

A photograph of a large, multi-story brick building, likely a law school building, with a central tower and a lit street lamp in the foreground. The building is made of red brick and has many windows. The street lamp is black and has a glowing yellow light. The sky is blue and there are some trees with yellow leaves in the background.

# Law School Applicant Guide



Brown Pre-Professional Advising Center  
**PRE-LAW ADVISING**

## **Pre-Law Advising**

Brown Pre-Professional Advising Center

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[www.brown.edu/go/lawcareers](http://www.brown.edu/go/lawcareers)

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## Pre-Law Advising

Pre-Law Advising is one of the advising programs of the Pre-Professional Advising Center. Its main partners are the office of the College and the Center for Careers and Life After Brown- CareerLAB. We support students and alumni interested in legal education and careers through individual advising, internet resources and a multitude of events and programs designed to inform students and alumni about the study and practice of law at all stages of their exploration and preparation for law school application. Among the events we organize annually are the Brown Law School Fair, dean and alumni panels that present individual law schools and address various aspects of the application process, legal education, and practice.

This Guide is primarily intended for those who are preparing to enter the application process which begins each fall for matriculation in the following fall. However, it is a useful guide for all students and alumni in the early stages of researching the pathways to law school and legal practice. As law requires substantial academic and professional commitment, we encourage all students and alumni to engage in self-reflective practices as they develop an interest in law and to explore the field broadly through their academic and extracurricular, volunteer and employment pursuits.

Our website, [brown.edu/go/lawcareers](https://brown.edu/go/lawcareers), contains a wealth of information about all aspects of your exploration of the law career and education. We encourage you to consult it frequently and in detail as it would answer most of your questions and guide you in your studies, co-curricular activities and applications.

Advising consultations with the Law Careers advisors are available during open hours and by appointment. We ask that students and alumni complete our online [Office Registration Form](#) before meeting with one of the Law Careers advisors. Please consult our website for open hours and event information or contact our office if you wish to schedule an appointment. Alumni not near campus are welcome to consult with us via email, phone or Zoom. When you meet with a Law Careers advisor to discuss your law school application, please bring or email your résumé and a draft of your personal statement if you wish to discuss them. Check our website for upcoming information sessions, law school visits, and other events.

## Self-Assessment

We encourage you to think about your academic and career plans in the broader context of your strengths, interests, and long-term objectives. This self-reflective practice should guide you to select courses, co-curricular activities, internships and service projects that develop your understanding of law and its intersections with society, policy, intellectual tradition, and practical applications to resolve problems—from those of your future clients, to those of society at large, domestically and internationally. Before embarking on the law school admission process, consider carefully if this is the right choice for you at this time. Given the major commitment of time, effort, and resources it will take to get through law school, it is a question well worth asking yourself.

How do you know that you are ready? A good place to start might be the web sites of the law schools that interest you. Are you excited about the course descriptions, clinical opportunities, and special academic programs? You might also ask yourself if you are feeling a bit burned out on school. Is there anything else you would like to try before you begin law school and embark on a legal career?

Do you think that some work experience might help clarify your reasons for going to law school? Have you been trying without success to write your personal statement? Are your credentials strong enough for admission to the schools that interest you the most? If you wish to discuss any of these or other questions, feel free to consult the Law Careers advisors in open hours, by phone or via email.

Between 2012 and 2018 the number of law school applicants declined significantly due to the lower number of jobs for recent law school graduates. This trend appears to be reversing as employment prospects improve and students find the pursuit of a law degree in line with their civic commitments. More than three quarters of Brown's applicants take one or more years after earning their Bachelor degree to consider their professional plans before applying. This is common nationally too. We encourage you to explore our website and this guide in detail, consult with professionals and mentors and reflect on your career goals before you commit to applying. Brown applicants enjoy excellent success in part because they take the time to become as well prepared as they can be. You will find multi-year national and Brown-specific data on our website under [Admission Statistics](#).



