

Paralegal

Diploma

Program Objective

The Paralegal Diploma program is designed to prepare students for a wide range of positions within the paralegal field. Throughout the program, students learn both the theoretical and practical aspects of the paralegal profession, ranging from the Canadian constitutional structure to practical approaches for legal research, fact investigation, and writing of legal-related documents.

The paralegal field offers many employment opportunities in almost every sector of the economy as it touches on many aspects of our society. To this effect, the program curriculum provides students with knowledge of the various processes of civil litigation in Ontario, court proceedings, and trial stages as well as those pertaining to lower courts, such as Small Claims. The program also aims to educate students in areas of law, such as business and corporate, creditor-debtor, and family law. It also touches upon employment and real estate law, among others.

Students gain legal skills such as advocacy, negotiation, and interviewing. The program equips students with day-to-day skills required in the legal services sector and familiarizes them with office management procedures, various legal software packages often used in law firms, and the basics of accounting principles required by the Law Society.

Graduates of this accredited Paralegal Diploma program will be entitled to apply to the Law Society of Upper Canada to write their licensing examination.

Program Notes

Financial assistance may be available to qualified students.

Students must pass all courses and achieve a 70% program average to earn a Paralegal Diploma.

Full-time students must attend the required hours per week as per the course schedule.

Admission Requirements

Grade 12 or equivalent graduate or Mature Student status (i.e., 19 years of age or over with at least one year out of high school) and subject to the discretion of the college Director. Grade 12 or equivalent graduates who cannot supply appropriate proof and Mature Students will be required to complete an entrance examination to properly assess their personal strengths and weaknesses.

A good command of the English language, an ability to work with an individualized learning system (particularly the Integrated Learning™ System) or online learning as applicable, and an ability to follow instructions are required.

Career Opportunities

Recent studies indicate that strong growth in Paralegal jobs is expected over the next few years. Paralegals are employed by law firms, record search companies, and in legal departments throughout the public and private sectors. Careers requiring the paralegal skills include:

- Commercial Law Paralegal
- Corporate Paralegal
- Criminal Law Paralegal
- Designated Paralegal
- Family Law Paralegal
- Foreclosure Paralegal
- Insurance Paralegal
- Labor Law Paralegal
- Litigation Paralegal
- Mortgage and Real Estate Paralegal
- Property Paralegal
- Real Estate Paralegal
- Wills and Estates Paralegal
- Collection Paralegal

Method of Delivery

Combination of:

- Integrated Learning™ System training facilitated by Academy of Learning College facilitators.
- Instructor-led training.



Duties and Responsibilities

Paralegals prepare legal documents and conduct research to assist lawyers or other professionals. Their duties may include:

- Preparing legal documents, court reports, and affidavits
- Researching records, court files, and other legal documents
- Conducting in-depth legal research and identifying appropriate laws
- Assisting lawyers by interviewing clients, witnesses, and other related parties
- Drafting legal correspondence and performing general office and clerical duties

Required Skills and Personal Attributes

To be successful in a Paralegal career, individuals must possess the following:

- Excellent communication (reading, writing and verbal) and interviewing skills
- Strong people and interpersonal skills
- Excellent organization and job task planning skills
- Strong decision-making and problem-solving skills
- Excellent advocacy (written and verbal) skills
- Research skills – legal research and factual investigation
- Self-motivated
- Professional
- Detail-oriented

Competencies upon Completion

Core Courses

- **Business Skills**
Grammar Essentials for Business Writing
- **Office Skills**
Basic Bookkeeping Level 1 and Personal Computer Fundamentals for End Users
- **Word Processing**
Intermediate level of proficiency in Microsoft Word
- **Spreadsheets**
Basic level of proficiency in Microsoft Excel
- **Legal**
Introduction to the Legal System Parts I and II, Client Care for Legal Professionals, Administrative Law, Legal Research and Memorandum Writing, Evidence and the Litigation Process, Tort and Contract Law, Criminal/Summary Conviction Law, Employment Law, Provincial Offences/Motor Vehicle Law, Insurance Law/SABS, Small Claims Court, Legal Writing and Communications, Tribunal Practice and Procedure, Alternative Dispute Resolution, Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, Legal Computer Applications, Residential Landlord and Tenant Law, Advocacy, Immigration and Refugee Law Overview, Economic Classes, Family Sponsorship, Temporary Status, Refugee Protection, Ethics and Professional Responsibility, Practice Management/Operating a Small Business, Legal Accounting

Worksite Externship

The externship exposes the student to a working environment where classroom instruction is put into practice. This allows the student to link classroom knowledge and training to real life, practical activities.