



NOVA SCOTIA
BARRISTERS' SOCIETY

Guide for Applicants with Foreign Law Degrees

February 2018

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Guide for Applicants with Foreign Law Degrees

Applicants with a foreign law degree, who seek admission to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (the "Society"), fall into two scenarios:

1. Those already [admitted to a foreign Bar](#), being Applicants for Admission on Transfer; and
2. Those [not admitted to a foreign Bar](#), being Applicants for Enrolment in the Bar Admissions Course and as an Articled Clerk.

Both scenarios include Canadian citizens.

Non-Canadian Law Degree – Admitted to a Foreign Bar

Individuals who have earned their law degrees and have been admitted/called to a foreign bar will apply to be admitted to the Nova Scotia Bar using the process discussed in the following pages. In order to be eligible to apply, individuals must be entitled to be employed in Canada.

Note: You must have received the Certificate of Qualification from the National Committee on Accreditation before you can apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society.

STEP ONE – APPLY TO THE NATIONAL COMMITTEE ON ACCREDITATION (NCA)

The first step in the accreditation process is for you to contact the [National Committee on Accreditation \(NCA\)](#).

What is the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA)?

The NCA has been designated as the national credential assessment organization and operates through the [Federation of Law Societies of Canada](#). The NCA verifies that internationally trained lawyers applying to work in the Canadian legal profession have an education comparable to that of a Canadian law degree (common law). The Society is not a part of the NCA.

How long will it take to complete the accreditation process?

It is best to begin the process before arriving in Canada, since it can take anywhere from one year to four or five years to complete. The length of the process will depend on many factors, such as your country and legal jurisdiction of origin, access to necessary documentation, and time available for exam preparation.

What documents will I need?

Before leaving your country, contact your university(ies) and law society (regulator of the legal profession) to inform them of the documentation you will require them to send to the Canadian accreditation bodies. You will need to provide:

- transcripts,
- Certificate of Admission to the Bar,
- Letter of Good Standing, and
- a detailed CV/resumé

Will I require further legal training?

Before completing an application form, you should contact the NCA for further information on potential Canadian educational requirements. If you are coming from a jurisdiction with little or no exposure to substantive common law, you may be required to apply for and attain an LLB or JD from a Canadian or other common law law school before being eligible to practise law in Canada. If, however, you have experience with common law systems, you may only be required to write exams or enrol in law school courses.

How do I apply?

All applications must be made through the NCA's [online application form](#). You may apply at any time throughout the year but applications cannot be assessed until ALL documentation is received and the fees have been paid.

What must I submit with my application?

1. **Academic record** – courses, grades, credits
 - a. Applicants may forward their original transcripts for pre-legal education but all documents related to legal education must be official and sent directly to the NCA from the university.
 - b. Please see NCA [website](#) and application form for more information on the difference between “original” and “official” documentation.
2. **Certificate of Admission to Bar/Council/Law Society**
Must be an official document sent from the Society.
3. **Transcript of courses or exams completed for call to the Bar/Council/Law Society**
Must be an official document sent from the Society.
4. **Letter of Good Standing from Bar/Council/Law Society**
Must be an official document sent from the Society.
5. **Detailed CV/resumé of legal work and professional experience**
This is a document detailing the tasks and responsibilities involved in your legal career. It is best to include lots of detail and information on exposure to common law systems and subjects. For more information, contact the NCA directly.
6. **Assessment fee**
This fee can be paid using a credit card.

PLEASE NOTE: You are responsible for providing certified English translations of any documents not in French or English.

How does the assessment process work?

Each application is **assessed individually against the NCA Assessment Policy** ([review the NCA's policies](#)) and any unique circumstances are taken into consideration. During the assessment process, the NCA will consider work experience obtained while working as a licensed lawyer (or barrister or solicitor, etc.) in a common law jurisdiction. They will also compare foreign legal systems to the Canadian legal system by referring to [Juri Globe](#).

