

INSTRUCTIONS REGARDING THE USE OF LAPTOP COMPUTERS FOR THE OCTOBER 2016 FIRST-YEAR LAW STUDENTS' EXAMINATION

ATTENTION: IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU CAREFULLY READ THIS ENTIRE BULLETIN

Only **laptop** computers will be allowed into the examination room, and they must meet the specifications outlined in this bulletin. Applicants requiring special equipment due to medical reasons must request permission to use such equipment through the testing accommodations petition process.

LAPTOP COMPUTER CERTIFICATION

If you wish to use a laptop computer to take the October 2016 First-Year Law Students' Examination, you must:

1. Apply online;
2. Select a laptop computer test center;
3. Pay the additional laptop computer fee;
4. Ensure your laptop computer is configured for access to the Internet;
5. Confirm your laptop computer meets the minimum requirements listed below;
6. Download and install SofTest (the designated software) **onto the laptop computer you will be using** for the examination;
7. Download the exam file that will be used on the day of the examination;
8. Download, complete and upload the Mock Examination exam answer file using SofTest;
9. Upload the exam file, which was used during the examination and which contains your answers to the four (4) essay questions, **as soon as possible following conclusion of the examination and not later than the published deadline;**
10. Verify the successful upload of your answer file by reviewing your Exam History in ExamSoft; and,
11. Not delete or uninstall SofTest or any Softest Program Directory Files or Folders until results for the examination have been released.

Applicants with disabilities who wish to use their own laptop computers to take the examination must comply with the same requirements as those taking the examination under standard conditions.

Applicants may initiate and complete the certification process with ExamSoft after they print their admittance tickets from their Admission Status Screens. Beginning approximately eight (8) weeks prior to the examination, admittance tickets will be available for printing from applicants' Admission Status Screens after the State Bar's Office of Admissions has determined they are eligible to take the examination. Applicants assigned to laptop computer test centers must be certified no later than October 21, 2016. If your laptop computer or the software is not operational on the day of the examination, you will have to handwrite the examination.

Applicants who are unable to use their laptop computers on the day of the examination and/or who withdraw their requests to use laptop computers are not entitled to a refund of the laptop computer fee.

If you wish to request a test center change, the Los Angeles Office of Admissions must receive your request no later than September 15, 2016. Following receipt of the request, you will be assigned to the requested test center if space is available. Assignment to a test center does not establish your eligibility to take the examination. Only after all eligibility requirements are met will an admittance ticket be available for printing.

EXAMINATION INFORMATION

ExamSoft's FlexSite Internet-based examination delivery option will be used for delivery of the essay portion of the examination for grading of the answers prepared on Tuesday, October 25, 2016. (The multiple-choice portion of the examination is not available on computer.) This will require applicants to upload their examination answer file via the Internet in order for their answers to be graded. Applicants are not required to have Internet connectivity during the examination, but are required to have access to Internet connectivity immediately following the examination to meet the upload deadline. **It is your responsibility to be familiar with SofTest and your laptop computer prior to the examination, as technical support will not be provided before, during or after the examination session.**

Following the examination, applicants will have until 12:00 noon (Pacific Time), October 26, 2016, to upload their examination answer file. If you fail to upload your answer file by the published deadline, a deduction of ten scaled points will be taken from your total written scaled score. If you fail to upload your answer file within two (2) weeks of the published deadline, you will be given a grade of zero (0) for each answer not uploaded timely.

EXAMINATION DAY INFORMATION

On the day of the examination, those using laptop computers at laptop test centers must be seated **no later** than 7:20 a.m., at which time instructions for getting your laptop computer ready to use will begin. You should plan to arrive at the test center at least 15 minutes prior to that time so that you can find your seat and get comfortable. General instructions regarding administration of the examination will commence promptly at 7:45 a.m. **NO** extra time will be provided to ensure that a laptop computer is ready for use before the examination session begins. Technical assistance **will not** be available. Examination questions will be distributed in hard copy just before the beginning of the examination session.

If your laptop computer is not ready to begin at the designated time, you will be required to handwrite your answers to the examination. Applicants are not permitted to bring other laptop computers, typewriters or word processors into the standard laptop test centers to use as backups.

EXAMSOFT INFORMATION

To ensure the security of the examination process, applicants are required to use SofTest software to take the written portion of the October 2016 First-Year Law Students' Examination. The application provides a simple word processing program and is designed to be familiar to users of WordPerfect or Microsoft Word. It blocks access to non-SofTest files on an applicant's laptop computer during administration of the examination and can be used on virtually any modern computer, i.e., purchased within the last 3 – 4 years.

