



NOVA SCOTIA  
BARRISTERS' SOCIETY

# Articling Handbook

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# PART 1 – Becoming an Articled Clerk

## What is articling?

Articling is a 12-month period of experiential learning meant to assist in the transition from law school to the actual practice of law. During articling the goal is to provide each articled clerk with an opportunity to gain experience in a variety of relevant areas, including (but not limited to) professional responsibility, personal practice and office management, interviewing and advising, negotiation, advocacy, legal writing and legal drafting. A clerk's work must be supervised by other lawyers, who provide constructive feedback and assist them in learning legal practice and client management skills.

A clerk may commence articling throughout the calendar year on the first of any month; however, the official start dates are **March 1**, **June 1**, **September 1** and **December 1**, with June 1 serving as the most common start date.

## What are the prerequisites for applying to article?

In order to be eligible to commence articles and apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (the "Society"), an applicant must meet the following requirements:

1. have a law degree;
2. be lawfully entitled to work in Canada; and
3. have an articling position arranged.

## How do I find a position?

The responsibility for finding an articling position is up to the applicant. An applicant can participate in interviewing sessions at law school, send out résumés to firms and post a "seeking articles" notice on the Career opportunities page of the Society's website. (All notices are also shared directly with lawyers by email through the [InForum](#) newsletter; use this [online form](#) to submit a notice.)

The traditional articling position will have a clerk working with a qualified principal or supervising lawyer for 12 months. There are also a number of other ways to fulfil the 12-month articling requirement, including sharing articles among several legal services providers over the course of the year-long period.

## Part-time articles

With the approval of the Executive Director of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (the "Society"), you may complete your articles on a part-time basis. In order to do so, your [Principal](#) must provide written consent to the part-time arrangement. You must complete the 12 months of articles within three years.

## Articling Agreement with a Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, Federal Court, Federal Court of Appeal, Tax Court of Canada or Supreme Court of Canada

If you enter into an Articling Agreement with a Justice of the Supreme Court of Nova Scotia, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal, Federal Court, Federal Court of Appeal, Tax Court of Canada or Supreme Court of Canada, you may receive up to six months' credit towards the 12-month articling requirement.

## Transfer of credits from outside of Nova Scotia

If you have articulated outside of Nova Scotia, you may request the permission of the Executive Director to obtain credit for this time towards the articling requirement. The articling must have been completed within the three years prior to the date of registration as an articled clerk in Nova Scotia. The maximum amount of time that may be transferred is six months.

## Secondment

Secondment means that you are articling in the office of another practising lawyer outside the office of your Principal. The secondment lawyer must meet the requirements to act as a Principal and meet the requirements of the [Articling Agreement](#). The work period with the secondment lawyer may not exceed one month without the Executive Director's approval.

## Shared articles

While the traditional articling arrangement involves a clerk working with a Principal in a single firm, another option open to articulated clerks is a shared articling arrangement. In this situation, you would work with a number of lawyers over the course of the articling year. At least one of the lawyers will act as Principal, and the other lawyers may act as Principals or secondment lawyers, depending upon your arrangements. Unlike the traditional secondment, previously discussed, these placements can be for periods in excess of one month and secondments may be of different lengths. All placements must be confirmed prior to the commencement of articles, and the details of all placements must be included in the [Education Plan](#). As the arrangements vary for this type of articles, it is important to contact an Officer, Education & Credentials to determine the appropriate structuring based on your proposed arrangements.

## How do I apply?

Before beginning articles, an applicant and principal must apply to the Society and should complete the checklist provided in the [Articling Application Form](#) available in the menu bar to the right under [Information for Articled Clerks](#), as well as any relevant documents under Information for Principals.

Please note: Applications should be submitted at least six weeks prior to the preferred articling start date (or by April 1 if applying to begin on June 1), in order to avoid a delay in the applicant's preferred start date.

Once received, the application is then processed by Society staff in Education & Credentials. Completed applications are considered in the order in which we receive them.

Your articling application must contain the following:

1. [Applicant's Questionnaire: Parts 1 and 2](#),
  - a. [Skills Course/Bar Exam selection](#)
  - b. [Skills Course Program Agreement](#)
  - c. [Equity and diversity \(optional\)](#)
2. [Particulars for any affirmative responses in the Applicant's Questionnaire](#),
3. [Articling Plan](#) (completed in conjunction with your Principal),
4. [Articling Agreement](#) (completed in conjunction with your Principal),
5. [Education Plan](#) (completed in conjunction with your Principal),
6. [Criminal record check](#),
7. [Notarized copy of government-issued photo ID](#),
8. [Official transcript or NCA Certificate of Qualification](#), and
9. [Letter from law school confirming you have met the requirements to graduate](#).

It may also include the following, if required:

1. [Proof of English language proficiency](#),
2. [Particulars of work permit or other authorization allowing you to work in Canada, if applicable](#),
3. [Accommodation for the Bar Examination](#), and
4. [Other information requested by the Executive Director](#).

All the [forms](#) required can be found online on the Society's [website](#) under the heading Become a Lawyer - [Articling](#) (PDF and MS Word versions are available for most forms).

## Applicant's Questionnaire, Parts 1 and 2

To complete your [Applicant's Questionnaire Parts 1 and 2](#) you will need to provide the following:

- Your contact information and educational background;
- Information regarding your articling position and your Principal;
- Responses to questions regarding your character and fitness;
- A Skills Course Program Agreement;

- Your selected dates to begin articles, attend the Bar Admission (or “Skills”) Course, and Bar Examination.

The Questionnaire also includes an Equity and Diversity Questionnaire and an application for special accommodation, which are optional to complete.

Part 2 of the Applicant’s Questionnaire inquires about your fitness to practise law. The information you provide in this section is held in confidence. You are not required to share the contents of this section with your Principal. This information should be provided separately or in a sealed envelope with the balance of your application.

In addition, the application includes a number of other forms to be completed. They are:

**a. Skills Course/Bar Exam selection**

Included in the articling application is a section where you will select when you would like to begin articles, attend the in-person session of the Bar Admission (or “Skills”) Course, and Bar Examination.

You will be asked to rank each of the in-person session times in order of preference. While we will try our best to schedule you for your preferred time, this may not be possible in all instances, particularly if your application is received after the deadline. If you have a special circumstance that you think may entitle you to a priority in selection of the in-person session (such as if you are getting married or have a pre-booked trip), please advise in your application. Note that simply only selecting one course preference does not ensure that you will be placed in that session.

Click here to see the [Bar Admissions Course Schedule](#).

**NOTE:** In some instances, your law firm/employer may wish for you to attend a specific session. In those cases we may be advised by the law firm/employer but it should still be noted on your application. (Your firm’s preference will take precedence, so if you have a special circumstance to take into account, please advise your firm.)

**b. Skills Course Program Agreement**

The Skills Course Program Agreement sets out your responsibilities while participating in both the in-person and online portions of the Skills Course. It is important that you read the agreement thoroughly prior to signing it.

**c. Equity and diversity**

The Society is committed to increasing opportunities for all law graduates from communities that have historically been under-represented in the legal profession. The Society is working with the Department of Justice, Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University and Nova Scotia law firms to make the legal profession more representative of the public it serves. One aspect of this initiative requires gathering relevant data on the representation of individuals from historically disadvantaged communities in programs of the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society.

Included in the Articling Application is a form used by the Society to collect information regarding the equity and diversity of the legal profession. Your response on this form is voluntary.

**Particulars for any affirmative responses in the Applicant’s Questionnaire**

If you answer yes to any question other than #7 in the Applicant’s Questionnaire Part 1, you need to provide further details. It is important that you provide as much detail as possible.

For more information on affirmative responses, see [What happens if I answer ‘yes’ to any of the “Good character” questions on the articling application?](#)

Also see [What if character and fitness is an issue in my articling application?](#)

### **Articling Plan**

For each Articled Clerk, the lawyer or firm acting as Principal must attach an [Articling Plan](#) to either their previously approved Education Plan or their new Education Plan. The Articling Plan either confirms the commitments made in the approved Education Plan or identifies changes for approval. If changes are noted in the Articling Plan, then an updated Education Plan showing the changes must also be submitted; it is not sufficient to only note the changes on the Articling Plan.

