
 <p>GENERALITAT VALENCIANA COMISSIÓ TÈCNICA D'EXÀMENS UNIVERSITAT DE VALÈNCIA</p>	<p>PROVA D'ACCÉS A LA UNIVERSITAT PRUEBA DE ACCESO A LA UNIVERSIDAD</p>	 <p>SISTEMA UNIVERSITARI VALENCIÀ SISTEMA UNIVERSITARIO VALENCIANO</p>
CONVOCATÒRIA: EXTRA JULIOL 2025	CONVOCATORIA: EXTRA JULIO 2025	
ASSIGNATURA: ANGLÈS	ASIGNATURA: INGLÉS	

## A NEW START AFTER 60: I GOT DIVORCED AND BECAME A LAWYER

After an interval as Isabella Rossellini's hand model, Elizabeth Barbour went to law school at 54. Now, she is working on 50 domestic violence cases and says her career is a privilege, not a job. Elizabeth Barbour didn't start studying law until she was 54 and had a school-age daughter. "But once I decide to do something, I'm hard to stop," she says.

Law is an atypical later-life career choice. It certainly had no connection with Barbour's first and second vocations, as a hand model and then a property developer. "Law school was hard. It was disheartening," she says. "I was literally everybody's mother's age. I didn't have a cohort of friends. I was like a foreigner. I felt really isolated".

One day, after a negotiation exercise, the professor told her: "I've never had a student be able to work the table like you did". She spent time with family-law attorneys and "began to realize that this would be my area". After graduating, she worked for a firm that dealt with wealthy individuals. "But that's just a lawyer helping you to argue over money," she says. "I didn't want to do that." She became a licensed lawyer at her second attempt. Soon after, at 60, she got a job with the Legal Aid Society in her home town of Roanoke, Virginia. By then, her marriage had ended. In retrospect, she says, going to law school was "a declaration of selfhood".

Now 68, Barbour is working on 50 domestic violence cases. The work is emotionally exhausting – and rewarding. "These amazing women have been kicked around the block and are able to say: 'Enough.' When they come to me, they are ready for a change. I can give them legal help and play an active role in their life as they are transitioning from one place to another." Barbour considers her career a "happy accident". Until she was 54, she had "a freewheeling kind of life – but never without direction". Barbour believes that she has found her calling. Initially, the courtroom was frightening. "But my mum always said: 'Do what you're afraid to do.' These days, the fear has gone. It's more and more rewarding. I love my office. I love my clients. I

see no end to my career. It is a privilege, not a job".

*Adapted from an article by Paula Coccozza, The Guardian, 17-2-2025.*

### Part I. Reading Comprehension

1. Are the following statements true (T) or false (F)? Identify the part of the text that supports your answer by copying the exact passage on the answer sheet. (2 points: 0.5 point each)

a. Elizabeth Barbour was a lawyer before working as a hand model. **F**, "Law is an atypical later-life career choice. It certainly had no connection with Barbour's first and second vocations, as a hand model and then a property developer."

b. Elizabeth believes that being a lawyer is her mission. **T**, "Barbour believes that she has found her calling."

c. Barbour had two different jobs before becoming a lawyer. **T**, "Law is an atypical later-life career choice. It certainly had no connection with Barbour's first and second vocations, as a hand model and then a property developer."

d. When Elizabeth graduated, she worked for rich people. **T**, "After graduating, she worked for a firm that dealt with wealthy individuals."

2. Answer the following questions using your own words but taking into account the information in the text. (2.5 points: 1.25 point each)

A. Why does Barbour say that Law school was a hard experience?

**Evidence from the text:** "Law school was hard. It was disheartening," and "I was literally everybody's mother's age. I didn't have a cohort of friends. I was like a foreigner. I felt really isolated." (Paragraph 2)

**Suggested answer:** Barbour says Law school was hard because she felt much older than the other students and did not have a group of friends there. She felt lonely and out of place, almost like a foreigner.

B. How does Elizabeth describe her work as a lawyer now?

**Evidence from the text:** "The work is emotionally exhausting – and rewarding," and "It is a privilege, not a job." (Paragraph 4)

**Suggested answer:** "Elizabeth describes her work as emotionally demanding but very rewarding. She helps women who are going through difficult situations, especially domestic violence cases, and she feels that her career is a privilege rather than just a job."

