

Information

Law Society Admission Program

Law Society
of British Columbia

845 Cambie Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada V6B 4Z9
t 604.669.2533 | BC toll-free 1.800.903.5300
Registration & Licensee Services 604.605.5311 | f
604.687.0135
TTY 604.443.5700
Email registration@lsbc.org | lawsociety.bc.ca

About the Program

What is the Law Society Admission Program?

In order to be called to the British Columbia bar, applicants are required to complete a 12-month training program. The program, called the Law Society Admission Program (LSAP), consists of:

- nine months of articles; and
- successful completion of a 10 week full-time Professional Legal Training Course (PLTC).

The LSAP is supervised and administered by the Credentials Committee of the Law Society of British Columbia. This information sheet provides an overview of the LSAP (both articles and PLTC), as well as instructions on how to enroll in the program.

Who is eligible for enrolment in the LSAP?

To be eligible for enrolment in the LSAP, an applicant must provide:

- proof of graduation from a common law faculty of a Canadian university; or
- a Certificate of Qualification issued by the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA); for more information, see the information sheet [NCA Certificate of Qualification](#).

Who is eligible to act as a principal?

To be eligible to serve as a principal to an articled student, a lawyer must:

- have engaged in the full-time* practice of law in Canada for at least five of the eight years immediately preceding the articling start date; and
- be engaged in full-time practice at the time of the application to act as a principal; and
- not be prohibited from practising law under [Rule 2-89](#), respecting returning to practice after an absence.

*Any period in which the lawyer has been engaged in part-time practice is counted at a rate of 50 percent for the purposes of the full-time practice requirement.

Of the five years that the lawyer has spent in the active practice of law immediately preceding the articling start date, at least three of those years must have been spent practising in:

- British Columbia; or
- Yukon Territory, while the lawyer was a member of the Law Society of British Columbia.

A lawyer may act as principal to no more than two articulated students at one time.

In exceptional circumstances, the Credentials Committee may allow a lawyer who does not qualify (under [Rule 2-57](#)) to act as a principal, or to act as principal to more than two articulated students at one time.

Is it necessary to have an articling position secured to apply for enrolment in the LSAP?

Yes. Applicants must have a commitment of articles before applying for enrolment in the LSAP. The onus of obtaining an articling position is entirely on the applicant.

British Columbia law students should contact the Career Services Office at their law school:

- [Careers Services Office, Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia](#)
- [Law Careers Office, Faculty of Law, University of Victoria](#)
- [Career Services, Faculty of Law, Thompson Rivers University](#)

Canadian law students attending other law schools should contact the Career Services Office at their law school.

The following sources may assist NCA applicants:

- [The Canadian Bar Association, BC Branch](#)
- [The Career Services Office at the Peter A. Allard School of Law, University of British Columbia](#) can order a [Legal Careers Guide](#) which provides advice on the articling job search in British Columbia.

Admission to the program

How do I enroll in the LSAP?

You must submit your application package and fees for enrolment in the LSAP to the Law Society **at least 30 days before your proposed enrolment start date.**

You must also submit a separate application form for registration in the PLTC to the Law Society before the deadline for the session requested.

Details on how to make these applications are below.

What documents are required to enroll in the LSAP?

The LSAP application package must be completed and filed with the Law Society **at least 30 days before** an applicant's LSAP enrolment start date: see [Law Society Rule 2-54](#). Applicants must submit the following:

- Application: Law Society Admission Program Enrolment, including an attached photograph;
- Articling Agreement;
- Articling Skills and Practice Checklist;
- **Official transcript** sent directly from the university showing the **actual granting** of the law degree and grades, or NCA Certificate of Qualification if the applicant's legal qualifications have been acquired outside Canada; and
- enrolment fee (cheques payable and sent to the Law Society of British Columbia) of **\$3,018.75**

Recent graduates may submit an official transcript at a later date only if the university has not yet processed the granting of the applicant's degree in time for the LSAP enrolment application deadline. In this case, the applicant must provide a letter from the Dean confirming that all requirements have been met. The official transcript must also be submitted **as soon as it is available**.

The onus is on the applicant to ensure that all documentation is complete and filed with the Law Society **at least 30 days before** the proposed enrolment start date. This is not the responsibility of the proposed principal.

What is the fee?

