

Fair Registration Practices Report - Paralegals (2011)

This Fair Registration Practices Report was produced as required by:

- the *Fair Access to Regulated Professions Act* (FARPA) s. 20 and 23(1), for regulated professions named in Schedule 1 of FARPA
- the Health Professions Procedural Code set out in Schedule 2 of the *Regulated Health Professions Act* (RHPA) s. 22.7 (1) and 22.9(1), for health colleges.

Provision of Information About Registration Practices (1 / 13)

Describe how you make information about registration practices available to individuals applying or intending to apply for registration. Specify the tools used to provide information, and the manner in which you make that information available, current, accurate and user friendly in each of these subcategories:

a) steps to initiate the registration process

The Law Society's information on registration practices for individuals applying or intending to apply for the Licensing Process is available on the Law Society's website at www.lsuc.on.ca. The website link "Becoming a Paralegal" guides individuals or potential applicants to the Paralegal Licensing Process - Home Page where one can access the Licensing Process - Site Map, the Career Map, fees, the application prerequisite information and the formal online application. The online application is accompanied by a memorandum containing explicit instructions on how to complete the online form, download it and submit the completed copy with the required documents and certification which registers the applicant in the Licensing Process. The required application fee can be paid online or submitted with the completed application and documents to the Law Society's Office of the Registrar by the prescribed deadline to avoid a late filing fee.

When the applicant completes the online application and pays the application fee, the applicant becomes a Licensing Process Paralegal candidate and is issued a secure Law Society web-message account which provides the candidate and the Law Society an immediate and direct means of communication. The candidate's account houses all correspondence conducted between the candidate and the Law Society, and is used for various communication purposes including posting of the fees invoice, any and all information regarding the Paralegal licensing examination, the self-study materials and once eligible, information on how to apply for the P1 Licence.

Other initiatives taken to provide information on the registration process include advising all approved colleges in September of each year that of any updates to the online application for the upcoming Licensing Process and that the on-line application and information to complete the form will be available to their students in the first week of October.

b) requirements for registration

Academic requirements for applying to and entering the Licensing Process are as follows: complete a Legal Services (Paralegal) program that has been accredited by the Law Society at a college (community or private) approved by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

Requirements for registration: complete the online application, download the completed version of the application and submit it to the Office of the Registrar with all required documents, duly commissioned or notarized, and pay the applicable application fee. Candidates are registered for the Paralegal Licensing Examination based on the selected date indicated on the application, and are invoiced for the applicable fees which must be paid by the specified deadline. Once registered into the process, the candidate must successfully complete the licensing examination.

Requirements for licensing: successfully complete the Paralegal Licensing Examination, submit all required licensing documents, be of good character as required by the Law Society Act and pay the application fee for licensing.

A late filing fee is applied to applications submitted after the specified deadline.

c) explanation of how the requirements for registration are to be met, such as the number of years of schooling required for a degree to be deemed equivalent to an Ontario undergraduate degree, length and type of work experience, credit hours or program content

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

There are no other or further requirements for application to or registration for the Paralegal Licensing Process than those specified in (b) above.

d) any education or practical experience required for registration that must be completed in Ontario or practice that must be supervised by a member of the profession who is registered in Ontario

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Paralegal candidates are required to have graduated from a Legal Services (Paralegal) program that has been accredited by the Law Society and approved by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. A college that seeks accreditation from the Law Society for a Legal Services (Paralegal) program must require as part of its program curriculum a field placement of 120 hours in a legal services environment.

The above information is provided to individuals on the Law Society website, through Law Society staff when enquiries are made, through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration website on Career Mapping, through the college's website where the accredited program is offered and through the Ontario Colleges Application Services.

e) requirements that may be satisfied through acceptable alternatives

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

To enter the Paralegal Licensing Process, there are no alternatives to the requirements described in (b).

f) the steps in the assessment process

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Candidates must write and pass the Licensing Examination, which is offered three times during the licensing cycle – August, October and February (of the following year). Applicants submit, with their application, information pertaining to their good character. If issues are raised in the good character review, the candidate's information will be reviewed by the Investigation Department of the Law Society. If the Investigation Department determines that good character may be at issue, the candidate's information and Investigation's review will be provided to the Proceedings Authorization Committee who will determine if a good character hearing is required and if so, arrangements for a Hearing will be made and the candidate advised. The Hearing will determine the candidate's fitness for entry into the profession. A candidate can be represented by Counsel during all aspects of the pre-hearing and hearing processes.