3. Find a synonym for each of the four words below from these six options. All words are underlined in the text (1 point: 0.25 point each)

isolated      cohort      rewarding      amazing      attempt      freewheeling

- a. group → **cohort**
- b. lonely → **isolated**
- c. extraordinary → **amazing**
- d. self-sufficient → **freewheeling** (This is the trickiest one. "Freewheeling" usually means independent, relaxed, and not strictly controlled. In this context, it is the closest option to "self-sufficient," because Barbour describes having "a freewheeling kind of life" before becoming a lawyer.)

4. Choose a, b, or c, in each question below. Only one choice is correct. (1.5 points: 0.5 point each)

1. Elizabeth Barbour says that ...

a) **her work is an opportunity rather than a job. Evidence from the text: "It is a privilege, not a job." (Paragraph 1)**

b) her duty is to find a privileged work. **X** This is wrong because the word "privilege" refers to how Barbour feels about her career, not to the type of work she has to find.

c) her job is to work for privileged women. **X** This is wrong because Barbour works mainly with women affected by domestic violence, not with privileged women.

d) her dream is to become an important judge. **X** This is wrong because the text never mentions that she wants to become a judge. Her current work is as a lawyer, and she says she loves that career.

2. One of Barbour's professors ...

a) made her feel isolated and very old. **X** This is wrong because the text says Barbour felt isolated and older than the other students, but it does not say that the professor made her feel that way.

b) **praised her negotiation skills. Evidence from the text: "I've never had a student be able to work the table like you did." (Paragraph 3)**

c) complimented her on the way she sat at the table. **X** This is wrong because "work the table" is not literal. It means she managed the negotiation well.

d) told her that she would not become a lawyer. **X** This is wrong because the professor actually praised her performance; there is no negative prediction about her future.



3. For Barbour, the courtroom...

a) used to be frightening but it isn't anymore. Evidence from the text: "Initially, the courtroom was frightening," and "These days, the fear has gone." (Paragraph 4)

b) Is still frightening. **X** This is wrong because the text clearly says that she no longer feels afraid.

c) was difficult and she took her mum with her. **X** This is wrong because her mother is only mentioned as someone who gave her advice. The text does not say her mother went to the courtroom with her.

d) was scary for everyone including her and her mum. **X** This is wrong because the text only talks about Barbour's own fear. It does not say everyone was scared, and it does not say her mother was scared.

Part II. Composition (130 to 150 words approximately) (3 points)

5. Choose one of these two topics and write a composition about it.

### MODEL ESSAY OPTION A

A. Do you think that it is possible to change your career later in life? You may include the pros and cons of such a change in your answer.

**Note:** We have **bolded** the connectors, linkers, and useful phrases in the essay

Short  
introduction,  
2- 3 lines

**Nowadays**, many people believe that changing careers later in life is risky. **However**, I **strongly believe that** it is possible **because** adults can learn new skills and use their previous experience in a different field.

Main body  
divided into 2  
or máx. 3  
paragraphs

**Firstly**, a career change can be very positive. It may give people a second chance to follow their real interests, improve their salary or feel more motivated. **For example**, someone who has worked with people for years may become a good teacher, nurse or lawyer **because** they have already developed communication, patience and empathy. These qualities can help them adapt more easily, **even if** they need specific training.


**Nevertheless**, there are also disadvantages. Starting again can be stressful, **especially if** the person needs to study, spend money or compete with younger workers. **In addition**, some people may feel insecure at first.

**Short**

**conclusion, 2-3 lines**

**In conclusion**, changing careers later in life is not easy, **but** it can be a brave and rewarding decision **if** the person is determined and realistic.

**(162 words)**

 Let's have a look in more detail why this model essay is a good example of writing.

 **Prompt breakdown:**

1. Clear opinion about changing careers later in life.
2. Explanation that adults can learn new skills.
3. Reference to using previous experience in a new profession.
4. Mention of advantages: personal interests, salary and motivation.
5. Developed example showing how previous skills can help in a new career.
6. Mention of disadvantages: stress, studying, money and competition with younger workers.
7. Reference to emotional difficulty or insecurity.
8. Clear conclusion connected to the topic.