The current fee for enrolment in the LSAP, including the PLTC, is \$3,018.75 (\$2,875 plus GST). This fee is subject to change. The enrolment fee is payable to the Law Society of British Columbia and must be received **at least 30 days before** the enrolment start date.

Can I enroll in the LSAP if I am a member of another Canadian law society?

Members of other Canadian law societies are eligible to apply for call and admission in British Columbia as transfer applicants and may not be required to complete the LSAP. If you are a member of another law society and choose to enroll in the LSAP rather than pursue an application for transfer, you must:

- provide a letter to the Law Society confirming that you are aware of your options and have chosen the LSAP route; and

- pay a fee of \$4,488.75 (\$4,275, plus GST), which includes an unsubsidized PLTC component.

If you decide to change to a transfer applicant during the LSAP period, you must provide a complete transfer application and transfer application fee of \$1,207.50 (\$1,150, plus GST) at least 30 days before your proposed call date.

For more information on applying for call and admission on transfer, see the information sheet for [Transfers](#).

Can I obtain credit for clerking or time spent articling or practising elsewhere?

The regular nine-month articling term can be reduced by the completion of:

- a clerkship at the Supreme Court of Canada, British Columbia Court of Appeal or Supreme Court, Federal Court of Canada, or the Tax Court of Canada;
- a clerkship at a superior court in another Canadian jurisdiction;
- articles in another Canadian jurisdiction; or
- practice experience in a common law jurisdiction outside Canada.

Applicants may be eligible for a maximum reduction of five months in the nine-month articling term, resulting in a minimum articling period of four months. For details, see the information sheet [Reductions in the Articling Term and Exemption from PLTC](#).

Can I complete my articles on a part-time basis?

You may apply to complete some or all of your articles on a part-time basis by submitting the following to the Law Society **at least two months** before your proposed enrolment start date:

- the enrolment application and enrolment fees; and
- a letter from you and your prospective principal setting out:
 - your principal's express approval of the part-time arrangements;
 - the type of experience to be provided to you;
 - the hours per day you will work in the office of your principal; and
 - the length of your proposed articling term.

Your proposed articling term must be a continuous period that will give you work experience equivalent to the regular nine-month articling period, and your articles must be completed within two years of the articling start date.

The part-time equivalent of the articling period must be calculated on the following basis:

- eight hours of scheduled work equals one day of articles; and

- no credit will be given for more than eight hours per day.

Any request to alter the above requirements must first be approved by the Credentials Committee at one of its regular meetings.

What else do I need to know about completing the LSAP application form?

The privilege of practising law in British Columbia is exclusive to members of the Law Society of British Columbia. For the protection of the public and the profession, the *Legal Profession Act* imposes a statutory obligation on the Benchers to be satisfied that each applicant for enrolment as an articulated student is of good character and fit to become a barrister and solicitor of the Supreme Court. The onus is placed on the applicant to satisfy the Benchers in this regard.

You are advised to answer all questions fairly and fully and to disclose to the Law Society anything that you consider might adversely affect your application so that it can be considered at an early date. You should give the fullest details possible and supporting documentation.

When considering matters relating to good character, repute and fitness, the Credentials Committee assesses the following factors:

- applicant's age at the time of the conduct in question;
- recentness of the conduct;
- reliability of the information;
- seriousness of the conduct;
- factors underlying the conduct;
- cumulative effect of the conduct or information;
- evidence of rehabilitation;
- applicant's positive social contributions since the conduct;
- applicant's candour in the admissions process; and
- materiality of any omissions or representations.

If you have questions about disclosing information in an application for enrolment, or matters which may relate to the test of good character, repute and fitness, please contact the Credentials and Licensing department by email via CredentialsLicensing@lsbc.org, or by calling the Law Society (at 604.669.2533) *and asking to speak with a Credentials Officer.*

The Professional Legal Training Course (PLTC)

What is the PLTC?

The PLTC is an intensive full-time, 10-week legal procedure and skills course. The course is designed to help you bridge the gap between law school and practice. It is based on a definition of professional competency, including a combination of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

Students are strongly advised not to make any plans that will interfere with their attendance during the 10 weeks of the PLTC.

This section provides an overview of the PLTC. For more information, see the [PLTC section of the Law Society website](#).

What is covered in the course?