A candidate may appeal the decision if denied entry into the profession.

g) the documentation of qualifications that must accompany each application; indicate which documents, if any, are required only from internationally trained applicants

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Candidates must request the approved college to submit directly to the Law Society an official transcript that confirms the date of graduation by the candidate and a field placement statement of where the 120 hours was completed.

No further or other information is required from internationally trained candidates.

h) acceptable alternatives to the documentation if applicants cannot obtain the required documentation for reasons beyond their control

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

There are no alternatives to the documents as the transcript and statement of field placement are available from the graduate's approved college and the field placement employer.

i) how applicants can contact your organization

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Applicants can contact the Law Society by email, by their assigned web message account provided to them after completing the online application, by phone, fax, regular mail, or arranging an appointment. Walkins will also be handled by staff.

j) how, why and how often your organization initiates communication with applicants about their applications

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Applicants will be contacted immediately after filing their application form without all required documents or if the information was wrongly completed on the form. Applicants are provided a confirmation email in their web messaging account when the application is complete to be properly registered into the Licensing Process. Following the application process, candidates are provided registration information via their personal web messaging account which is used specifically for their interactions with the Law Society during the entire Licensing Process. The Society also communicates regularly with the candidates throughout the Licensing Process on all matters including the Licensing Examination dates and locations, reference materials matters and updates, fee payments, the Class P1 Licence process after all requirements have been completed and any other items affecting the candidate's file.

k) the process for dealing with documents provided in languages other than English or French

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Such documents are sent for translation to an appropriate translator or translation service.

l) the role of third-party organizations, such as qualification assessment agencies, organizations that conduct examinations or institutions that provide bridging programs, that applicants may come into contact with during the registration process

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

No third party organization is utilized to support the Paralegal Licensing Process.

m) any timelines, deadlines or time limits that applicants will be subject to during the registration process

Upon registration into the Licensing Process, a candidate has, from the date of registration in the initial licensing cycle (June 1 to May 31), three years to complete the licensing examination in the Paralegal Licensing Process and become licensed. Candidates are provided three attempts to successfully complete the Paralegal Licensing Examinations over the three year term. Within the three year deadline to complete the Licensing Process, candidates may appeal to the Director of Professional Development and Competence for a fourth write of a failed licensing examination if there were compelling reasons that affected their success to pass in anyone of the previous three writes.

n) the amount of time that the registration process usually takes

The registration process for licensing takes less than one full year to complete in most cases and a significant number complete the process in less than 6 months. The process is flexible, and candidates who may choose a preferred timeline must ensure that they complete all components within three years.

o) information about all fees associated with registration, such as fees for initial application, exams and exam rewrites, course enrolment or issuance of licence

Fees associated with registration and subject to applicable taxes:

- 1) The application fee - \$160.00
- 2) Late filing of the application - \$75.00
- 3) The Paralegal Licensing Examination Fee (materials included) - \$1,075.00
- 4) A rewrite of the Paralegal Licensing Examination (materials provided on a CD free of charge. Also accessible online by candidates only) - \$925.00
- 5) Candidates may request a hardcopy of the materials for rewrites - \$150.00
- 6) Application fee for the Licensee Certificate for Legal Services (P1 Licence) - \$165.00

p) accommodation of applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society's policy regarding accommodation for the Licensing Process is available to candidates on the Law Society's website. The online Licensing Process application asks candidates to indicate whether they wish to receive the "Request for Special Needs Accommodation" package for the purpose of applying for special needs accommodation. Upon request, a hard copy of the Request for Accommodation package is sent to the candidate in confidence, and must be completed and returned by the stated deadline. Candidates may also receive a PDF electronic copy, if required, and may request information about special accommodation at anytime by email through the assigned special needs account or by calling Support Services through our general enquiry line. Calls and email are returned within two business days if not sooner. All information provided by a candidate or a supporting third party is held in strict confidence and separate to the candidate's Licensing Process registration and records file. The candidate's accommodation documentation that is filed, is retained for one year after receipt of the Class P1 Licence and then all information is disposed.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

A change in registration practices is identified in section 1(m) where the number of attempts to write and complete the licensing examination over the 3 year term has been reduced to three writes with an appeal for a fourth write if there were compelling reasons that affected the candidate's writing of anyone of the previous three attempts.

