

Career Map

for Internationally Educated

Lawyers



The Law Society of
Upper Canada | Barreau
du Haut-Canada

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Introduction

This Career Map was updated in August 2016 in collaboration with the [Law Society of Upper Canada](http://www.lsuc.on.ca) (www.lsuc.on.ca) and the [Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration](http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca) (www.ontarioimmigration.ca). The information is accurate at time of writing. Requirements may have changed by the time you apply. Please refer to the Law Society of Upper Canada and [National Committee on Accreditation](http://flsc.ca/) (http://flsc.ca/) websites for the latest information. Please contact the Law Society of Upper Canada before commencing your application process.

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Access to the Barrister and Solicitor Designation in Ontario

Ontario lawyers hold the title "Barrister and Solicitor". They are also known in Ontario as lawyers, counsel, corporate counsel, Crown attorneys, Crown prosecutors, litigators, general counsel, law partners, or legal advisors.

A law passed by the Government of Ontario in 1797 created The Law Society of Upper Canada, today also known as the "Law Society". This law put the responsibility for governing the legal profession in the hands of Ontario's lawyers. Since then, law has been a self-governed profession in Ontario.

A board of directors composed of lawyers, paralegals, and lay persons (non-lawyers and non-paralegals) runs the Law Society. The directors are known as "benchers". Ontario lawyers elect 40 lawyers benchers, Ontario paralegals elect 5 paralegal benchers, and the Ontario government appoints the remaining 8 benchers. This board

of directors meets in an official gathering called Convocation, to deal with matters related to the legal profession. Convocation is the statutory body that regulates the legal profession. The Law Society acts independently from the government, which is not involved and does not intervene in the admission, competence, licensing regulation and discipline of lawyers. The Law Society is responsible for overseeing these activities. In addition, pursuant to the *Law Society Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. L.8*, the Law Society establishes all licensing requirements for Ontario lawyers. Everyone who wants to practise law in Ontario must obtain a licence from the Law Society. Individuals who do not have a licence to practise law from the Law Society cannot represent themselves as Ontario lawyers. You can obtain a free copy of the [Law Society Act](http://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90l08) (www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/90l08) on the government of Ontario website.

Lawyers can practice law in Ontario in one or both of Canada's official languages – English and French.

Responsibilities

Ontario's lawyers use their best judgment and understanding of the law to assist their clients. They gather and understand the details related to a case, give their clients information on the law, and provide legal opinions or advice. They have the interpersonal skills to communicate well with their clients and in courts of law. They keep up to date on the law and legal procedures – as well as the community where they practise – through ongoing training and development to maintain their knowledge and skills. They act for the benefit of their clients, while maintaining client confidentiality and avoiding potential conflicts of interest.

The responsibilities of these well-educated and highly skilled professionals include some or all of the following:

- Advise clients of their legal rights and all matters related to law;
- Research legal precedents and gather evidence;
- Plead clients' cases before courts of law, tribunals and boards;
- Draft legal documents such as real estate transactions, wills, divorces and contracts;
- Prepare statements of legal opinions;
- Negotiate settlements of civil disputes;
- Perform administrative and management functions related to the practice of law;

- Act as mediator, conciliator or arbitrator; and
- Act as executor, trustee or guardian in estate and family law matters

Who This Career Map is Not For

The following professionals in Ontario may provide legal services, but are not licensed to practise law as lawyers in Ontario:

- **Paralegals, also known as Legal Service Providers.** These licensed professionals can only provide legal services in very specific situations, such as matters before the Small Claims Court, provincial boards and agencies, and *Provincial Offences Act* matters (such as driving offences) before the Ontario Court of Justice. Their education, training and examinations are very different from the education, training and examinations required to become a lawyer. In 2007, the Law Society became the regulator of this profession. Paralegals who are licensed to provide legal services in Ontario must comply with the Paralegal Rules of Conduct and with By-Laws approved by Convocation. You can obtain further information about [how to become a licensed paralegal or about paralegal regulation on the Law Society of Upper Canada website](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocessparalegal/) (www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocessparalegal/).
- **Foreign Legal Consultants** are lawyers who are licensed to practise law in another country, and have applied and received permission from the Law Society to practise the law of that country while living in Ontario. They cannot practise the law of Ontario itself until they apply to the Law Society and meet the Law Society's requirements to qualify for an Ontario license. Ontario lawyers can employ, partner, associate or affiliate with Foreign Legal Consultants in Ontario, but only if they do so in compliance with Law Society By-Laws, rules and policies. You can get further information on [Foreign Legal Consultants on the Law Society of Upper Canada website](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/For-Lawyers/About-Your-Licence/Lawyers-from-Outside-Ontario/Foreign-Legal-Consultant-Permit/) (www.lsuc.on.ca/For-Lawyers/About-Your-Licence/Lawyers-from-Outside-Ontario/Foreign-Legal-Consultant-Permit/).
- **Legal department directors, legal firm managers.** These are administrators, rather than practising lawyers.
- **Notary publics** witness signatures on legal documents and certify that photocopies of original documents are true and accurate copies of the original documents. They also sign other documents, such as Permanent Resident Cards, Passport Applications and court statements, certifying that the written facts are true.

Overview of Requirements to Practice Law in Ontario

Step 1 — Demonstrate That You Have Attained the Educational Equivalent of a Canadian Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) or Juris Doctor (J.D.) Degree

There are two ways you can do this:

- 1. Receive a Certificate of Qualification from the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA).** The NCA is a standing committee of the Federation of Law Societies of Canada consisting of members involved with the administration of provincial and territorial law societies, members of the practising bar, and representatives of the Council of Canadian Law Deans. The mandate of the NCA is to assess the qualifications of individuals with legal education and professional experience obtained outside of Canada (or in a civil law program in Québec) who wish to be admitted to a common law bar in Canada.

