

Rule 203. Admission of Graduates of Accredited and Unaccredited Institutions

(a) Bar Examination. The general requirements for permission to sit for the bar examination are:

(1) Receipt of an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university or the receipt of an education which, in the opinion of the Board, is the equivalent of an undergraduate college or university education.

(2) (i) Except as provided in subparagraph 2(ii) of this Rule, completion of the study of law at and receipt without exception of an earned Bachelor of Laws or Juris Doctor degree from a **[n accredited]** law school **that was an accredited law school at the time the applicant matriculated or graduated**. See Rule 205 (relating to admission of graduates of foreign institutions) for standards applicable to graduates of foreign law schools; or

(ii) Completion of the study of law at and receipt without exception of an earned Bachelor of Laws or Juris Doctor degree from a **[n unaccredited]** law school located within the boundaries of the United States of America **that was not an accredited law school either at the time the applicant matriculated or graduated**, provided that the applicant is a member of the bar of a reciprocal state and meets the following qualifications:

(A) Presentation of a certificate from the highest court or agency of such state having jurisdiction over admission to the bar and the practice of law stating that the applicant is in good standing at the bar of such court or such state.

(B) Presentation of proof satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has for a period of five years of the last seven years immediately preceding the date of filing of the application for admission to the bar of this Commonwealth:

(i) engaged in the practice of law in a reciprocal state or states outside this Commonwealth. For purposes of this paragraph, the phrase "engaged in the practice of law" is defined as "devoting a major portion of one's time and energy to the rendering of legal services"; or

(ii) engaged full-time in the teaching of law at one or more accredited law schools in the United States; or

(iii) **engaged primarily in the performance of legal functions while [served] serving** on active duty in the United States military service[,], as a judge advocate **[or law specialist,]** as **[those terms are]** defined in the Uniform Code of Military Justice, 10 U.S.C. **[Sec.] §801**, as amended, regardless of the location of the service.

Service under subparagraphs (i), (ii) and (iii) may be combined to satisfy the five year service requirement of this subparagraph.

(3) Presentation of a certificate of good standing from the highest court or the agency having jurisdiction over admission to the bar and the practice of law in every state or jurisdiction in which the applicant has been admitted to practice law, stating that the applicant is in good professional standing at the bar of such court or state. An applicant who is disbarred or suspended for disciplinary reasons from the practice of law in another jurisdiction at the time of filing an application for permission to sit for the bar exam shall not be eligible to sit for the bar exam.

(b) Admission to the Bar. The general requirements for admission to the bar of this Commonwealth are:

(1) satisfactory completion of the bar examination administered by or under the authority of the Board; and

(2) absence of prior conduct by the applicant which in the opinion of the Board indicates character and general qualifications (other than scholastic) incompatible with the standards expected to be observed by members of the bar of this Commonwealth.

Rule 204. Admission of Domestic Attorneys

As an alternative to satisfying the requirements of Rule 203, an attorney, licensed to practice law in another state, may be admitted to the bar of this Commonwealth if the applicant meets the following requirements:

(1) Has completed the study of law at and received without exception an earned Bachelor of Laws or Juris Doctor degree from a[n **accredited**] law school **that was an accredited law school at the time the applicant matriculated or graduated.**

(2) Is a member of the bar of a reciprocal state on active status at the time of filing of the application for admission to the bar of this Commonwealth.

(3) Presentation of a certificate of good standing from the highest court or the agency having jurisdiction over admission to the bar and the practice of law in every state or jurisdiction in which the applicant has been admitted to practice law, stating that the applicant is in good professional standing at the bar of such court or such state. An applicant who is disbarred or suspended for disciplinary reasons from the practice of law in another jurisdiction at the time of filing an application for admission to the bar shall not be eligible for admission to the bar of this Commonwealth.

(4) Presentation of proof satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has for a period of five years of the last seven years immediately preceding the date of filing of the application for admission to the bar of this Commonwealth devoted a major portion of time and energy to the practice of law in one or more states.

(5) Presentation of proof satisfactory to the Board that the applicant has either taken and passed the bar examination in a reciprocal state or has devoted a major portion of time and energy to the practice of law in a reciprocal state for five years of the last seven years immediately preceding the date on which an application was filed under this Rule.

(6) An applicant who has taken and failed the Pennsylvania bar examination will not be admitted under this Rule. This provision does not apply to individuals who have passed the bar examination upon a subsequent attempt.

(7) Satisfaction of the requirements of Paragraphs (a)(1) and (b)(2) of Rule 203.

(8) Has passed the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam with the score required by the Court to be achieved by successful applicants under Rule 203.

For purposes of this rule, the phrase “practice of law” is defined as engaging in any of the following legal activities, provided such activities were performed in a state in which the applicant was admitted to practice law or in a state that affirmatively permitted such activity by a lawyer not admitted to practice law in the jurisdiction:

(i) Representation of one or more clients in the private practice of law.

(ii) Providing legal services as an attorney with a local, state or federal agency.

(iii) Teaching law full time at an accredited law school, college or university in the United States, provided a substantial portion of such time was spent teaching at an accredited law school.

(iv) Service as a judge in a federal, state or local court of record.

(v) Service full time as a judicial law clerk to any judge of any court of the United States or of any state or territory of the United States.

(vi) Service as corporate counsel.

(vii) **Performing legal functions** while [Service] **serving** on active duty in the United States military service as a judge advocate as defined in the Uniform Code of Military Justice, 10 U.S.C. §801, as amended.

The term “practice of law” shall not include providing legal services in any of the above referenced areas, when such services as undertaken constituted the unauthorized practice of law in the state in which the legal services were performed or in the state in which the clients receiving the unauthorized services were located.