There was a reduction in the application fee in 1(o). The application for a P1 Licence was increased in 1(o) to assist with receptions that are now held for newly licensed paralegals.

Amount of Fees (2 / 13)

Are any of the fees different for internationally trained applicants? If yes, please explain.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

No, the fees for the Paralegal Licensing Process are identical for all candidates.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Provision of Timely Decisions, Responses and Reasons (3 / 13)

a) What are your timelines for making registration decisions?

The timelines for making registration decisions for licensing are dependent on the candidate's successful completion of all components in the Paralegal Licensing Process. Timelines for registration could be affected by any of the following situations: delay in submitting the online licensing process application, missing required documents, payment of required fees, not registering or successfully completing the Paralegal Licensing Examination, a good character issue or issues and failing to complete the application for licensing appropriately or not paying the Licensure Certificate for Legal Services fee once all requirements for licensing have been met.

b) What are your timelines for responding to applicants in writing?

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Applicants can expect a written response within 40 to 72 hours pending the nature of the enquiry and what information would be required for the response.

c) What are your timelines for providing written reasons to applicants about all registration decisions, internal reviews and appeal decisions?

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Written responses to applicants about registration decisions, internal reviews and appeal decisions are provided within one week following review and a decision respecting any application or registration issues. Hearing Panel decisions respecting good character are public and published immediately after the Hearing Panel issues its order. The timeliness of internal reviews and appeal decisions rests with the seriousness of the candidate's good character issue and the length of time it takes to investigate, the responsiveness of the candidate to investigation, participation of third parties and representation by counsel on behalf of the candidate, if acquired by the candidate, and/or Law Society counsel.

Timeliness for good character issues are based on the seriousness of the matter at hand and therefore, any of the following steps may take place sequentially depending on the issue:

- 1) Administrative Compliance unit determines if the good character issue(s) of a candidate requires investigation, and if so, the file is referred to the Intake unit.
- 2) The Intake unit reviews the good character issue(s) and assigns the file for investigation.
- 3) The Investigation unit, once it has investigated the issue(s), determines if the issue(s) requires further review and if so, the file is referred to the Proceedings Authorization Committee.
- 4) The Proceedings Authorization Committee becomes involved if Investigation's review determines the issue(s) requires legal opinion, and
- 5) the Hearing Panel becomes involve if the Proceedings Authorization Committee's review determines the issue(s) requires a final decision (order) on the licensing application by the candidate.

d) Explain how your organization ensures that it adheres to these timelines.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Response protocols have been established for each respective department overseeing the various components of the registration process.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

Minor adjustments in wording for section (a).

Access to Records (4 / 13)**a) Describe how you give applicants access to their own records related to their applications for registration.**

The application form is an electronic online form and completing the form is entirely the applicant's responsibility. Applicants control all aspects for completing the form, downloading it and submitting the completed application to the Law Society with all required documents. After applicants are registered in the Licensing Process, as candidates, they can access their Licensing Process records online or make a request to view their records in person.

b) Explain why access to applicants' own records would be limited or refused.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

There are no circumstances under which access to or a copy of an applicant's original application and the documents submitted by the candidate would be limited or refused.

c) State how and when you give applicants estimates of the fees for making records available.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

There are no other fees charged for making records available to the applicant while in the Licensing Process other than those listed on the fee schedule. The schedule lists fees for documents such as transcripts for Licensing Examination result, replacement of a lost Law Society identification card, or a Licensee Certificate for Legal Services. No fees are charged for copies of the applicant's personal original documents.

d) List the fees for making records available.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

An official copy of a Licensing Process transcript mailed directly to a third party - \$25.00 plus applicable tax.

An unofficial copy of Licensing Process transcript - \$15.00 plus applicable tax.

Replacement of a Licensee Certificate for Legal Services - \$75.00 plus applicable tax.