The Articling Plan must be signed by both the Principal and the Articled Clerk.

### **Articling Agreement**

The purpose of the [Articling Agreement](#) is to identify the Articled Clerk and Principal, confirm the articling term and clarify the responsibilities of each party over the articling term. It also sets the specific obligations owed to the Principal and the Articled Clerk by the other. The Agreement does not deal with other terms of employment such as pay, vacation or sick leave. Those terms should be dealt with directly between the Articled Clerk and Principal.

### **Education Plan**

Your Principal or Supervising Lawyer's [Education Plan](#) sets out the outline for your articling program. It details how you will develop the core skills and competencies identified by the Society that will prepare you to be competent at the level of a newly called lawyer. In addition to outlining how you will be taught these skills, the Education Plan sets out how you will be supervised and provided with feedback. Each Plan must be approved by the Society.

Follow this link to the [Competency Framework](#).

### **Criminal record check**

A Canadian Police Information Centre Criminal Record Synopsis (national check) must accompany your application. It must be dated no later than six months prior to the date of your application. You can obtain a criminal record check by going to any police station or through [www.mybackcheck.com](http://www.mybackcheck.com). (See Policy on [Criminal Record Checks](#).)

### **Notarized copy of government-issued photo ID**

You must include in your application a photocopy of a government-issued photo ID, (such as a passport or driver's licence), that has been notarized by a notary public. In addition to signing, dating and sealing the document, the notary should indicate that it is a true copy of the original.

Please be sure that the notary and the Society can clearly see your photo and any other information on the photocopy.

### **Official transcript or NCA Certificate of Qualification**

You will need to order an official transcript to be sent to the Society directly by your university's Registrar's Office; however, you will not be able to obtain a copy of your transcript until after your graduation. The transcript **must** indicate that your law degree has been conferred. If you order it too early, that notation will not be written on the transcript and you will be required to order another.

You will be permitted to begin your articles pending receipt of your transcript; however, it will be your responsibility to ensure that we are provided with a copy of your transcript (conferring your law degree) prior to the date noted in your ruling letter.

If you attended any additional law schools (other than as an exchange student) you must also provide us with a transcript from them.

If you have a foreign law degree, you will need to have a Certificate of Qualification sent directly to the Society from the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA). For more information, see [What do I do if I have a law degree from outside Canada or a civil law degree?](#)

### **Letter from law school confirming you have met the requirements to graduate**

If your transcript will not be delivered to the Society at least two weeks prior to the commencement of your articles, you must arrange for your law school to provide us with a letter confirming that you have met all the requirements for your law degree and will graduate. This letter will serve as short-term proof of your law degree until your transcript arrives. (Please see [Appendix C – Required Content for Confirmation Letters](#).)

**Note: If you are applying for a June 1 articling start date and you attend the Schulich School of Law at Dalhousie University or the University of New Brunswick, you will not need to arrange for a letter, as these law schools provide us with the list of graduating students once it has been confirmed.**

**In addition, you may need to provide the following with your application:**

#### **Proof of English language proficiency**

Should the Society determine that proof of English language proficiency is required, you will be contacted and provided with a listing of any required documentation.

#### **Particulars of work permit or other authorization allowing you to work in Canada, if applicable**

If you will be working in Canada on a work permit or other form of authorization, you will need to provide full details of your permit or authorization with your application. (For more information, see [I'm not lawfully entitled to work in Canada, but I've been hired by a firm. Can I work as an articled clerk?](#))

#### **Accommodation for the Bar Examination**

Some applicants may require accommodation for writing the Bar Examination. An application for accommodation is included in the Articling Application. Requests for accommodation must be accompanied by documentation from a professional, setting out both the condition requiring accommodation and what they recommend by way of accommodation. More information regarding the documentation required can be found in Section 5 of the Application.

Requests for accommodation with accompanying documentation must be received no later than six weeks prior to the sitting of the Bar Exam. Requests received later than this may not be reviewed and/or approved prior to the sitting date.

#### **Other information requested by the Executive Director**

From time to time you may be requested to provide further information about the contents of your application. If further information is required, the Society will contact you and provide details of what is required.

### **Processing your application**

You will be contacted a number of times during the processing of your Articling Application. The first will be at the time your application is submitted. At that time, you will be sent an email indicating your application has been received. You will be contacted again after your application is reviewed to advise of any missing components. You will also be contacted to follow up on missing components. It is therefore very important that the Society have current contact information for you while your application is being processed.

### **Ruling Letter**

Once your Articling Application has been reviewed and approved, you will receive an email with an attachment called "Ruling Letter" confirming your articling start date. This letter will outline a variety of important dates, your personal login credentials for the Society's website, and information regarding course placements for the articling year.

As noted above, your ruling letter will set out your personal login credentials for the [Member Login](#) section of the Society website. You will use this username and password to access a variety of different materials including the Articling eCommunity, Bar Review materials and your grades. You can also print your membership card.

For further information on accessing the members section of the Society website see Appendix B - [Nova Scotia Barristers' Society website](#).

**NOTE: You will be issued a second username and password to access CPLED, the online platform used for practice management, client relationship management, and the online modules of the Skills Course.**

See the Society's [Policies related to Articling](#).

## What does your Principal need to submit?

Your Principal will need to submit the following documents:

1. [Application to Act as Principal](#) (either as an Individual or a Firm);
2. [Education Plan](#);
3. [Articling Plan](#); and
4. [Articling Agreement](#).

### Application to Act as Principal

A firm or an individual lawyer may act as a Principal. The traditional articling arrangement had the articled clerk supervised by an individual lawyer as Principal. In the case where the [firm acts as the Principal](#), an individual lawyer is named as the **Supervising Lawyer**. **There are different forms to be completed for an [individual lawyer to act as Principal](#) versus a [firm acting as Principal](#).**

To act as a Principal or Supervising lawyer, the lawyer must have carried on the practice of law for at least five years. They must also have not been convicted pursuant to Part III of the *Legal Profession Act* in the last three years, have outstanding criminal charges or be the subject of any practice restrictions. The Application to Act as Principal confirms the Principal or Supervising Lawyer meets the requirements to act as a Principal and they are committed to the education of an Articled Clerk. The application is accompanied by a proposed Education Plan and a proposed Articling Plan.

In limited instances, a Principal or Supervising lawyer may not be required to strictly meet the requirements to act. For further information, see the [Policy on waiver of five-year eligibility requirement to be Principal](#).

### Education Plan

Your Principal or Supervising Lawyer's [Education Plan](#) sets out the outline for your articling program. It details how you will develop the core skills and competencies identified by the Society that will prepare you to be competent at the level of a newly called lawyer. In addition to outlining how you will be taught these skills, the Education Plan sets out how you will be supervised and provided with feedback. Each Plan must be approved by the Society.

See the [Competency Framework](#).

### Articling Plan

For each articled clerk, a lawyer or the firm who is acting as Principal must attach an [Articling Plan](#) to either their previously approved Education Plan, or their new Education Plan. The Articling Plan either confirms the commitments made in the approved Education Plan or identifies changes for approval. If changes are noted in the Articling Plan, then an updated Education Plan showing the changes must also be submitted – it is not sufficient to note the changes only on the Articling Plan.

The Articling Plan must be signed by both the Principal and the Articled Clerk.

### Articling Agreement

The purpose of the [Articling Agreement](#) is to identify the Articled Clerk and Principal, confirm the articling term, and clarify the responsibilities of each party over the articling term. It also sets the specific obligations owed to the Principal and the Articled Clerk by the other. The Agreement does not deal with other terms of employment such as pay, vacation or sick leave. Those terms should be dealt with directly between the Articled Clerk and Principal.

