

ADMISSIONS

Full information regarding the admissions process is available on the Faculty of Law website at: <https://law.queensu.ca/admissions/jd/admissions-process> (<https://law.queensu.ca/admissions/jd/admissions-process/>)

Admissions Philosophy

Queen's Faculty of Law believes that the geographic, ethnic, cultural, racial and socio-economic diversity of the Canadian population should be reflected in the ranks of those granted access to legal education.

The academic rigour of the JD degree program requires that students who are admitted have a strong aptitude for legal reasoning, demonstrated academic ability, and good potential for success in studies at this level. The Admissions Committee takes a holistic approach to assessing applications. In addition to undergraduate grades and LSAT scores, the Committee considers other attributes such as intellectual curiosity, avid interest in law, social commitment, reasonable judgment and insight, leadership potential, teamwork skills, creative ability and innovative endeavours, self-discipline, time management skills and maturity. The Admissions Committee reviews personal statements, letters of reference and the autobiographical sketch to obtain information about these attributes.

Our Faculty is enriched by the skills, knowledge and experience of students who have been community leaders, excelled in extracurricular activities and enjoyed success in careers prior to the pursuit of a legal education as much as we benefit from students with inquiring minds who have excelled consistently in a broad range of academic disciplines. Such outstanding applicants are encouraged to apply to the relevant category of admission.

Admissions Policies

Non-Discrimination

It is the policy of Queen's University that no applicant will be denied admission to any program on the basis of age, ancestry, colour, creed, marital status, place of origin, race, sex or sexual orientation.

In addition, the Queen's University Code of Conduct defines and prohibits certain infringements upon the rights of members of the university community. These infringements include discrimination or harassment based, among other grounds, on ethnicity, gender, disability, national origin, race, religion or sexual orientation.

Further, the Faculty of Law has adopted a Commitment of Principle Relating to Equality Issues to identify and address

historic and current inequalities among groups of persons in our society.

Personal Information and File Retention

Applicant files are kept for one year after the initial application in the event that an applicant should re-apply. Thereafter, the files of applicants who do not register are destroyed, unless information regarding misconduct in the application process is received. Applicant information provided in electronic format and remitted by OLSAS is collected in our admissions database. This information will be saved in our admissions database for 10 years to permit longitudinal or statistical studies, reports or queries pertinent to recruitment, admissions, diversity of the applicant pool and registrant populations, enrolment management, retention and academic progress. Information pertaining to admitted applicants who register at Queen's may be used for the purpose of participating in correlation studies conducted by the Law School Admission Council to assess the predictive value of the LSAT score and grades at the time of admission in relation to performance in first-year law. The application documentation submitted on admission is retained as part of the electronic student file for students who are admitted and register at Queen's Faculty of Law.

Misrepresentation

Provision of false or misleading information or failure to provide material information will invalidate the application and will result in immediate rejection or in the revocation of admission and/or registration.

Admission Categories

JD First Year

Approximately 216 students are welcomed into the first-year cohort at Queen's Law. While most students are admitted through the General Admissions category, Queen's Law has three special access categories through which eligible persons can apply; the Indigenous Persons Category, the Black Student Applicant Category, and the Regular Access Category. When a person applies to Law School, they are required to indicate on their application whether they wish to be considered as a General Admissions applicant or as someone who fits into one of the special access categories. Once that decision is made the Admissions Committee cannot change it. Consequently, if an applicant applies for the Indigenous Peoples Category and is unable to provide proper proof of Indigeneity, their application will not be considered under the General Admissions Category. Similarly, the Admissions team cannot move an applicant from the



General Admissions Category into an Access Category, even if the applicant would clearly fit into it.

General Category

All applicants in the General category must have successfully completed three full years of coursework in a degree program at a postsecondary institution. See the Senate Policy on the Basis of Admission for Advanced Study: <https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/basis-admission-advanced-study> (<https://www.queensu.ca/secretariat/policies/senate/basis-admission-advanced-study/>).

The Admissions Committee reviews the nature and content of the undergraduate and graduate programs undertaken. Full-time enrolment, scholarships and awards received, consistency and improvement in academic performance, and successful completion of graduate work are weighed positively.