Replacement of a candidate's lost Licensing Process photo identification card - \$15.00 plus applicable tax.

e) Describe the circumstances under which payment of the fees for making records available would be waived or would have been waived.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

There is no waiver for the above fees unless a misprinted document was issued originally for any of the above records.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

Minor rewording in section (a).

Resources for Applicants (5 / 13)**a) List and describe any resources that are available to applicants, such as application guides, exam blueprints or programs for orientation to the profession.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

1) Career Map posted on the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration with a link on the Law Society website provides all information on entry to the Paralegal Licensing Process and requirements to be licensed.

2) The Law Society's website links to the Paralegal Licensing Process webpage and it provides a complete set of documentation and guidelines for completing the entire process from application to certification.

- 3) The Paralegal Licensing Examination competency profiles, guidelines, study guide and practice questions are available on the website.
- 4) The reference materials for study and preparing to write the Licensing Examination are provided to candidates upon being fully registered, which includes payment of the required fees.

b) Describe how your organization provides information to applicants about these resources.

Information is provided to applicants through the Ontario private and community colleges, the entry points for Ontario's Paralegal training, and the colleges communicate regularly with the Law Society. Applicants may directly contact the Law Society and all have access to the Law Society website where all relevant information on the process appears. Each college provides information to their students about the accredited paralegal program and the paralegal licensing requirements via their websites and publications. The Law Society's website provides contact information to potential applicants if they wish to speak to a Law Society staff member.

In October of each year, the Law Society notifies all colleges when the application process for the upcoming Licensing Process is available to applicants.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

Minor rewording in section (b)

Internal Review or Appeal Processes (6 / 13)

In this section, describe your internal review or appeal process. Some regulatory bodies use these two terms (internal review and appeal) for two different processes, some use only one of these terms, and some use them interchangeably. Please use the term that applies to your profession. If you use both terms (for two different processes), please address both.

a) List your timelines for completing internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions.

Internal reviews or appeals of registration reside solely with issues of good character. These matters are conducted and completed within the same licensing year as the applicant is registered unless the assessment of good character issues require more time due to the complexity of the matter or the candidate's requests for adjournments of process delays the decision-making.

The timeliness in dealing with good character issues is based on the seriousness of the matter at hand. The following steps are taken sequentially and a decision may be rendered on the matter at any one of the steps:

- 1) Administrative Compliance unit determines if the good character issue(s) of a candidate requires investigation, and if so, the file is referred to the Intake unit.
- 2) The Intake unit reviews the good character issue(s) and assigns the file for investigation.
- 3) The Investigation unit, once it has investigated the issue(s), determines if the issue(s) requires further review and if so, the file is referred to the Proceedings Authorization Committee.
- 4) The Proceedings Authorization Committee becomes involved if Investigation's review determines the issue(s) requires legal opinion, and
- 5) the Hearing Panel becomes involve if the Proceedings Authorization Committee's review determines the issue(s) requires a final decision (order) on the licensing application by the candidate.

i. State the number of internal reviews or appeals of registration decisions that exceeded your timelines.

In 2011 no candidate had the review of a good character issue exceed the timeline to be licensed, which from the time of application and successful completion of all requirements for licensing would be the licensing cycle of 12 months.

ii. Among internal reviews or appeals that exceeded your timelines, state the number that were from internationally trained applicants.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Not applicable as there are no internationally trained applicants that enter the Paralegal Licensing Process directly without having met the registration requirements as published.

b) Specify the opportunities you provide for applicants to make submissions regarding internal reviews or appeals.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

If applicants are denied entry to the profession based on a failure to exhibit good character, they have the right to appeal to the Law Society's Hearing and Appeals Panel. The applicants can choose to be represented by counsel at the hearing and the hearings are public. As part of the hearing process, applicants can request that the Law Society investigation office disclose information that was used to deny their entry to the profession and the applicant may make submissions personally or through counsel to respond to this information.

c) Explain how you inform applicants about the form in which they must make their submissions (i.e., orally, in writing or by electronic means) for internal reviews or appeals.