### Ruling Letter

Once the Principal's Application and supporting documents have been received and approved, the Principal or Supervising Lawyer will receive a ruling letter by email confirming they are permitted to act as a Principal. This letter will also approve your Education Plan and Articling Plan.

## PART 2 – During the articling year

As an Articled Clerk, you may perform any legal service a responsible practising lawyer does; however, you must meet the following conditions:

1. Your principal must adequately supervise that activity;
2. You must be properly prepared for the task; and
3. Your principal must ensure that you are sufficiently competent to perform the task.

As the articling year progresses and your skills increase, it is anticipated that the tasks you can do will also increase. For further direction see the [Articling and Admissions Guidelines](#), in particular sections 2.7 and 3.5, which address court appearances.

It is important that during your articling year you identify yourself as an Articled Clerk during all forms of communication and when appearing at court. You may not be noted as counsel of record on a court file and you may not give or accept a **professional undertaking**. You are also not permitted to take an oath/swear a document.

If you are attending court and the matter requires the lawyers to be gowned, you may wear the gown only. You are not permitted to wear the tabs and you should not wear a QC's robe.

### Reports

Twice during the year, your Principal/Supervising Lawyer will submit a report on your progress to the Society. The first report will be forwarded to your Principal/Supervising Lawyer by email midway through your articling term, while the second report will be sent a month before the end of your articles. In this report, your Principal/Supervising Lawyer will provide feedback with respect to the development of your core skills and competencies. In most instances you will meet with your Principal/Supervising Lawyer to review the contents of the report before it is submitted to the Society.

### Bar Admissions Course

As part of the articling year, all Clerks must participate in the Bar Admissions Course. The Bar Admissions Course was established as the means for the Society to evaluate the skills required of a newly called lawyer. To be successful, clerks must meet the required level of competence.

The Course consists of three components: a three-week in-person Skills Course, a four-part online Skills Course, and the two-day Bar Examination. Attendance and completion of all components of the Bar Admissions Course is mandatory. **Principals and firms must accommodate this schedule during the articling term.**

The complete [schedule for the Bar Admissions Course](#) for the year can be found on our website.

You will be advised of your Skills Course placements in your ruling letter approving your articles.

The purpose of all components of the Skills Course is to evaluate your competence in a number of areas. During the in-person and online legal writing and drafting sessions, you will be introduced to and given an opportunity to practise the methods upon which you will be evaluated. While these sessions may introduce skills and knowledge you have already experienced during law school and / or through your articles, you may find there are other skills that you have not yet fully developed or learned. The sessions provide an opportunity to practise and hone all of your skills, even those you have used before, to the required level of competency to be successful on your evaluations.

### ***In Person***

The in-person portion of the Skills Course is three weeks long and takes place at the Society's offices in Halifax between the months of September and December. Three sessions are scheduled during this time period. Included in the articling application is a section where you will select when you would like to attend the in-person session of the Bar Admission (or "Skills") Course.

You will be asked to rank each of the in-person session times in order of preference. While we will try our best to schedule you for your preferred time, this may not be possible in all instances, particularly if your application is received after the deadline. If you have a special circumstance that you think may entitle you to a priority in selection of the in-person session (such as if you are getting married or have a pre-booked trip), please advise in your application. Note that simply only selecting one course preference does not ensure that you will be placed in that session.

The Skills Course focuses on evaluating the following key practice skills: Communication and Interviewing, Negotiation and Mediation, and Oral Advocacy. The methods to be evaluated for these key practice skills are introduced using a combination of presentations demonstrations, hands-on learning and guest speakers, and you will be evaluated in each of the skill areas prior to the completion of your session. To successfully complete the Skills Course, you will be required to complete three Evaluations that are marked on a pass/fail basis. You will be provided with guides that will be used to evaluate your performance. Your ability to recognize and address the appropriate substantive, procedural and ethical issues will also form part of the evaluations.

Classes typically run from 9:30 am to 4:30 pm Monday to Friday. Occasionally, classes will begin earlier or end later – you will be notified in advance whenever possible. You are expected to use out-of-class time to prepare for upcoming classes and evaluations. On most days when the course is not in session, you will have access to the Society's classroom and computers (the classroom does have Wi-Fi access but please note that only a few desktop computers will be available in this room – you are welcome to bring your own laptop to the course).

A complete course schedule and syllabus will be posted on your NSBS Member Login (eCommunity) on the first day of your session outlining for you, in general terms, the areas of focus for each day as well as the preparation required. **You are responsible for being aware of your own personal schedule.**

The syllabus will provide details on what will be covered each day of your in-person session. You will need to review the syllabus and ensure you complete the necessary preparation (such as reading articles on the eCommunity) prior to arriving each day. You should come each day prepared to participate in class discussions as well as to work in pairs or groups. In addition to this preparation, you will be expected to arrive on time, exhibit respectful and professional behaviour and dress appropriately. Please note that dress is business casual on most days, however for some exercises you are expected to wear appropriate business attire. You will be reminded of these days in advance. (They are also noted on your syllabus.)

### ***Attendance/late arrival***

In addition to evaluating you on the various skills during the session, we will be assessing your professionalism and practice management skills. Clerks who arrive late, without obtaining prior permission, are required to sign in. The sign-in sheets will be monitored and there will be repercussions including notifying your principal.

Any requests to be absent or with regards to a late arrival must be directed to the Skills Course staff for approval. We do realize that although attendance at the in-person session is mandatory, extenuating circumstances may arise when it may be necessary for you to request to be excused. All requests should be made in a timely fashion as late requests may affect our ability to approve your request. The decision with respect to your request may result in your absence being permitted with or without conditions, which could include the requirement to attend a portion of a later session to complete the missed content. If you fail to contact the Skills Course staff and you are absent from any portion of the Course, your principal will be contacted promptly. In addition to this notification, your marks will be withheld until a satisfactory notice

for the absence is received and any conditions placed upon you with regards to your absence are completed.

For more information, see [Policy regarding granting of extensions and absences during the Skills Course](#).

Requests to be scheduled at a particular time during days when your attendance is not required for the full session are considered in limited cases with sufficient notice.

Failure to attend for your competency evaluation during the in-person session without prior approval will result in a grade of “fail” in that skill. It will be necessary for you to complete a supplemental evaluation.

For more information, see [Policy regarding Completion of Assignments and Evaluations in the Skills Course](#).

Should you arrive late for your evaluation, you may have insufficient time to complete it. A determination will be made at the time of your arrival whether or not you will be permitted to proceed. As evaluations are completed in pairs, you should be aware that your late attendance or failure to attend will not only affect your evaluation but also that of your partner.

In the event a situation should arise that would cause you to arrive late for or miss your evaluation, you must contact the Skills Course Staff, immediately. This will allow the staff to review the situation and make a decision with respect to the evaluation.

**In addition to mandatory attendance, it is important to note that you are not permitted to perform work for your principal or a practising lawyer while attending the in-person portion of the Course. Please see regulation 3.6.5(c) of the [Regulations](#) under the *Legal Profession Act* for additional information.**

### **Evaluations**

The practice completed in the in-person portion of the Course will assist in preparing you for the evaluation of each skill. Careful work on the exercises and attention to feedback from classmates and Society staff will help you develop these skills. The evaluations require you to demonstrate the competence of a newly called lawyer in each skill and many of the practice exercises in the Course replicate what will be expected in the evaluations.

For each skill that is evaluated, you will find in your materials a “guide” that is a checklist for the specific skill. The guides are used by Society staff and clerks as an aid in providing detailed constructive feedback on the performance of particular skills. The guides are the criteria by which your performance will be judged during the evaluation. You should become familiar with the guides and use them conscientiously during the session.

We expect that you will collect and retain the guides completed by Society staff and classmates after you have received feedback on your work. A complete set of guides will serve as a record of your strengths and weaknesses when you prepare for the evaluations.

A description of the Evaluation for each skill is set out below:

- **Interviewing Skills Evaluation:**  
A 40-minute recorded interview. As a lawyer, you will interview a client (played by a staff member or other clerk) and advise them fully of their legal positions. The interviews will be evaluated using the Interviewing and Advising Guide.
- **Advocacy Skills Evaluation:**
  - a) You will prepare the documents for a mock Chambers motion: affidavit, brief and draft order, which will be evaluated using the Evaluation Guide.