## Law School Application Timeline

Summer	Fall	Fall-Winter	Summer-Fall
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* LSAT (June-July)</li> <li>* Register with the Credential Assembly Service (CAS)</li> <li>* Research potential schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* LSAT (October)</li> <li>* Write essay</li> <li>* Gather Letters of Recommendation</li> <li>* Determine where to apply</li> <li>* Complete admission applications</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Complete financial aid applications</li> <li>* Schools make their decisions</li> <li>* When admitted, pay seat deposit</li> <li>* Attend accepted students open houses at law schools</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Matriculate to law school</li> </ul>

## Application Systems and Components

To apply to law school, you have to navigate several related systems and submit a number of documents to support your candidacy. We recommend you familiarize yourself with these application systems and components early so that you can arrange for the completion and submission of all required documents in a timely fashion. The Law Careers advisors arrange a number of information sessions throughout the academic year to help you better understand the various aspects of the law school application and to connect with admission representatives. The basic elements of the application are described below. Detailed instructions are provided on our website.

### Law School Admission Council (LSAC)

LSAC is the central hub for all application information. Start your research on their website: [www.lsac.org](http://www.lsac.org). LSAC is a non-profit organization that coordinates the admission process for law schools in the United States and Canada. LSAC is responsible for developing and administering the LSAT and runs the Law School Credential Assembly Service (CAS). In addition,

LSAC provides information and data related to law school admission and legal careers.

### **Law School Credential Assembly Service (CAS)**

CAS is the centralized application service for all law schools administered by LSAC. In order to apply to law school, you must register with CAS. You will then submit all of your undergraduate transcripts to CAS, along with other information about yourself. Letters of recommendation are also submitted through CAS. CAS then distributes all of this information, including your LSAT scores, to the law schools to which you apply. Subscribe to CAS in the summer before you apply or early in the fall. For more information, visit the CAS website at [www.lsac.org](http://www.lsac.org).

### **The LSAC Flex App and Individual School Applications**

In the 2013 application cycle, LSAC introduced a new system that combines elements of a common application with individualized, law school-specific components. You register with LSAC to complete this application and to submit materials to CAS. This application is often referred to as Flex App. It is an integrated approach to the application process and consolidates all materials you need to provide to law schools. Access the application instructions and portal at <http://www.lsac.org/jd/applying-to-law-school/overview>. **You are responsible for reading all application instructions and understanding the admission policies and procedures for the individual schools to which you are applying.**

### **Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and Graduate Record Exam (GRE)**

The standardized test for law school is the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). The LSAT consists of four sections: reading comprehension, analytical reasoning (or logic games), logical reasoning, and a writing sample. In addition, there is an unscored section to pre-test items for use in future LSAT administrations. The LSAT is offered several times per year. As of summer 2019, the test transitioned from pencil-and-paper, to computer-based administration with test dates in June, July, September, October, November, January, February, March and April in 2019- 2020. The latest exam date we recommend for every application cycle is the one offered in October. Your scores are sent to law schools as part of your CAS report. LSAT registration information, as well as detailed descriptions of the test, and preparation materials can be found at <https://www.lsac.org/lsat>. Be aware of test registration regulations, including test administration, cancellation dates, and reporting policies. You should plan to take the LSAT exam in time to submit your application reasonably early and when you are best prepared for the exam itself. All LSAT scores are reported to CAS and become part of your record. Law schools consider multiple LSAT scores

differently; some average multiple scores, others regard the higher or the most recent score exclusively. It is best to take the exam once after comprehensive preparation and practice.

Beginning in 2017 a number of the 206 ABA-approved law schools announced they would allow applicants to take the GRE instead of the LSAT. Columbia, Georgetown, Harvard, Yale, NYU, Cornell, Duke, UPenn, University of Chicago, Northwestern, University of Arizona are some of the approximately [70 of these schools as of mid-2021](#). The schools considered this step in the context of continually declining applications nationally and with the aspiration to attract applicants from a wider range of backgrounds. The American Bar Association, which currently recognizes only the LSAT as an appropriate test, will be considering this change in the coming months and years. The main consideration would be the predictive validity of the GRE not only for performance in the law school curriculum but also on state Bar exams.