- **Knowledge:**

The substantive and procedural areas and transactions covered are representative of areas that articling students and newly called lawyers will encounter. They are taught in a fashion that gives students a feel for how law is practised and some techniques for educating themselves in new practice areas. The knowledge areas covered are:

- Civil Litigation
- Commercial¹
- Company
- Creditor's Remedies
(including Builders' Liens)
- Family¹
- Real Estate¹
- Estates¹
- Law Office Management
- Criminal Procedure

- **Skills:**

As well as knowing the law, a lawyer has to know how to use the law. To ensure this, students learn skills that they can use during their articles and when practising law. Students are given a number of opportunities to practise the skills in the course, either by watching other students or by practising themselves. Students have an opportunity to provide and receive feedback from fellow students and their instructors. The following skills are taught:

- Advocacy
- Writing
- Interviewing
- Drafting
- Legal Research
- Alternative Dispute Resolution (Mediation)
- Problem-solving

- **Attitudes:**

The PLTC teaches ethical issues in the knowledge and skill areas in which they are most likely to come up in practice. In this way, students learn a practical approach to ethical matters. In addition to professional responsibility, the PLTC teaches students about practice management within knowledge and skill contexts.

On the first day of each session, each student will receive a copy of the PLTC Student Handbook of policies, procedures, guidelines, and information on the course.

¹ Including related tax issues

What are the requirements to complete the PLTC?

To successfully complete the PLTC, students must pass four skills assessments as well as two open-book examinations (each three hours long).

- **Skills Assessments:** The skills assessments are in the areas of writing, drafting, advocacy, and interviewing. The writing assessment involves writing an opinion letter. The drafting assessment involves drafting a simple contract based on facts given to the student. These are take-home exams that must be completed by the due dates set out in the PLTC schedule. The advocacy assessment is done in pairs in a mock Chambers setting, with one student being the applicant and the other the respondent. The interviewing assessment is also done in pairs, with one student playing the lawyer and the other student playing the client. Both the advocacy and interviewing assessments are individually scheduled and videotaped. A passing mark in all skills assessments is 70%.
- **Part I and Part II Examinations:** At the end of the course, students must take and pass two examinations. The examinations are based on the PLTC work and the *Practice Material*. The examinations are open book, meaning students can bring PLTC materials, statutes, and personal notes. The examinations consist of short answer essay type questions, multiple choice, and some true/false questions. A passing mark is 60%.

There are also a number of mandatory assignments and exercises that must be satisfactorily completed.

A copy of the *Requirements for Standing* is located in each classroom and should be referred to for more information.

What are the attendance requirements in the PLTC?

The course runs for 10 weeks, Monday to Friday, with most days having both morning and afternoon sessions. **Attendance is mandatory** and students should plan to be at the PLTC from 9 am – 3:30 pm. There are some days where there are no classes and students are expected to do assignments or class preparation elsewhere. Statutory holidays have been included in the schedule. A full schedule is handed out on the first day of the course.

Exceptions to the attendance requirements are only made in a few circumstances, and requests should be made well in advance. If a student is absent, he or she may have to make up the missed classes or exercises during the next session. The PLTC covers considerable material in a short time, and students are required to attend all classes and lectures to ensure they are fully prepared for the assessments and examinations. In cases of emergency if a class is missed, it is the student's responsibility to obtain missed notes, lesson information, or assignment requirements from other students or their instructors.

Do not make any work, travel, vacation, family, or other plans that might conflict with the 10 weeks of the PLTC session.

What accommodation is available to a student with disabilities?

The PLTC is committed to ensuring that students with disabilities receive reasonable accommodation to minimize the effect of the disability as much as possible during the course, while maintaining the validity of the PLTC assessment and examination procedures.

A student with a disability may apply in writing to the PLTC for accommodation in any part of the course, including assessments and examinations. A student must apply by the specified deadline on the application if the accommodation must be in place in order to attend class. If the disability arises during the course, the student must apply as soon as possible after the disability arises. In applying for accommodation, a student must describe the procedures that will minimize the effect of the disability as much as possible. A student may be asked to provide documentation and background information about the disability. Please contact the PLTC to obtain the accommodation package and more information.

Does the PLTC provide support to students requiring assistance?