- b) You will make a motion in Chambers before a volunteer judge and your oral advocacy will be evaluated using the Oral Advocacy Guide.
  - c) You will submit your preparation for the Chambers motion, including your case analysis. Your preparation will be evaluated using the Chambers Preparation Guide.
- **Negotiation Skills Evaluation:**
    - a) You and your opponent will be given general and confidential facts to research. You will then meet at a designated time to negotiate a settlement. Your negotiation will be recorded. You will also submit a two-part Negotiation Summary – Part 1 outlining your preparation and Part 2 providing a self-assessment of the negotiation. Both will be evaluated according to the Negotiation Evaluation Guide.
    - b) You will be required to complete a number of learning journals reflecting on the various exercises completed throughout the negotiation and mediation portion of the session.

While work throughout all exercises and classes can be collaborative, ***all evaluation work must be your own***. Discussion or working in pairs or a group is not permitted. You may not share research, compare notes or discuss the interpretation of the law and / or facts with anyone other than Course staff. Questions about an evaluation must be directed to Society staff. ***The copying of evaluations in whole or part is not permitted, and any violation of this rule will result in disciplinary action and failure of the component.***

The evaluations are marked on a pass/fail basis and the results are normally posted within one month after the completion of your in-person session. It is possible that you may not satisfy the assessment criteria during one (or multiple) of your competency evaluations. Should this be the case, you will be contacted to complete a supplemental evaluation. Prior to this supplemental evaluation, you will receive feedback and a copy of the assessment criteria to assist you in addressing issues with the particular practice skill. Further information on this will be provided to you as necessary.

### ***Submission requirements***

Some of the evaluations include a written component. These components are not just evaluated for their content but for their compliance with the submission protocol (see [Appendix D –Submission Protocol](#)) and their timely submission. Throughout your legal career, you will be required to follow requirements and meet deadlines. Failure to follow these requirements could result in rejected documents or returned submissions, which could mean missed deadlines or other delays that are unfavourable for a client. The requirements set by the submission protocol should be treated the same as those requirements found in practice. ***Failure to comply with the submission protocol may result in your evaluation not being accepted.***

In addition, you are responsible to ensure written components are submitted on time and complete. Failure to submit your evaluation on time, without an extension, will result in you failing the evaluation. Further, a clerk submitting an incomplete evaluation will have their marks withheld until the evaluation is submitted in full.

For further information, see [Policy regarding granting of extensions and absences during the Skills Course](#) and [Policy regarding Completion of Assignments and Evaluations in the Skills Course](#).

### ***Online***

The online portion of the Skills Course consists of four modules – Practice Management, Client Relationship Management, Legal Writing and Legal Drafting. Practice Management and Client Relationship Management normally open in the month of August with the competency evaluations taking place in December but may be offered at other times throughout the year. The other two modules take place between January and April.

The Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education (CPLED) is an external company hosting all of our online Skills Course modules. You will receive a username and password, along with any additional relevant information, close to the start date of your first CPLED online module.

***Please keep your usernames and passwords in a safe place, as Society and CPLED staff are not able to access your password information once it has been set.***

For instructions on [how to log into CPLED](#), see Appendix B.

Both Legal Writing and Legal Drafting consist of one assignment and a competency evaluation. The time alternates between weeks in which assignments or evaluations are being prepared and weeks in which they are being marked.

For each module, you will be assigned a Learning Group Facilitator (or “LGF”) who will provide feedback to you in your CPLED Dropbox and answer any questions you have about assignments and the evaluation. All LGFs are experienced members of the Nova Scotia Bar and are meant to serve as a valuable resource for you throughout your completion of the online modules. Your LGF will email you with an introduction prior to the start of the module.

Throughout the online module, you should expect to communicate with your LGF through your CPLED email or the discussion board. (See [Appendix B](#))

Please be aware that your LGF will not necessarily be available to answer questions on weekends, so please do not leave questions until the Friday before an assignment is due. If you have questions about the module or any related issues, please do not wait to contact your LGF (regarding an assignment or evaluation) and/or the course moderator (with anything else or if you have not heard from your LGF within 24 hours). The sooner we are aware of something, the sooner we can discuss it and provide you with an answer.

The assessment criteria for Legal Writing and Legal Drafting are posted in the individual modules. During the Legal Writing and Legal Drafting modules, your LGF will provide you with feedback on your assignments based on these criteria. Feedback is posted by noon on the Monday the next Unit opens. The feedback you receive is meant to assist you in preparing for the competency evaluation at the end of the module. It is therefore important that you review your feedback and discuss any questions you might have with your LGF.

### ***Evaluation***

The evaluation for each module will be marked based on the assessment criteria for that module. A description of the evaluation for each module is set out below:

**Legal Writing** – Preparation of an opinion letter written in plain language based upon a memo.

**Legal Drafting** – Preparation of a contract written in plain language based upon a memo.

The evaluations are marked on a pass/fail basis. The results are normally posted two weeks after the completion of the online component.

It is possible that you may not satisfy the assessment criteria during one or both of your competency evaluations. Should this be the case, you will be contacted to complete a supplemental evaluation. Prior to this supplemental evaluation, you will receive feedback and a copy of the assessment criteria to assist you in addressing issues with the particular practice skill. Further information on this will be provided to you as necessary.

### ***Submission requirements***

The assignments and evaluations in the Legal Writing and Legal Draft modules are not just evaluated for their content but also for their compliance with the submission protocol (see [Appendix D – Submission Protocol](#)) and their timely submission. Throughout your legal career, you will be required to follow requirements and meet deadlines. Failure to follow these requirements could result in rejected documents or returned submissions, which could mean missed deadlines or other delays that are unfavourable for a client. The requirements set by the submission protocol should be treated the same as those

requirements found in practice. Failure to comply with the submission protocol after receiving a warning will result in your assignment or evaluation not being accepted and treated as if it was not submitted.

The responsibility for timely receipt of your assignments/evaluations is yours. Do not wait until the last minute to submit your assignments/evaluations, as you will want to leave sufficient time to check that you have received your submission confirmation email and to confirm the proper file is in the dropbox. In order to have your assignments marked and receive feedback, they must be received on time.

Completing course work is not only important but mandatory. If you fail to meet a submission deadline, your principal will be notified. Failure to meet an assignment deadline will result in you not being permitted to complete the evaluation and it will be necessary for you to complete the module at a later date. Should you miss the submission deadline for the competency evaluation you will fail the module and need to complete a supplemental evaluation.

In the event a situation should arise that would affect the timely submission of your assignment, you must contact the Course Moderator and your LGF in advance of the submission deadline. This will allow them to review your situation and make a decision prior to your assignment or evaluation due date.

For further information, see [Policy regarding granting of extensions and absences during the Skills Course](#) and [Policy regarding Completion of Assignments and Evaluations in the Skills Course](#).

### **Practice Management**

The Practice Management module is hosted on the CPLED website. The purpose of the module is to evaluate your competency to manage the running of a law practice. The module consists of three units. Units 1 and 2 include a number of readings, exercises and a formative quiz. The materials in the module are provided as a tool to assist you in preparing for the Competency Evaluation and cover the various areas set out in the assessment criteria. They cover a broad range of topic areas, some that you may be familiar with and others you may not. It will be up to you to determine in which area or areas you need to review the materials and whether or not you need to seek additional resources to assist in your understanding of a given topic. You will not be assessed on the specific contents of the various readings provided but on your ability to apply your knowledge of practice management principles.

To provide clerks with plenty of time to not only review the module contents but obtain practical experience, the content, quizzes and exercises will be available through the CPLED website commencing in August. The competency evaluation however will not be open until December. All work on the competency evaluation must be your own.