The applicant's academic record and LSAT score are weighed most heavily in this category. The other Admissions criteria are weighed carefully in making distinctions between applicants who are equally competitive on these bases:

- Competitive applicants should have at least an "A-" average (GPA 3.7) in their best two years of their undergraduate degree program at a full course load along with an LSAT score of at least 157.
- For a student who does not have two years at full course load (i.e., at part-time load), more emphasis will be placed on their CGPA, as calculated by OLSAS, which should be at least a 3.3.

An applicant who meets the minimum criteria for admission is eligible for consideration but is not guaranteed admission.

Indigenous Peoples Category

Queen's Faculty of Law is committed to upholding its obligations to respond in a meaningful way to the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. With a goal of increasing Indigenous representation within the legal profession and enhancing our collective understanding of Indigenous law and legal traditions, Queen's Law has established a separate admissions category for Canadian Indigenous Peoples. Applications will be considered based on the applicant's interest in and identification with his or her Indigenous community as well as other factors including academic performance, results of the LSAT, employment history, letters of reference and a personal statement. The personal statement submitted in support of the application should explain the applicant's interest in, and identification with, his or her Indigenous community.

In order to qualify as Indigenous for the purposes of the Indigenous Peoples Category an applicant must prove their status as an Indigenous person. In accordance with the Queen's University Indigenous Student Pathway requirements, the applicant must provide one of the following documents as proof of Indigeneity:

- "Certificate of Indian Status" issued by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that is current and not expired;
- Certified copy of a Métis Nation Citizenship card from one of the four provincial affiliates (Métis Nation of Ontario including "complete citizenship" confirmation letter from the MNO Registrar, Métis Nation Saskatchewan, Métis Nation of Alberta, Métis Nation British Columbia) of the Métis National Council; or a valid membership card from one of the Metis Settlements of Alberta, the Northwest Territory Métis Nation, or the Manitoba Métis Federation;
- Certified copy of a Nunavut Trust Certificate card or Inuit Enrolment card associated with one of the Land Claim Agreements in the claim regions of Nunavut, Nunatsiavut, Nunavik, and Inuvialuit;
- Citizenship identification issued by a First Nation that has a modern Treaty and/or self-government agreement;
- Membership card or other documentation indicating that the person is a Non-Status First Nation person who is a member of an Indigenous organization negotiating a treaty or other agreement with the federal and/or provincial governments; and
- American Indian, Alaskan Native, or Native Hawaiian citizenship document from tribes that are state or federally recognized or recognized by the National Congress of American Indians (<https://www.ncai.org/>).

An applicant who applies under the Indigenous Peoples' Category but is unable to provide satisfactory proof of indigeneity will not be considered for other admissions categories.

Applicants under this category should have successfully completed at least three years of postsecondary education at a degree-granting institution that provides an academic environment and education that prepares students for potential success in advanced study. If there is strong evidence of academic ability in the application, an exception might be made to the standard requirement of three years of full-time academic work.

An applicant who meets the minimum standards is eligible for consideration but is not guaranteed admission.

The Admissions Committee will endeavour to make decisions on completed applications for this category early in the admissions cycle.

Black Student Applicant Category

Queen's Faculty of Law is committed to increasing the representation of Black persons within the legal profession and supporting Black students who choose Queen's.

Applications will be considered based on any personal or professional experiences that may allow an applicant to contribute to the law school community and further the law school's goal of building a representative and diverse class cohort, as well as other factors including academic performance, results of the LSAT, employment history, letters of reference and a Personal Statement. This material will form the basis upon which the Admissions Committee will judge whether an applicant is able to undertake the JD degree program successfully.

To be competitive in the admissions process, an applicant should have at least a "B+" average (GPA of 3.5) in the top 2 years of their undergraduate degree program at a full course load, along with an LSAT score of at least 155. Other evidence of academic ability in the application may be considered holistically alongside these academic standards.

The Admissions Committee will endeavour to make decisions on completed applications for this category early in the admissions cycle.

An applicant who meets the minimum criteria for admission under this category is eligible for consideration but is not guaranteed admission.

Access Category

Queen's Faculty of Law is committed to enhancing diversity in legal education and the legal profession. To this end, the Faculty encourages applications from candidates whose backgrounds, qualities or experiences allow them to make unique contributions to the law school community, the legal profession and society in general.