The assessment is based on the academic and professional profile of each individual applicant. The NCA applies a uniform standard on a national basis so that applicants with common law qualifications obtained outside of Canada can apply regardless of where they wish to practise in Canada. As a result, applicants do not need to satisfy different entrance standards to practise law in different provinces and territories of Canada.

After reviewing an application, the NCA issues a letter to the applicant listing any subjects and/or legal education that will be required to ensure that the applicant's legal education and training are comparable to that provided by an approved law school in Canada. Once the applicant has successfully completed the NCA's requirements, the NCA issues a Certificate of Qualification. Most law societies in Canada accept the NCA's Certificate of Qualification for the purpose of entry to their bar admission or licensing process.

The Certificate of Qualification is not the same as a Canadian law degree. Applicants who wish to obtain a Canadian law degree should apply to a Canadian law school.

For more information about an NCA assessment, please visit the [Federation of Law Societies of Canada](http://www.flsc.ca) website (www.flsc.ca).

or

2. Graduate From an approved common law program.

A Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.) or Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree program is normally at least three years long. The average annual tuition for a Canadian law school is \$13,000, not including room, board or books. The following Ontario university faculties offer a common law program that is approved and recognized by the Law Society of Upper Canada:

- [Osgoode Hall Law School, York University](http://www.osgoode.yorku.ca/) in Toronto
(www.osgoode.yorku.ca/)
- [Lakehead University Law School](http://www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/law) in Thunder Bay
(www.lakeheadu.ca/academics/departments/law)
- [Queen's University Faculty of Law](http://law.queensu.ca/index.html) in Kingston
(http://law.queensu.ca/index.html)
- [University of Ottawa Faculty of Law – Common Law Section](http://www.commonlaw.uottawa.ca/) in Ottawa
(www.commonlaw.uottawa.ca/)
- [University of Ottawa Faculty of Law – Common Law Section, French Program](http://www.commonlaw.uottawa.ca/) in Ottawa
(www.commonlaw.uottawa.ca/)
- [University of Toronto Faculty of Law](http://www.law.utoronto.ca/) in Toronto
(www.law.utoronto.ca/)
- [University of Windsor Faculty of Law](http://www.uwindsor.ca/law) in Windsor
(www.uwindsor.ca/law)
- [University of Western Ontario Faculty of Law](http://www.law.uwo.ca/) in London
(www.law.uwo.ca/)

The following university faculties in other provinces of Canada offer a common law program that is approved and recognized by the Law Society:

- [Dalhousie University Faculty of Law](http://www.dal.ca/) in Halifax, Nova Scotia
(www.dal.ca/)
- [McGill University Faculty of Law](http://www.mcgill.ca/law/) in Montreal, Quebec
(www.mcgill.ca/law/)

- [Thompson Rivers University Faculty of Law](http://www.tru.ca/law.html) in Kamloops, British Columbia
(www.tru.ca/law.html)
- [University of Alberta Faculty of Law](http://www.law.ualberta.ca/) in Edmonton, Alberta
(www.law.ualberta.ca/)
- [Université de Moncton, École de droit](http://www.umoncton.ca/umcm-droit/) in Moncton, New Brunswick
(www.umoncton.ca/umcm-droit/)
- [University of British Columbia Faculty of Law](http://www.law.ubc.ca/) in Vancouver, British Columbia
(www.law.ubc.ca/)
- [University of Calgary Faculty of Law](http://www.law.ucalgary.ca/) in Calgary, Alberta
(www.law.ucalgary.ca/)
- [University of Manitoba Faculty of Law](http://www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/law/) in Winnipeg, Manitoba
(www.umanitoba.ca/faculties/law/)
- [University of Saskatchewan College of Law](http://www.usask.ca/law) in Regina, Saskatchewan
(www.usask.ca/law)
- [University of New Brunswick Faculty of Law](http://www.law.unb.ca/) in St John, New Brunswick
(www.law.unb.ca/)
- [University of Victoria Faculty of Law](http://www.law.uvic.ca/) in Victoria, British Columbia
(www.law.uvic.ca/)

Step 2 — Successfully Complete the Licensing Process To Become A Lawyer

[Ontario's Licensing Process to become a lawyer](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer/)

(www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer/) requires the successful completion of several mandatory components.

Candidates must pass both the Barrister Licensing Examination and the Solicitor Licensing Examination, which are self-study, open book examinations that test candidates' knowledge of the law and competence in skills required for entry-level practice as a lawyer.

Candidates must also complete the Experiential Training requirement of the Licensing Process, which can be accomplished through either the Articling Program or the Law Practice Program.

1. Experiential Training requirement

Licensing candidates must complete either the Articling Program or the Law Practice Program to satisfy the Experiential Training requirement of the Lawyer Licensing Process.

Candidates who have gained prior legal experience in another jurisdiction may be eligible for an Exemption from the Experiential Training requirement, or for an Abridgment of the Articling Program, based on their prior legal experience. Exemptions and Abridgments are discussed in greater detail below.

