# Becoming a Lawyer in Australia

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Becoming a lawyer in Australia involves a multi-faceted process that combines education, practical experience, and formal qualifications. Individuals interested in a legal career must navigate a well-defined route that begins with obtaining the necessary academic credentials. We outline the essential milestones in the process of becoming a lawyer in Australia, preparing you for each phase of your journey.

## Becoming a Lawyer in Australia

The foundation of a legal career in Australia typically starts with an undergraduate law degree. The most prevalent options are the Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and the Juris Doctor (JD). The LLB generally spans three to four years and is tailored for students who have just graduated from high school. Conversely, the JD is designed for those who possess an undergraduate degree in another field and usually requires three years of study. Both degrees provide crucial legal knowledge necessary for practicing law in Australia.

To practise law in Australia, you must gain admission as a lawyer by the Supreme Court of an Australian State or Territory. Following this, you are required to obtain a practising certificate issued within an Australian jurisdiction.

New Zealand practitioners are subject to specific requirements under the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997 (Cth)*. Admission-related inquiries should be directed to the Supreme Court of the State or Territory where you intend to practise.

## Membership of the Australian Bar Association

Membership of the Australian Bar Association (ABA) is exclusively open to individuals who hold Australian practising certificates and are members of a State or Territory Bar Association. The ABA represents over 6,300 independent legal practitioners across Australia, bound by the Legal Profession Uniform Rules and Legislation.

For any questions regarding admission, including the recognition of overseas qualifications, you should contact the admission authority in the State or Territory where you intend to practise. The admission authorities are:

- New South Wales: Legal Profession Admission Board
- Victoria: Victorian Legal Admissions Board
- Queensland: Legal Practitioners Admissions Board
- Australian Capital Territory: Legal Practitioners Admission Board

- Western Australia: Legal Practice Board of Western Australia
- Northern Territory: The Legal Practitioners' Admission Board
- South Australia: South Australian Board of Examiners
- Tasmania: Legal Profession Board of Tasmania

# Licence to Practice

After being admitted as a lawyer in Australia, you are required to hold a practising certificate to practise law in any Australian jurisdiction. Practising certificates are issued by different authorities depending on the jurisdiction.

For more details on how to apply for a practising certificate in a specific State or Territory, please reach out to the appropriate authority listed below.

- Australian Capital Territory Law Society (solicitors)
- Australian Capital Territory Bar Association (barristers)
- Law Society of New South Wales (solicitors)
- New South Wales Bar Association (barristers)
- Law Society Northern Territory (barristers and/or solicitors)
- Queensland Law Society (solicitors)
- Bar Association of Queensland (barristers)
- Law Society of South Australia (barristers and/or solicitors)
- Law Society of Tasmania (barristers and/or solicitors)
- Victorian Legal Services Board (barristers and/or solicitors)
- Legal Practice Board of Western Australia (barristers and/or solicitors)

# CPD Points

Upon admission, lawyers in Australia are required to engage in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) to maintain their practicing certificate. CPD obligations vary by state but generally include completing a designated number of professional development hours each year. Activities may involve attending seminars, workshops, or online courses to keep abreast of legal advancements and improve professional skills. Keeping track of your CPD activities can be made easier with appropriate tools, ensuring you meet your obligations effectively.

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