The NCA considers the following when determining compatibility of an applicant's legal education and legal work experience to the Canadian legal system:

- the country and jurisdiction in which the applicant was educated;
- the recognition of the law school or law program attended by the authority for the legal profession in the jurisdiction where the law school is located;
- length of degree, subject matters studied, content of courses, academic standing, and age of legal degree;
- the length and substance of professional legal experience;
- standing at current law society, the type and level of law practised; and
- continuing legal education and development.

How long will it take to assess my application?

Applications are assessed within four to six weeks once all documentation is received.

What is a recommendation?

Recommendations are the results of the assessment of your application. The NCA will set out what, if any, additional assessments or education you will require before your legal education is comparable to a Canadian law degree (common law).

How do I interpret the results and recommendations of my assessment?

There are three categories of NCA recommendations:

1. Specific number of exams
2. Combination of exams and in-class instruction at a Canadian Common Law School
3. Requirement to complete a law degree at a Canadian Common Law School

In making its recommendation, the NCA focuses on nine core common law subjects including five mandatory Canadian subjects, in which applicants must demonstrate an understanding:

1. Foundations of Canadian Law
2. Canadian Criminal Law
3. Canadian Constitutional Law
4. Canadian Administrative Law
5. Canadian Professional Responsibility
6. Contracts
7. Torts
8. Property
9. Business Organizations

The determination of these recommendations is generally based on the legal jurisdiction of the applicant:

1. **Common Law** (e.g., England, Australia, United States, India)
 - All applicants are required to complete the five Canadian-specific common law subjects.
 - Sometimes applicants are required to take additional courses depending on experience, education and academic standing.
 - In-class participation is typically recommended only for applicants who obtained a significant portion of their education through distance learning.
2. **Mixed** (e.g., Philippines, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Israel, Scotland)
 - Assessments are based on the categorization of the country's legal system by JuriGlobe.
 - Typically five to nine exams are assigned.
 - In-class participation is typically recommended only for applicants who obtained a significant portion of their education through distance learning.
3. **Non common law** (e.g., China, Columbia, Iran, Mexico)
 - These are legal jurisdictions with very little or no exposure to common law. Considering the significant differences in interpretation and application of legal principles, the NCA requires these applicants to obtain substantial exposure to the common law typically by attending a Canadian or other common law law school.
 - Also relevant is licensure as a lawyer in a common law jurisdiction when the licensure process included substantive exams or courses.

Please note: As a province of Canada, Nova Scotia is a common law jurisdiction. Therefore, the NCA criteria are generally greater for applicants with a civil law degree than they are for applicants with a non-Canadian common law degree.

What is the examination process?

The NCA exams are offered in four sessions: January, May, August and October. All nine NCA exams are offered twice a year, in either January and August or May and October. The five Canadian mandatory subjects are offered at all four sessions.

The exams are offered in Calgary, Toronto and Vancouver, but arrangements can be made to write in other Canadian cities or internationally (normally at the applicant's expense).

The exams are similar to Canadian law school exams and are set and marked by professors across the country. Syllabi, sample exams, exam schedules and an exam-writing guide are all provided on the [NCA Examination website](#). Study materials can also be obtained through websites for international applicants.

A fee is charged for each examination.

What is a Certificate of Qualification?

Upon completion of the assigned requirements, applicants receive a "Certificate of Qualification" that declares knowledge of Canadian substantive law. With the Certification of Qualification, internationally trained lawyers can apply to their provincial or territorial law society, which regulates admission to the Bar and the legal profession in that province or territory.

In Nova Scotia, the provincial law society is the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society (NSBS, "the Society"). The Society is a self-regulated body composed of elected Council members and appointed members of the public (see the [Legal Profession Act](#) for more details). The Executive Director is employed by Council and oversees the administration of the Society.