Information about the Law Society hearing and appeals processes is available on the Law Society website. Applicants may also contact the Law Society for an oral or written explanation. A written explanation of the Hearing Panel's decision is provided to the applicant or Counsel, if Counsel was retained. If the applicant wishes to appeal and requires information about the appeal process, the applicant can contact the Tribunal Office.

d) State how you ensure that no one who acted as a decision-maker in a registration decision acts as a decision-maker in an internal review or appeal of the same registration decision.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The relationship of the appeal / review bodies to the assessment and decision-making bodies in the registration process is arm's length. The Hearing and Appeals Panel is privy only to the issues related to good character/conduct and is not privy to any information respecting the completion of other components of the registration process and whether or not they have or have not been completed. Decision-makers, who deal with the completion of the registration components not including good character, do not sit on a Hearing Panel as they are not qualified to do so.

e) Describe your internal review or appeal process.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Review or appeal process for good character

Licensing Process applications, in which good character issues have been listed by the candidate, are sent to the Administrative Complaints unit where the issue is reviewed to determine if the issue requires further investigation. If it is determined that there are no issues of good character the decision is communicated to the Office of the Registrar and the candidate's record file is marked "cleared".

If it is determined an issue exists, the candidate's file is submitted to the Intake unit of the Professional Regulation Department and an investigator is assigned to the file. Investigation takes place and involves the candidate throughout the process. The assigned investigator may determine, based on the findings of the investigation that no further issue of good character exists and the file is returned to the Office of the Registrar to be marked as "cleared".

If the investigator's process determines that there is a good character issue, the file is forwarded to the Discipline unit and the Proceedings Authorization Committee. The Proceedings Authorization Committee reviews the candidate's issue and determines if it will proceed to a Hearing. If it is determined that a hearing is required, a public Admissions Hearing is held. A candidate is permitted to appear before the Hearing Panel with counsel, if desired, and make submissions.

If the Proceedings Authorization Committee determines that there is no issue warranting a hearing, the candidate's file is returned to the Office of the Registrar to be entered as "cleared" on the candidate's registration file.

- f) State the composition of the committee that makes decisions about registration, which may be called a Registration Committee or Appeals Committee: how many members does the committee have; how many committee members are members of the profession in Ontario; and how many committee members are internationally trained members of the profession in Ontario.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

A Hearing Panel must be composed of at least three persons appointed by the Law Society's Governing Board, of whom: at least one shall be a person who is not a licensee; and one must be a bencher (governor of the Law Society), a licensee or a person approved by the Attorney General for Ontario to be appointed to a Hearing Panel.

The Hearing and Appeals Panels are composed of lawyers, paralegals and non-lawyers. Information on how many of these members were internationally trained is not collected.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

Some minor changes in wording to some sentences in section (a) and (c), but no changes to registration practices.

Information on Appeal Rights (7 / 13)

This section refers to reviews or appeals that are available after an internal review or appeal.

Describe how you inform applicants of any rights they have to request a further review of or appeal from a decision.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The applicant receives a copy of the order of the Hearing Panel and can refer to the Law Society Act and Rules of Practice and Procedure for the Tribunal of the Law Society (Hearing Panel) outlining the avenues of appeal. The legislation and Rules of Practice and Procedure are available on the Law Society's website.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Assessment of Qualifications (8 / 13)

This category covers your processes for assessing all qualifications, such as academic credentials, competencies, language ability or practical experience.

- a) List the criteria that must be met in order for an applicant's qualifications to satisfy the entry-to-practice requirements for your profession.**

The following criteria must be met by applicant to enter the Licensing Process and satisfy the requirements for entry-to-practice (licensing):

- 1) Graduate from a Legal Services (Paralegal) program accredited by the Law Society from a college that is approved by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.
- 2) Write and pass the Paralegal Licensing Examination.
- 3) Be of good Character.

b) Describe the methodology used to determine whether a program completed outside of Canada satisfies the requirements for registration.

Programs completed outside of Ontario are not eligible for registration. To enter the licensing process, all applicants must be graduates of an accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program delivered by a college in Ontario approved by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities.

c) Explain how work experience in the profession is assessed.