The Unit 3 Competency Evaluation is an online examination consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. A one-week period will be given in which to write the competency evaluation. The evaluation is open book. You will have four hours in which to complete the examination and it must be completed in a single sitting. The Evaluation must also be supervised by an approved invigilator. The Practice Management Competency Evaluation Protocol and Assessment Criteria can be found in the Introduction to the module.

It is up to you to find an invigilator. The invigilator may be a lawyer or someone in your office. This individual must be able to observe you throughout your writing of the competency evaluation. In the rare circumstance that you are unable to locate an invigilator, you may contact Education & Credentials and arrange to write the Evaluation at our offices. The invigilator's form, found in the table of contents for the course, will need to be completed and returned to Education & Credentials twice. The timing for submitting the form is as follows:

**Prior to completing the competence evaluation** – Sections 1, 2 (if necessary) and the first portion of section 3 (up to and including Competency Evaluation Location (Address)) of the Competency Evaluation Administration form should be completed. The invigilator must also sign the bottom of the form. This will allow us to confirm you have arranged an invigilator and that they

are approved to invigilate.

**After you complete the competency evaluation** – The invigilator will complete the balance of section 3 (Commencement and Completion times and Invigilation Report). This will confirm the evaluation was completed without any irregularities or allow us to assess any irregularities if they arose.

In the event that you do not pass the Competency Evaluation, you will be contacted to complete a supplemental Evaluation. Prior to this supplemental Evaluation, you will receive feedback and a copy of the assessment criteria to assist you in addressing issues with any relevant practice skills. Further information on this will be provided to you as necessary.

### **Client Relationship Management**

The Client Relationship Management module is hosted on the CPLED website. The purpose of the module is to evaluate your competency to manage client relationships. The module consists of three units. Units 1 and 2 include a number of readings, exercises and a formative quiz. The materials in the module are provided as a tool to assist you in preparing for the Competency Evaluation and cover the various areas set out in the assessment criteria. They cover a broad range of topic areas; some that you may be familiar with and others you may not. It will be up to you to determine in which area or areas you need to review the materials and whether or not you need to seek additional resources to assist in your understanding of a given topic. You will not be assessed on the specific contents of the various readings provided but on your ability to apply your knowledge of client relationship management principles.

To provide clerks with plenty of time to not only review the module contents but obtain practical experience, the content, quizzes and exercises will be available through the CPLED website commencing in August. The competency evaluation however will not be open until December. All work on the competency evaluation must be your own.

The Unit 3 Competency Evaluation is an online examination consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. A one-week period will be given in which to write the competency evaluation. The evaluation is open book. You will have four hours in which to complete the examination and it must be completed in a single sitting. The Evaluation must also be supervised by an approved invigilator. The Client Management Competency Evaluation Protocol and Assessment Criteria can be found in the Introduction to the module.

For further information on finding an invigilator and completion of the invigilator form, see the section on [Practice Management](#).

### **Grades**

Successful completion of the Skills Course requires:

- a. attendance, participation and professional behaviour;
- b. completion of all assignments and evaluations; and
- c. a grade of “pass” in all evaluations.

The evaluations are marked on a pass/fail basis. The results of each evaluation are normally posted within one month after the completion of either your in-person session or the online session.

For directions on accessing your grades, see Appendix B – [How to View your “Report Card” or Grades](#).

View the Society’s [Policies related to the Bar Admissions Course](#) online.

## The Bar Exam

The Bar Exam is offered twice a year; once in January and once in July. The purpose of the Bar Exam is not to test your knowledge of specific case law or statutes but to determine if you meet the base level of competency for entry into the practice of law in Nova Scotia. The exam tests your ability to identify legal issues, analyze those issues by applying the facts to the law and reach a conclusion.

The Bar Exam covers 14 areas of law:

- Aboriginal law
- Administrative law
- Business organizations
- Civil trial procedure
- *Code of Professional Conduct*
- Commercial transactions
- Constitutional law
- Contract law
- Criminal law
- Evidence
- Family law
- Real estate
- Torts
- Wills and probate

To assist you in preparing for the exam, the Society posts a set of [Bar Review materials](#) on its website. These materials are an outline for the concepts in each of the above listed areas of law. The materials are reviewed and revised annually, and posted May 1 of each year.

As the materials are only an overview, if you are unfamiliar with an area of law or find an area particularly difficult, you should seek out further resource materials (e.g., textbook) or find a mentor to assist you.

### Preparing for the exam

You should ensure you give yourself plenty of time to prepare for the exam. In addition to the Bar Review Materials, we also post [sample exams](#) on our website that you may wish to use to assist you in your preparation. Please keep in mind that the sample answers are not perfect answers but will provide you with a good idea of what a passing answer should include.

We also offer a virtual [exam writing seminar](#) on our website. The seminar provides general information about the structure of the exam, a review of the method for answering questions and suggestions for preparing for the exam and writing it. Should you have any questions after viewing the virtual seminar, please contact an Officer, Education & Credentials at [cferguson@nsbs.org](mailto:cferguson@nsbs.org) or [egreen@nsbs.org](mailto:egreen@nsbs.org) and we would be happy to address them for you.

### Writing the exam

The Nova Scotia Bar Examination is closed book. No books, tablets, paper or personal items may be left on your desk. The exam consists of 12 questions and is written over two days in four sessions – two sessions in the morning and two sessions in the afternoon. Each session is two hours and 15 minutes long and includes three questions. Questions are not topic specific and could cover multiple areas of law.

You are given 64 lines to write your answer for each question and must complete your answers on the given lines. You are not permitted to write in the margins or “double up” on lines by writing in the blank space. While you are not required to quote case law or statutes, you do need to set out general legal principles. Given the limited space for your response, it is important to be organized and to avoid wasting space on extraneous issues.

### Results

The results for the Bar Examination are pass/fail and not a numerical score. You will be able to access your result in the Articled Clerk’s eCommunity of the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society website. (See [Appendix B](#) – How to View your “Report Card” or Grades.)

Marks for the January exam are normally released the first Thursday of April, while the July exam marks are normally posted the first Thursday of October. These dates may change in exceptional circumstances

and if that is the case, you will be notified of any change via email. Your Principal/Supervising Lawyer is also provided with your exam results one week after posting.

### **What if I fail?**

If after reviewing your grade you find you have failed the exam, you should contact the Education & Credentials department at the Society for your exam package. The package will include your exam, your marks for each question, a memo about common exam writing mistakes, a set of sample answers and the policy on exam remarking. You will also be offered an opportunity to meet with Education & Credentials staff to review a question or two of your exam and obtain some assistance on how to improve your performance for the next sitting. There is no charge for this meeting and it usually lasts about an hour.

If you wish to have your exam remarked, you will have 30 business days from the date the grades are posted to request this and pay the remarking fee. The remarking is conducted by a trained group of Bar Examiners who do not receive your initial marks and instead remark the questions you have failed as if they had not been previously scored.

The remarking process is as follows:

1. Lawyers who have agreed to review exams (or "Bar Examiners") review the answers to each question you have failed.
2. The Bar Examiners meet as a group to review their marking of your exam and finalize their results.
3. Your grade may increase or decrease.
4. There is no ability to appeal a remarking.
5. The Bar Examiners' mark is the final grade.

If your remarking results in you obtaining a passing grade, your remarking fee will be refunded.

If you decide not to have your exam remarked or the remarking does not result in a passing score, you are able to rewrite the exam at the next sitting. You may attempt to rewrite the exam two times. Additional attempts may only be made with the permission of the Director, Education & Credentials.

View the Society's [\*Policies related to the Bar Examination\*](#) online.

## Professionalism

Articled Clerks are subject to the same professional conduct standards as practising lawyers and are expected to abide by the *Code of Professional Conduct*. You should familiarize yourself with the content of the *Code*.

Throughout the articling year, you should conduct yourself with the upmost integrity and courtesy. Articled Clerks must always identify themselves as Articled Clerks and are not to leave the impression that they are practising lawyers.