STEP TWO – APPLY TO THE NOVA SCOTIA BARRISTERS’ SOCIETY (THE “SOCIETY”)

If you are an internationally trained lawyer who has already been admitted/called to the Bar outside of Canada, you will apply as a transfer applicant.

Note: You must receive a Certificate of Qualification from the National Committee on Accreditation before you can apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers’ Society.

How do I apply?

In order to apply, you must complete and provide the Society with the following:

1. Copy of your Certificate of Qualification
2. Application for Admission on Transfer
 - a. Transfer fee
 - b. Documentation regarding any affirmative responses in Parts B and/or C of the application, if applicable
3. Notarized copy of a government-issued photo ID
4. Current Certificate of Standing from each jurisdiction in which you are or have been licensed to practise
5. Current Certificate of Standing for each governing body of each professional organization, excluding law societies, of which you are or have been a member, if applicable
6. Two Statements of Good Character

Copy of Certificate of Qualification

The NCA will provide a copy of your Certification of Qualification directly to the Society. While dealing with the NCA, you are responsible to select where you wish to send your Certification of Qualification.

Application for Admission on Transfer

To complete the Application for Admission on Transfer, you will need to provide the following:

- your personal information
- your education history
- confirmation of your ability to work in Canada
- list of all law societies in which you are currently or were previously a member (**supported by Certificates of Standing**)
- list of all governing professional bodies, other than law societies, in which you are currently or were previously a member (**supported by Certificates of Standing**)
- your employment history, including the nature and extent of your practice/law experience
- responses to questions about your professional history and character and fitness, as well as particulars regarding any affirmative answers
- your intentions with regards to practising once you are called to the Bar
- your Application for Permit Pending Call to the Bar – this is not applicable
- your Authorization and Undertaking
- Part 2 of the Application addressing Fitness
- two Statements of Good Character

Confirmation of ability to work in Canada

If you are not a Canadian citizen or do not have Canadian landed immigrant status, please provide particulars of work permit or other authorization. (For information on immigration see Appendix D.)

Transfer fee

The [transfer fees](#) can be found on the Society's website. To find the fees for the transfer application on the fee schedule look under Other Fees, then under the heading **transfer from another law society**, and then at application fee.

Particulars of any affirmative responses

If you answer "yes" to any of questions 11 to 15 in Part B or any question in Part C, you will need to provide further details. It is important to provide as many details as possible.

What happens if I answer 'yes' to any of the "good character" or "professional history" questions in my application?

If you answer "yes" to any of the "good character" or "professional history" questions, you will need to attach all 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. 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 is the role of the Credentials Committee?

The [Credentials Committee](#) is a regulatory committee of the Society. Part of its mandate is to set policies relating to the credentialing process and to investigate matters of character and fitness.

What if character and fitness are issues in my application?

Should the Executive Director determine that character and/or fitness are issues in an application for admission on transfer, 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.

Credentials Committee policies

- [Policy on internal review by Credentials Subcommittee of Executive Director decisions](#)
- [Credentials Committee - Policy on special meeting criteria](#)
- [Policy on Appeals to Credentials Appeal Panel of Credentials Committee Decisions](#)
- [Policy on Credentials Committee admissions decisions on applications referred by Executive Director](#)

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), which 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 and compare the original and the photocopy to confirm they are identical.

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

Certificates of Standing from law societies

A certificate of standing confirms your membership in a law society as well as providing information about any discipline or competency proceedings, practice restrictions and other information. A certificate of standing must be provided directly to the Society by each jurisdiction in which you are, or have ever been, licensed to practise law.

Certificates of Standing from professional organizations other than law societies

If you are or have been a member of a regulated profession, such as a nurse, engineer or accountant, you will need to provide certificate(s) of standing from those organizations. A certificate of standing confirms your membership in the profession as well as providing information about any discipline or competency proceedings, practice restrictions and other information. A certificate of standing must be provided directly to the Society by each organization in which you are, or have ever been, a member.