Work experience is not assessed for the purposes of entering the Paralegal Licensing Process. Work experience can be assessed by a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved college through the prior learning assessment process which has been established by the colleges to assess possible exemptions or advanced standing. A college may offer an individual, with related work experience, advanced standing or course exemption for an accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program.

d) Describe how your organization ensures that information used in the assessment about educational systems and credentials of applicants from outside Canada is current and accurate.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Not applicable, see b) and c) above.

e) Describe how previous assessment decisions are used to assist in maintaining consistency when assessing credentials of applicants from the same jurisdictions or institutions.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Not applicable, see b) and c) above.

f) Explain how the status of an institution in its home country affects recognition of the credentials of applicants by your organization.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Not applicable, see b) and c) above.

g) Describe how your organization accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The applicant submits a Request for Accommodation which must include adequate supporting documentation that supports the need for accommodations. The documentation must be current and must confirm

- 1) that a disability or impairment exists;
- 2) how the disability adversely affects the applicant's ability to participate in the Paralegal Licensing Examination;
- 3) provide the recommendation for accommodation and how the recommended accommodation will negate the adverse affect of the disability while writing the licensing examination and provide a rationale that relates to those adverse effects.

Once the request and documentation have been reviewed and approved, appropriate steps and mechanisms are put in place to provide the approved accommodation. This may entail the booking of a private room, additional proctors or providing the licensing examination in an electronic format for those with visual impairments who have been granted permission to use adaptive technology.

h) State the average length of time required to complete the entire registration process, from when the process is initiated to when a registration decision is issued.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

On average, 6 to 12 months or less pending when the application is received, when the candidate writes and passes the Paralegal Licensing Examination and if the candidate has no good character issues.

i. State whether the average time differs for internationally trained individuals.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The average time does not differ for internationally trained candidates who must complete an approved college graduation requirements in an accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program as described in 8a.

ii. If the average time differs for internationally trained individuals, state whether it is greater or less than the average for all applicants, and the reasons for the difference.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The average time does not differ for internationally trained candidates who must complete an approved college graduation requirements in an accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program as described in 8a.

i) If your organization conducts credential assessments:

i. Explain how you determine the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society does not conduct credential assessments. The Law Society requires a candidate's official transcript that is acquired directly from a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved college (community or private). The transcript must confirm the date and year the applicant graduated from a Law Society accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program.

ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society does not determine equivalency for the Paralegal Licensing Process as every candidate must write and pass the Paralegal Licensing Examination. To enter the Licensing Process, the Law Society requires the applicant to provide an official transcript that must be sent directly from a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved college (community or private), and the transcript confirms the date and year the applicant graduated from a Law Society accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program.

iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Work experience is not assessed for the purposes of entering the Paralegal Licensing Process. Work experience is assessed by a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved college through its prior learning assessment process in order to determine if any exemptions or advanced standing can be offer to the individual applying to enter an accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program.

j) If your organization conducts competency assessment:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.

Evaluation of competency is conducted by the writing and passing of the licensing examination. The Paralegal Licensing Examination have been developed through a rigorous blueprinting and competency profiling process that engaged paralegals, lawyers, college professors and others in the development of minimal expectations for entry into the provision of legal services by a licensed paralegal.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Paralegal Licensing Examination has been developed through a rigorous blueprinting and competency profile process and is validated on an ongoing basis.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Previous work experience is not used to assess competency for the Law Society's Paralegal Licensing Process.

k) If your organization conducts prior learning assessment:

i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society does not conduct prior learning assessments for entry into the Paralegal Licensing Process. Prior learning assessments, if applicable, are done by the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved colleges for entry into an accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program from which a college applicant must graduate to enter the Licensing Process for paralegal candidates.

ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.

The Law Society has amended the number of attempts an applicant has to complete the Paralegal Licensing Examination in the 3-year term of the Licensing Process.

iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Not applicable, see (k) i. above.

l) If your organization administers examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

The format of the Law Society's Licensing Examination is multiple-choice and scoring is completed by scanning bubbled answer sheets through an electronic scoring system. A candidate can attempt the licensing examination 3 times and the candidate has 3 years to complete the Licensing Process after being registered. A candidate can request a 4th attempt of the licensing examination within the 3 year term if the candidate has not been successful after 3 attempts, and if he or she has experienced extenuating circumstances.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The blueprint process that tests the reliability of every question held in the Law Society's secured Paralegal Licensing Examination question databank. Every question that is used on an examination has been assessed both in a pre-written examination and then post the writing of the examination by the external psychometric experts and Advisory Groups. Passing scores are adjusted if required and in accordance with the blueprint specifications.