### **Transcripts**

You will need to order transcripts from the Office of the Registrar at Brown and from the registrar at any other postsecondary school where you have taken courses or earned either an undergraduate or graduate degree. Please note that if you have taken courses at RISD, you must submit a RISD transcript. You must use LSAC's Transcript Request Forms when you approach the Office of the Registrar in order to have your transcript sent to CAS. More information about transcript requirements is available on the LSAC website here: <http://www.lsac.org/jd/applying-to-law-school/cas/requesting-transcripts>

### **Study Abroad or Foreign Transcripts**

Explore the details on the LSAC page for International Transcripts:

<https://www.lsac.org/applying-law-school/jd-application-process/cas/requesting/international-transcripts>

A brief summary:

Transcripts for course work abroad are required if:

you are applying to a law school that requires the authentication and evaluation feature of the Credential Assembly Service (CAS)

and

- you received your bachelor's degree from an institution outside of the United States, its territories, or Canada;

or



- you were directly enrolled at such an institution outside the US, its territories, or Canada, and the total amount of work you completed at all of these institutions combined is the equivalent of more than one year of undergraduate study in the United States, its territories, or Canada.

Copies of all international educational records must be submitted in the original language securely by the original institution. If the transcript or other required documents are not in English, a translation must be included. Individual law schools may have specific requirements. Make certain you are aware of those as you explore law schools to which you will apply.

### **Academic Record (GPA)**

Since there is no particular concentration law schools prefer, they are interested in the breadth and depth of your academic record as the context to your GPA. As you explore your academic and career interests during your Brown studies, take advantage of the Open Curriculum to develop broad-based competencies in the areas that interest you the most. Brown's Office of the Registrar reports our grading standards each year to LSAC, including the fact that letter grades at Brown do not bear numerical equivalents. LSAC nonetheless will calculate a GPA for law school applicants based on the transcript. Brown does not validate LSAC's computation of the GPA; however, experience has shown that LSAC uses the following rubric in assigning quality points: A=4.0, B=3.0, and C=2.0. We do not know how grades of S are interpreted, but believe that these are left out of the GPA calculation. Taking one or two courses S/NC judiciously should not hamper the competitiveness of your academic record. Mandatory S/NC courses taken as part of your concentration requirements should not cause any problems. Grades in courses taken at other U.S. universities or colleges will be calculated into the overall Grade Point Average by LSAC. If you have taken courses at RISD and select the S/NC option at Brown, the letter grades assigned at RISD will appear on the RISD transcript. Note that you are required to submit your RISD transcript to LSAC. These grades will be calculated into your GPA.

### **Résumé**

You will need to have a polished and up-to-date résumé to submit with your law school applications. The Law Careers advisors can discuss your résumé with you but for longitudinal help preparing your résumé, meet with a career counselor at CareerLAB. Consult their web site for valuable tips:

<https://www.brown.edu/campus-life/support/careerlab/undergraduate-0/resumes-cover-letters-and-online-profiles>

### **Letters of Recommendation**

Most law schools require two letters of recommendation but may accept a third. Each law school has its own requirements, so it is important that you take the time to learn about the guidelines for the schools to which you will apply. Many schools require letters from two faculty members, though they will often accept recommendations from work supervisors, as well, especially if the applicant has worked for several years following their undergraduate studies, you can have your letters sent directly to LSAC's Letter of Recommendation Service (LOR), which is part of CAS. Through the LOR, you can designate specific letters of recommendation for specific schools. If you are planning to take a few years off before applying to law school it may be best to maintain contact with the individuals you think you would ask for letters of recommendation. Continuing to develop the relationship can strengthen your recommenders' knowledge of your work and the qualities you would bring to the process. If you wish to ask for letters of recommendation some time before you apply, you may have them stored in the LSAC LOR system. Alternatively, you could have the letters stored in credential systems such as Interfolio.com. Note, however, that each letter stored in a system other than the LSAC LOR would need to be accompanied by a copy of the LSAC LOR form, which can complicate the process for you. The full details about collecting and transmitting letters of recommendation are posted on the LSAC website here:

<https://www.lsac.org/applying-law-school/jd-application-process/credential-assembly-service-cas/letters-recommendation>

Letters of recommendation provide admission committees with important qualitative information not available in other parts of your application. This is why it is important for your letter writers to focus on the quality of your work as well as your developed intellectual and interpersonal skills necessary for success in the legal profession (e.g., analytical reasoning, written and oral communication, research, work habits, commitment, leadership, and collaboration abilities, etc.).