Statements of Good Character

Your application needs to include two statements of good character. The application includes the form for these statements and should be completed by a lawyer who has worked with you, has known you for at least two years and is able speak to your good character. The statements of good character should be returned directly to Society by the individual completing them. They may be returned via email or fax.

How long will it take to process my application?

We strive to process complete applications with no public interest issues within two weeks. Timelines may be extended during periods of high application volume, particularly from April 1 to July 15. See [***Policy on Timelines***](#). *Applications with character or fitness issues must be referred to the Credentials Committee.*

What considerations will be made when processing my application?

Each application is assessed on a case-by-case basis by the Society's Executive Director and the Education & Credentials department. The Society will consider relevant practice experience, competency, character and fitness when determining whether to approve a transfer application. The application may be approved with or without conditions.

What types of conditions might be attached to my application?

The Executive Director may approve a transfer application with or without conditions. All applicants will be required to complete the [**Bar Examination**](#). There may also be a requirement to take all or a portion of the Skills Course or to work under a period of supervision.

How will I find out the results of my review?

Once your Application for Admission on Transfer has been reviewed and approved, you will receive an email with an attachment called "ruling letter" confirming your approval. This letter will outline any important dates, your personal login credentials for our website, and information regarding any conditions you must complete.

Related policies

The following policies apply to Applications for Admission on Transfer:

- [**Procedure regarding an affirmative answer to the fitness question on the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society application forms**](#)
- [**Policy on applications for transfer from a jurisdiction outside Canada**](#)
- [**Policy on education plans for transfer applicants**](#)
- [**Policy on decision making in the public interest**](#)

STEP THREE – COMPLETE CONDITIONS

The approval of your application for admission on transfer may include conditions. All applicants must successfully complete the Bar Examination. You will be required to pay the foreign transfer exam fee for the Bar Examination. (See [Fees](#) – Other Fees, Foreign Transfer exam fees). Other common conditions are to successfully complete the Practice Management Module or to work under supervision. If you are required to complete any portion of the Skills Course, you will be advised about the related fee.

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 our 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 on 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., textbooks) or find a mentor to assist you.

Preparing for the Exam

You should 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](#) one of the Officers, Education & Credentials 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 Exam 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 F](#) – 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. If you are required to complete a period of supervision, your Supervising Lawyer will also receive 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.

You should review the following policies related to the Bar Examination:

- [Policy on applicant identification and release of grades](#)
- [Policy on invigilation of the Bar Examination](#)
- [Policy on remarking of Bar Examination](#)
- [Policy on rewriting the Bar Examination](#)
- [Policy on use of language dictionary](#)
- [Policy on writing at a location outside Halifax](#) – Please note, there is a fee for writing offsite.
- [Policy regarding accommodation during the Bar Admission Course](#)
- [Request for Accommodation Form](#)

Skills Course

As part of your conditions, you may be asked to complete all or part of the Skills Course. The most frequent condition is completion of the Practice Management and Client Relationship Management Modules. The Skills Course is a portion of the Bar Admissions Course and was established as the means for the Society to determine that those who successfully complete the course possess the required level of competence for a new lawyer. If you are required to complete any portion(s) of the Skills Course, you will be advised of the particular fees by staff.

For more information on the Skills Course, see the [Articling Handbook](#).

Practice Management

The Practice Management module is an evaluative module hosted on the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education (CPLED) [website](#). The model consists of three units. Units 1 and 2 include a number of readings, assignments and short quizzes meant to assist you in evaluating your understanding of the principles of practice management. You will have four weeks to review the content, then Unit 3, the Competency Evaluation, will open. The Competency Evaluation will be open for 10 days.

Please note: You will be issued a specific CPLED username and password.

The Unit 3 Competency Evaluation is an online examination consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. 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 for an invigilator and confirm 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 will allow us to assess any irregularities if they arose.