If a candidate is granted an Exemption from the Experiential Training requirement, the candidate must take the Professional Conduct and Practice in Ontario (PCPO) course. Attendance for the 3-day interactive course is mandatory. It provides training and discussion on the Law Society's Rules of Professional Conduct and selected By-Laws regarding client identity, financial management, trust accounting and practice management as applied to the practice of law in Ontario. Topics covered in the course include civility and professionalism, fiduciary duties to clients, duties to the administration of justice, ethical advocacy, client service and communication, and practice management.

i. Articling Program

The Articling Program is similar to apprenticeship in a skilled trade. You must work for 10 months under the direct supervision of a practising lawyer. You may be paid for your work in an articling placement; compensation can vary between articling placements and is negotiated directly between the employer and employee. The Articling Program is discussed in greater detail below.

or

ii. Law Practice Program

The eight-month Law Practice Program (LPP) is held once per year. The program consists of a four-month training course and a four-month work placement. The English LPP is offered at Ryerson University in Toronto and the French LPP is offered at the University of Ottawa. The Law Practice Program is discussed in greater detail below.

Step 3 — Call to the Bar

The Call to the Bar is a ceremony where candidates who have completed the Licensing Process take the required oath, and receive the Law Society’s Certificate with the designation of “Degree of Barrister-at-Law” and the Courts Certificate that designates the recipient as a Solicitor. Acquiring these documents entitles you to practise law in Ontario. You can choose to receive the Certificates in either English or French, though you must make a written request if you wish to order them in both languages. Call to the Bar ceremonies are held each year in June, September and January.

Residence or Physical Presence in Ontario during Licensing Process

Most of the steps to becoming licensed to practice law in Ontario do not require you to reside or be physically present in Ontario. You do not need to reside in Ontario in order to submit your application to the NCA, to register for the Law Society’s Lawyer Licensing Process, or to be called to the bar as a licensed lawyer. You also do not need to be a citizen or permanent resident of Canada to complete any of these steps.

You will, however, need to be physically present in Ontario at specific times to complete the Licensing Examinations (which can only be written in person) and to attend the Call to the Bar ceremony. You may also need to be physically present in Ontario to complete certain components of the NCA accreditation process, such as examinations.

Some of the options candidates may choose from to fulfill the Experiential Training component of the Law Society’s Lawyer Licensing Process can be completed outside of Ontario. Candidates who select the Articling Program may choose to complete a national (within Canada but outside of Ontario) or international articling placement. For candidates who select the Law Practice Program in the English language, the four-month training course component is offered largely online (however, candidates are required to attend in person in Toronto for approximately three weeks). Also, candidates who have gained prior legal experience in another jurisdiction may be eligible for an Exemption from the Experiential Training requirement.

More detailed information about each of these steps to becoming licensed to practice law in Ontario is provided below.

Language Proficiency

There is no language proficiency requirement for this profession as part of the licensing (certification) process. However, please note that a high level of language proficiency in

English or French may be needed to find employment in Ontario. To determine your language proficiency and receive referrals to language training programs, visit a Language Assessment Centre in Ontario.

Certification Process to Practise as a Lawyer in Ontario

Applying to the National Committee on Accreditation

In order to enter the Licensing Process to become a lawyer, you must obtain a Certificate of Qualification issued by the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA). You can apply to the NCA from your home country. You will need to send the following documents to:

The National Committee on Accreditation

c/o the Federation of Law Societies of Canada
1810 – 45 O'Connor Street
Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4
CANADA

- 1. Transcripts of your post-secondary education.** You will need to ask the institution where you attained your legal education to send, under its seal, the final original transcripts of your law grades (or a certificate of standing) directly to the NCA. The NCA will only evaluate your education if you have completed and achieved your degree(s). Photocopies or certified copies of transcripts are not acceptable.

- 2. If you have been licensed by the bar of another jurisdiction, you must provide proof of this.** You will need to ask the legal institution or regulator, where you were licensed by the other bar, to submit a certificate of call or admission and a letter or certificate of good standing directly to the NCA. If you were admitted to the bar based on written examinations over and above examinations for a law degree, the legal institution or regulator where you were licensed must submit a transcript of your marks directly to the NCA.

- 3. A National Committee on Accreditation Application for Assessment of Legal Credentials.** Please download the [application form and instructions](https://ncaportal.flsc.ca/flsc_application/Content/StartApplication.aspx) (https://ncaportal.flsc.ca/flsc_application/Content/StartApplication.aspx) from the NCA website and complete the form as described in the instructions.

4. Supporting materials. Along with the completed application form, you must provide:

- Original transcripts of your pre-law grades, if any. You can provide a certificate of standing if a transcript is not available; and
- A current curriculum vitae (c.v.) or résumé describing your work experience and professional development activities.

For more information regarding [applying to the NCA](http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/) (<http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/>), please visit the Federation of Law Societies of Canada's website.

Fees

The fee for assessment is \$450 (including all applicable taxes). The fee may be paid by credit card only. Other forms will not be accepted. This fee, as well as all other fees, is subject to change.

Note: The NCA will not return any original documents to you. If you want the NCA to return original documentation that you have submitted, you must also submit a separate photocopied set of the materials.

The NCA processes applications throughout the year in the order its office receives them. You will receive confirmation that the NCA has received your materials by e-mail (or mail if e-mail is unavailable). Once all documentation required to assess your qualifications has been received, you will receive your assessment result within three months.

