing law. One covers the academic requirements for admission and the other covers the practical legal training requirements for admission. Clause 2.5 of the Uniform Principles makes it clear that *'academic credit will rarely be given for subjects undertaken as part of a practical legal training course, or bar examination preparation, even if the subjects bear similar names'*.

Can you advise me which law or PLT program best suits my circumstances based on the assessment?

No. The Board is unable to advise applicants as to which law course provider or PLT provider they should attend to undertake their study and training. The Board approves the content taught at law schools and in PLT programs; however the modes of delivery and curriculum design are unique and the responsibility of the law schools and PLT providers. Applicants must discuss their requirements with the law schools and PLT providers to ascertain what courses will meet their requirements.

Can you advise what visa I need to study in Australia?

No. The Board is unable to provide advice on any visa or international study requirements. We refer students to the law school and PLT providers as well as the Australian Department Home Affairs to understand and gain information in this regard.

PLEASE NOTE: In respect of any application made to the Board, it is YOUR responsibility to make sure you provide certified copies of any documents submitted in support of your Form 12 and/or Form 13 application for assessment. Please read the Forms, Information pack and Uniform Principles carefully prior to submitting any application for assessment.