



## Coming to the Bar Checklist

Below is a suggested checklist for legal practitioners intending to come to the private bar.

Please note that in compiling the information contained in and accessed through this table, the Association has used its best endeavours to ensure that the information is correct and current at the time of publication (4 July 2023) but takes no responsibility for any error, omission or defect therein. It is the reader's responsibility to undertake their own research as to the below information.

| <b>Pre-exam (6-12 months pre-course)</b>          |   |                   |
|---|---|-------------------|
| Start thinking about mentors and chambers         | Use the "Find a Barrister" search on the Association's website.   | Free              |
|   | Speak to members of the profession.   |                   |
|   | Research desired practice areas and look at the leading practitioners on the Doyles Guide if you do not have personal contacts. Most practitioners will be happy to hear about your interest. |                   |
| Start thinking about chambers                     | As a starting point, see list of reader rooms published by the Association.   | Free              |
| Access the required reading for the Qld bar exams | See reading lists in the Information for Applicants Booklet.  | Depends on source |
|   | Materials on the Qld bar exams reading lists are made available for use in the Supreme Court Library of Queensland. This library service is provided free of charge.                          |                   |

## Pre-exam (6-12 months pre-course)

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| Attend or view the pre-course information session for Exam Takers sitting the pre-course | Check website for details of sessions or the recording | Free |
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## Qld Bar Exams

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| Sit 3 examinations | See <i>Information for Applicants</i> Booklet page 10<br><br>Applications generally close approximately four (8) weeks before the examination date.<br>Examinations are held twice per year with all three (3) examinations being sat on one (1) day. | <a href="#">Click here for Information for Applicants</a> |
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## 0-3 Months Pre-Course

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| Register for an ABN and GST (if applicable)                   | Review the <a href="#">ATO website</a> on sole trader obligations, GST and ABN registration. If in doubt, see an accountant.  | Free  |
| If possible, secure mentors and chambers before Course starts | Consider whether you are commencing practice immediately as this will determine what steps you need to take.<br><br>Some Exam Takers may not have chambers organised pre-Course. This is okay, but it is highly recommended that you organise as much as possible before the Course as you will be busy preparing for the Course. | Free  |
| Pay for the Bar Practice Course                               | You will typically be required to pay for the Bar Practice Course as per your Letter of Offer, once results are known. Approximately 6-8 weeks prior to the course.<br><br>Material will be provided by BAQ during the Course for you to download and print.  | <a href="#">Click here for Information for Applicants</a> |
| Develop your network  | Take the opportunity before the BPC to reach out to solicitors/firms/in-house teams you know. You should also attend networking events and let colleagues/acquaintances know about your intentions. It assists at this stage to have an idea about what area/s you plan on practicing in.   | Varies – depends on event attended                        |

## During Course

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| Consider your living expenses                                 | <p>Ensure that you have enough savings to cover your living expenses for at least six (6) weeks (the BPC duration). You may also want to consider having savings for at least a couple of weeks after the BPC.</p> <p>Some Exam Takers have mentioned it was useful to keep the week before the course free so they could begin to prepare for the course. If you choose to do this, you will need to factor this into your savings plan.</p> <p>Please note that the Association makes no recommendation, guideline or statement as to when you should leave your employment – it is entirely your decision.</p> | Calculate your personal expenses for at least six (6) weeks.                             |
| Prepare application for the grant of a practising certificate | <p>Read the process for applying for a practising certificate (PC) on the Association’s website and in particular the Association’s Practising Certificate FAQ document found on the website <a href="https://qldbar.asn.au/practising-certificate">https://qldbar.asn.au/practising-certificate</a></p> <p>If you intend to commence practice soon after completing the course, you should start preparing your application and gather the documentation that must be attached to the application. There is a helpful checklist on the last page of the application form.</p>                                    | Free (excluding application fees and costs of supporting documentation that is required) |
| Cancel your PC  | There is no need to cancel any current practising certificate that you may hold. Please refer to the <u>Practising Certificate FAQ document</u> on our website for more information for seeking “in principle” approval of your practising certificate application.   | Free   |
| Order certificate of fitness and good standing                | You require a certificate of good standing when applying for your PC. Please refer to the Practising Certificate FAQ document for the Association’s requirements relating to practising certificate applications and supporting documentation, including certificates of fitness/standing or statement of status.   | \$181.00 (QLS fee)   |
| Purchase Professional Indemnity Insurance                     | You will need to purchase professional indemnity insurance of at least \$1.5 million, valid from no later than the date of your application for a PC until 30 June next, from one of the Association’s approved insurers.   | Depends on insurer.  |

