EXEMPTION POLICY

The Membership Committee recommends that the Bar Council adopt as a standing general policy the following:

A. That the *prima facie* position is that every applicant should undertake all parts of the Bar Readers' Course, including all of the Seminar Series, all Advocacy Units and the Reading Period.

B. That an applicant for membership of the Bar Association be exempted from the undertaking and obligation of completing the Bar Readers' Course (including the Advocacy Units and the Reading Period) if the applicant provides suitable proof that:

1. immediately prior to the Bar Readers' Course becoming a compulsory condition of new membership of SABA, the applicant was practising solely as a barrister and was not practising as a solicitor and has since that time continued to practise solely as a barrister and not as a solicitor; or

2. after the Bar Readers' Course became a compulsory condition of new membership of SABA, the applicant was an unconditional member of SABA, had resigned that membership and is seeking to re-join SABA;

3. has completed a Bar Readers' Course or equivalent training programme in another jurisdiction which is recognised by the Bar Association as an acceptable alternative to the Bar Readers' Course or Units of it; or

4. has been appointed as King's Counsel or Senior Counsel.

C. That the Membership Committee are permitted to refer to the Bar Council individual cases in its discretion where it considers that an applicant that falls within the above criteria should nonetheless undertake and complete the Bar Readers' Course (or some Unit of the Course).

D. That an applicant for exemption of part of the Units of the Bar Readers' Course on compassionate grounds must be made in writing to the Course Coordinator in advance of the relevant session or exercise and will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Further information may be requested by the Course Coordinator to support the application for an exemption. The Reader may be required to provide or undertake other work in lieu of their attendance.

Reviewed September 2026