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

Client Relationship Management

The Client Relationship Management module is an evaluative module hosted on the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education (CPLED) [website](#). The module consists of three units. Units 1 and 2 include a number of readings, assignments and short quizzes meant to assist you in evaluating your understanding of the reading materials. You will have four weeks to review the content, then Unit 3, the Competency Evaluation, will open. The Competency Evaluation will be open for 10 days.

Please note: You will be issued a specific CPLED username and password.

The Unit 3 Competency Evaluation is an online examination consisting of multiple choice and short answer questions. 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 Relationship Management Competency Evaluation Protocol and Assessment Criteria can be found in the

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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:

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

Grades

Like the Bar Exam, the evaluations are marked on a pass/fail basis. The results of each evaluation are normally posted within two weeks after the completion of your session.

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

For further technical information regarding the CPLED platform, see the [CPLED portion](#) of Appendix F.

Articling

A further condition may be the requirement to complete a period of articles. Articling is a period of experiential learning meant to assist in the transition to the practice of law in Nova Scotia. An applicant's work must be supervised by other lawyers, who provide constructive feedback and assist them in learning legal practice and client management skills. Articles must be completed in the province of Nova Scotia.

STEP FOUR – ADMISSION TO THE BAR

In order to be called to the Bar, you must have successfully completed the conditions set out in your ruling letter and pay any required fees.

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 Society will arrange for the oath to be translated by an official translator. 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 hard copy 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. A condensed version of your biography 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 5-6 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. See [Our Fee Schedule](#).

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 4-5 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 in the Halifax area 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 Bar Admission Ceremony

All [ceremonies](#), except the large call in June, are held at The Law Courts, 1815 Upper Water Street, Halifax, Nova Scotia. 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. 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 standing until the Justice grants your order. At that time, you will thank the Court and sit down.

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: Photographs will be permitted at the discretion of the Presiding Justice as long as they do 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 Admission scroll. **Be sure to sign the roll of lawyers before leaving.**

Related policies

Policies related to the admission to the Bar are listed below:

- [Policy on timelines](#)
- [Procedure for the Bar Admission Ceremony](#)

STEP FIVE – AFTER YOU ARE ADMITTED

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

These are 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 Member – An admitted member who is 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](#)

For more information, see [Changing categories](#) in the [Membership](#) section of the website.

No matter what your employment status or membership category, you should ensure 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 completed. 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 that 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](#) for upcoming conferences, seminars, webinars and other offerings.

Details on [how to create a plan](#) can 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. Registration and other details can be found on the [Online LRA Qualification Assessment](#) webpage.

Opening your own practice

If you are interested in opening your own law firm, find more information here:

- [Opening a new practice](#), on the Society's website
- [Opening a law office](#), on the LIANS website

Non-Canadian Law Degree – Not Admitted to A Foreign Bar

Individuals have earned their law degree and have NOT been admitted/called to a foreign Bar. They must be lawfully entitled to be employed in Canada. It will be necessary for them to obtain an articling position in Nova Scotia and to complete the Bar Admission Course.

Note: You must receive a Certificate of Qualification from the National Committee on Accreditation before you can apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society.

Step One – Apply to the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA)

The particulars of [how to apply to the NCA](#) are set out starting on page 4 of this Guide.

Step Two – Apply to be an articled clerk

The Society's [Articling Handbook](#) provides a full overview of the articling process, from completing the application to being admitted to the Bar. Please refer to the Handbook for this stage of the process.

Step Three – Complete Bar Admissions Course

Information about the Bar Admission Course, including the Bar Examination and Skills Course, can be found in the [Articling Handbook](#). Please refer to the Handbook for further details.