The Admissions Committee will consider these factors:

- disability
- educational and financial disadvantage
- membership in a historically disadvantaged group
- age
- life experience
- any other factor relating either to educational barriers you faced, or to your ability to enrich the diversity of the law school community and the legal profession

You must demonstrate the following capabilities:

- that you have strong potential to complete the JD program
- that you have the ability to reason and analyze
- that you can express yourself effectively orally and in writing, and
- that you possess the skills and attributes necessary to cope with the demands of law school

Traditional measures of academic performance and LSAT scores may be given comparatively less weight in this category, while non-academic experience and personal factors confirming your special circumstances or unique qualities may be given comparatively more weight.

Competitive applicants should have at least a "B+" average (GPA 3.3) in their best two years of their undergraduate degree program at a full course load along with an LSAT score of at least 154.

For a student who does not have two years at full course load (i.e., at part-time load), more emphasis will be placed on their CGPA, as calculated by OLSAS, which should be at least a 3.0.

An applicant who meets the minimum criteria for admission in this category is eligible for consideration but is not guaranteed admission.

Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

All first-year applicants are required to take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). LSAT scores for the past five years may be used. The Faculty engages in a rolling admissions process commencing after the OLSAS admissions deadline at the beginning of November. The February test score is the latest score accepted for admission in the current admission cycle. The Admissions Committee will rely on the highest score achieved at the time of the admission decision.

Language Proficiency and TOEFL

An excellent command of spoken and written English is essential for success in law school. A TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language) score is required for applicants who are not fluent in English. Applicants in any category who have completed at least three years of full-time study at a recognized university, taking courses for which English is the official language of instruction, may request exemption from the TOEFL requirement. Such a request for exemption must be supported by an academic letter of reference attesting to the applicant's fluency in written and spoken English.

Test results from the new iBT TOEFL are preferred. Under the old TOEFL scoring system, no applicant with a TOEFL score of less than 600/250 and a TWE of less than 5.0 was considered. Standards for the new TOEFL iBT are a minimum total score of no less than 100, with a minimum of 24 on the



Writing section, no less than 22 on the Speaking section, no less than 24 on the Reading section and no less than 20 on the Listening section.

For further information, please see the TOEFL website at www.ets.org/toefl/ (<http://www.ets.org/toefl/>).

Students who are admitted on the basis of a TOEFL score and/or the completion of three years of full-time study at a recognized university are not eligible for language based academic accommodations.

Part Time Studies

A maximum of five persons may be admitted on a part-time basis to the first-year JD degree program in each admissions cycle. Such applicants must meet the admissions standards required of applicants for full-time study and are assessed for admission using the same criteria. The Admissions Committee will consider the reasons provided for studying on a part-time basis and the competitive strength of the application in the category of admission claimed. Applicants accepted as part-time students are expected to complete the JD degree program within six years. The JD program is not offered by distance education and it is not recommended for students who would be commuting long distances on a regular basis to attend class.

Following registration, it is possible for a 1L student to seek a change in registration status to full-time, if classes have not started. Since most 1L courses are a full academic year long, it may not be advisable to change to full-time status after classes have started. However, it would be possible for an upper-year student to be permitted to drop to part-time status on documented grounds, by decision of the ASPC. It would be possible for a full-time 1L to seek permission on documented grounds to drop mandatory courses and change to part-time status, with permission of the ASPC or from the Assistant Dean, JD Program as delegate.

JD Upper Year

Each year, Queen's Law accepts a small number of Students who have been enrolled in a common law LLB or JD degree at other Canadian or foreign law schools, or have completed a law degree in a foreign jurisdiction. The process of Upper Year admissions is very competitive, with only a small number of positions generally available. All upper-year applicants are required to have demonstrated strong academic performance and show good personal or academic reasons for wanting to study at the Faculty of Law of Queen's University.

Categories of Upper-Year Admission Transfer

From a common law LLB or JD program at a Canadian Law School: An applicant who has completed the first year of a common law LL.B. or JD degree program at a Canadian law school may apply to transfer into the second year of the JD degree program at the Faculty of Law of Queen's University. If accepted, such students will be expected to satisfy the JD degree requirements after two years of full-time coursework. Upon successful completion of the degree requirements and adherence to all academic regulations, students will be eligible to receive a Queen's University JD degree. Such students will have transfer credits recognized for first-year courses that are substantially similar to the first-year curriculum of the JD degree program at Queen's University, but will be required to complete any first-year courses that were not part of the first-year curriculum of the degree program of the current law school from which they seek to transfer.

