



The American Bar Examination

The USA is a federal system, with no nationwide qualification for lawyers. Rather each state sets its own criteria for permission to sit the state Bar Examination. Additionally, nearly all states require candidates to pass the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) and the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE). Some states also require the passing of the Multistate Essay Examination (MEE) and/or the Multistate Performance Test (MPT). NB. Many states have now adopted the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE) which consists of the MBE, MPT and MEE.

Most states insist on candidates holding an undergraduate degree (of any discipline) and completing a 3-year professional Juris Doctor (JD) degree in the USA. Many states require the JD degree to have been obtained at a law school approved by the American Bar Association. Non-ABA accredited law schools may only qualify attendees to practise in the state in which the school is situated.

A list of ABA-approved law schools can be found at americanbar.org/groups/legal_education/resources/aba_approved_law_schools/in_alphabetical_order.html

Students who have completed a US LLM may qualify to sit the bar exam in certain states. The criteria for eligibility to take the bar examination are set by each state's bar association. Contact the bar association of the state in which you intend to practise law for information on test dates and sites. For details regarding which states please refer to pages 24-25 at: ncbex.org/publications/bar-admissions-guide/

A list of state bar associations can be found on the ABA website at: americanbar.org/aba.html

A list of US LLM programmes can be found at llm-guide.com/usa.

Course fees per academic year can range from \$20,000 to \$45,000. When considering funding for your degree, you should also consider living expenses, books and personal costs. Additional fees are payable for submitting an application, sitting the Bar Examination and following the preparatory review course.

N.B. neither having a Juris Doctor (JD) degree or passing a state Bar Examination give the right to work in the U.S. Therefore, you will also need to apply & satisfy US immigration requirements to go and live & work in the US.

Students who wish to gain experience of US law but practise in the UK are advised to undertake the one-year degree in law (LLM).

For further detailed information, please see the Fulbright Commission's website_ fulbright.org.uk/going-to-the-usa/postgraduate/educationusa-advice/choosing/type-of-university/law

The New York State Bar Examination:

The New York Bar does consider holders of qualifying UK university law degrees as eligible to sit their Bar Examinations without first obtaining the JD or LLM. Whilst successful candidates are immediately eligible to practise as an associate attorney, there is no guarantee of employment – most US law firms would look for related legal experience.

Further information on the acceptability of foreign legal education for the New York Bar can be found at nybarexam.org/Foreign/ForeignLegalEducation.htm

The examination can only be taken in New York State. For non-US residents, the location has traditionally been Albany. Applications should be requested from the State Board of Law Examiners, Corporate Plaza, Building 3, 254 Washington Avenue Extension, Albany NY 12203 – 5195 Tel: 001 518 453 5990 or downloadable at nybarexam.org.

Commencing with July 2016 the New York Bar Examination consists of the Uniform Bar Examination (UBE). The UBE takes 2 days comprising the following: a mixture of 6 essays (Multistate Essay Exam) and 2 Multistate Performance Test (MPT) questions and the Multistate Bar Exam: 200 multiple choice questions. All applicants who have passed the bar examination and are seeking admission to practise law in New York State must also take and pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Examination (MPRE). The MPRE can be taken before or after the bar examination, however, the applicant must pass the MPRE within three years either before or after passing the New York bar examination. In addition, students must pass the online New York Law Exam (NYLE) before admission.

Costs

- Students should consider these carefully. The Examination fee is \$750 for foreign applicants (in addition to the Bar Examination Course – see course providers below)
- Flights to the USA
- Accommodation
- Attendance of the admission ceremony.

NB: New York State does not accept holders of the Graduate Diploma in Law as eligible for the Bar Examination. Such students, to qualify, would need to complete the LPC or BPTC and then a US LLM at an ABA-approved law school to be sure of having the necessary durational equivalence to US legal education and qualify to sit the examination. However, the situation here is vague and it is best to contact the New York Bar direct for an assessment of eligibility, or take further advice from Barbri International (see Bar Examination Course Providers in the UK, below.)

California Bar Examination:

The State Bar of California, 180 Howard Street, San Francisco, CA 94105 Tel: 001 415 538 2000 calbar.ca.gov

California State allows holders of an LLB or Graduate Diploma in Law who successfully qualify as solicitors or barristers to sit their bar examination. This means that those individuals must successfully complete the LPC or BPTC and a training contract or pupillage. Students who possess an LLB may be allowed to sit their bar examination with completion of a US LLM.

Bar Examination Course Providers in the UK:

barbri-international.com Tel: 0207 682 4641 (London office)

This organisation runs a 6 month programme for the New York, California & Texas Bar examinations via streamlined lectures from February-August & September-March each year. The programme is available either via weekend attendance at locations including Dublin, Belfast & London. It is also available via Home Study through an online portal.

Manchester Metropolitan University Careers & Employability Service - mmu.ac.uk/careers



Ask a Careers Question

Get online advice through [My Career Hub](#), ask your question at any time and receive support via email.

mmu.ac.uk/careersquestion



Careers Consultant Appointments

Book a 30 minute appointment with a Careers & Employability Consultant. All you need to do to book in is call us on 0161 247 3483.



Careers Events

Meet employers and enhance your employability by attending our workshops, employer events and careers fairs. Keep up to date with the latest events here:

mmu.ac.uk/careers/events