How the National Committee on Accreditation makes its evaluation decision

The NCA will evaluate your application on an individual basis. It will base its recommendations on and take into account:

- Your legal background – academic and professional
- How long ago you earned your degree
- The country where you got your legal education

- The type of legal system in the country where you practised, such as common law, non-common law or hybrid
- The subjects you studied
- The content of the courses you studied
- Your academic marks and standing in all years of the law program
- The nature of the degree-granting institution you went to
- The quality of undergraduate education or training you received
- The professional qualifications you earned
- Any relevant graduate legal education
- The length and nature of your professional legal experience
- Your law teaching experience

What the National Committee on Accreditation will recommend

The NCA will make one of four recommendations:

1. You are eligible to receive a Certificate of Qualification and are therefore eligible to apply to Ontario's Licensing Process to become a lawyer. Most Canadian common-law law societies either require or accept the NCA's Certificate of Qualification.

or

2. You must demonstrate competency in specific subjects before you are awarded a Certificate of Qualification and therefore are eligible to apply for Ontario's Licensing Process to become a lawyer. Once your qualifications have been assessed and you have received your assessment result letter outlining your prescribed subjects, there are two ways you can demonstrate competency in these subjects:

i. Write and pass the NCA challenge examinations.

The NCA provides three-hour open-book (open statutes) examinations on each subject, marked on a pass/fail basis. Four examination sessions are offered each year in Toronto with all NCA subjects offered each January and August; additional sessions for the four mandatory Canadian subjects are also held in May and October. You will find out whether you have passed or failed within approximately 10-12 weeks following the examination session. If you fail an examination, the marking professor will provide you with a detailed memorandum. You are allowed to rewrite exams you have failed, but only once. If you fail an NCA challenge examination twice, you will have to take that course at a Canadian law school.

Information about the [NCA challenge examinations, including the syllabi for the subjects and examination registration forms](http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/) (<http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/>), are available on the Federation of Law Societies of Canada website.

ii. Seek permission to register as a special student in a Canadian law program and complete the assigned subjects as part of its program of studies.

Some faculties may, before admitting you, require you to write the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). Once you achieve an unconditional pass in each subject, you will need to arrange for an official transcript, under seal, to be sent directly to the NCA from the University. If you fail any examination(s), you may be eligible to apply for independent and third party evaluation of your failed paper(s), as part of the school's regulations. Do not assume you will be able to rewrite any examinations you fail. This will depend on the rules of the law school you are attending.

or

3. You must take a stipulated number of courses or years at a Canadian common law school or take a specified program of studies at one of the Canadian law schools recognized by Convocation, before you are eligible to apply for Ontario's Licensing Process to become a lawyer. You will need to obtain an unconditional pass for every credit hour of your program of studies and satisfy the law school's overall Grade Point Average (GPA) requirements.

The exact number of courses or years you will need to take depends on your individual background of legal education and professional experience. Your NCA assessment result letter will describe the courses you are required to complete.

or

- 4. You must apply to and pass a Canadian common law program before you are eligible to apply for Ontario's Licensing Process to become a lawyer.**

Enrolling in a Canadian law school

NCA applicants can seek admission into a Canadian law school to attain their law degree either as regular full-time students or, where the law school's regulations permit, as *special students* on a fee-for-course basis.

Applicants applying for admission to Ontario law schools must do so through the Ontario Law School Application Service (OLSAS), a division of the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC). Contact information for the Centre is provided below.

Please note that the NCA's recommendation will not automatically get you into any Canadian law school. You are responsible for applying to Canadian law faculties, and satisfying their academic requirements, admissions procedures and regulations. Admission into Canadian law schools is extremely competitive for Canadians as well as for qualified people from outside the country. Once you are qualified, it is wise to apply to several law schools across the country.

Deadlines for admission are:

- November 1 for admission to first-year studies that start in September of the following year

or

- May 1 for admission to the second or third year of the LLB program if there is space (assuming you have a Letter of Permission from your home institution to complete some or all of your legal studies at this Ontario institution, or are an NCA applicant with advanced standing who is entering the program to complete your requirements).

If you want to appeal your NCA assessment

An applicant may appeal the assessment issued by the NCA by submitting a letter to the NCA together with payment of the prescribed appeal fee, indicating the reasons for the appeal. An Appeal Panel established by the NCA considers the appeal and issues its decision on the basis of the applicant's submission and the written documentation contained in the file. The Appeal Panel may reduce or supplement the requirements set out in the decision being appealed.

The fee for an appeal of an assessment is \$280 CDN, plus applicable taxes payable by credit card only. Please review the [NCA Appeal Policy](http://flsc.ca/_documents/NCAPolicychangesJan2014.pdf) (http://flsc.ca/_documents/NCAPolicychangesJan2014.pdf) prior to submitting an appeal.

NCA Appeal Panels are constituted to consider any appeals received on or before the following dates during each year: January 30; April 30; July 30; October 30.

Ontario's Licensing Process to Become a Lawyer

No matter how much experience you may have in the legal profession in your home country, you must complete Ontario's licensing process to become a lawyer. You do not need to be a Canadian citizen or permanent Canadian resident to enter the Licensing Process or to be called to the bar and become a lawyer in Ontario. At every step of this process, you must pay all required fees.

Step 1 — Apply to the Law Society

To become a lawyer in Ontario, you must apply to be registered into the Law Society's Lawyer Licensing Process. You can [submit your application online](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer/) (www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer/) on the Law Society's website. Applicants who are completing the NCA process may begin to submit their Lawyer Licensing Process application supporting documents to the Law Society before they have received their NCA Certificate of Qualification; however, such applicants will not become registered into the Lawyer Licensing Process until their Certificate of Qualification has been submitted by the NCA to the Law Society.

