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**Overseas Lawyers Qualification  
Examination**

CIRCULAR 22-64 (SD)

4 February 2022

**22-64 (SD) OVERSEAS LAWYERS QUALIFICATION  
EXAMINATION  
2022 INFORMATION PACKAGE**

Opening Date for Applications: **Friday, 4 February 2022**

Deadline to Submit Applications:

- For applicants applying for a resit of any Head(s) of the 2021 Examination in the 2022 Examination: **Friday, 29 April 2022**
- For all other applicants: **Friday, 18 March 2022**

**I. Applications for the 2022 Overseas Lawyers Qualification Examination**

1. The Information Package for the Overseas Lawyers Qualification Examination (“the Examination”) in 2022 (“2022 Information Package”) is available on the website of the Law Society (“Society”) at [www.hklawsoc.org.hk](http://www.hklawsoc.org.hk).
2. All application forms (i.e. Form A) and supporting documents must be submitted by **FRIDAY, 18 MARCH 2022** except for applicants applying for a resit of any Head(s) of the 2021 Examination in the 2022 Examination. If for good reason(s), the supporting documents are not provided by 18 March 2022, they must be provided by 29 April 2022. Candidates applying for a resit of any Head(s) of the 2021 Examination in the 2022 Examination must submit their Form As and supporting documents by **FRIDAY, 29 APRIL 2022**.
3. The 2022 Information Package has been updated with the following major amendments:

**(i) Part I – Overseas Lawyers Qualification Examination**

Incorporated in 1907 as a company limited by guarantee

## Section C

- ***Paragraph 26 – Applications to resit the Examination***

The list of documents to be submitted by a candidate to resit the Examination has been updated to include, where applicable, a certified copy of the candidate's new passport or new Hong Kong identity card, a statutory declaration confirming that the supporting document(s) submitted by the candidate in support of his or her application to resit refer to and relate to him or her. In addition, the date of issue of the original Certificate(s) of Good Standing of a candidate should not be more than 4 months from the date of receipt of such Certificate(s) of Good Standing or the fresh Form A by the Society, whichever is the later date of receipt by the Society.

## Section F – Guidelines for exemption from sitting all or parts of the Examination

- ***Paragraph 1(a)***

A new section entitled “Tips for presenting prescribed details in tabular format in support of an application for exemption from sitting Head III (Commercial and Company Law)” has been added to provide more guidelines to the applicants on their applications for Head III exemption.

- ***Paragraph 1(a), Remarks in Notes (1)(ii)***

In the context of law firms in Hong Kong (whether Hong Kong firms or foreign firms), it is clarified that only experience gained as a registered foreign lawyer will count. Other experience gained by overseas qualified lawyers working in law firms in Hong Kong will not count.

## Section G – Form A

- ***Paragraph F***

An applicant's Certificate of Good Standing is not valid for the purpose of his or her application for the Examination if the date of its issue is more than 4 months from the date such Certificate of Good Standing or the applicant's Form A is received by the Society, whichever is later.

- ***Paragraph J***

If an applicant's name has been changed and is now different from that shown on his or her supporting documents, the applicant should submit

evidence that the documents refer to him or her, for example, a certified copy of a marriage certificate.

If an applicant's name appears in different versions in the supporting documents, the applicant should submit a statutory declaration confirming that the supporting documents refer to and relate to him or her. Different versions of a name are considered to exist when an applicant's name as appears in a supporting document is different from that shown in the certified copy of his or her passport or Hong Kong identity card. Some examples on what would be considered as different versions of name are given in paragraph J. If an applicant is uncertain as to whether different versions of a name are considered to exist in the supporting documents, he or she may submit a statutory declaration confirming that the supporting documents refer to and relate to him or her in any event.

- ***Paragraph K***

If an applicant claims experience in the practice of law as a registered foreign lawyer in Hong Kong and the applicant had/has had less than 2 years of post-qualification experience in the full-time practice of foreign law at the time of the relevant employment and a supervision condition was/is imposed on him or her pursuant to Rule 5 of the Foreign Lawyers Registration Rules Cap. 159S, the relevant employer's verification letter should also include (i) the name of the supervising solicitor or foreign lawyer, (ii) all of his or her jurisdiction(s) of admission and (iii) the law(s) of the jurisdiction(s) practised by the supervising solicitor or foreign lawyer.

In the case of a company, the employer verification letter should be issued by an officer at managerial level in the company (such as the applicant's supervisor there) on the company's letterhead.

If an applicant was employed by more than one employer during any period of time in the 10 years immediately preceding his or her application to sit the Examination (including any secondment arrangement) and the applicant wishes to rely on his or her experience in the practice of law gained during such period of time in support of his or her application, the applicant must provide the verification letter from those who were his or her employers during such period of time in compliance with the requirements set out in paragraph K. In addition, if there is or are any overlapping period(s) of employment, all employers involved in the overlapping employment must provide verification letters with details as to work arrangements and the number of hours per week the applicant worked for each employer, and how the applicant worked for each employer (including whether or not the applicant was required to be physically present in the relevant employer's office to attend work).

- ***A new section on electronic Certificates of Good Standing***

A new section has been added to set out when electronic Certificates of Good Standing would be accepted by the Society for the purpose of the Examination and how the electronic Certificates of Good Standing should be sent to the Society.

- ***Paragraph 26 of Form A on reference letters***

If an applicant is currently in employment, one of the reference letters must come from a partner of the applicant's current firm or an officer at managerial level of the applicant's current employer (such as his or her supervisor) even if the applicant has been with the firm or the employer for less than two years.

- ***Paragraph 28 of Form A on Exemption***

Footnotes have been added to remind applicants that they are required to check the relevant box(es) to indicate they wish to seek an exemption from sitting Head II (Civil and Criminal Procedure) and/or Head V (Principles of Common Law) even if they consider they are entitled to such exemptions under Rule 4(1) and/or Rule 4(2) of the Overseas Lawyers (Qualification for Admission) Rules (Cap. 159Q).

- ***Paragraph 30 of Form A on declaration and undertaking***

An applicant's declaration must not be witnessed by a solicitor who is an employee or principal in the applicant's employer firm or company.

- ***Date of Form A***

A footnote has been added to clarify that if the date of the statutory declaration in paragraph 30 of an applicant's Form A precedes the date of the applicant's Form A, the information deposited to by the statutory declaration will be validated to the date of the statutory declaration only, not the date of the applicant's Form A.

## **Section I – Sample statutory declaration**

Instructions on signing and witnessing are added to the sample statutory declaration verifying different versions of name.

## II. Enquiries

To align with the guidelines and recommendations of the Centre for Health Protection of the Department of Health, the HKSAR Government, and to reduce the risk of transmission of novel coronavirus infection, all enquiries relating to the applications for the 2022 Examination must be made either by e-mail to [adrg1@hklawsoc.org.hk](mailto:adrg1@hklawsoc.org.hk) and [OLQEAppln@hklawsoc.org.hk](mailto:OLQEAppln@hklawsoc.org.hk) or by telephone on telephone number +852 2805 9103. As part of the infection control measures, the Society regrets it is unable to entertain requests for face-to-face consultation on enquiries.