

Admission to the legal profession



Since the twelfth century, it has been customary for advocates to swear an oath of allegiance upon admission to practice. The Third Charter of Justice provided for the formation of the Supreme Court of New South Wales, the appointment of court officers and the admission of solicitors and barristers.

Among the first cohort of lawyers to be admitted in 1824 were barristers Saxe Bannister, Dr Wardell and William Charles Wentworth. Two centuries later, the Supreme Court continues to be involved in the admission of legal practitioners, both directly and indirectly, through its ceremonies and its representation on the Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) and its various committees.

Between February and December 2024, the Supreme Court held 53 admission ceremonies in the Banco Court, all of which were livestreamed on the Court's YouTube channel. In February 2024, the Court held an admission ceremony in Newcastle with the gracious assistance of the University of Newcastle providing its Hall for the ceremony. A total of 3,013 Australian lawyers were admitted (including 100 admitted under the Trans-Tasman provisions). As part of the Court's bicentennial celebrations, each newly admitted lawyer received a commemorative copy of *Constant Guardian – Changing Times: The Supreme Court of New South Wales, 1824-2024*. The Court acknowledges the assistance of LPAB in making that possible.

Legal Profession Admission Board

The Legal Profession Admission Board (LPAB) is constituted by the *Legal Profession Uniform Law Application Act 2014*. It is a self-funding statutory corporation responsible for:

- determining the eligibility and suitability of people seeking to be admitted as a lawyer in NSW;
- accrediting academic law courses and practical legal training courses in NSW;
- registering, enrolling and examining students in the Board's Diploma in Law Course;
- appointing public notaries in NSW; and
- maintaining the Roll of Lawyers and the Roll of Public Notaries in NSW.

Membership of the Board comprises:

- the Chief Justice of NSW;
- three judges or former judges of the Supreme Court nominated by the Chief Justice;
- a nominee of the Attorney General; and
- nominees of the Council of Australian Deans, the Bar Council, and the Law Society Council.

In 2024 the Court’s nominees were the Hon A R Emmett AO KC (Presiding Member; to 30 June 2024), the Honourable Justice Anthony Payne (Deputy Presiding Member to 30 June 2024; Presiding Member from 1 July 2024), the Honourable Justice Kunc (to 30 June 2024), the Honourable Justice Kirk (Deputy Presiding Member from 1 July 2024) and the Honourable Justice Peden (from 1 July 2024).

**Legal Profession Admission Board
Examinations Committee**

Supreme Court members during 2024
The Hon. Justice Peden (Chair)
The Hon. Justice Chen (Deputy Chair)

**Legal Profession Admission Board
Legal Qualifications Committee**

Supreme Court members during 2024
The Hon. Justice Kirk (Chair)
The Hon. Justice Lonergan (Deputy Chair)

**Legal Services Council
Admissions Committee**

Supreme Court members during 2024
The Hon. A R Emmett AO KC (Chair until 30 June 2024)
The Hon. Justice Kunc (Chair from 1 July 2024)

A detailed account of the Board’s activities and achievements can be found in its Annual Report, which is available for download from www.lpab.nsw.gov.au

Trans-Tasman admissions

Trans-Tasman admissions are lodged in the Supreme Court Registry instead of the Legal Profession Admission Board. Applications from legal practitioners from New Zealand are determined under the *Trans-Tasman Mutual Recognition Act 1997* (the Act).

In 2024, 100 New Zealand practitioners were enrolled under the Act.

2019	71
2020	35
2021	49
2022	61
2023	88
2024	100