The PLTC provides support to students requiring assistance with the skills portion of the course. An Academic Support Instructor is available, on a part-time basis, to assist PLTC students. For further information about academic support, please contact Cindy Jeklin at CJeklin@lsbc.org

Registration in the PLTC**Is it necessary to have an articling position secured to apply for registration in the PLTC?**

The PLTC is part of the LSAP. Students must have a commitment of articles before applying for a PLTC session. You may be registered in a PLTC session before you are enrolled in the LSAP. Registration in the PLTC does not constitute approval of your enrolment in the LSAP. Your continued registration in the PLTC is subject to you meeting all Law Society enrolment criteria. You must be enrolled in the LSAP prior to attending the PLTC.

What are the PLTC enrolment options?

There are three PLTC sessions each year in February, May, and September. Space is limited for each session.

As above, students are strongly advised not to make any plans that will interfere with their attendance during the 10 weeks of the PLTC. Attendance at the PLTC is required and students should plan to be at the PLTC for a full 10 weeks, Monday to Friday, 9 am – 3:30 pm. The course also requires a substantial amount of reading and a number of assignments.

In consultation with their principals, students are required to choose when they will attend the PLTC and when they will do the articling portion of the program. Most students take the PLTC

either at the beginning or end of articles. However, some law firms and students prefer to split the office requirement with attendance at the PLTC.

If, for some reason, the student is unable to successfully complete the course, he or she will be required to do remedial work. The student will be expected to come back in the next session of the PLTC to complete the outstanding or failed work. This may affect a student's eligibility date to begin practice.

Please see the [Application: Professional Legal Training Course Registration](#) for the recognized PLTC options and the relevant PLTC application deadlines.

What documents are required to register in the PLTC?

To register for a PLTC session (as a component of the LSAP), a student must:

- obtain the principal's written consent to the dates requested to attend; and
- submit a completed *Application: Professional Legal Training Course Registration* to the Law Society before the application deadline for the session requested.

Students should indicate a first and second choice for the PLTC, and should be prepared to attend either session until they receive written confirmation of acceptance into a PLTC session. There is no guarantee that a student will be admitted to their first choice of a PLTC session.

The Law Society does not reserve places for students in the PLTC. Once the deadline has passed for a session, the Law Society assesses the number of students registered and the spaces available. If a PLTC session is oversubscribed, students articling outside the Lower Mainland and those from one-student firms receive priority (please refer to [Law Society Rule 2-72\(2\)](#)). Then, a waiting list is established from applications filed on time, ordered according to the date of receipt. An early application is to a student's advantage.

Law firms with more than two students requesting the same session, may be considered for the waiting list. Applications moved to the waiting list are given priority in the student's second choice session, provided those applications were received by the deadline. All late applications go to the bottom of the waiting list in the order received.

Confirmation of registration in a PLTC session is sent to the student four to six weeks after the application deadline. At that time, information regarding course materials is also provided. Once registered in a session, a student may not transfer to another session without the consent of the PLTC and the student's principal.

The onus is entirely on the student to ensure that all documentation is complete and filed with the Law Society before commencement of the PLTC. It is the student's responsibility to ensure that the PLTC receives the *Application: Professional Legal Training Course Registration* before the deadline date for the session requested.

Can I take the PLTC part-time?

The Benchers have approved the concept of part-time articles and part-time attendance at the PLTC. There is no part-time schedule set for the PLTC. Therefore, the program will attempt to accommodate students within the framework of the existing course. A number of variations can be made depending on the student's situation.

A student may apply to complete the PLTC on a part-time basis by submitting a written request to PLTC stating the reasons for attending part-time and setting out any resulting constraints on the student's attendance. The student should contact the PLTC at least six months before starting a PLTC session.

Can I be exempted from the PLTC?

If you have completed a bar admission course in another Canadian jurisdiction or if you are a lawyer qualified in a foreign country, you may apply to the Credentials Committee to be exempted from all or a portion of the PLTC. See the information sheet [*Reductions in the Articling Term and Exemption from PLTC*](#).

Once in the LSAP

Can I take a vacation during articles?

An articulated student must work full-time in the office of a principal for a continuous period of not less than nine months, except for law clerks or others who have been granted a reduced articling period. A principal may give a student up to 10 working days as vacation during the articling portion of the program. Any vacation time will not be calculated in the nine-month period.

If you are required to take more than 10 working days off from your articles for holidays or sick time, you must apply for a leave of absence under [Law Society Rule 2-69](#).

Can I take a leave during articles?

