

**CAREERS IN LAW**

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**OVERVIEW**

Law is a profession that touches upon a number of different areas and therefore there are a number of different law streams. Some of these streams are listed below.

* **Corporate/Commercial Law** - involves organizing businesses, mostly contracts, liability, or intellectual property.
* **Tax Law -** generally involves assisting businesses with their taxes and advising clients and individuals about tax loopholes.
* **Intellectual Property Law -** is the law of copyrights, trademarks, and patents
* **Family Law** - involves arranging for people’s day to day family issues, such as adoption, divorce, and wills.
* **Criminal Law** – used in the cases where people commit crimes
* **Constitutional Law** - involves matters pertaining to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms such as ensuring individual rights under the Charter and the division of powers between the federal government and the provincial governments.
* **Civil Litigates** - deal mostly with claims involving wrongdoing: tort law, and contracts.
* **International Law** – involves working with multinational corporations and dealing with international issues such as human rights.
* **General Practitioners** – perform a variety of tasks for individual, smaller clients such as drawing up real estate deals, contracts, as well as family law concerns.
* **Labour/Employment Law -** From a management perspective, labour lawyers advise their clients (employers) on employment law such as working conditions, wrongful dismissal etc. From a labour perspective, labour lawyers work with individuals, or unions advising members how to pursue various claims (such as pursuing workers compensation, human rights or labour code violations, or wrongful dismissal suits).
* **Environmental law** – Work towards public, corporate and government interests regarding the environment

In addition to the many different types of law, there are also many nontraditional legal careers for which a law degree can be useful. This can include working for a non-profit organization or a non- governmental organization, an advocacy group, a community legal clinic or work in the government in policy.

In addition, you can go on to do your master’s degree or PhD degree in law and teach, or do law-related things like becoming a professor, or a career counselor at a law school. Lawyers targeting politics typically practice for a number of years prior to entering the political realm. Many universities also offer joint law programs. For instance, the University of Toronto Faculty of Law provides students with the option to combine their law degree with other subject areas such as Social Work.

**APPLYING TO/ATTENDING LAW SCHOOL**

## What University Background is Required

Gaining admission into law school is competitive. To be considered for law school, candidates must have at least 2-3 years of undergraduate study. The requirements vary for each law school, however the basic requirements usually include a combination of a candidate’s GPA (minimum of B+/A average) and LSAT score (minimum of 70-85). Many law schools have regular, mature and aboriginal categories for admission as well. Each applicant is considered and compared with others in the same category. In addition, most law schools also consider their candidates’ extracurricular activities and past work experiences.

## What is the LSAT?

The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is issued by the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) and is administered in two parts. The first part is a half-day multiple choice test that is designed to test reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, and logical reasoning. The second part is a 35-minute unscored written essay. The LSAT is an integral part of law school admission consideration in the United States, Canada, and a growing number of other countries.

LSAT registration can be completed online through the [LSAC](https://www.lsac.org/) website, or through phone at 215-968-1001. More information about test dates, locations, and deadlines can be found on the website.

**Applying to Ontario Universities**

The admission process is handled centrally by the Ontario Law School Application Service ([OLSAS](https://www.ouac.on.ca/olsas/)), a division of the Ontario Universities Application Centre (OUAS).

It is a good idea to order an application from OLSAS at least one year prior to applying to Law School. This will give you an idea of what is required and will help you start the process as early as possible. It is also recommended that applicants allow from between 5-25 hours of preparation time in advance of submitting their application.

**Ontario Law Schools**

* [Bora Laskin Faculty of Law](https://www.lakeheadu.ca/programs/departments/law)(Lakehead University)
* [Osgoode Hall Law School](https://www.osgoode.yorku.ca/)(York University)
* [University of Ottawa](https://www.osgoode.yorku.ca/)
* [Queen’s University](https://law.queensu.ca/)
* [Ryerson University](https://www.ryerson.ca/law/)
* [University of Toronto](https://www.law.utoronto.ca/)
* [Western University](https://www.law.uwo.ca/)
* [University of Windsor](https://www.uwindsor.ca/law)

The first-level common law degree in Canada is the *Juris Doctor* (J.D.), which takes 3 years to complete. However, this alone is not sufficient to permit a candidate practice law.

**Practicing Law in Ontario**

To be admitted to the bar in Ontario, you must write and pass the provincial bar exam, and either ***article*** or complete the ***Law Practice Program***.

