PREPARING FOR LAW SCHOOL

Law is the profession of interpreting laws, applying them to client situations and providing legal advice. It involves informing clients of their legal rights and responsibilities and providing representation in situations such as negotiations, courts and tribunals. The legal profession involves a significant amount of research and preparation of legal documentation and contracts. There are many areas of law specialization, some of which include business, taxation, intellectual property, criminal, environmental, human rights, family, labour and litigation law. Students are need not have a specific interest in one of these areas to apply to law school.

WHAT UNIVERSITY BACKGROUND IS REQUIRED?

Gaining admission to law school is competitive. Requirements to apply vary for each law school but often start with a combination of a candidate’s GPA (minimum B+/A average) and LSAT score (minimum of 75-85th percentile). Additionally, admission committees also consider a candidate’s extracurricular activities and work experience when evaluating prospective students. A strong personal statement and solid academic references from professors are also typically required. It is prudent to verify all information about admissions requirements and processes directly with each faculty.

Many law faculties maintain separate admission categories for applicants who are mature in age, aboriginal, as well as for applicants with disabilities. These access categories may have slightly different admission requirements. Each applicant is considered and compared with others in the same category.

WHAT IS THE LSAT?

The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a half-day standardized test issued by the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) to measure skills considered essential for success in law school. The test consists of five 35-minute sections of multiple-choice. The sections include reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, and logical reasoning sections. A fifth section is used to pretest new test questions. A 35-minute writing sample is also included at the end of the test. The LSAT is offered four times a year.

Tip: Review an LSAT guide such as those published by Kaplan, PowerScore, and/or Princeton Review for sample questions and solutions to help you understand the skills assessed in the LSAT. Once you are ready to study for the LSAT, begin to practice from actual and previously administered LSATs. Official LSAT PrepTests can be purchased at: http://www.lsac.org/. Free LSAT preparation offered through the U of T Law School Access Program, for high-potential, low-income undergraduate students and recent university graduates. Further details can be found via: https://www.law.utoronto.ca/admissions/youth-outreach/lsap.

Free LSAT Prep is also available online through the Khan Academy: https://www.khanacademy.org/prep/lsat

HOW TO REGISTER FOR THE LSAT

Applicants can register online by visiting the LSAC website: www.lsac.org. Check the LSAC website for test dates, locations and deadlines.

Tip: Check with each law school regarding deadlines by which the LSAT must be written and consider writing at an earlier sitting to provide flexibility should you choose to take the test again.

APPLYING TO ONTARIO UNIVERSITIES

There are 17 law schools in Canada with seven in Ontario. Within Ontario, it is common to receive 2,500+ applications for 160-290 spots. Given the degree of competition, students are advised to consider and prepare for a variety of career options rather than having a narrow and exclusive focus on law. Once admitted, the cost of law school in Canada ranges greatly and is dependent on each educational institution. For the 2018-2019 year, the cost of tuition ranged between $18,584 (University of Ottawa) to $38,230 (University of Toronto).

The application process is handled centrally by the Ontario Law School Application Service (OLSAS) http://www.ouac.on.ca/olsas.

- In addition to the online application, refer to each university’s admission requirements for supplementary information that might be required. Applications are due through OLSAS November 1, 2019.
- It is recommended that applicants allow between 5-25 hours for preparation of their application and if a personal statement is required, allow plenty of time for editing and refining.
- Non-refundable OLSAS application fee is $200.00 Canadian, plus $100.00 for each school applied to.
- Refer to the OLSAS website for a listing of upcoming Law School information events/sessions in the fall: www.ouac.on.ca/events-olsas/

TIP: Preview the online OLSAS application (http://www.ouac.on.ca/olsas) at least one year prior to applying to law school by creating a "dummy" account. This will give you an idea of what is required and will help you understand the process of applying in following year(s).