It is also important to keep in mind that the Skills Course is a professional program and the contents (assignments, handouts, etc.) are the property of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society. The content is provided to you for use **in the program only**. You are not to share any of the materials with anyone nor save the materials in a location where they may be accessed by future students (such as on a workplace network).

Further, your conduct will be evaluated throughout the modules. There is an expectation that you will conduct yourself ethically and professionally during the entirety of the Skills Course. This includes arriving on time, submitting all evaluations and assignments on time, being considerate of the other participants, and ensuring that the work you submit is your own and original. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

To confirm that you agree to abide by these terms, you will sign the Skills Course Program Agreement in your Articling Application. Please read this document carefully as it applies to ALL aspects of the Skills Course.

## **Nova Scotia Lawyers Assistance Program**

The Nova Scotia Lawyers Assistance Program or “NSLAP” is a confidential 24-hour a day referral and short-term counselling service for members of the legal profession, their staff and families (including articulated clerks) for a full range of personal, family or life events and issues including, but not limited to, financial concerns, family, child and eldercare issues, communication problems, career development, health and fitness issues, psychological and emotional disorders, addiction, stress, depression or trauma.

In addition to the various levels of psychological services provided, NSLAP includes wellness programs either personally or online, as a series of health questionnaires and information to help you develop your Personal Wellness Plan, medical information, a variety of e-courses and other tools designed to help you take charge of your health and well-being. Members also have access to Plan Smart Lifestyle and Specialty Counselling Services designed to provide care giving, life planning and health management services.

Please be sure to familiarize yourself with the wide range of products and services this program provides.

[www.nslap.ca](http://www.nslap.ca)

1-866-299-1299

## PART 3 – Between articles and call

### Extending articles

If for some reason you are not ready to be called to the Bar at the end of your articling term, you can request an [extension of articles](#). You may need an extension to cover the few weeks between the completion of your articling term and your call to the Bar, or you may need additional time to meet all the articling requirements. Whatever the reason, you will require the agreement of your principal and approval from the Society.

View the Society's [Policy regarding Extensions of Articles](#) online.

## PART 4 - Admission to the Bar

In order to be called to the Bar, you must have successfully completed the Skills Course, Bar Examination and your articling term. As well, any fees incurred during your articling year (such as your Skills Course fees) must be paid.

Twice during the year, your Principal/Supervising Lawyer will submit a report on your progress to the Society. The first report will be forwarded to your Principal/Supervising Lawyer by email midway through your articling term while the second report will be sent a month before the end of your articles. In this report, your Principal/Supervising Lawyer will provide feedback with respect to the development of your core skills and competencies. In most instances, you will meet with your Principal/Supervising Lawyer to review the contents of the report before it is submitted to the Society. In order to be admitted to the Bar, your final report must confirm that you are competent in all the skills listed in your Education Plan.

In addition to the final report, the email enclosing your final report will request a [Certificate of Principal/Supervising Lawyer](#) and a [Statement of Good Character](#). Your Principal/Supervising Lawyer certifies that you are ready to be called to the Bar and are competent to the level of a newly called lawyer. Your Principal/Supervising Lawyer must also sign a statement confirming you are of good character. Your final report, Certificate of Principal/Supervising Lawyer and Statement of Good Character must be returned to the Society before a determination can be made as to your eligibility to be called.

**Once Education & Credentials staff have confirmed that you have met all the requirements to be eligible to be called to the Bar, you will receive the Bar Admissions Package via email.**

### Contents of the Bar Admissions Package

#### Information regarding employment/trust accounts

This form is used to obtain up-to-date contact and employment information for the Society database. In addition, line item (2) indicates how you would like your scroll to read. You are welcome to record any city that you identify with, hometown or otherwise. **Scrolls will be printed in English unless otherwise requested.** Only one scroll is issued per applicant.

#### Oath on Admission

You are required to either swear *or* affirm the Oath on Admission at the ceremony; it is optional to either swear or affirm the Oath of Allegiance. Templates are provided for English, French and Mi'kmaq; however, every applicant must first take the Oath on Admission in either English or French.

**Applicants wishing to take the Oath in another language should advise the Society upon receiving the admissions package.** The applicant is responsible for any fee associated with the official translation of this document.

In order to complete the oath form, you will need to insert your name in the appropriate space(s) and return the document to the Society for filing. You are not required to memorize the Oath – a hardcopy will be provided to you at the ceremony.

If you choose to swear your Oath and would like to use a book other than the Bible, please advise the Society **as soon as possible**.

#### Biography

A short biography is required for Society records and for document filing at The Law Courts. Biographies are printed in the ceremony program, and a condensed version will be read aloud prior to you swearing or affirming the Oath(s). A template setting out the standard content for the biography will be provided.

### **Notary Application**

Included in the Bar Admissions Package is the Notary Application. This form must be completed and returned to the Society. The notary appointments are administered by the Department of Justice and cannot be made until you are a member of the Bar. The Society will forward your completed application to the Department of Justice after the call. It normally takes five to six weeks once the applications are sent before your notary scroll will be received. **You are not permitted to sign as a notary until you have your notary scroll.**

### **Payment of fees**

In order to be called, you will need to pay three fees: the Bar Admission fee, the Notary Application fee and the Prothonotary's fee. Find more information about [Fees](#) on the Society's website.

### **Order**

Based on the information you provide in the Bar Admissions Package, Education & Credentials staff will prepare any necessary court documentation on your behalf to support your call to the Bar, including an Order for the judge to grant during the Call ceremony. You are no longer required to provide your own Order.

**NOTE: All of the above documents must be filed at least four to five weeks before your anticipated Call date.**

### **Attire**

For your Call, you must be fully gowned (waistcoat, robe, wing collar shirt, tabs, black or dark grey trousers or skirt, black shoes). Gowns may be obtained within the HRM at Colwell's (tel: (902) 420-1222) or Duggers (tel: (902) 425-2525). Be sure to give yourself plenty of time to place your order and have it delivered. If you are borrowing a gown, please ensure that you have not borrowed a QC gown.

**Please note that the Society does not provide or rent gowns.**

### **The ceremony**

The process for the Call to the Bar, when it is not the June call, is similar to what is listed below; however, the ceremony takes place at The Law Courts.

The June Call to the Bar takes place at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, 1055 Marginal Rd., Halifax. You are permitted to have guests and seating is on a first-come basis.

The ceremony begins with the entrance of the Presiding Justice. Everyone will rise and Court is formally opened. When the Presiding Justice sits down then everyone else is seated. Applicants are then called alphabetically. When you are called, you will rise and approach the center podium. The Presenting Officer will read your biography and then move for your admission. At this time, you will recite the Oath/Affirmation of Admission and optionally the Oath/Affirmation of Allegiance. You will stay at the podium until the Justice grants your order. At that time you will thank the Court and return to your seat.

This process will continue until all applicants have been called, following which the Presiding Justice will deliver a short address. When the address is complete the Justice will rise, the Court Clerk will ask everyone to rise and the Court will be formally closed.

**Note: Once the ceremony begins, guests will not be permitted to enter and exit by the main door during the Ceremony. The side entrance must be used once the ceremony is in progress.**

**Note: Photography will be permitted at the discretion of the Presiding Justice as long as it does not interfere with the proceedings.**

## **Signing the Roll of Lawyers**

In order to complete your admittance into the Bar, it is necessary for you to sign the Roll of Lawyers. The Roll will be available to be signed after the ceremony is complete. After signing the Roll, you will receive your Admissions scroll. **Be sure to sign the Roll of Lawyers before leaving.**

The process for the Call to the Bar, when it is not the June call, is similar, however the call takes place at The Law Courts, 1815 Upper Water St., Halifax.

View the Society's [\*Policies related to Admission to the Bar\*](#) online.

## PART 5 – After I’m called

The fees you pay for the call to the Bar include payment of your Society membership fee as a practising and insured member until the end of the month in which you are called. Should you wish to change your membership category, you will want to do so before the end of that month. As this can take time, be sure to request the change at least two weeks ahead of the date on which you want the change to be effective. Please keep in mind during busier times of the year it can take longer to process requests.