## Post Course

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| Practising certificate and BAQ membership | Your PC is required for practice as a barrister. Detailed information about applying for a practising certificate, and the supporting documentation required, is in the Practising Certificate FAQ document available on our website.  | \$677 for 2023/24 year for membership and practising certificate (may vary)         |
| Email                                     | You might like to arrange BarWeb to set-up your email (unless provided by your chamber group). This is the “@qldbar.asn.au” address. You will need to have a practising certificate before you can obtain the email. It costs, between \$30-\$90 per month, depending on capacity, and this is charged in three month periods in advance. <a href="https://barweb.net.au/applications/application-for-services/">https://barweb.net.au/applications/application-for-services/</a>  | \$30 - \$90 per month   |
| BAQ membership and Supreme Court Library  | <p>BAQ membership access a range of free library services online, in person, and by subscription, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal research - up to 30 minutes of free research assistance a day;</li> <li>• document request service (copies of judgments and other documents not available online) - up to 10 free documents a day; and</li> <li>• resource support and guidance - learn how to get the most out of the library’s databases, collections and subscriptions.</li> </ul> <p>New barristers (called to the private bar less than 3 years ago) will also have access to the Virtual Legal Library (VLL). VLL provides free online access to over 100 key legal resources in the areas of civil, criminal and family law from leading publishers including LexisNexis, Thomson Reuters and CCH. Available publications include core commentary services, law reports, textbooks and journals.</p> <p>Upon payment of your membership to the Bar Association your details will be forwarded to the Supreme Court Library and they will contact you in relation to the services available.</p> | Free  |
| Purchase Accounting software              | <p>You might like to consider purchasing accounting software. Some options include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BarBooks – Generally there is a special for readers where it is \$1.00 for the first year, and approximately \$60/month every subsequent year: <a href="https://www.barbooksaustralia.com/">https://www.barbooksaustralia.com/</a></li> <li>• Silq: <a href="https://www.silq.com.au/barrister/">https://www.silq.com.au/barrister/</a></li> </ul>  | There are generally special offers for readers – contact the providers for details. |
| Apply for Court ID Card                   | This card lets you jump the queue at the Supreme and District Court security check.<br>Check - Court Security Identity Card Terms and Conditions   | \$30  |

## Post Course

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|  | Form - Application for Court Security Identity Card   |   |
| Apply for entry to Register of Practitioners of the High Court | <p>If you intend to practice in a federal court or tribunal, you will need to be entered on the Register of Practitioners of the High Court of Australia. Application for entry is free; however, the Registry will charge a practitioner to obtain a certificate of admission. <a href="http://www.hcourt.gov.au/registry/register-of-practitioners">http://www.hcourt.gov.au/registry/register-of-practitioners</a></p> <p>If you are already entered on the Register of Practitioners, you should ensure that your registration accords with your current entitlement to practice. Any person who previously practised as a solicitor, and was entered on the Register as such, should take steps to check and if necessary update their entry to a barrister.</p> | \$125   |
| Consider networking and memberships                            | <p>Queensland Young Lawyers membership</p> <p>Legal Aid Registration for panels</p> <p>Law Right / Caxton Legal / Women's Legal Service</p> <p>Women Lawyers Association of Queensland membership</p>   | <p>\$50</p> <p>Free</p> <p>Free</p> <p>\$75</p>           |
| Register for government panels                                 | <p>If you would like to undertake government work, you should consider registering your interest to undertake work for Qld Government departments: <a href="http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/justice-services/legal-services-coordination-unit/whole-of-government-policy-for-engaging-barristers">http://www.justice.qld.gov.au/justice-services/legal-services-coordination-unit/whole-of-government-policy-for-engaging-barristers</a></p> <p>You may also want to apply to do work for Commonwealth agencies:</p> <p><a href="https://www.ag.gov.au/LegalSystem/LegalServicesCoordination/Pages/Engagementofcounsel.aspx">https://www.ag.gov.au/LegalSystem/LegalServicesCoordination/Pages/Engagementofcounsel.aspx</a></p>   | Free  |
| Consider set up expenses                                       | <p>Business cards - You might want to purchase business cards (frequently used companies include VistaPrint and Moo.com)</p> <p>Check with your chambers whether they have existing templates or suppliers</p> <p>Legal wear – you will need a bar jacket, jabots (or tabs and collar), barrister robes and a wig.</p> <p>There are a number of providers in Queensland, including Ludlows and Stuart Suits. There are also providers online, for examples Regalia Wear.</p>  | <p>\$50 to \$200 depending on quantity</p> <p>\$2,750</p> |

## Post Course

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|  | Office furniture - You might need to purchase office furniture. To begin with consider the minimum requirements as a reader generally fills their office as the year progresses. As a starting point you might like to buy a desk, computer and chair.  | \$1,000                            |
|  | Some reader rooms will have built in furniture so this may not be required.   |                                    |
|  | Online research tools - Consider online research tools that you may need.   | Depends on research tools arranged |
|  | It is suggested you sign up to the Supreme Court Library – if you are registered as a Library Member, access is available to the library 24/7:<br><br><a href="https://www.sclqld.org.au/information-services/member-registration/">https://www.sclqld.org.au/information-services/member-registration/</a><br><br>For those who practice in crime, Queensland Sentencing Information Service (QIS) is administered through the Supreme Court Library. Barristers can register for access:<br><br><a href="https://media.sclqld.org.au/documents/forms/qsis-licence-agreement.pdf">https://media.sclqld.org.au/documents/forms/qsis-licence-agreement.pdf</a> |                                    |
|  | Signage – Some chambers require you to pay for the sign in chambers and for your name to be added to the sign in the foyer of the building.   | \$200 depending on chambers        |

## First Year at the Bar

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|--------------------|---|----------------------------|
| Call on profession | Call on Silks in your practice areas  | Free                       |
| Ongoing Expenses   | Reader rooms – the facilities associated with these rooms will vary. If phone lines and internet are not included, consider pre-paid mobile internet and relying on your mobile phone as your lease may only be for 12 months | \$2,500/month = \$30,000pa |
|                    | BarWeb Services (You should check that this is not organised by your chambers)  | \$40/month = \$480pa       |
|                    | Consider what networking events you might like to attend.   | \$1,000pa                  |
|                    | CPD seminars/conferences. It is generally free for you to attend CPD seminars run by the Association.   | \$1,000pa                  |

## First Year at the Bar

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|  | Accountant costs – Ask people in chambers who they use as there are accountants who specialise in and have expertise with Barristers | \$1,000 - \$2,000pa        |
|  | You should consider income protection insurance.   | Depends on medical history |