FACULTIES IN OTHER PROVINCES AND ABROAD

Those considering law schools outside of Ontario or Canada should enquire about application processes for each faculty of law in those provinces / countries.
Qualifying to practice in Canada with an international law degree requires a number of accreditation steps before articling / Law Practice Placement and the bar exams. For full details consult:


**PRACTICING LAW IN ONTARIO**

To practice Law in Ontario, the Law Society of Upper Canada requires successful completion of:

- An accredited three-year Juris Doctor (J.D) program
- 10 months of Articling – supervised work (usually paid) with a law firm or a Law Practice Placement (consisting of a 4 month training program and a 4 month placement) [http://www.lpp.ryerson.ca/](http://www.lpp.ryerson.ca/)
- A self-study course on Professional Responsibility and Practice (approx. 30 hours to complete)
- Two full-day multiple choice Bar Exams

**Ontario Law Schools:**
- University of Toronto [www.law.utoronto.ca](http://www.law.utoronto.ca)
- University of Ottawa [http://llmphd.uottawa.ca/](http://llmphd.uottawa.ca/)
- Queen’s University [http://law.queensu.ca/](http://law.queensu.ca/)
- University of Western Ontario [http://www.law.uwo.ca/](http://www.law.uwo.ca/)
- University of Windsor Ontario [http://www.uwindon.ca/law/](http://www.uwindon.ca/law/)
- York University - Osgoode Hall [www.osgoode.yorku.ca](http://www.osgoode.yorku.ca)
- Lakehead University [http://www.law.lakeheadu.ca/](http://www.law.lakeheadu.ca/)
- Ryerson University [https://www.ryerson.ca/law/](https://www.ryerson.ca/law/)

**Tip:** Detailed information about admission requirements and application procedures should be obtained from the individual Faculties of Law. For an overview summarizing law school requirements, application categories and specialty programs refer to: [https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/olsas-program-requirements/](https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/olsas-program-requirements/) and/or [https://www.lsac.org/jd/choosing-a-law-school/canadian](https://www.lsac.org/jd/choosing-a-law-school/canadian)

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**CAREER CENTRE RESOURCES**

**Graduate and Professional Schools Fair:** Typically held in the 2nd or 3rd week of September annually, 10:00am – 2:00pm at the RAWC. Speak with representatives from Ontario and other law schools. See the Events Calendar for a list of faculties attending the fair.

**Law Schools Admissions: The Inside Scoop:** A detailed panel discussion with representatives from law programs in Ontario. Usually held the same day as the Graduate and Professional Schools Fair.

**Law School Information Session:** If you are thinking of a career in law, attend this information session on preparing your application for faculties of law in Ontario. One or two sessions are offered in each of the fall and winter terms.

**Extern / Job Shadowing Program:** A unique career exploration program to investigate career interests over a 1 to 5-day voluntary placement in November, February and June. [https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/jsp-students](https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/jsp-students)

**Career Centre Print and On-line Resources:**

- “Cracking the LSAT” (Princeton Review) – Techniques and Strategies for scoring higher.
- “Get Into Law School: A Strategic Approach” (a Kaplan publication) – Advice regarding the admissions process and tips for preparing to apply to law school.
- “Mastering the Personal Statement” – Understand the process of writing a personal statement. Also, try our e module found on our website under Further Education, Resources and Links [http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/events-services](http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/events-services) Make an appointment to have your statement reviewed at the Career Centre.
- Master the LSAT by Jeff Kolb – part of our e-book collection for download (find under section: “Do I have what I need to get into Grad School?”): [http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/career-exploration/career-resource-library](http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/career-exploration/career-resource-library)
- Law and Legal Careers Binders – Career information related to law

**Alumni Profiles** – Learn about the careers paths of Alumni practicing Law: [http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/alumni-profiles/by-industry](http://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/alumni-profiles/by-industry) (four Lawyer Profiles)


**Individual Appointments** – Get advice and information to plan your law career, explore alternatives, gain relevant experience and critique your personal statement. Call (905) 828-5451 or drop by the Career Centre at DV 3094

Contact law schools’ admissions offices to clarify specific questions not covered on their websites.

Information is subject to change. Consult the original sources for the most up to date information. (Updated Sept. 2019)