The Law Society encourages NCA applicants to review the [Licensing Process information available online](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer/) (<http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer/>) and to contact the Licensing Process staff to discuss their individual circumstances and any applicable deadlines well in advance of applying. Licensing Process staff may be contacted by

email at licensingprocess@lsuc.on.ca or by phone at 416-947-3315 or toll-free at 1-800-668-7380 ext. 3315.

Step 2 — Licensing Examinations

You must successfully complete two examinations as part of the requirements to be become licensed – the Barrister Licensing Examination and the Solicitor Licensing Examination. They can be written in either English or French.

The Licensing Examinations are designed to assess whether a given candidate for licensure demonstrates the minimum level of competence required of an entry-level lawyer. The Barrister Licensing Examination assesses barrister competencies for entry-level practice, and the Solicitor Licensing Examination assesses solicitor competencies for entry-level practice. Sittings of the Licensing Examinations are offered on dates in June (Toronto, Ottawa, London and Windsor), November (Toronto and Ottawa) and March (Toronto and Ottawa).

Each Licensing Examination is 7 hours (420 minutes) in total length and is comprised of a total of approximately 240 multiple-choice items. The Law Society develops study materials which support all examined competencies on each Licensing Examination. The Licensing Examinations are developed with reference to these Law Society-provided study materials, and no external material or information is required. The Licensing Examinations are an open-book format. Candidates are permitted to bring any print materials prepared for the purpose of assisting them in the writing of a Licensing Examination (including any study materials, notes and textbooks) into the Testing Area at the sitting of a Licensing Examination.

The Law Society provides accommodation for the Licensing Examinations to candidates based on conditions arising from enumerated grounds listed in the Human Rights Code, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19. Examples of accommodation for Licensing Examinations include alternative examination formats (such as text-to-speech) and the use of special equipment such as a personal computer and adaptive software.

Step 3 – Experiential Training Program

Candidates entering the Law Society's Lawyer Licensing Process may choose from two Experiential Training paths: the Articling Program or the Law Practice Program. Candidates must complete either the Articling Program or the Law Practice Program to satisfy the Experiential Training requirement of the Lawyer Licensing Process.

Candidates who have gained prior legal experience in another jurisdiction may be eligible for an Exemption from the Experiential Training requirement, or for an Abridgment of the Articling Program, based on their prior legal experience.

Articling Program

You can begin to search for an articling placement while completing your NCA Certificate of Qualification requirements. It is important that you begin your search for an articling placement as soon as possible, as the competition for these positions is very high.

To be eligible to begin the Articling Program, you must have:

- 1.** Registered as a candidate in the Lawyer Licensing Process; and
- 2.** Completed your LL.B, J.D. or NCA requirements and have the institution submit the required transcript or certificate to the Licensing and Accreditation Department at the Law Society.

Candidates must complete a total of 10 months in an articling placement, at all times under the direct supervision of an approved Articling Principal (a supervising lawyer) who has filed an Application to Serve as an Articling Principal with the Law Society. If you begin your articling placement without an approved Principal, you will not receive credit for any of your time spent working.

You are responsible for finding your own Articling Principal and articling placement. Articling placement opportunities are posted on the Law Society's Articling Registry, and licensing candidates seeking a placement may also submit a biographical paragraph to the Law Society, describing their interests and previous legal experience, for distribution to potential employers who have contacted the Law Society in search of an articling candidate. Employers also advertise articling placement opportunities through a variety of other listings and sources.

The Law Society also facilitates a Mentorship Program, which matches candidates who are seeking an articling placement with a mentor who will provide encouragement and advice during their search.

More information about these and other resources for the [Articling Program](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498112) (www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498112) can be found on the Law Society's website.

While articling placements are traditionally for 10 consecutive months with a single lawyer or law firm in the Province of Ontario, there are exceptions:

- If you have prior experience practising as a licensed lawyer in a common law jurisdiction, you can apply for an Exemption from the Articling Program OR an Abridgment of the articling placement. Exemptions and Abridgments are considered on a case-by-case basis, based on previous legal experience. The [criteria for Exemptions or Abridgments and the application forms](#) (www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498211) can be found on the Law Society's website.
- Internationally-trained candidates who apply for and obtain an Exemption from the Articling Program are required to attend a three-day course called Professional Conduct and Practice in Ontario, which is held at the Law Society of Upper Canada in Toronto each year.
- You may be eligible to seek permission from the Law Society to enter into a non-traditional articling placement:
 - Joint Articling Placement, where you complete a 10-month articling placement under the direct supervision of two or more Principals. You can work for both Principals concurrently, or for one followed by the other.
 - National Articling Placement, where your articling placement is located in a Canadian province other than Ontario, or an International Articling Placement, where your articling placements is outside Canada.
 - Applications for non-traditional articles are evaluated on a case-by-case basis. The length, scope and diversity of the proposed legal experience will be reviewed and the relevance of the proposed legal experience will be assessed.

Articling candidates are required to complete the online Professional Responsibility and Practice course and assessment during the placement. This course will provide you with training on competencies related to professional responsibility, ethical issues, and practice management. You will immediately be able to apply the learning you receive in the course to your daily law practice activities and seek guidance and mentoring from your supervising lawyer (Articling Principal).

For more information about the [Articling Program](#) (www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498112), please visit the Law Society's website.

Candidates who are registered in the Lawyer Licensing Process and who have not completed the Articling Program are eligible to register for the Law Practice Program to fulfil the experiential training requirement of the Lawyer Licensing Process.

Law Practice Program

The Law Practice Program (LPP) consists of a four-month training course and a four-month work placement. The program is held once a year in English and in French.