From a common law LLB or JD degree program at a law school outside Canada: Applicants must outline in the personal statement the courses for which they are seeking recognition for transfer credit and the reasons for that claim. Transfer credit will be recognized for first-year courses that are substantially similar to the first-year curriculum of the JD degree program at Queen's University but transferees will be required to complete any first-year courses that were not part of the first-year curriculum of the degree program at the home law school from which they seek to transfer. The Admissions Office will determine if previously earned credits will be recognized for transfer to the Queen's University JD degree. Upon admission, students will be expected to satisfy the JD degree requirements after successful completion of at least two years of full-time coursework. Upon successful completion of the degree requirements and adherence to all academic regulations, students will be eligible to receive the JD degree from Queen's University.

Letter of Permission

An upper-year law student may apply to study as a visiting student at the Faculty of Law for a single term or for one academic year on a letter of permission basis. Students admitted on a letter of permission are not eligible for transfer into the Queen's JD degree program. Academic work completed at Queen's Faculty of Law will be credited toward satisfaction of the degree requirements of the home law school. The home law school will reserve the right to approve course load and course selections. A letter of permission student will be subject to the academic policies and regulations of Queen's University and of the Faculty of Law for the duration of the registration as a visiting student.

National Committee on Accreditation (NCA)

The NCA was established by the Canadian Council of Law Deans and the Federation of Law Societies of Canada to conduct assessments of the equivalency of legal credentials and experience. For further details and contact information, please see the Working in Ontario and Federation of Law Societies of Canada websites. Applications for admission in the NCA category must be supported by a letter of recommendation from the NCA concerning the conditions upon which a Certificate of Qualification would be issued by the Committee. The Certificate of Qualification is needed for entry into a provincial licensing process. NCA applicants should note that interviews for articling placement in Ontario generally take place during the summer, one full year prior to the start of the placement. Applicants are advised to contact the Law Society of Upper Canada to confirm the procedures and deadlines for the licensing process. A letter of recommendation and any subsequent correspondence relating to completion or attempts of required courses must be received by Queen's Faculty of Law by June 30. A Queen's University JD degree is not conferred upon applicants admitted under the NCA category.

Admissions Standards

Applicants who have attained at least a "B" average in their previous years of study in law will be considered for admission in all upper-year categories. An applicant who has failed one or more courses in law school or in the NCA process will not be considered for admission. At least one academic letter of reference must be provided from a law professor who can comment on the applicant's academic abilities.

For transfer and letter of permission applicants, a letter is required from the Dean, Associate Dean (Faculty and Academic Policy), or Assistant Dean, JD Program of the current law school attesting that the applicant is in good standing and has not been the subject of any disciplinary sanction on academic or non-academic grounds nor otherwise been found to have engaged in misconduct.

Provided that the application is competitive on academic factors, priority will be given to the admission of transfer or letter of permission applicants who are seeking to return to their home province from a Canadian law school outside Ontario and to applicants seeking to transfer between Ontario law schools.

Curriculum-related grounds and career-path reasons supporting the application will be considered. Consideration will be given to compelling compassionate or personal grounds supporting the application. Documentation corroborating the grounds should be provided to support the application.

Language Proficiency and TOEFL

See JD First Year Requirements.

Combined Degrees

The admissions policies and procedures for the JD apply to admissions to the JD portion of all combined degrees, except for the Civil-Law Common Law Combined degree.

Civil Law-Common Law

Full information about admission to the Civil Law-Common Law program is posted on the Faculty of Law website at <https://law.queensu.ca/programs/combined-degrees/civil-common> (<https://law.queensu.ca/programs/combined-degrees/civil-common/>).

The application deadline is May 1 for civil law students and graduates from other Quebec law schools.

Students in their final year and graduates of the civil law degree program at University of Sherbrooke may apply to take an intensive fourth year of studies at full course-load following graduation to obtain a common law JD degree conferred by Queen's University. Applicants from University of Sherbrooke are encouraged to apply before March 1st.

If space is available, students in their final year and graduates from other Quebec civil law degree programs may be considered for admission to the combined degree program in accordance with the admissions standards applied to the Sherbrooke applicants.