**Licensing Examinations**

Candidates must successfully pass the Barrister and Solicitor examinations administered by the Law Society of Ontario, which consist of self-study, open-book exams, each about 7 hours in length. These examinations are meant to test competencies for entry level practice.

**Articling**

Articling entails working under the supervision of a licensed and qualified lawyer, referred to as an articling principle, for 10 months. Students are required to find an articling principle on their own, and assuring they’re approved by the law society. Resources such as the Articling Registry and Mentorship Program are provided by the [Law Society of Ontario](https://lso.ca/becoming-licensed/lawyer-licensing-process/experiential-training#articling-program-5) to help students with this process.

**Law Practice Program**

The LPP is an 8-month program, consisting of a 4-month training course and a 4-month work placement. The English language program is offered by Ryerson University and the French language program is offered by the University of Ottawa.

**BUILDING EXPERIENCE**

In order to gain an edge in the law profession, it is essential for one to gain experience through work, community volunteering and extra-curricular activities. The following are some ways:

## School Clubs/Societies

A great way to gain exposure to applying to law school and the law profession is to take part in the activities organized by groups on campus. A club on campus which focuses on this is the Political Science and Pre-Law Association. For more information about this club, check out their website at <https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/political-science/psla>. This group organizes speaker sessions, mock LSAT sessions, and discussion groups for students at the UTM campus.

Getting involved with various groups on campus will allow you to build upon essential skills needed for the law profession such as public speaking, debating skills, etc.

## Part-Time/Full-Time Work

Part-time/Full-time work in different settings has the potential to allow one to gain first-hand experience into the day-to-day life of a lawyer and gain necessary skills. [CLNx](https://clnx.utoronto.ca/) has many job postings related to the law profession. You can also take a look at some de-listed positions as well to get an idea of the kinds of potential work available.

## Employer Directories

Taking advantage of employer directories will help you in networking with individuals who are already practicing law. Networking is an essential skill needed for the law profession. The following are some directories that you can take advantage of:

### Canadian Law List (Canada Law Book)

<http://www.canadianlawlist.com/>

### Canadian Legal Lexpert Directory

<https://www.lexpert.ca/directory>

### Martindale-Hubbell Canada

<https://www.martindale.com/by-location/ontario-lawyers/>

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

**Law School Resources**

**Law School Admission Council**

<https://www.lsac.org/>

**OLSAS Requirements Quick Links**

<https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/olsas-program-requirements/>

**Khan Academy LSAT Prep**

<https://www.khanacademy.org/prep/lsat>

**Career Centre E-Books (under *LSAT and Law School*)**

<https://guides.library.utoronto.ca/c.php?g=373504&p=2526368>

**Oxford Seminars Law School Profiles**

<https://www.oxfordseminars.ca/LSAT/lsat_profiles.php>

**Canadian Law Schools**

<https://www.lsac.org/choosing-law-school/find-law-school/canadian-law-schools>

**Councils and Federations**

**International Bar Association**

<https://www.ibanet.org/PPID/Constituent/Student_Committee/qualify_lawyer_Ontario.aspx>

**Law Society of Ontario**

<https://lso.ca/home>

**The Canadian Bar Association**

<https://www.cba.org/Home>

**Federation of Law Societies of Canada**

<http://www.flsc.ca/>

**National Committee on Accreditation**

<https://nca.legal/>

**Finding Work**

**Federal Student Work Experience Program**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission/jobs/services/recruitment/students/federal-student-work-program.html>

**Public Service Recruitment Program**

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission/jobs/services/recruitment.html>

**Ontario Internship Program**

<https://www.internship.gov.on.ca/mbs/sdb/intern.nsf/LkpWebContent/ePublishedHOME>

**Canadian Bar Association – Career Alternatives for Lawyers**

<https://www.cba.org/Publications-Resources/CBA-Practice-Link/Young-Lawyers/2014/Career-Alternatives-for-Lawyers>

**Exploring Graduate Programs**

<https://www.universitystudy.ca/>

<https://www.gradschools.com/>

<https://www.crimsl.utoronto.ca/graduate>

<http://www.loyalistcollege.com/programs-and-courses/full-time-programs/paralegal/>

<https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/programs>

**Other Resources**

<https://www.campusaccess.com/education/law-careers.html>

**UTM Career Centre**

<https://www.utm.utoronto.ca/careers/further-education/professional-schools/law>

**Canadian Law Students Blog**

<https://lawstudents.ca/forums/>