To use a laptop computer during administration of the examination, applicants must:

- Have experience working with the laptop computer and the software;
- Have installed SofTest software and downloaded the Mock Examination and the exam file required for the examination to the laptop computer that will be used during the examination (once downloaded to a laptop computer, you cannot transfer the software and file to another laptop computer);
- Have completed a Mock Examination using SofTest and uploaded the Mock Examination exam answer file;
- Have signed a "Release of Liability" form, which confirms you have accepted the conditions associated with using your laptop computer and that the Committee of Bar Examiners assumes no liability in the event there is a technical or mechanical failure of the equipment or software during the examination;
- Begin and/or continue with the examination by handwriting in the event there is a power failure, electrical difficulties or a malfunction with the laptop computer and/or software due to technical difficulties; and,
- Upload the exam file used during the examination, which contains your answers to the four (4) essay questions, immediately following conclusion of the examination and no later than the published deadline.

Please Note: ExamSoft recommends Firefox or Google Chrome, as Internet Explorer is not a supported browser.

SofTest Minimum System Requirements: SofTest can be used on virtually any modern laptop computer (i.e., one purchased within the last 3 - 4 years).

The specific system requirements can be found on ExamSoft's Custom Home page for the California Bar Examination at <https://ei.examssoft.com/GKWeb/login/firstyear>.

It is not possible to take secure exams through virtual operating systems such as Microsoft's Virtual Machine, Parallels, VMware, VMware Fusion or any other virtual environment.

External standard or ergonomic keyboards and equipment such as a mouse are allowed. These items may be wireless.

Maximum size allowed of laptop computer screen is 17.3 inches.

In some cases on PC laptop computers, certain antivirus applications may block SofTest from starting properly or can affect SofTest's performance during an examination. Visit ExamSoft's Knowledge Base at <http://support.examssoft.com> to determine if your laptop computer is running any of the programs listed and for instructions on how to disable your antivirus/antispyware applications **before** installing SofTest and how to re-enable them after installation is complete.

You must download SofTest through <https://ei.examssoft.com/GKWeb/login/firstyear> even if it was previously installed for use in law school or for a previous First-Year Law Students' Examination. Be sure to fully uninstall any prior version of SofTest before downloading and installing the newest version.

Installing SofTest: After you have printed your admittance ticket from the Admission Status Screen, go to the Custom Home Page for the First-Year Law Students' Examination on the ExamSoft website at: <https://ei.examssoft.com/GKWeb/login/firstyear>. To begin the process, do the following:

- Locate the Exam Takers box in the upper left hand portion of the page;
- Log in using your File Number (Applicant ID) followed by the letter F and your Password. Your File Number can be found on your application acknowledgment and your Password is your date of birth, entered as mmddyyyy. If your File number is less than 6 digits, add leading zeros to your number. **Do not use your "Application Number" as your "Applicant ID";**
- Download SofTest;
- Install SofTest and register your copy, after which two (2) Exam Files (one for use during the examination and one associated with the Mock Examination) will download automatically; and,
- Check ExamSoft confirmation e-mails to ensure the institution displayed is "State Bar of California – First Year Exam".

If you have an email spam blocker, please add barsupport@examssoft.com and support@examssoft.com to your contact or safe list so that you can receive the emails that will be sent to you during the certification process and as confirmation during the examination answer file upload process.

You must complete the certification process no later than October 21, 2016. It is recommended, however, that you complete the process as soon as possible after printing your admittance ticket so that ExamSoft will have the opportunity to assist you in resolving any problems you may encounter prior to the examination. If your laptop computer or SofTest is not operational when the examination begins or at any time thereafter, you will have to handwrite your examination answers.

Downloading Your Exam File: During the laptop certification process, the Mock Examination exam file and a blank exam file for you to record your answers during administration of the examination will be automatically downloaded to your laptop computer.

Certification Confirmation: After successfully completing the certification process, you will be advised on-screen and via email by ExamSoft that you have done so and that the two files have been downloaded (The October 2016 First-Year Law Students' Examination file and the mock examination file). If you do not receive the confirmation emails, you have not successfully completed the certification process for the October 2016 First-Year Law Students' Examination. You may check your certification status and view your download/upload history online at <https://ei.examssoft.com/GKWeb/login/firstyear>. Log in using the Exam Takers box, click the Exam History button to review your record and confirm that you have downloaded the exam and mock exam files and have uploaded the mock exam answer file. **Applicants should only have one exam file for the written session of the October 2016 First-Year Law Students' Examination.**

Softest can be registered for your school and the First-Year Law Students' Examination concurrently. When launched, click on 'Take an Exam' and you will see your Academic Student ID and any downloaded exams, along with your File Number and First-Year Law Students' Examination file and Mock Exam examination file.

DO NOT Copy the ExamSoft Program from One Laptop Computer to Another Computer. For example, do not download the software to a desktop computer and try to manually move it to your laptop computer. If you move the software and exam files to another computer, an error message will be displayed when you attempt to begin the examination. If such an error message is displayed, you will be unable to use your laptop computer to take the examination and you will be required to handwrite your answers. You may **NOT** download and install SofTest to more than one laptop computer.