Students may take a leave of absence from articles under [Law Society Rule 2-69](#) provided that:

- the total time of leaves of absence, other than maternity and parental leaves, does not exceed 22 working days (or such longer period approved by the Executive Director under Rule 2-69(8));
- the leave does not affect the student's attendance at the PLTC; and
- the student's principal consents to the leave of absence.

Any time taken for a leave of absence will not be calculated in the nine-month articling period.

For parental leaves, a student who becomes a birth or adoptive parent during or within 12 weeks before the articling period is entitled to 12 weeks or, where the student is the primary caregiver of the child, 16 weeks parental leave. A student is entitled to 18 weeks maternity leave during the period from 11 weeks before to 17 weeks after giving birth, in addition to the parental leave entitlement.

If the maternity or parental leave causes a student to fail to attend any part of the PLTC, the Credentials Committee may require the student to attend all or part of the PLTC at a session held after the completion of the student's maternity or parental leave.

Students who take a leave of absence must notify the Law Society in writing in advance of the leave or, in the case of a maternity or parental leave, as soon as possible.

Can I be employed outside of articles?

During the articling term and the PLTC, an articulated student is not permitted to accept employment from any person other than the student's principal or a person to whom the student's articles are seconded, except with the approval of the Law Society (see [Law Society Rule 2-68](#)). Any employment outside of articles must have the principal's consent, be performed outside normal office hours, and in no way interfere with the student's articles or commitment to the PLTC. Students must first apply to the Law Society for approval in advance of engaging in any employment outside of articles.

Where can I learn more about articles?

For more information about articles, see the [Articling](#) section of the Law Society website.

Call and admission to the bar

How do I qualify for call and admission?

To qualify for call to the bar and admission as a solicitor of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, you must complete the following satisfactorily:

- the articling term;
- the PLTC; and
- any other requirements imposed by the Credentials Committee.

How do I apply?

Approximately six weeks before their anticipated license date, students will receive an email from the Law Society with instructions on how to apply for call and admission. This information is also available [on the Law Society web site here](#).

After completion of all requirements for call and admission and approval of appropriate documentation, the student must take the barristers and solicitors oath prior to becoming eligible for practice.

New lawyers must be presented to the court in a call and admission ceremony, although they do not need to attend that ceremony prior to issuance of their practising certificates. Presentation to the court is required, however, before the first renewal of a certificate (i.e., before the end of the calendar year in which the new lawyer qualifies for call and admission).

As an exception, if a new lawyer qualifies for the first time in the last four months of the calendar year, they may have their certificate renewed once without presentation in court. The lawyer must be presented to the court before the end of the calendar year after the one in which he or she qualifies for call and admission. Please refer to [Law Society Rule 2-84](#).

When a new lawyer applies for call and admission they will be informed of the options available for presentation to the court.

What are the dates for upcoming call ceremonies?

Dates for call ceremonies can be found on the [calendar](#) page of the Law Society web site.

Can I be called and admitted outside the Lower Mainland?

If you wish to be called and admitted outside the Lower Mainland, you may make arrangements to be called at a regional call ceremony elsewhere in British Columbia.

A regional call ceremony can be scheduled on an as-needed basis, wherever there is a student who wants to be called, a Bencher that wants to hold the ceremony, and a Supreme Court judge and courtroom that are available.

Once your application for enrolment in the LSAP has been approved, the Law Society will provide you with further information on arranging a regional call. You must initiate the arrangements at least 90 days before your scheduled call and admission.

How can I obtain more information?

If you have questions about the Law Society Admission Program, please contact:

Registration & Licensee Services
Law Society of British Columbia
845 Cambie Street
Vancouver, BC V6B 4Z9

Tel.: 604.605.5311
BC Toll-free: 1.800.903.5300
Fax: 604.687.0135
Email: registration@lsbc.org

If you have questions about disclosing information in an application for enrolment, or matters which may relate to the test of good character, repute and fitness, please contact Credentials and

Licensing by email via CredentialsLicensing@lsbc.org or by calling the Law Society (at 604.669.2533) and asking to speak with a Credentials Officer.

If you have questions specifically about the PLTC please contact pltc@lsbc.org or call 604.697.5818.

The information in this package is based on the Law Society Rules as they exist at this time. You must comply with the Rules that are in effect at the time you apply to the Law Society Admission Program and with any changes in the rules that may occur while you are enrolled in LSAP. If you have any questions about LSAP, contact Registration & Licensee Services at the Law Society of British Columbia.