

DESCRIPTION OF THE CALIFORNIA BAR EXAMINATION: GENERAL BAR EXAMINATION AND ATTORNEYS' EXAMINATION

The California Bar Examination consists of the General Bar Examination and the Attorneys' Examination. The General Bar Examination has three parts: six essay questions, the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE), and two performance tests (PT's). The parts of the examination may not be taken separately, and California does not accept the transfer of MBE scores from other jurisdictions. On Tuesday and Thursday applicants have three hours to answer each set of three essay questions, which are administered during the morning sessions, and three hours for each PT, which are administered during the afternoon sessions. The MBE is administered on Wednesday.

The examination for those applicants who have applied for and are eligible to take the Attorneys' Examination will be administered on Tuesday and Thursday. It consists of the six essay questions and two PT's from the General Bar Examination. Applicants admitted to the Attorneys' Examination will not be permitted to take the Multistate Bar Examination. Applicants must pass the examination to which they have been assigned.

The examination for all applicants begins at 9:00 a.m., Tuesday; however, applicants must be seated no later than twenty minutes before the beginning of the examination so that instructions may be given.

Essay Questions

Each three-hour essay session consists of three essay questions. This part of the examination is designed to measure an applicant's ability to analyze legal issues arising from fact situations. Answers are expected to demonstrate the applicant's ability to analyze the facts of the question, to tell the difference between material facts and immaterial facts, and to discern the points of law and fact upon which the question turns. The answer must show knowledge and understanding of the pertinent principles and theories of law, their qualifications and limitations, and their relationships to each other. The answer should evidence the applicant's ability to apply the law to the given facts and to reason in a logical, lawyer-like manner from the premises adopted to a sound conclusion. An applicant should not merely show that they remember the legal principles, but should demonstrate his/her proficiency in using and applying them.

Performance Test Questions

Performance test questions are designed to test an applicant's ability to understand and apply a select number of legal authorities in the context of a factual problem. Each question consists of a file and library, with instructions advising the applicant what task(s)

Description of the California Bar Examination:
General Bar Examination and Attorneys' Examination
Page 2

should be performed. In addition to measuring an applicant's ability to analyze legal issues, performance test questions require applicants to: 1) sift through detailed factual material and separate relevant from irrelevant facts, assess the consistency and reliability of facts, and determine the need for and source of additional facts; 2) analyze the legal rules and principles applicable to a problem and formulate legal theories from facts that may be only partly known and are being developed; 3) recognize and resolve ethical issues arising in practical situations; 4) apply problem solving skills to diagnose a problem, generate alternative solutions, and develop a plan of action; and, 5) communicate effectively, whether advocating, advising a client, eliciting information, or effectuating a legal transaction. Performance test answers are graded on the applicant's responsiveness to instructions and on the content, thoroughness, organization and persuasiveness of written tasks.

Multistate Bar Examination (MBE)

The Multistate Bar Examination (MBE), which is administered on Wednesday, is developed by the National Conference of Bar Examiners (NCBE). This portion of the examination is an objective six-hour examination containing 200 questions, which is divided into two three-hour sessions during which 100 questions are administered. The MBE tests six subjects: Constitutional Law, Contracts, Criminal Law, Evidence, Real Property, and Torts. A "Bulletin of Information for Applicants" concerning the Multistate Bar Examination (MBE) is available through the NCBE or by writing the Office of Admissions.