The English LPP is provided by Ryerson University. It normally begins in late August and ends in April of the following year. The training course component runs for four months beginning in August and ending in December. The four-month work placements run from January to April. The LPP at Ryerson replicates the experience of working in a law firm using interactive web-based modules and digital simulation tools. The training course component of the LPP at Ryerson is offered largely online; however, candidates will be required to attend in person in Toronto three times during the course for approximately one week at a time. Contact lpp@ryerson.ca or visit the [LPP section of the Ryerson University's website](#) (www.lpp.ryerson.ca/) for more information.

The French Law Practice Program at the University of Ottawa is normally held from September to April. The training course component will run from September to December and the work placements will run from January to April. The program provides intensive, hands-on training in a smaller group format. Candidates are required to attend in person in Ottawa for the duration of the four-month training course. The University of Ottawa requires that candidates enrolled in the LPP be fluent in French in order to maximize success in the interactions, skills activities and assessments. Candidates who have not previously studied law in French will be required to successfully complete a language proficiency examination before being accepted into the French LPP. The proficiency examination will be administered by the University of Ottawa. Candidates are encouraged to visit the [Law Practice Program section of the University of Ottawa's website](#) (www.commonlaw.uottawa.ca/lawpractice).

Ryerson University and the University of Ottawa, as providers of the Law Society's Law Practice Program, will arrange for four-month work placements for candidates registered in the LPP. The LPP will provide candidates with work placement opportunities in a variety of practice areas and contexts, including traditional law firms, in-house legal departments, non-governmental organizations, legal clinics, small firms, rural firms, and criminal and family law practices.

More information about the [English LPP](#) (www.lpp.ryerson.ca/) can be found on the Ryerson University's website.

More information about the [French LPP](#) (<https://commonlaw.uottawa.ca/en/students/career-and-professional-development-office/law-practice-program>) can be found on the University of Ottawa's website.

Special Note: Provision of Legal Services and Rights of Appearance during Licensing Process

A candidate who is registered in the Lawyer Licensing Process is not permitted to provide legal services in Ontario, nor to make appearances on behalf of clients before Ontario courts and tribunals, except during the period when that candidate is employed in an articling placement or LPP work placement.

Candidates who are registered in the Lawyer Licensing Process and are serving under an approved Articles of Clerkship or are currently engaged in their LPP work placement term may make appearances before Ontario courts and tribunals on certain matters. For more information on the [matters on which such candidates may appear](http://lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498115) (<http://lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498115>), please visit the Law Society's website.

For more information regarding [rights of appearance for candidates in the Lawyer Licensing Process](http://lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498113) (<http://lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocess.aspx?id=2147498113>), please visit the Law Society's website.

Step 4 — Call to the Bar

To become eligible to be Called to the Bar in Ontario, you must:

- Successfully complete Steps 1 through 3 above;
- Pay all Law Society fees;
- Be of good character, as required by the Law Society Act. Candidates' answers to the questions set out in the Good Character Section of the Licensing Process Application must be current, complete and correct right up until before the day they are called; and
- Submit all documents required by the Law Society. These include:
 - Certified proof of your legal name as required by the Law Society;
 - An official law school transcript that confirms the granting of the LL.B. or J.D. degree or the NCA Certificate of Qualification (issued directly by the University or the NCA to the Law Society);
 - Two recent passport photos;

- A printed copy of the Licensing Process Application duly signed and commissioned; and
- If you selected the Articling Program, the Articles of Clerkship is due within 10 days of starting your articling placement; A Record of Experiential Training in Articling Program is to be completed by both the candidate and the Articling Principal before the end of the articling placement; and the Certificate of Service under Articles, to be completed by you and your Principal when your articling placement is finished; or
- If you selected the LPP, a record of completion of the program.

Note that all components of the Lawyer Licensing Process must be completed within a candidate's three-year Licensing Term. Deferrals or rewrites of licensing examinations or deferral of the experiential training requirements may affect a candidate's ability to complete the Licensing Process within this time frame.

Equity and Diversity in Ontario's Law Profession

The Law Society of Upper Canada is committed to promoting equity and diversity in the legal profession and to help stop discrimination and harassment. Through its activities, and through its Equity Initiatives Department, it seeks to ensure that both law and the practice of law are reflective of all the peoples of Ontario, including Aboriginal people, Francophone people and equity-seeking communities.

The Law Society's Equity Initiatives Department is not, however, involved with the evaluation of foreign legal credentials.

Equity and Diversity Activities

The Law Society's Equity Initiatives Department plays a leadership role in coordinating a number of activities that help identify equity needs. It ensures that the Law Society:

- actively works with Aboriginal, Francophone and equity-seeking communities through consultations, meetings and [public education activities](http://mrc.lsuc.on.ca/jsp/equity/equity-public-education-series.jsp) (<http://mrc.lsuc.on.ca/jsp/equity/equity-public-education-series.jsp>)
- works to enable positive changes within the profession through its [programs and services](http://mrc.lsuc.on.ca/jsp/equity/programs-and-services.jsp) (<http://mrc.lsuc.on.ca/jsp/equity/programs-and-services.jsp>) and [model policies, reports, and publications](http://mrc.lsuc.on.ca/jsp/equity/policies-publications-reports.jsp) (<http://mrc.lsuc.on.ca/jsp/equity/policies-publications-reports.jsp>), and

- provides resources for members of the public and the profession

In addition, the Law Society provides a range of services and programs to lawyers, internationally trained lawyers and students, law firms, licensing candidates and Articling Principals, and works closely with community groups and schools to encourage law as a career. Its services and programs include:

- An [Equity Public Education Series](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/with.aspx?id=2147487015) (www.lsuc.on.ca/with.aspx?id=2147487015) that promotes, in partnership with legal associations and community groups, education and discussion among members of the public and the profession on the challenges and opportunities for Francophone, Aboriginal and equity-seeking communities in the legal profession. This initiative also provides networking opportunities for students and recently-called lawyers.
- A [Discrimination and Harassment Counsel](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/with.aspx?id=2147487009&langtype=1033) (www.lsuc.on.ca/with.aspx?id=2147487009&langtype=1033) that confidentially assists anyone who may have experienced discrimination or harassment by a lawyer or within a law firm. This service is free of charge to the Ontario public and lawyers.