PROMPT POINT	COVERED?	WHERE IT APPEARS IN THE ESSAY
Clear introduction to the topic	✓	"Nowadays, many people believe that changing careers later in life is risky."
Clear personal opinion	✓	"However, I strongly believe that it is possible..."
Explanation that adults can learn new skills	✓	"...because adults can learn new skills..."
Reference to using previous experience in a	✓	"...and use their previous experience in a different field."



different field		
Main body divided into clear paragraphs	✓	One paragraph for advantages and one paragraph for disadvantages.
Advantage 1: following real interests	✓	"It may give people a second chance to follow their real interests..."
Advantage 2: improving salary	✓	"...improve their salary..."
Advantage 3: feeling more motivated	✓	"...or feel more motivated."
Developed example connected to the topic	✓	"For example, someone who has worked with people for years may become a good teacher, nurse or lawyer..."
Explanation of transferable skills	✓	"...communication, patience and empathy."
Explanation of how previous skills help in a new career	✓	"These qualities can help them adapt more easily..."
Reference to the need for training	✓	"...even if they need specific training."

Mention of disadvantages	✓	"Nevertheless, there are also disadvantages."
Disadvantage 1: stress	✓	"Starting again can be stressful..."
Disadvantage 2: studying	✓	"...especially if the person needs to study..."
Disadvantage 3: spending money	✓	"...spend money..."
Disadvantage 4: competition with younger workers	✓	"...or compete with younger workers."
Emotional difficulty or insecurity	✓	"In addition, some people may feel insecure at first."
Clear conclusion	✓	"In conclusion, changing careers later in life is not easy..."
Final idea connected to the opinion	✓	"...but it can be a brave and rewarding decision if the person is determined and realistic."
Appropriate length	✓	162 words.

## MODEL ESSAY OPTION B

B. What would you like to do for a living? Think of your dream job.

**Note:** We have **bolded** the connectors, linkers, and useful phrases in the essay

<p>Short introduction, 2- 3 lines</p>	<p><b>Nowadays</b>, choosing a future job is <b>one of the most important decisions</b> in a person's life. There are many professions I find interesting, <b>but</b> my dream job would be to become a lawyer <b>because</b> I like helping people and defending their rights.</p>
<p>Main body divided into 2 or máx. 3 paragraphs</p>	<p><b>Firstly</b>, I think this job would be very rewarding. Lawyers can support people who are going through difficult situations, give them advice and help them solve serious problems. <b>For example</b>, if someone has been treated unfairly at work or has a family problem, a lawyer can guide them and make sure their voice is heard.</p> <p><b>However</b>, I also know that becoming a lawyer is not easy. It requires years of study, effort and discipline. <b>In addition</b>, lawyers need to be responsible, patient and good at communicating with different people.</p>
<p>Short conclusion, 2-3 lines</p>	<p><b>In conclusion</b>, I would like to work as a lawyer <b>because</b> it is a challenging but useful profession. <b>Although</b> it requires hard work, I believe it would make me feel proud.</p> <p>(162 words)</p>

💡 Let's have a look in more detail why this model essay is a good example of writing.

📌 **Prompt breakdown:**

1. Clear answer to the question about the writer's dream job.
2. Explanation of why the writer would like to become a lawyer.
3. Reference to helping people and defending their rights.
4. Explanation of why this job would be rewarding.
5. Developed example showing how a lawyer can help someone.
6. Mention of a specific situation where a lawyer may be useful.

7. Reference to the difficulties of becoming a lawyer.
8. Mention of the personal qualities needed for this profession.
9. Clear conclusion connected to the topic.

PROMPT POINT	COVERED?	EVIDENCE FROM COMPOSITION
Clear dream job	✓	"my dream job would be to become a lawyer"
Reason for choosing this job	✓	"because I like helping people and defending their rights"
Helping people	✓	"Lawyers can support people who are going through difficult situations"
Giving advice and solving problems	✓	"give them advice and help them solve serious problems"
Rewarding profession	✓	"this job would be very rewarding"
Specific example	✓	"if someone has been treated unfairly at work or has a family problem"
How a lawyer can help	✓	"a lawyer can guide them and make sure their voice is heard"
Difficulty of the profession	✓	"becoming a lawyer is not easy"
Study, effort and discipline	✓	"It requires years of study, effort and



		discipline"
Useful personal qualities	✓	"responsible, patient and good at communicating with different people"
Final opinion/conclusion	✓	"it is a challenging but useful profession"
Personal feeling about the job	✓	"I believe it would make me feel proud"