Step Four – Admission to the Bar

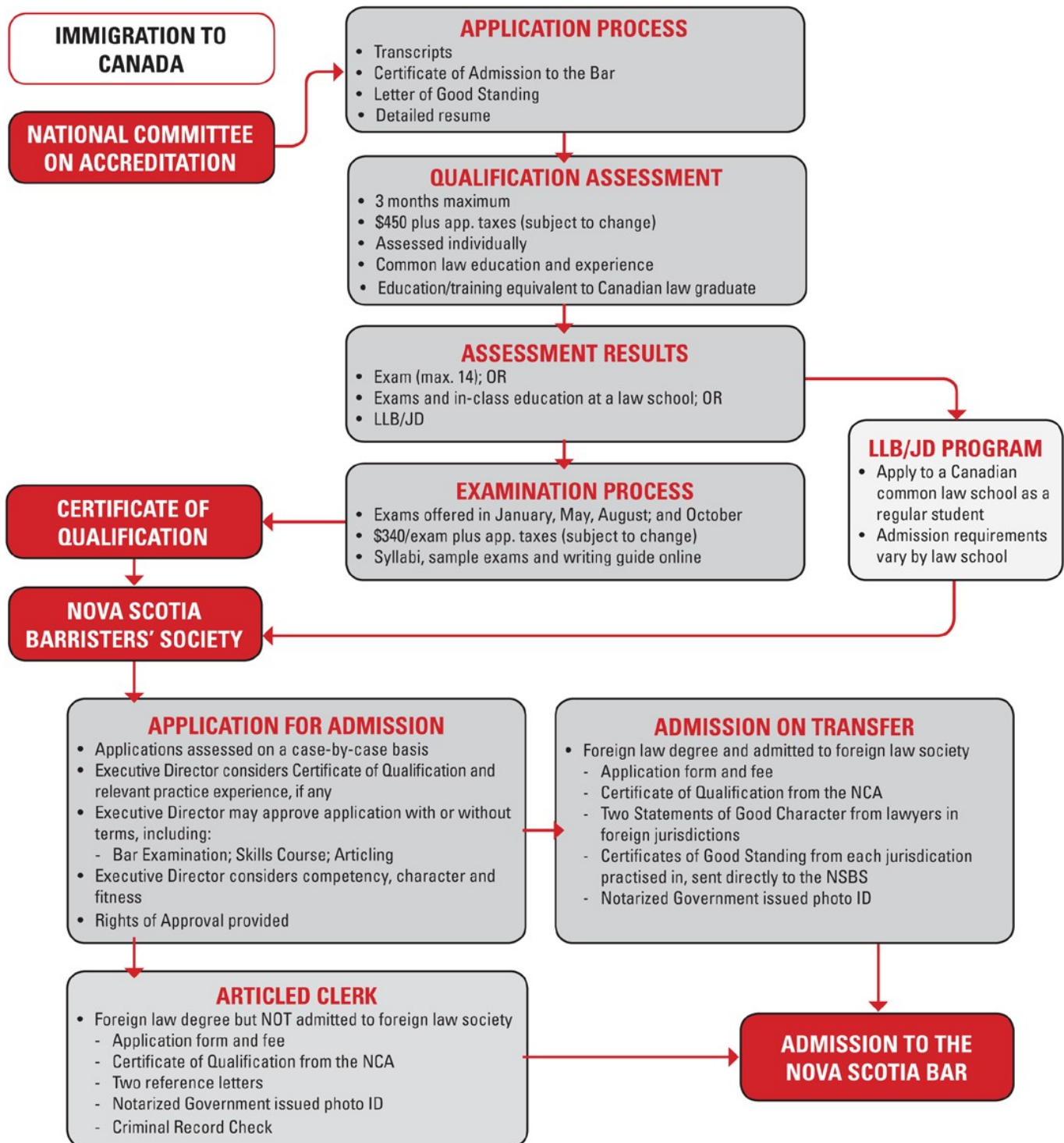
The process for admission to the Bar follows the steps set out in the [Admission to the Bar](#) section of this Guide.

Step Five – After you are admitted

Information and resources for lawyers following admission to the Bar can be found in the [After you are Admitted](#) section of this Guide.