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society develops new examination questions on an ongoing, regular basis with examination question development taking place once per annum and continues to review, update and add to its secure databank of questions.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

The Law Society has amended the number of attempts an applicant has to complete the Paralegal Licensing Examination in the 3-year term of the Licensing Process.

Third-Party Organizations (9 / 13)

a) List any third-party organizations (such as language testers, credential assessors or examiners) relied upon by your organization to make assessment decisions.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society does not rely on any third party organizations to make assessment decisions for the Paralegal Licensing Process. Applicants who meet the Paralegal Licensing Process registration requirements which require the applicant to be a graduate of a Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities approved college with a Law Society accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program. Upon registering in the Paralegal Licensing Process, each candidate must write and pass the Paralegal Licensing Examination and be of good character.

b) Explain what measures your organization takes to ensure that any third-party organization that it relies upon to make an assessment:

i. provides information about assessment practices to applicants

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

ii. utilizes current and accurate information about qualifications from outside Canada

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

iii. provides timely decisions, responses and reasons to applicants

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

iv. provides training to individuals assessing qualifications

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

v. provides access to records related to the assessment to applicants

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

vi. accommodates applicants with special needs, such as visual impairment

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

c) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct credential assessments:

- i. Explain how the third party determines the level (e.g., baccalaureate, master's, Ph.D.) of the credential presented for assessment.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

- ii. Describe the criteria that are applied to determine equivalency.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

- iii. Explain how work experience is taken into account.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

d) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct competency assessments:

- i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate competency.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

- ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate competency is validated, and how often it is validated.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

- iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of competency.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

e) If your organization relies on a third party to conduct prior learning assessments:

- i. Describe the methodology used to evaluate prior learning.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

- ii. Explain how the methodology used to evaluate prior learning is validated, and how often it is validated.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

- iii. Explain how work experience is used in the assessment of prior learning.**

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

f) If your organization relies on a third party to administer examinations:

i. Describe the exam format, scoring method and number of rewrites permitted.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

ii. Describe how the exam is tested for validity and reliability. If results are below desired levels, describe how you correct the deficiencies.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

iii. State how often exam questions are updated and the process for doing so.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A – see (a) above.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Training (10 / 13)

a) Describe the training that your organization provides to:

i. individuals who assess qualifications

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Individual staff members are trained to review the official transcript issued directly to the Law Society by the approved Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities college and confirm that the Legal Services (Paralegal) program is accredited. Staff ensure that the month and date of graduation for the accredited Legal Services (Paralegal) program is entered on the transcript. A list of approved colleges and Legal Services (Paralegal) programs are provided to each staff member. This information is also on the Law Society website and in staff manuals.

ii. individuals who make registration decisions

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Registration decisions are based on a candidate's official transcript that is submitted directly to the Law Society's Office of the Registrar by an approved college and the staff members are also trained to ensure that all required documents that must accompany the application for the Paralegal Licensing Process are filed by the candidate.

iii. individuals who make internal review or appeal decisions

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

The Law Society provides training on an ongoing basis to all internal staff, benchers (governors of the Law Society) and adjudicators on their respective roles in the registration and internal review and appeals processes. The training includes ongoing external education, education programs offered internally to address specific Law Society needs and requirements, and ongoing improvement of process and procedures to ensure efficient and effective application of the Rules of Practice and Procedure.

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Agreements on the Recognition of Qualifications (11 / 13)

Examples of agreements on the recognition of professional qualifications include mutual recognition, reciprocity and labour mobility agreements. Such agreements may be national or international, between regulatory bodies, associations or jurisdictions.

a) List any agreements on the recognition of qualifications that were in place during the reporting period.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

None.

b) Explain the impact of these agreements on the registration process or on applicants for registration.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

N/A

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

*** SAME AS LAST YEAR ***

Data Collection (12 / 13)

Languages in which application information materials are available

a) Indicate the languages in which application information materials were available in the reporting year.

