

Admission *Process* Guide

The *Law*
Association
OF NEW ZEALAND



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DISCLAIMER: This document was current as at October 2024.
Please check all the relevant rules and regulations at the time of
your application. If there are any conflicts, use the rules and regulations.

Preparation

Before you start *applying for admission.*

Consider how many referees you will need (this depends on how long you have been employed and whether you are/how long you have been resident in NZ) and who your referees could be. Generally, you will need references from your employers and two general character references from “preferred referees”, one of whom must have known you for at least five years and the others for at least two years. See the full requirements in the Certificate of Character [form](#).

If you are an international student graduating with a New Zealand law degree or overseas qualified lawyer and transferring your qualifications to NZ, pay attention to the referee instructions on the form as different requirements for references applies depending on personal circumstances. You will also need to request your criminal records from your home country in advance.

Consider who will be your moving counsel. This is a practicing lawyer who will sign your LA 1 form and be present at your ceremony to move your admission.

Select your admission date [here](#). Use the information below to determine when you need to submit applications/file documents. Generally, the admission procedures are timed with reference to your chosen admission date.

Once you have finished Profs (Professional Legal Studies), start gathering together the information you’ll need. Depending on your admission date, you may want to be ready to apply as soon as you receive your certificate from your Profs course.





Certificate *of Completion*

Apply to the NZCLE for a Certificate of Completion using the application form.

This certificate shows you have satisfied the requirements to become a lawyer (Bachelor of Laws, Legal Ethics course and Professional Legal Studies Course). It expires three years after being issued. If the three year period expires and you have not been admitted, you will need to re-apply for another Certificate.

Allow for 6 to 8 weeks (up to 40 working days) processing time from the date your application is received. Depending on your admission date, you may want to 'fast track' your application. Fast track application certificates should be dispatched within 8 working days from the date NZCLE receives the application, granted that payment and all correct documentation is received. Note the fast-track timeframe of 8 working days is not a guarantee.

You will need to get the following documents certified before submitting your application:

- i. LLB degree if it does not show on your transcript; and
- ii. your birth certificate or signed passport needs to be certified and you can get the declaration section witnessed at the same time.

The current fees are:

- i. Standard application and postage: \$194.00 (including GST)
- ii. Standard application and courier: \$205.75 (including GST)
- iii. Fast track application and courier: \$389.75 (including GST)

Certificate of Character

Apply to the NZLS for a certificate of character using the application form.

This certificate shows you are a fit and proper person for admission.

You should start this process three months ahead of the date of the proposed admission ceremony. If you need to make any disclosures to the NZLS, you should start the process four months ahead of the proposed admission ceremony. Note: Once issued, the certificate is only valid for three months. Your certificate of character must be valid at the time of filing. The application and references will lapse if the process is not complete after 3 months. You may be required to refresh your documentation.

The form has a checklist of everything you need to provide.

You need to get your proof of identity and any name change document certified with the following wording: "I certify this to be a true copy of the original, which I have sighted, and the photo represents a true likeness of [name of the person presenting the document to me for certification]."

You will also need to have the declaration section of the form witnessed by an enrolled barrister and solicitor of the High Court or a Justice of Peace (this may be done at the same time as getting your documents certified).

Referee reports:

- i. You need to send your referees the [referee report](#) form.
- ii. Once completed, they need to be sent independently by the referee. If your references are practicing lawyers or have verifiable email addresses, they can email a PDF of the form, otherwise, they must send the original.
- iii. It's a good idea to follow up with your referees to ensure the reports are received before the applicable deadline on the [NZLS website](#).

The NZLS fee is currently \$270 (inc. GST).

More information [here](#).



File Documents *at the High Court*

These can be found in the

[Schedule to the Admission Rules.](#)

Two copies of your [LA 1 form](#) (your originating application, made by the lawyer moving your admission).

Two copies of your [LA 2](#) (if you hold a New Zealand law degree) OR [LA 3](#) form (if you have been admitted in an overseas jurisdiction and have completed any additional requirements prescribed by the [NZCLE](#)) This is your affidavit in support, sworn by you, and must attach certified originals of the following:

- i. a certificate of completion or a copy of the refusal by the NZCLE to issue this;
- ii. a certificate of character or other response from the NZLS to your application; and
- iii. copy of the receipt the NZLS gave you for your certificate of character payment (they will give this to you when your certificate of character is issued).