Appendix A – Internationally Trained Lawyers Pathway Diagram

ACCREDITATION PROCESS FOR INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED LAWYERS IN NOVA SCOTIA



Appendix B – Checklist: Applicants already admitted to a foreign Bar

Note: Applicants must receive their Certificate of Qualification from the National Committee on Accreditation before they can apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society.

Step One – Apply to the National Committee on Accreditation (NCA)

- Complete online application
- Submit detailed curriculum vitae/resumé
- Submit original final academic transcripts of pre-law post-secondary education
- Submit original copy of final academic transcripts of law education (**submitted by institution**)
- Submit licence(s) or certificate(s) (or equivalent) issued by regulatory authority of any jurisdiction(s) where licensed to practise law, *if applicable* (**submitted by regulatory authority**)
- Submit official documentation of membership in good standing from the regulatory authority (or authorities) in the jurisdiction(s) where licensed to practise law, *if applicable* (**submitted by regulatory authority**)
- Submit official copies of transcripts of any courses or examinations required by the regulatory authority (or authorities) that govern(s) the applicant's admission to the practice of law, *if applicable* (**submitted by regulatory authority**)
- Submit assessment fee
- Complete recommendations
 - Exams
 - Additional legal training
- Receive Certificate of Qualification

Step Two – Apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society as an Applicant for Admission on Transfer

- Provide copy of Certificate of Qualification
- Complete [Application for Admission on Transfer](#)
 - Pay [transfer fee](#)
 - Provide particulars of affirmative answers in Part B and/or C, *if applicable*
- Provide confirmation of ability to work in Canada
- Provide copy of notarized government-issued photo ID
- Provide Certificate(s) of Standing **from law societies** where you are or have been practising (**to be submitted directly to the Society by the law society**)
- Provide Certificate(s) of Standing **from other professional organizations** to which you have been or are a member, *if applicable* (**submitted directly to the Society by the organization**)
- Provide two Statements of Good Character (**to be submitted directly to the Society by individuals completing the statements**)

Step Three – Complete conditions

PLEASE NOTE: this list includes all of the common conditions you *may* be required to complete. Your ruling letter will set out which of these conditions you are required to complete.

- Complete conditions
 - Bar Examination (you will need to pay the related [fee](#))
 - Skills Course (**you will be advised of the related fee based on your conditions**)
 - Interviewing
 - Negotiation
 - Oral Advocacy
 - Legal Writing
 - Legal Drafting
 - Practice Management
 - Period of supervision
 - Other: _____

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*

Appendix C – Checklist: Applicants not admitted to a foreign Bar

Note: Applicants must receive their Certificate of Qualification from the National Committee on Accreditation before they can apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society.

Step One – Apply to the NATIONAL Committee on Accreditation (NCA)

- Complete online application
- Submit detailed curriculum vitae/resumé
- Submit original final academic transcripts of pre-law post-secondary education
- Submit original copy of final academic transcripts of law education (**submitted by institution**)
- Submit licence(s) or certificate(s) (or equivalent) issued by regulatory authority of any jurisdiction(s) where licensed to practise law, *if applicable* (**submitted by regulatory authority**)
- Submit official documentation of membership in good standing from the regulatory authority (or authorities) in the jurisdiction(s) where licensed to practise law, *if applicable* (**submitted by regulatory authority**)
- Submit official copies of transcripts of any courses or examinations required by the regulatory authority (or authorities) that govern(s) the applicant's admission to the practice of law, *if applicable* (**submitted by regulatory authority**)
- Submit assessment fee
- Complete recommendations
 - Exams
 - Additional legal training
- Receive Certificate of Qualification

Step Two – Apply to the Nova Scotia Barristers' Society to be an articled clerk

- 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-issued photo ID

- Authorization to work in Canada, *if applicable*
- Certificate of Qualification
- Two reference letters (**to be submitted directly to the Society by the referees**)
- 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*)
- 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*

Appendix D – Immigration information

The NCA and NSBS have no role in the immigration process in Canada. For further information on this topic, please visit the following websites:

- Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada www.cic.gc.ca
- Nova Scotia Office of Immigration <http://novascotiaimmigration.com>
- Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS) <http://www.isans.ca>
- Find out about immigrating through the Nova Scotia Nominee Program (NSNP) by reviewing the Nova Scotia Office of Immigration website: www.novascotiaimmigration.ca
- Read about federal immigration programs, find out whether you are eligible and download application forms at: www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/index.asp
- Once you are approved to immigrate, ISANS can provide additional programs and services to help with employment, language learning and general settlement in the province of Nova Scotia. You can start these programs before you arrive.
- Pre-arrival? Register online at: www.novascotiastart.ca.
- Already in Nova Scotia? Register at: www.isans.ca.

Appendix E – Finding employment

ABOUT THE LABOUR MARKET

To explore the demand for lawyers & related careers in Nova Scotia visit these websites:

- www.careers.novascotia.ca/searchjobprofiles
- www.careers.novascotia.ca/ns-labourmarket

RESUMÉS

To prepare a resumé that meets Canadian standards, look at the following resource. It is important to include details about your education and work experience, but do not include personal information about your age, marital status, family, religion, etc. Canadian resumé also do not include photos. <http://careers.novascotia.ca/resumes>

FINDING EMPLOYMENT

To immigrate to Canada as a Skilled Worker or to enter as a Temporary Foreign Worker, you often need to have an “arranged job offer”. These links may help you find potential employers in Nova Scotia: www.jobbank.gc.ca and www.careerbeacon.com. In Canada, lawyers often work in positions outside the practice of law. On the next page, see a list of alternative careers for lawyers.

ARE YOU AN INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED LAWYER INTERESTED IN CONNECTING WITH A LEGAL WORKPLACE IN NOVA SCOTIA?

- [Observership Program poster](#)
- [ITL Observership Pilot Program – Final report \(May 2014\)](#)

To connect to a legal workplace in Nova Scotia, please contact the Observership Program Coordinator, Emma Halpern at ehalpern@nsbs.org.

- [Working in your field > lawyers](#): This page offers a professional self-assessment tool and other useful suggestions and links for internationally trained lawyers.
- [Career Pathway Loan Fund](#): A community-based partnership that provides support services for internationally trained workers to overcome financial barriers in the foreign credential recognition process, and to assist them in their return to work.

INTERNATIONALLY TRAINED LAWYERS GROUP

External to the Society, the Internationally Trained Lawyers Group seeks to provide the support and leadership necessary to address challenges that internationally trained lawyers may face as they integrate into the Nova Scotia community and beyond, and to promote solutions that the group proposes.

For more information about the group, please contact **Godfred Chongatera** at gchongatera@mkjustice.ca.

Alternative careers for lawyers

Here are just a few ideas to explore. Some will require further training but they would all build on the skills and competencies you have as a lawyer.

- Bylaw enforcement
- Community legal worker
- Legal aid assistant
- Paralegal
- Court administrator
- Court and tribunal agent
- Legal researcher
- Police officer
- Probation or parole officer
- Occupational health & safety officer
- Private investigator
- Customs Inspector
- Regulatory body administrator
- Insurance adjuster
- Insurance agent
- Insurance fraud investigator
- Risk manager
- Industrial relations manager
- Policy analyst
- Land Law Examiner/Title Examiner
- Zoning administrator
- Human rights administrator
- Employment equity consultant
- Employee Benefit Plan specialist
- Employee Disability Program coordinator
- Personnel management specialist
- Retirement system administrator
- Immigration consultant
- Mediation / Dispute Resolution
- Mortgage specialist
- Labour relations manager
- Union business representative

Appendix F – 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.

(This is your NSBS username and password that you received in your ruling letter, NOT your CPLED username and password.)

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 system 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 homepage 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 homepage 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 ensure 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 homepage 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 download the files using the "Download All Files" button.