Equity and Diversity Mentoring Program

This Program matches candidates in the Licensing Process and those recently called to the Bar with experienced members of the legal profession. Lawyers provide candidates and recently called lawyers with advice and support. Candidates and lawyers can gain insight into the practice of law by spending time in a lawyer's workplace, observing courtroom work, and by attending Law Society public education programs.

More information about the [Mentoring Program](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/For-Lawyers/Improve-Your-Practice/Lawyer-Mentorship-Programs) (www.lsuc.on.ca/For-Lawyers/Improve-Your-Practice/Lawyer-Mentorship-Programs) can be found on the Law Society's website.

Bridge Training Program for Lawyers

Bridge training programs: If you are qualified in your profession but new to Ontario, you may benefit from a bridging program. [Bridging programs](http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/OI/en/working/OI_BRIDGE.html) (www.ontarioimmigration.ca/OI/en/working/OI_BRIDGE.html) help qualified immigrants move more quickly into their professions without duplicating what they have already learned.

The Osgoode NCA On-line Exam Preparation Courses

York University

The program offers five on-line courses on-demand to help internationally trained lawyers prepare for and pass the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA) examinations and obtain their Certificate of Qualification which establishes the equivalency of their law degree credentials to those of a Canadian Law Degree. The Certificate of Qualification would allow successful participants to continue in the licensure process with the Law Society of Upper Canada (LSUC).

Website: <http://osgoodepd.ca/>

Email: osgoodepd@osgoode.yorku.ca

Phone: 416-597-9724

Location: Province-wide

Labour Market Information

According to Ontario Job Futures, there were 41,330 lawyers in Ontario in 2010 – a number that has risen to 47,428 in 2014. Their annual income is \$186,691 – well above the provincial average for all occupations of \$61,495 (in 2011). However, employment growth for this occupation is only about as fast as the average for all occupations through the year 2010. Although job growth will create new positions, most new jobs are only expected to become available when current workers retire. More significantly, the high cost of legal services may persuade some to use less expensive services, where a lawyer is not mandatory. These less expensive services include dispute resolution, electronic filings and computerized legal databases.

Demand for lawyers is linked to population growth and the volume of business activity, and can therefore be cyclical. Demand for legal services involving real estate transactions, mergers and acquisitions, for instance, tends to decline during a recession, while those involving bankruptcy activities increases. One growing area of demand in today's complicated business environment is corporate regulatory compliance – helping companies keep up with government and other regulatory rules.

For more information on labour market conditions for this profession, consult [the Ontario Job Futures website](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/labourmarket) (www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/labourmarket) and the [Government of Canada Job Bank website](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca) (www.jobbank.gc.ca). In Ontario, this information is available at public libraries and at Employment Resource Centres in your community.

If you are planning to settle in Ontario, it is a good idea to get familiar with the local labour market in your destination community. This information will give you a detailed

description of your profession and a good sense of the job prospects in your field to help you make informed decisions about your employment search.

Here are a list of resources that provide Ontario labour market information, including current industry trends, job salaries and work conditions, where to find employers, and what skills and training employers are looking for:

- Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development [Labour Market Information](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/labourmarket/) (www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/labourmarket/)
- Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development [Ontario Job Futures](http://www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/labourmarket/) (www.tcu.gov.on.ca/eng/labourmarket)
- Government of Canada [Job Bank](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca) (www.jobbank.gc.ca)
- Settlement.org [Labour Market Information](http://settlement.org/ontario/employment/working-in-canada/labour-market-information/) (http://settlement.org/ontario/employment/working-in-canada/labour-market-information/)

Key employers

The federal, provincial and municipal governments employ lawyers. So do prosecutor's offices, educational institutions and private businesses, particularly businesses providing scientific or technical services. In addition, lawyers can join partnerships or law firms, or open their own private practices.

Fees and Costs (in Canadian dollars)

The following fee schedule was accurate at time of writing, but is subject to change. Unless otherwise indicated, you will need to add Canada's applicable taxes to these fees.

Before you come to Ontario

Costs of sending transcripts of your post-secondary education and proof you have been called to the bar are your responsibility. Purchasing textbooks for the challenge examinations are also your responsibility.

Fees Charged by the National Committee on Accreditation	Costs (payable by credit card only)
Assessment fee to National Committee on Accreditation (all taxes included)	\$450 (not refundable)
NCA examinations Fee per examination (plus applicable taxes)	\$315

Law School Application Fees	Costs
Application for Admission	\$200 (not refundable)
Law School Application Service Fee (per law school)	\$90

The five tables below indicate the fees related to the lawyer licensing process that are currently charged by the Law Society of Upper Canada. (Please be aware that all fees are subject to change and that applicable taxes will be applied to all fees.)

