



# **National Requirement**

**January 1, 2018**

**Note added April 2024:** An [amended National Requirement](#) was approved on March 12, 2024. It will come into effect on January 1, 2029, with application to spring 2029 graduates of approved Canadian common law programs and to NCA applicants whose files are ready to be assessed on or after January 1, 2029.



## National Requirement

### A. STATEMENT OF STANDARD

#### 1. Definitions

In this standard,

- a. "bar admission program" refers to any bar admission program or licensing process operated under the auspices of a provincial or territorial law society leading to admission as a lawyer in a Canadian common law jurisdiction;
- b. "competency requirements" refers to the competency requirements, more fully described in section B, that each student must possess for entry to a bar admission program; and
- c. "law school" refers to any educational institution in Canada that has been granted the power to award an LL.B. or J.D. degree by the appropriate provincial or territorial educational authority.

#### 2. General Standard

An applicant for entry to a bar admission program ("the applicant") must satisfy the competency requirements by either;

- a. successful completion of an LL.B. or J.D. degree that has been accepted by the Federation of Law Societies of Canada ("the Federation"); or
- b. possessing a Certificate of Qualification from the Federation's National Committee on Accreditation.

### B. COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS

#### 1. Skills Competencies

The applicant must have demonstrated the following competencies:

##### 1.1 Problem-Solving

In solving legal problems, the applicant must have demonstrated the ability to:

- a. identify relevant facts;
- b. identify legal, practical, and policy issues and conduct the necessary research arising from those issues;
- c. analyze the results of research;
- d. apply the law to the facts; and
- e. identify and evaluate the appropriateness of alternatives for resolution of the issue or dispute.

# National Requirement

## 1.2 Legal Research

The applicant must have demonstrated the ability to:

- a. identify legal issues;
- b. select sources and methods and conduct legal research relevant to Canadian law;
- c. use techniques of legal reasoning and argument, such as case analysis and statutory interpretation, to analyze legal issues;
- d. identify, interpret and apply results of research; and
- e. effectively communicate the results of research.

## 1.3 Oral and Written Legal Communication

The applicant must have demonstrated the ability to:

- a. communicate clearly in the English or French language;
- b. identify the purpose of the proposed communication;
- c. use correct grammar, spelling and language suitable to the purpose of the communication and for its intended audience; and
- d. effectively formulate and present well reasoned and accurate legal argument, analysis, advice or submissions.

## 2. Ethics and Professionalism

The applicant must have demonstrated an awareness and understanding of the ethical dimensions of the practice of law in Canada and an ability to identify and address ethical dilemmas in a legal context, which includes:

### 2.1 Knowledge of:

- a. the relevant legislation, regulations, rules of professional conduct and common or case law and general principles of ethics and professionalism applying to the practice of law in Canada. This includes familiarity with:
  1. circumstances that give rise to ethical problems
  2. the fiduciary nature of the lawyer's relationship with the client;
  3. conflicts of interest;
  4. the administration of justice;
  5. duties relating to confidentiality, lawyer-client privilege and disclosure;
  6. the importance of professionalism, including civility and integrity, in dealing with clients, other counsel, judges, court staff and members of the public; and
  7. the importance and value of serving and promoting the public interest in the administration of justice.



## **National Requirement**

- b. the nature and scope of a lawyer's duties including to clients, the courts, other legal professionals, law societies, and the public;
- c. the range of legal responses to unethical conduct and professional incompetence; and
- d. the different models concerning the roles of lawyers, the legal profession, and the legal system, including their role in the securing access to justice.

### **2.2 Skills to;**

- a. identify and make informed and reasoned decisions about ethical problems in practice; and
- b. identify and engage in critical thinking about ethical issues in legal practice.

### **3. Substantive Legal Knowledge**

The applicant must have undertaken a sufficiently comprehensive program of study to obtain an understanding of the complexity of the law and the interrelationship between different areas of legal knowledge. In the course of this program of study the applicant must have demonstrated a general understanding of the core legal concepts applicable to the practice of law in Canada, including as a minimum the following areas:

#### **3.1 Foundations of Law**

The applicant must have an understanding of the foundations of law, including:

- a. principles of common law and equity;
- b. the process of statutory construction and analysis; and
- c. the administration of the law in Canada.

#### **3.2 Public Law of Canada**

The applicant must have an understanding of the principles of public law in Canada, including:

- a. the constitutional law of Canada, including federalism and the distribution of legislative powers, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, human rights principles and the rights of Aboriginal peoples of Canada;
- b. Canadian criminal law; and
- c. the principles of Canadian administrative law.

#### **3.3 Private Law Principles**

The applicant must demonstrate an understanding of the principles that apply to private relationships, including:

- a. contracts
- b. torts
- c. property law



## National Requirement

### **C. APPROVED CANADIAN LAW DEGREE**

The Federation will accept an LL.B. or J.D. degree from a Canadian law school as meeting the competency requirements if the law school offers an academic and professional legal education that will prepare the student for entry to a bar admission program and the law school meets the following criteria:

#### **1. Academic Program**

- 1.1 The law school's academic program for the study of law consists of three full-time academic years or equivalent, which is 90 course credits.
- 1.2 The course of study consists primarily of in-person instruction and learning and/or instruction and learning that involves direct interaction between instructor and students.
- 1.3 Holders of the degree have met the competency requirements.
- 1.4 The academic program includes instruction in ethics and professionalism in a course dedicated to those subjects and addressing the required competencies.
- 1.5 Subject to special circumstances, the admission requirements for the law school include, at a minimum, successful completion of two years of post-secondary education at a recognized university or CEGEP.

#### **2. Learning Resources**

- 2.1 The law school is adequately resourced to enable it to meet its objectives, and in particular, has appropriate numbers of properly qualified academic staff to meet the needs of the academic program.
- 2.2 The law school has adequate physical resources for both faculty and students to permit effective student learning.
- 2.3 The law school has adequate information and communication technology to support its academic program.
- 2.4 The law school maintains a law library in electronic and/or paper form that provides services and collections sufficient in quality and quantity to permit the law school to foster and attain its teaching, learning and research objectives.

