

I N F O R M A T I O N R E G A R D I N G T H E G R A D I N G O F
C A L I F O R N I A B A R E X A M I N A T I O N S
A N D P O L I C Y O F T H E C O M M I T T E E O F B A R E X A M I N E R S
R E G A R D I N G R E Q U E S T S F O R R E C O N S I D E R A T I O N

DESCRI P T I O N O F T H E E X A M I N A T I O N S

The General Bar Examination

The General Bar Examination consists of two sections: the written section, consisting of six essays and two performance tests (PT), and the 200-item Multistate Bar Examination (MBE). An applicant can earn up to 100 raw points on each of six essays and up to 200 raw points on each PT. Scaled MBE scores are reported on a 2000-point scale, and scores on the written portion of the exam are scaled to the MBE and reported on a 2000-point scale. The written exam is 65 % of the total, the MBE is 35 % of the total, and the passing score on the examination is 1440.

The Attorneys' Examination

The Attorneys' Examination consists of the six essays and two performance tests from the General Bar Examination. An applicant can earn up to 100 raw points on each essay and up to 200 raw points on each PT. Written scores are scaled to the MBE, and the passing score is 1440.

GRADI NG T H E E X A M I N A T I O N S

The Committee of Bar Examiners is aware of the bar examination's importance to each applicant and has established procedures calculated to ensure a fair system of grading.

The anonymity of the applicant is preserved throughout the grading process. Each applicant is assigned a code number which is not known to either the applicant or any person responsible for the grading of the answers until after the applicant's final grade is determined. This number is stamped on the applicant's books and all other identification is removed. Thus, neither the readers who initially grade the papers nor the reappraisers who review the borderline papers have any way of knowing whose answers they are grading or what that applicant's

background, legal education or prior experience, if any, with the bar examination has been. Consequently, no factor other than the applicant's answers has any bearing on the applicant's success or failure.

The MBE is equated to prior MBEs through a comparison of the performance of all examinees on items used on the current and the prior examinations, and raw MBE scores are converted to scaled scores representing the same level of competence or performance as corresponding scaled scores on the prior examinations. The written scores on the exam are then converted to a score distribution that has the same mean and standard deviation as the MBE score distribution.

The examinations are graded using a phased grading procedure. In Phase I, all parts of the examination are graded (essay, MBE, and PTs). Those with rounded total scaled scores of 1466 and above pass, while those with rounded total scaled scores below 1390 fail.

In Phase II, the essays and PTs of those applicants with rounded total scaled scores of at least 1390 but less than 1466 are read a second time. The scores from the first and second readings are averaged, and those with rounded total scaled scores of 1440 and above pass, while those with rounded total scaled scores below 1412 fail.

The answers of applicants with rounded total scaled scores of at least 1412 but less than 1440 are sent to reappraisal where a member of the Board of Reappraisers rereads the entire examination and determines whether it merits a pass or a fail. Reported total scaled scores are rounded to the nearest whole number.

RECONSIDERATION

The Committee believes that this grading system affords each applicant a fair and careful consideration of all answers on the bar examinations and that no useful purpose would be served by further consideration by the Committee.

For this reason, the Committee will not entertain requests for reconsideration unless the applicant establishes that a departure from established procedures

or an arithmetical or clerical error resulted in failure or prevented the examination from being reappraised.