Law Society of Upper Canada-Application Fees	Costs
Application Fee	\$160
Application Fee (Transfer Member)	\$160 (not refundable)
Late Application Submission Fee (deadline is mid-December)	\$75 (not refundable)

Law Society of Upper Canada-Licensing Examination Fees	Costs
Barrister Licensing Examination (Includes study materials in digital and paper copy)	\$750
Solicitor Licensing Examination (Includes study materials in digital and paper copy)	\$750
Rewrite of Barrister Licensing Examination (Includes study materials in digital copy only)	\$600
Rewrite of Solicitor Licensing Examination (Includes study materials in digital copy only)	\$600
Articling Program/Law Practice Program	\$2,800
Professional Conduct and Practice in Ontario (Program is only for candidates exempted from Experiential Training Requirement)	\$900

Law Society of Upper Canada-Articling Program Fees	Costs
Application for Exemption from the Experiential Training Program	\$160
Application for Abridgment of Articling Placement	\$160
Application for National or International Articling Placement	\$160

Law Society of Upper Canada-Administrative Fees for the Monthly Payment Plan	Costs
Five-month Payment Plan Fee	\$50
Ten-month Payment Plan Fee	\$100

Law Society of Upper Canada-Incidental Fees	Costs
Call to the Bar	\$250
Late filing of any document submitted after the deadline (Includes transcripts, NCA Certificates, Articling Forms, Licensing Examination Registration or Deferment Forms)	\$100
Replacement of a Call to the Bar certificate	\$75
Official copy of Licensing Process transcript provided directly to a third party	\$25
Unofficial copy of Licensing Process candidate transcript	\$15
Replacement of a Licensing Process candidate photo ID card	\$15
Replacement Tax Receipt	\$10

To assist candidates enrolled in the Licensing Process who experience difficulty meeting their educational costs, the Law Society provides the Repayable Allowance Program (RAP) and a Monthly Payment Plan.

RAP is a program offering financial assistance to candidates enrolled in the Licensing Process who demonstrate need and have exhausted all other sources of funds. The RAP is a program of last resort for candidates who are struggling to pay their licensing fees and/or meet their living expenses during the Licensing Process.

More information about the [RAP and the Monthly Payment Plan](#) (www.lsuc.on.ca/FeesandForms) as well as other fees and related costs, please visit the [Law Society's website](http://www.lsuc.on.ca) (www.lsuc.on.ca).

For More Information

For more information on licensing requirements in Ontario, contact:

The Law Society of Upper Canada

130 Queen Street West

Toronto, ON M5H 2N6

CANADA

Telephone: 416-947-3315

Toll free: 1-800-668-7380

Fax: 416-947-3924

Email: licensingprocess@lsuc.on.ca

Website: www.lsuc.on.ca

For more information on the legal profession in Canada and the National Committee on Accreditation, contact:

National Committee on Accreditation c/o

Federation of Law Societies of Canada

1810 – 45 O'Connor Street

Ottawa, ON K1P 1A4

CANADA

Telephone: 613-236-7250 ext. 229

Fax: 613-236-7233

Email: info@flsc.ca

Website: www.flsc.ca/en/

For more information on applying to an Ontario law school, contact:

Ontario Law School Application Service (OLSAS)

Ontario Universities' Application Centre

170 Research Lane

Guelph, ON N1G 5E2

CANADA

Telephone: 519-823-1940

Fax: 519-823-5232

Email: olsas@ouac.on.ca

Website: www.ouac.on.ca

Translation Services

To find a certified translator in Ontario, contact:

Association of Translators and Interpreters of Ontario (ATIO)

1 Nicholas Street, Suite 1202

Ottawa, ON K1N 7B7

CANADA

Telephone: 613-241-2846

Fax: 613-241-4098

Email: info@atio.on.ca

Website: www.atio.on.ca

Related Occupation

For more information in regards to [alternative careers for lawyers](http://settlement.org/alternative-jobs/#lawyer) (<http://settlement.org/alternative-jobs/#lawyer>), please refer to the Settlement.org website.

For More Information

- Detailed information on the [Licensing Process to become a lawyer](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer) (www.lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocesslawyer)
- Detailed information on [Assessment Guidelines for Foreign-Qualified Lawyers](http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/applying-to-the-nca/) (<http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/applying-to-the-nca/>)
- More information about the [Law Society's Equity Diversity initiatives](http://www.lsuc.on.ca/with.aspx?id=2147487013) (www.lsuc.on.ca/with.aspx?id=2147487013)

For a government contact on accessing professions and trades in Ontario, contact:

Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration

Global Experience Ontario

Telephone: 416-327-9694 or 1-866-670-4094

TTY: 416-327-9710 or 1-866-388-2262

Email: geo@ontario.ca

Website: www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/geo/index.htm or www.ontario.ca/globalexperience

Getting Help

There are many programs and services designed to help internationally educated professionals work in their field in Ontario, such as internship and mentoring programs, bridge training programs and language training programs. For more information, please visit the [website of the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration](http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/working/index.htm) (www.ontarioimmigration.ca/en/working/index.htm).

Question and Answers

To see a list of [some of the most common questions and responses for internationally trained applicants seeking licensure in Law in Ontario](http://lsuc.on.ca/FAQs/) (http://lsuc.on.ca/FAQs/), please visit the Law Society's website.

You may have additional questions about the registration process for lawyers in Ontario. For more information, please visit the [Law Society of Upper Canada's website](http://www.lsuc.on.ca) (www.lsuc.on.ca).