### Membership categories

The membership categories that apply to newly called lawyers:

Practising Lawyer – A lawyer permitted to practise law (as defined in Section 16 of the [Legal Profession Act](#)) in Nova Scotia as defined by [regulation 5.3.3](#).

Non-Practising Lawyer – A lawyer who was formerly practising but is now not currently entitled to practise law in Nova Scotia.

The forms necessary to change your category can be found on the Society website.

- [Application for Change of Category – from Practising](#)
- [Application for Change of Category – to Practising](#)

More information about changing category can be found at:

[http://www.nsbs.org/for\\_lawyers/membership/changing\\_categories](http://www.nsbs.org/for_lawyers/membership/changing_categories)

No matter what your employment status or member category, you should ensure that the Society has up-to-date contact information for you. You can complete the [Contact Changes form](#) online.

**NOTE: If you change employment, you should contact the Officer, Database Administration to update your information.**

### Notary public

Included in your package for the Call to the Bar was an application to become a notary public. These applications were forwarded to the Department of Justice for processing once the call to the Bar was complete. You should expect to receive your notary scroll five to six weeks after your Call at minimum. **You are not permitted to sign as a notary until you have received your scroll.**

### Stamps and seals

The Society does not provide stamps or seals. These can be purchased from many business supply companies.

### Professional development

The Society encourages, and requires, a culture of continual learning within Nova Scotia’s legal profession. Protection of the public is the Society’s core purpose in establishing standards for professional responsibility and ongoing competence of lawyers in an increasingly complex world.

All practising lawyers are required to complete and implement an annual professional development plan, and report they have done so in their Annual Lawyer Report. The Society also recommends (as it has since 2006) that lawyers engage in at least 50 hours of self-learning/self-study annually in addition to the mandatory CPD Requirement.

The Society provides ongoing notices and information about CPD resources but does not accredit programs. Visit the Upcoming events page or the Events calendar on the Society’s website for upcoming conferences, seminars, webinars and other offerings.

Details on [how to create a plan](#) can also be found on the Society website.

## **Trust accounts**

If you want to open your own trust account, it is necessary for you to take the trust account assessment. You may also wish to take the assessment if you are a signatory on a trust account. You will need to contact the [Administrator, Education & Credentials](#) to arrange to take the assessment.

## **Land Registration Act**

Lawyers interested in practising property law need to pass the Land Registry Qualification Assessment. Details about the Land Registry Qualification Assessment, including registration information, can be found at <http://www.nsbs.org/online-land-registration-act-training-program>.

You are permitted prior to being qualified to have a subscription for a query access account with Property Online. This can be arranged at any time through the [Province's website](#). This will permit you to conduct searches in Property Online and become familiar with the platform.

## **Opening your own practice**

If you are interested in opening your own law firm, you can obtain more information at:

- [Opening a new practice \(NSBS\)](#)

## **NSBS Guide for New Lawyers**

The Society has created a primer for new lawyers, providing similar information that is covered in this section as well as a lawyer's regulatory requirements. The [Guide for New Lawyers](#) can be viewed on the Society's website.

## APPENDIX A

### **I'm not lawfully entitled to work in Canada but I've been hired by a firm. Can I work as an articled clerk?**

Even if a firm has hired you, you cannot be registered as an articled clerk unless you are lawfully entitled to work in Canada. In order to be called to the Bar, you will need a valid work permit that extends past your articling period.

### **What happens if I answer 'yes' to any of the "Good character" questions on the articling application?**

Attach all the relevant information regarding the circumstances and outline the steps you took to resolve the situation. Education & Credentials staff will contact you if additional information is required. Not all affirmative responses are determined to raise issues of good character; however, if there is a concern, the application will be referred to the Credentials Committee. Failure to disclose necessary information can result in the refusal of your application or striking you from the Registry of Articled Clerks, which is kept by the Society. Therefore, when in doubt, it is best to disclose. Any contact with the law, any credit problems/ bankruptcies, discharge from employment, or academic suspension/ dishonesty should be fully disclosed.

### **What do I do if I have a law degree from outside Canada or a civil law degree?**

Applicants with a civil law degree from a Canadian university or a law degree from a non-Canadian university must have their academic credentials evaluated by the Federation of Law Societies National Committee on Accreditation (NCA). The NCA can require applicants to pass examinations in specified areas of Canadian law, take courses at a Canadian law school with a specified program of studies, or complete a Canadian common law degree.

Once the applicant has met the NCA requirements, the NCA will issue a "Certificate of Qualification", which confirms that the applicant has the education and training equivalent to a graduate of an approved Canadian common law school. The Certificate of Qualification must be provided to the Society by the NCA.

Application forms for the NCA are available from its office or on its website. The completed application form must be forwarded directly to the NCA.

Website: <http://flsc.ca/national-committee-on-accreditation-nca/>

### **When should I report a concern regarding my articles to the Executive Director?**

Throughout your articling term you can always contact the Director, Education & Credentials or staff should you have any questions. Many issues may be easily resolved by contacting us. However, some things may arise that should be reported to us immediately:

- If a Principal fails to comply with the obligations of the Principal contained in the Articling Agreement;
- If circumstances in the office of the Principal are not conducive to providing an educational experience;
- If your Principal is not adequately supervising the files you are working on;
- If you are not gaining enough proficiency in the skills listed in the Society's Competency Framework;
- If the Principal/Articled Clerk relationship has degenerated to the point that a meaningful articling experience is no longer possible.

The Executive Director will then take whatever action is deemed appropriate.

### **May I obtain a part-time job while articling?**

You are not permitted as an Articled Clerk to engage in any other employment that in the opinion of the Executive Director would interfere with your completion of the Articling Agreement or the Bar Admission Course. However, not all part-time jobs will so interfere. Please consult with the Officer, Education & Credentials before you accept any “outside jobs”, as this requires approval of the Society.

### **What is the role of the Credentials Committee?**

The Credentials Committee is a regulatory committee of the Society. Part of its mandate is to set policy relating to the credentialing process and to investigate matters of character and fitness.

### **What if character and fitness is an issue in my articling application?**

Should the Executive Director determine that character or fitness is an issue in an application to commence articles, the matter is referred to the Credentials Committee for an initial decision. The Committee has the right to request that the Executive Director conduct an investigation into the matter before a decision is made. The Committee has the option of ordering an investigation, approving the application or denying the application with reasons. If the application is denied, the applicant can request a review of the decision by way of a Credentials Inquiry.

### **What is a Credentials Inquiry?**

If an applicant requests a review of the Credentials Committee decision, a panel is struck to hold a hearing into the applicant’s character and fitness. The inquiry follows the same rules as those used for Public Hearings in the Professional Responsibility realm. The applicant is entitled to be represented as is the Society. Witnesses are called by both sides and the Hearing Panel makes a decision based on the evidence.

### **What if I no longer wish to continue with my articles?**

Should you no longer wish to article, you may apply to the Executive Director to have your Articling Agreement terminated. You must provide all necessary information to the Executive Director in order to allow the Executive Director to consider the application and make a ruling. The Executive Director may approve the application on such terms as deemed appropriate.

View the Society’s [Policy on Termination of Articles](#) online.

### **What if I want to continue my articles with a different Principal?**

If you wish to continue your articles with a different principal, you may [assign the Articling Agreement](#) to another Principal. The following conditions apply:

- You must have the written consent of your Principal.
- The other Principal must have applied to be a Principal and been accepted.
- The prescribed Assignment of Articles form must be filed with the Society before the date you wish the assignment to take place.
- You must pay the prescribed fee.

### **What if I require a leave of absence from articling?**

If circumstances should arrive in which you feel you need to have a leave of absence, you will need to obtain written consent from your principal and get approval from the Executive Director. You will remain a member of the Society during your absence but you will not be entitled to act as an Articled Clerk. As well, the time you are absent will not be counted towards your articling term.

View the Society’s [Policy on Leaves of Absence](#) online.