Laptop Computer Problems After Certification. If after completing the certification process with ExamSoft you experience problems with your laptop computer that would prohibit you from using it for the examination, i.e., it becomes inoperable, you may ask to have another laptop computer certified and to download additional exam files through the "Re-Download SofTest" link after you log in with your Applicant ID and password at <https://ei.examsoft.com/GKWeb/login/firstyear>. Authorization will not be granted for the purpose of having a backup laptop computer available in the event a laptop computer malfunctions during the examination.

The Mock Examination: The Mock Examination confirms your laptop computer is compatible with SofTest and provides users with the opportunity to familiarize themselves with procedures for opening, using and uploading answer files prior to the day of the examination. By typing a paragraph in each window, it also allows users to ensure that there are no typing/keyboard issues with their laptop computer. The Mock Examination must be completed and the related exam answer file uploaded to complete the certification process and ensure your laptop computer has been configured properly for use on the day of the examination and for the upload of your exam answer file. You will receive an email confirmation after you have uploaded the exam answer file for your Mock Exam. Until you receive this email confirmation, you are NOT certified. For instructional videos and guides on taking the Mock Examination, please go to <http://support.examsoft.com>.

Additional copies of the Mock Examination are available if needed to help familiarize you with the SofTest application. Internet connectivity is required for downloading additional copies of the exam file and uploading exam answer files. **NO** Internet connectivity is required while taking the Mock Examination. Instructions for downloading additional copies of the Mock Examination can be found at <http://go.examsoft.com/barexam>.

Visit the ExamSoft Knowledge Base at <http://support.examsoft.com> if you have questions on the use of the software or if you encounter technical problems during the laptop computer certification process, as most problems can be easily resolved through ExamSoft's published support guides and troubleshooter. Should you continue to have technical problems, however, please call ExamSoft Client Support at 866-429-8889. Technical support is available 4:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. (Pacific Time), Monday through Friday and Saturday from 5:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. (Pacific Time). Neither the Office of Admissions nor the Committee of Bar Examiners is available to answer technical, installation or certification questions.

IMPORTANT PRE-EXAMINATION DAY INFORMATION

You **must** bring your own power cord to the test center on the day of the examination. Although an electrical outlet will be provided to you, be sure to have a fully charged battery in case of a temporary power outage. You will not be allowed to tape power cords into the electrical outlet, nor will you be allowed to plug any other item besides your laptop computer into the electrical outlet. Floppy disks, CDs, DVDs, and flash/thumb drives are prohibited in the examination room. If such items are found in the examination room or in an applicant's laptop computer, they will be confiscated and will not be returned.

Once you have completed the laptop certification process, DO NOT make changes to the configuration of your laptop computer. DO NOT delete or uninstall SofTest or any SofTest program directory files or folders until results for the examination have been released. DO NOT have someone else download the software for you.

Instructions. Pay careful attention to and follow the instructions provided during the examination. Use great care when highlighting and deleting during the examination, as well as using other functions that may significantly change a document. Applicants who do not take the time to become familiar with their laptop computers or with the word processing functions should consider handwriting their examination answers. No extra time or other administrative relief will be granted in the event that an examination file is deleted or otherwise altered.

Printing of Answers. Answers will not be printed at the test centers. The answer files will be retrieved from ExamSoft's secure server and printed after the examination has concluded using a standard format of line spacing and font, which may cause the final printed answer to look different from what you saw on your laptop computer screen, although the content will not have changed. Printed answers will be assembled in the corresponding question book covers that have been completed by the applicants taking the examination. More information regarding the process will be provided in advance of the examination and at the examination test center.

If there is a problem with the printing of your answers, you will be notified. You may be required to contact ExamSoft for assistance in retrieving the file remotely or be asked to physically provide your laptop computer to ExamSoft or to the Office of Admissions so efforts can be made to retrieve the encrypted backup copy of the examination answer(s) from your laptop computer's hard drive.

Rented Laptop Computers. Applicants who have rented laptop computers to use during the examination should not return them to the rental company until results for the October 2016 First-Year Law Students' Examination have been released.

It is your responsibility to be familiar with your equipment, the SofTest software and instructions provided by the Committee and ExamSoft on its website prior to the start of the examination. It is your responsibility to timely upload your answer file after the examination.

Any attempt to disable or tamper with SofTest's security features is prohibited. If it is discovered that tampering has been attempted, this information will be reported to the Committee for whatever action it may deem appropriate, which could include disqualification for admission to practice law in California.

CHECKLIST

To ensure proper and complete certification of your laptop computer for use during the examination, please use the following checklist.

- Install SofTest software with ExamSoft.
- Register SofTest. (All necessary exam files will download automatically.)
- Take the Mock Examination.
- Upload Mock Examination Answer File.
- Verify that you have received a total of four (4) emails, each to confirm either receipt of an exam file or the completion of one of the required steps listed above.
- Confirm your laptop computer certification status and download/upload history by going to www.examssoft.com/firstyear and logging in to your account using the Exam Takers box.