The Registrar at the Court can certify the documents at the time of filing. If you want to do this, select the [Deputy] Registrar of the High/District Court of New Zealand option at the bottom of the form.

Four copies of your [LA 5](#) (order of admission for sealing). You must file duplicates as the Court retains one copy and you need at least one other copy to apply for a practicing certificate.

Candidates for admission are placed in a ceremony corresponding to the order that their applications are filed in. If you want a ceremony earlier in the day, apply earlier. If you want a ceremony later in the day, file closer to the last day to file (however, you should still leave time to remedy any errors in your documents).



Preparation for *the Ceremony*

You can choose to wear either of the following (but you and your moving counsel must be wearing the same): either:

- i. traditional court attire (wigs, bib, white shirt and gowns); or
- ii. gowns over neat clothing.

You can hire regalia [here](#) or you can borrow regalia if you know people who own some.

Current hire prices are as follows:

- i. Barrister's Gown: \$55
- ii. Barrister's Wig: \$75
- iii. Bib: \$10
- iv. Bond (if outside Auckland Region): \$200 (\$100 if gown only)
- v. Courier Delivery (depends on location): \$10 to \$32.50 each way

On the day of *your admission*

You and your moving counsel will need to arrive at the High Court early (the Court will tell you what time you should arrive when you file your documents – it may be between 20 to 45 minutes before the ceremony begins).

The moving counsel and candidates will attend separate briefings before the ceremonies.

In the candidate briefing, you will be told what will happen during the ceremony and you will line up in order of your last names.

During the ceremony, counsel will move admission of the candidates and the candidates will take the oath:

- COUNSEL MOVING: May it please the Court I move that [name of candidate] be admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of this Honourable Court.
- REGISTRAR: Those who wish to take the Oath, please take the bible in your right hand. Ladies and gentlemen, do each of you swear by

Almighty God or solemnly, sincerely and truly declare and affirm that you will truly and honestly conduct yourself in the practice of a Barrister and Solicitor according to the best of your knowledge and ability. Please indicate your assent to the oath or affirmation by saying “I Do” as I call your name.

- PRESIDING JUDGE: This Court being satisfied that each of the candidates is duly qualified and of good character and a fit and proper person to be admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of this Court, orders that each of them be admitted as a Barrister and Solicitor of this Court accordingly.
- NEWLY ADMITTED: Bow in unison.





After *admission:*

You can apply for a practicing certificate.
Further information [here](#).

You can join The Law Association of New Zealand Inc. using the form [here](#). The Law Association Inc. is an independent membership organisation for the legal profession, with a nationwide focus. Joining the The Law Association Inc. is voluntary, and you must apply and pay fees. The benefits of joining The Law Association Inc. are that you are given access to The Law Association Inc's tools and resources for lawyers, and discounted prices on The Law Association's CPD activities, books in the The Law Association Inc. Library and collegiality events. The Law Association Inc. supports, advocates for, and represents lawyers, but it does not regulate the profession, that is the role of the NZLS. The NZLS is a separate organisation that every lawyer automatically becomes a part of when they receive their practicing certificate.

You can come to collegiality events.
Find out more about events near you [here](#).

Our *Mission*

Is to connect New Zealand's lawyers and keep them at the forefront of developments in the law and legal practice. Whether it's contributing to the development of new legislation, informing the profession about significant new laws, or supporting the courts and the justice system to operate more effectively, The Law Association Inc. is recognised and respected for its collective knowledge, insights, and collaborative approach. We bring together the sector's brightest in the country's largest volunteer membership organisation for lawyers. We're proud to serve members from across the country and to further the standards and reputation of the legal profession in New Zealand.

This document was created by The The Law Association Inc. Newly Suited Committee. Our committee comprises lawyers with up to 7 years PQE. Our goal is to offer events that provide support, education and mentorship to new lawyers entering the profession. If you would be interested in joining the committee, intakes are every two years. See the The Law Association Inc. website for more details.

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