Language	Yes/No
English	Yes
French	Yes
Other (please specify)	

Paid staff employed by your organization

b) In the table below, enter the number of paid staff employed by your organization in the categories shown, on December 31 of the reporting year.

When providing information for each of the categories in this section, you may want to use decimals if you count your staff using half units. For example, 1 full-time employee and 1 part-time employee might be equivalent to 1.5 employees.

You can enter decimals to the tenths position only. For example, you can enter 1.5 or 7.5 but not 1.55 or 7.52.

Category	Staff
Total staff employed by the regulatory body	518
Staff involved in appeals process	156
Staff involved in registration process	19

Countries where internationally educated applicants were initially trained

c) In the following table, enter the top source countries where your applicants¹ were originally trained in the profession (**excluding** Canada), along with the number of applicants from each of these source countries.

Enter the country names in descending order. (That is, enter the source country for the greatest number of your applicants in the top row, the source country for the second greatest number in the second row, etc.)

Use the dropdown menu provided in each row to select the country.

Note that only one country can be reported in each row. If two or more countries are tied, enter the information for these tied countries in separate rows.

Country of training (Canada excluded)	Number of applicants in the reporting year
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	
n/a	

¹Persons who have applied to start the process for entry to the profession.
 Select "n/a" from the drop-down list if you do not track this information. Enter "0" in a "Number of applicants" field if you track the information, but the correct value is zero. Jurisdiction where members were initially trained

d) Indicate where your members² were initially trained in the profession (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

The numbers to be reported in the **Members** row are the numbers on December 31st of the reporting year. For example, if you are reporting registration practices for the calendar year 2009, you should report the numbers of members in the different categories on December 31st of 2009.

	Jurisdiction where members were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Members on December 31st of the reporting year	4117					4117

²Persons who are currently able to use the protected title or professional designation of the profession.

Enter "n/a" if you do not track this information. Enter "0" if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Applications your organization processed in the past year

e) State the number of applications your organization processed in the reporting year (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

From January 1 to December 31 of the reporting year	Jurisdiction where applicants were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
New applications received	1489					1489
Applicants actively pursuing licensing (applicants who had some contact with your organization in the reporting year)	1352					1352
Inactive applicants (applicants who had no contact with your organization in the reporting year)	137					137
Applicants who met all requirements and were authorized to become members but did not become members	30					30
Applicants who became FULLY REGISTERED members	751					751
Applicants who were authorized to receive an alternative class of licence³ but were not issued a licence						0
Applicants who were issued an alternative class of licence³						0

³An alternative class of licence enables its holder to practise with limitations, but additional registration requirements must be met in order for the member to be fully licenced. Please list and describe below the alternative classes of licence that your organization grants, such as student, intern, associate, provisional or temporary.

Enter "n/a" if you do not track this information. Enter "0" if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

An alternate class of licence is not applicable.

	Class of Licence	Description
a)		
b)		
c)		
d)		
d)		
f)		
g)		
h)		
i)		
j)		

Reviews and appeals your organization processed in the past year

f) State the number of reviews and appeals your organization processed in the reporting year (use only whole numbers; do not enter commas or decimals).

From January 1 to December 31 of the reporting year	Jurisdiction where applicants were initially trained in the profession (before they were granted use of the protected title or professional designation in Ontario)					
	Ontario	Other Canadian Provinces	USA	Other International	Unknown	Total
Applications that were subject to an internal review or that were referred to a statutory committee of your governing council, such as a Registration Committee	234					234
Applicants who initiated an appeal of a registration decision	0					0
Appeals heard	0					0
Registration decisions changed following an appeal	0					0

Enter "n/a" if you do not track this information. Enter "0" if you track the information, but the correct value is zero.

Additional comments:

Please identify and explain the changes in your registration practices relevant to this section that occurred during the reporting year.

Certification (13 / 13)

If you have specific questions about the Licensing Process, you may contact:

The Office of the Registrar
Professional Development and Competence Department
The Law Society of Upper Canada
130 Queen Street West, Toronto, Ontario M5H 2N6
E-mail: registrar@lsuc.on.ca
Telephone: 416-947-3315
Toll Free: 1-800-668-7380, extension 3315
Website: www.lsuc.on.ca - click on Licensing

Process Date: February 28, 2011