



ADVANCED DECISION-WRITING COURSE



The Council of Australasian Tribunals (COAT) launched its **Advanced Decision-Writing course** in February 2023. The course will continue the dates as noted during 2025. 2025 courses are scheduled for 1 March – 30 April; 1 July – 31 August; 1 September – 31 October; and 1 November – 31 December.

Course content

The course consists of a series of interviews with some of Australia's most respected decision writers who discuss their approach to decision-writing:

- Justice Jayne Jagot (High Court of Australia)
- Justice Mark Leeming (NSW Court of Appeal)
- Justice John Griffith (A/ Justice of the NSW Court of Appeal, formerly justice of the Federal Court of Australia)
- Justice Rachel Pepper (NSW Land and Environment Court), and
- Judge Bernard McCabe (Federal Circuit & Family Court of Australia, formerly, Deputy President, Administrative Appeals Tribunal)

Conducted by published author and Tribunal member, Suzanne Leal, the interviews cover a range of topics, including: giving reasons for finding of facts, especially where the evidence is finely balanced and/or involves issues of credit; dealing with voluminous and/or technical material; balancing considerations in the exercise of a discretionary power; dealing with arguments about competing statutory construction, and structuring reasons which involve multiple disputed issues of fact and law.

Each interview is accompanied by a series of exercises which focus on extracts of decisions written by the interviewee. The exercises are designed to illustrate the techniques used by the interviewee and to encourage participants to reflect on their own practice.

Suitability for course

The course is designed for Tribunal members with several years' experience in decision-writing. The course does not cover the basics such as what are adequate reasons, or how to structure reasons for decision. See COAT's website <https://coat.asn.au/> for details on upcoming introductory courses on decision-writing.

Course online format

The course is conducted online, using an easy to navigate software platform. Access to the course is password protected.

Time commitment

Each interview runs for about 45 minutes. The accompanying questions should take about the same amount of time to complete. Most participants should be able to complete the course in 8 hours.

Participants will have access to the course for 8 weeks. The course is self-paced. Participants can complete the course in their own time.

Cost (GST not applicable to NZ)

\$500 (COAT members), plus GST
\$650 (non-members), plus GST.

Members of Tribunals that are financial members of COAT, and individuals who are financial members of a chapter of COAT are eligible for the discounted COAT fee.

Enrolment

COAT's licence to use its software platform limits the number of people who can be enrolled in course at any one time. Depending on the numbers of participants enrolled in other courses, COAT may not be able to accommodate all requests to commence the course on particular date.

COAT has limited online licenses each month for all our courses. Extending access to programs or re-enrolment without payment, can only occur in exceptional circumstances.

To register for this course: complete this form online or complete the form overleaf and return to secretariat@coat.asn.au

Enquiries: Kathryn McKenzie, COAT Secretariat, 0418 281 116; secretariat@coat.asn.au



To enrol in the Advanced Decision-Writing course please complete this form and email to secretariat@coat.asn.au or complete online [CLICK HERE](#)

Name:

Name of Tribunal(s):

Email:

Phone number: Work: Mobile:

Financial member of COAT Chapter

No ☐ Yes ☐

If yes, name chapter:

Your preferred commencement date:

☐ 1 March 2025 ☐ 1 September 2025

☐ 1 July 2025 ☐ 1 November 2025

Method of payment:

Credit card (Mastercard or Visa only) ☐ Mastercard ☐ Visa

Name on card:

Card number: Expiration date: CVC:

Payment amount:

Send invoice to email address:

(if not email address of participant)

If you wish to enrol multiple participants, please request an invoice from the COAT Secretariat secretariat@coat.asn.au and include name and contact details of each participant and preferred commencement date.

I found this really useful and directly applicable to a lot of my work, and was pleased to have these insights and suggestions.

– Participant