

FACULTY OF ARTS STUDENT EXPERIENCE CENTRE

# BEFORE ENTERING THE LAW PROFESSION

There are many different types of lawyers. Some work for the government and prosecute people accused of crimes, while others defend people accused of crimes. Corporate lawyers work in business-related areas, such as taxation, commercial transactions, and the incorporation of new companies. Their work involves fewer court appearances and more negotiation and careful reading of contracts. Some lawyers specialize in litigation of non-criminal matters such as wrongful dismissal suits and negligence actions. These lawyers are known as civil litigators. Whatever the specialty, all lawyers share the main task of advising clients of their legal rights and responsibilities and preventing any potential problems.

According to [careercruising.com](http://careercruising.com), after completing law school, lawyers must work for approximately one year as an articling student before they can write the bar exams. Most articling students receive a salary for their work. Their earnings range from about \$30,000 to more than \$75,000 a year, depending on the employer. In general, lawyers make between \$50,000 and \$200,000 a year. The national median income is around \$97,000 a year. Before you get excited about the earning potential, you need to know how to apply to Law School. Please refer to the link below to ensure that you have all the information and start your preparation.

## Application Instructions and Preparation

Applicants are expected to become familiar with and observe the application procedures for each law school/program to which they are applying. Applicants should read the entire instruction booklet and the program-specific information provided by each law school before completing the application. Link here for the [Ontario Law School Application Service](http://www.ouac.on.ca/docs/olsas/olsas_e.pdf) (OLSAS):

[http://www.ouac.on.ca/docs/olsas/b\\_olsas\\_e.pdf](http://www.ouac.on.ca/docs/olsas/b_olsas_e.pdf). In general, completed applications for admission must be received at OLSAS no later than **November 1st**. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the application, and all required supporting documentation, is received at OLSAS by the required deadlines. Applicants are required to submit a personal profile/statement for all law schools, a supplemental form for some schools, transcripts, LSAT score and others (see OLSAS website). Applicants must ensure that they complete these forms according to the instructions provided. Failure to comply with the admission requirements and deadlines may result in the cancellation of the application.

Application fees are non-refundable. See [http://www.ouac.on.ca/docs/olsas/rc\\_olsas\\_e.pdf](http://www.ouac.on.ca/docs/olsas/rc_olsas_e.pdf) for grade requirements.

## Law School Admission Test (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 sections include one reading comprehension, one analytical reasoning, two logical reasoning, and a fifth section used to pretest new test items and pre-equate new test forms. For more information, link to the [Law School Admission Council](http://www.lsac.org/) website - <http://www.lsac.org/>.

## Non-Academic Requirements

- **Work Experience , Community Involvement & Personal Accomplishments**  
Work experience is analyzed for signs of organizational, administrative skills and initiative. Vocational, professional or other special qualifications will be considered and assessed for indications of commitment to the community. Other factors can include extracurricular activities, hobbies and special accomplishments.
- **Career Objectives & Personal Considerations**  
The applicant's career objectives, including how and where the legal education will be employed, are considered. Personal factors affecting the applicant are recognized, such as illness, bereavement, unusual family responsibilities or other such circumstances which may have some bearing on the applicant's qualifications.

## Reflection Exercise

Below are some questions prepared by Harvard University. How would you answer these questions?

- What personal attributes are needed to be successful in a legal career?
- What is satisfying and dissatisfying about the field of law?
- What are the typical practice areas and the range of jobs you can consider with a law degree?
- Why did you decide to go to law school? Has your career developed as expected?

## Related Careers

- Legal department director (in [0114](#) *Other administrative services managers* )
- Legal firm manager (in [0125](#) *Other business services managers* )
- Notaries public and trademark agents who are not lawyers (in [4211](#) *Paralegal and related occupations* )
- Patent agents who are not lawyers or Quebec notaries (in [4161](#) *Natural and applied science policy researchers, consultants and program officers* )
- Social Workers ([4152](#))

For more information, visit [Human Resources and Skills Development Canada](http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx) <http://www5.hrsdc.gc.ca/NOC/English/NOC/2011/Welcome.aspx> – and input the four-digit code in the box “Quick Search Enter a 4-digit number (required)”.

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