

NCA Certificate of Qualification

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I have a law degree from a country other than Canada. How can I be called to the Bar in British Columbia?

An applicant seeking to be called to the Bar in British Columbia who has obtained a law degree in a country other than Canada or a law degree in the Civil Code must first obtain either a Canadian LL.B. degree or a Certificate of Qualification issued by the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA): see Law Society Rule 2-54(2). With either of these qualifications, he or she may then apply to enrol in the Law Society Admission Program (LSAP). The LSAP consists of nine months of articles and the 10-week Professional Legal Training Course. Upon successful completion of LSAP, the applicant may then be called and admitted in BC.

How can I apply for a Certificate of Qualification?

If you wish to apply for a Certificate of Qualification, please contact the National Committee on Accreditation at the address below for an application and information package.

Upon review of your completed application, the NCA will advise you whether you must either complete further study at a Canadian common law school or pass certain examinations set by the NCA. It is your responsibility to arrange for completion of the NCA's requirements. If you are required to undertake further study at a Canadian university, this does not guarantee admission. You must apply to one or more Canadian universities and meet their individual entrance requirements.

Please note that the Law Society has no contact with the NCA on individual applications and will not overrule a decision of the NCA or waive the requirements for a Certificate of Qualification in lieu of a Canadian LL.B.

The address of the NCA is:

Federation of Law Societies of Canada (NCA)
c/o National Committee on Accreditation
World Exchange Plaza
45 O'Connor Street, Suite 1810
Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4

The NCA application package is available on the Federation of Law Society's website at www.flsc.ca.

Can I receive credit in the Law Society Admission Program for time spent qualifying or practising elsewhere?

An applicant who holds professional legal qualifications in a common law jurisdiction outside Canada and has been in the active practice of law in that jurisdiction for at least one full year may apply for a reduction in the nine- month articling term.

The articling term may be reduced by up to one month for each full year of active practice experience in another jurisdiction. The maximum reduction is five months; accordingly, the minimum articling period for any applicant receiving a reduction is four months.

As well, an applicant who has engaged in the active practice of law in a common law jurisdiction outside of Canada for at least five full years may apply to the Credentials Committee for exemption from all or portions of the 10-week Professional Legal Training Course.

See the information sheet *Reductions in the Articling Term and Exemption from PLTC* for more information, including instructions on how to request a reduction in the articling term or exemption from PLTC.

How can I obtain information about immigration requirements?

If you are not resident in Canada, please consult the Canadian immigration authorities at an Embassy or High Commission office in your area with regard to immigration requirements.

How can I learn more about Law Society Admissions Program?

For information on the Law Society Admission Program, including instructions on how to apply for the Program, see the information sheet *Law Society Admission Program*.

How can I obtain more information?

If you have any questions on the Law Society Admissions Program, please contact:

Registration & Licensee Services
Law Society of British Columbia
8th Floor, 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

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.

LAW SOCIETY RULES

Enrolment in the admission program

- 2-54** (1) An applicant may apply for enrolment in the admission program at any time by delivering to the Executive Director the following:
- (a) a completed application for enrolment in a form approved by the Credentials Committee, including a written consent for the release of relevant information to the Society;
 - (b) proof of academic qualification under subrule (2);
 - (c) an articling agreement stating a proposed enrolment start date not less than 30 days from the date that the application is received by the Executive Director;
 - (d) other documents or information that the Credentials Committee may reasonably require;
 - (e) the application fee specified in Schedule 1.
- (2) Each of the following constitutes academic qualification under this rule:
- (a) successful completion of the requirements for a bachelor of laws or the equivalent degree from an approved common law faculty of law in a Canadian university;
 - (b) a Certificate of Qualification issued under the authority of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada;
 - (c) approval by the Credentials Committee of the qualifications of a full-time lecturer at the faculty of law of a university in British Columbia.
- (3) For the purposes of this rule, a common law faculty of law is approved if it has been approved by the Federation of Law Societies of Canada unless the Benchers adopt a resolution declaring that it is not or has ceased to be an approved faculty of law.
- (4) An official transcript of the applicant's grades at each approved faculty of law at which the applicant studied is proof of academic qualification under subrule (2) (a).
- (5) The Credentials Committee may approve academic qualifications under subrule (2) (c) if the applicant
- (a) has been a full-time lecturer at a common law faculty of law in a Canadian university for at least 5 of the last 8 years, and
 - (b) has been found by the Credentials Committee to have an adequate knowledge of the common law.

Practice experience in a common law jurisdiction outside Canada

- 2-65** (1) An articulated student or applicant for enrolment who holds professional legal qualifications obtained in a common law jurisdiction outside Canada and has been in the active practice of law in that jurisdiction for at least one full year, may apply in writing to the Executive Director for a reduction in the articling term.
- (2) The Executive Director may reduce an articling term under this rule by up to one month for each full year of active practice of law in another jurisdiction.

Training course

2-72(1)The Executive Director may set the dates on which sessions of the training course will begin.

- (2) The Credentials Committee may direct that an articulated student be given priority in selection of the training course session that the student wishes to attend if the student is or will be
 - (a) articling outside the Lower Mainland,
 - (b) articling as the only student in a firm, or
 - (c) employed as a law clerk.
- (3) Before registering in the training course, an articulated student or applicant must make application for enrolment under Rule 2-54 (1) [*Enrolment in the admission program*].
- (4) To register in a training course session, an articulated student or applicant must
 - (a) pay to the Society the fee for the training course specified in Schedule 1, and
 - (b) deliver to the Executive Director
 - (i) an application for registration, and
 - (ii) the principal's consent to the training course session chosen.
- (5) The Executive Director must deliver to each student who was registered in a training course session and to each student's principal, a transcript stating whether the student passed or failed the training course.
- (6) If a student fails part of the training course, the Executive Director may allow the student one further attempt to pass the examinations, assignments or assessments concerned.
- (7) An articulated student may apply in writing to the Credentials Committee for exemption from all or a portion of the training course, and the Committee may, in its discretion, grant all or part of the exemption applied for with or without conditions, if the student has
 - (a) successfully completed a bar admission course in another Canadian jurisdiction, or
 - (b) engaged in the active practice of law in a common law jurisdiction outside Canada for at least 5 full years.