# APPENDIX B – TECHNICAL INFORMATION

## Nova Scotia Barristers' Society website

### How to log into the eCommunity

1. Go to the bottom of the [NSBS homepage](#)
2. Click on "Member Login"

You will be directed to a page that says "Welcome to the Member Login portion of the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society website"

3. Click on the "Log On" link in the upper right hand corner of the page
4. Enter your username and password

**(Note: This is your NSBS username and password, NOT your CPLED username and password. Your NSBS password is included in your ruling letter.)**

### How to access the Resource Library for the Skills Course

1. Log into the eCommunity
2. Click on the "Articled Clerks" tab in the red banner at the top of the page
3. On the right hand side of the page you will see the "Resource Library"
4. Click on the "+" sign to the left of the "Resource Library" file folder
5. Click on the "+" sign to the left of the "Skills Course" file folder
6. You can now see the contents of the various subfolders by clicking the "+" sign next to the subfolder you wish to view

### How to download items from the Resource Library

1. Find the item you wish to download
2. Click on it **once** – a "Download" button will appear on the banner under the "Resource Library" heading
3. Click the "Download" button
4. You will now be asked to open or save the file

### How to view your "Report Card" or Grades

1. Log into the eCommunity
2. Select the "Articled Clerks" tab from the red banner at the top of the page
3. Scroll to the bottom of the page to view the "Enrolment and Grades" section
4. Grades will be posted next to the relevant session

Grades are noted as Pass, Fail or Incomplete

### How to print your Member Card

Your member card is confirmation of your membership in the Society and your practising status.

1. Log into the eCommunity
2. Click on "Member Card" in the red banner
3. Click the "Here" link at the end of the text
4. Select whether you wish to Open or Save the file
5. Once the file is opened select Print

## CPLED (Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education)

### How to log Into CPLED

1. Go to [CPLED](#)
2. Click the “Desire2Learn” button under “Quick Links”
3. Prior to entering your username and password complete the systems check by clicking the link “Please click here for a System Check before you login”
4. Once the System Check is complete enter your username and password  
**(This is your CPLED username and password NOT your NSBS username and password. Your CPLED password will be emailed to you prior to you commencing your first module on the CPLED platform.)**
5. Click the Log In button

### How to access the Skills Course

1. Log in to CPLED
2. Select “Nova Scotia Skills Course”
3. On the Skills Course Homepage select the relevant module listed in the center of the page

### How to change the time zone setting

1. Log into CPLED
2. At “My Home” or any screen after you log in, click next to your name in the minibar at the top right corner
3. Select “Account Settings” from the dropdown menu
4. Scroll down to “Time Zone”
5. Select “Canada-Halifax” from the Time Zone dropdown menu
6. Click the “Save and Close” button at the bottom of the page

### How to access your CPLED Email

1. Log into CPLED and enter the Skills Course
2. Select the “Communication” dropdown menu from the menu at the top of the home page or any screen in the Course
3. Select Email from the dropdown menu
4. You will next see your “inbox”.
5. You can compose and read email here.

### How to access the Discussion Board

1. Log into CPLED and enter the Skills Course
2. Select the “Communication” dropdown menu from the menu at the top of the home page or any screen in the Course
3. Select Discussions from the dropdown menu
4. Locate your LGFs discussion board

### How to save a file to the Dropbox

1. Log into CPLED and enter the Skills Course
2. Select “Dropbox” from the menu at the top of the home page or any screen in the Course
3. On the “Dropbox Folder” page, select the folder for the relevant assignment
4. Click the “Add A File” button
5. Click the “Upload” button
6. Select the relevant file to upload (**BE SURE you upload the PROPER file**)
7. Once the file has been selected click the “Add” button
8. Click the “Submit” button to complete the submission
9. You will receive an email from CPLED acknowledging your submission
10. **If you do not receive the email, check to insure your file has been submitted**

**\*All submissions MUST comply with the submission protocol, which can be found by following the link on the introductory page of each module.**

### **How to check your feedback**

1. Log into CPLED and enter the Skills Course
2. Select "Dropbox" from the menu at the top of the home page or any screen in the Course
3. Under the "Feedback" column on the "Dropbox Folder" page, click the "View" link for the relevant assignment
4. Under Feedback on the "View Feedback" page, select the relevant file or down load the files using the "Download All Files" button.

## **APPENDIX C – REQUIRED CONTENT FOR CONFIRMATION LETTERS**

A letter confirming graduation must indicate that you have completed all the requirements for your degree and note you will be graduating. It should not use the word “expected” when referring to your graduation. Below are three examples of satisfactory letters:

### **Example 1**

“[STUDENT] has completed all graduation requirements and their JD degree will be conferred on [DATE].”

### **Example 2**

This is to certify that the person mentioned above has successfully completed all of the requirements in order to obtain his/her Juris Doctor degree from [UNIVERSITY]. He/She will receive his/her diploma on [DATE].

### **Example 3**

This letter is to confirm that [NAME], attended [UNIVERSITY] from [DATE] to [DATE]. He/She has successfully completed the JD program and has satisfied the requirements for conferral of the JD degree on [DATE].

At this time, our office can confirm his/her eligibility to graduate in the [DATE] convocation ceremony.

# APPENDIX D – SUBMISSION PROTOCOL

## NSBS Submission Protocol

1. Save your assignment or evaluation in Word (.doc, .docx).
2. Use 11 or 12-point font.
3. Use 1.5 line spacing.
4. Make all four margins at least one inch.
5. Use the following file-naming protocol:  

Last name\_First name\_Assignment name

*Example:* Smith\_Jane\_Assignment\_Unit1
6. Ensure your name appears on each page in either the header or footer.
7. Number the pages.
8. Your assignment must comply with the maximum page requirement.

Assignments or competency evaluations that do not follow this protocol may not be accepted.

## APPENDIX E – ARTICLING AND ADMISSIONS CHECKLIST

- Locate Articling position
- Review [Articling Handbook](#)

Complete and submit the following:

### Clerk ([Articling Application Form](#))

- Applicant's Questionnaire Part 1
- Skills Course/Bar Exam selection
- Skills Course Program Agreement
- Equity/Diversity Form, *optional*
- Particulars of any affirmative answers in Applicant's Questionnaire Part 1
- Applicant's Questionnaire Part 2 (**to be submitted separately from Part 1**)
- Criminal record check
- Notarized copy of government photo ID
- Authorization to work in Canada, *if applicable*
- Letter from law school confirming you have met the requirements to graduate, *if applicable*
- Official transcript or Certificate of Qualification
- Proof of English proficiency, *if applicable*
- Articling Plan (*to be completed in conjunction with Principal*)
- Articling Agreement (*to be completed in conjunction with Principal*)
- Education Plan (*to be completed in conjunction with Principal*)
- Special (Examination) Accommodations Request Form, *if applicable*
  
- [Fees](#)

### Principal

- Principal Application ([individual](#) or [firm](#))
- Articling Agreement (*completed in conjunction with Clerk*)
- Articling Plan (*completed in conjunction with Clerk*)
- Education Plan (*completed in conjunction with Clerk*)

### Step Three – Complete Bar Admissions Course

- Bar Examination
- Skills Course
  - In Person
    - Interviewing
    - Negotiation
    - Oral Advocacy
  - Online
    - Practice Management
    - Legal Writing
    - Legal Drafting

### Step Four – Admission to the Bar

Complete and return the following:

- Information regarding employment/trust accounts
- Oath on Admission (**be sure to request translation, if needed**)
- Oath of Allegiance, *if applicable*
- Biography
- Notary Application
- Fees
- Arrange attire for ceremony
- Attend ceremony
- Sign Roll of Lawyers
- Receive Admission Scroll
- Receive Notary Scroll

### Step Five – After you are admitted

- Review membership category
- Update employment information with Society, *if needed*
- Order stamps and seals (**these are not provided by or ordered through the Society**)
- Create annual Professional Development Plan
- Complete Trust Account Assessment, *if applicable*
- Complete Land Registration Qualification Assessment, *if applicable*
- Review materials on opening a firm, *if applicable*