### **Personal Statement**

Law schools require you to submit a "personal statement" as part of your application. It is typically best to develop one comprehensive version of your personal statement and to modify it appropriately based on the somewhat different law school prompts and formatting expectations. We don't recommend that you start with a completely different version of the personal statement for each school as this can be hard to manage and most likely won't be helpful to you. Ensure that what you customize for individual schools fits harmoniously within your general narrative. The personal statement instructions are generally quite broad: for example, "Write a statement about yourself," or "Tell us something about yourself and your interest in law." Though the vagueness of the prompt can be daunting, the

personal statement offers an opportunity for you to introduce yourself to admission committees on a more personal level, allowing them to learn about you beyond the information presented in other parts of your application. An effective personal statement offers a clear and memorable portrait of you - your interests, experiences, personality, skills, and motivations to pursue education and a career in law. Because personal statements are personal, there is no one format or approach that will work well for everyone. We offer a few tips below. It is best that you develop your personal statement through multiple revisions and that you work longitudinally with The Writing Center on these while you are enrolled at Brown. The Writing Center works with both students and alumni in person during the academic year but cannot provide guidance to alumni via email or phone. <https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/support/writing-center/> offers further details.

### **Tips for Personal Statement Writing**

- ***Be original***

Guess the top three most common personal statement topics and avoid them. In particular, skip the “Why I want to be a lawyer” dissertation; instead, tell an original story or relay an experience that is consistent with your desire to attend law school. In other words, “Show, don’t tell.”

- ***Avoid corny or flashy tricks***

Some candidates will try to be clever in order to make their application stand out, but we recommend that you avoid this strategy. Do not write an epic poem about your quest to enter law school, draw a picture as your personal statement, write in stream-of-consciousness style, write your obituary in which you look back on a career as Chief Justice, or write a short story in which you are on trial and the admission committee is the jury.

- ***Keep it personal***

The essay is called a “personal” statement for a reason. Many students try to impress admission officers with essays on philosophy, Russian politics, or the need for prison reform. Avoid this tactic. A well-written essay on current events or an academic subject might win awards, but it is not the best way to show an admission committee what you will contribute to their program. Center your essay on something about your background, interests, commitments, and life plan. If these are linked to specific knowledge areas and expertise, it is fine to draw connections to those specific areas, as long as you do not make them the main focus of your narrative.

- ***Do not recycle your résumé***

Some applicants make the mistake of devoting their personal statement to summarizing their accomplishments. Your personal statement can certainly concern something impressive you have done, but should not just recycle your résumé. Think of your personal statement as an opportunity to add something new to your application portfolio. Again, “show, don’t tell” is the best strategy.

- ***Contribute to the law school community***

Law school admission officers are looking for interesting students who will help make their school a vibrant learning community. They are looking for diversity in interests, background, experience, and outlook. Think about your personal statement as a chance to step outside of the GPA/LSAT numbers in your application and illustrate why admitting someone with your background, experiences, and aspirations will make their school - and the profession - a better place.

- ***Make it easy to read***

Write clearly. While elevated prose may be engaging and may show your sophistication, it may sometimes appear distant and inauthentic. Use declarative sentences in the active voice wherever possible. Organize each paragraph around a topic, theme, or idea as you would in a closely-argued paper. Do not try to distinguish your essay just through its lexical or physical features—use a regular font (e.g., Times New Roman, or Calibri), ordinary margins, white background, etc. Do follow schools’ guidelines about these. Admission committees care about typos, grammar, topic sentences, and transitions. Proofread your essays very carefully. Elegant writing is rewarded while sloppiness invites negative attention.

- ***Some helpful questions to consider as you begin your draft:***

What have you learned from your co-curricular or work experiences, and how have those experiences contributed to your growth?

When does time disappear for you?

Have you had to overcome any unusual obstacles or hardships (economic, physical, familial, etc.) in your life? What were these obstacles and how did you face them?

What might be unique, special, or distinctive about your life story or experiences?

### **Addenda and Diversity Statements**

Each law school-specific portion of the application enables you to submit brief addenda about anything you wish to add that may not be the best fit for your personal statement. You may choose to complete an addendum that

contextualizes an element of your application or background. Be factual and brief and avoid normative statements that may confuse rather than inform. Different parts of the application may include space for additional brief comments such as Diversity statements. We suggest you think about diversity broadly in terms of the unique characteristics that capture you as an applicant who will contribute to making the law school incoming class more dynamic and broad-based. Diversity is not determined merely culturally or socioeconomically; it can also encompass competencies developed through activities and education.

### **Institutional Action and Dean Certifications**

Law school applicants are required to report and explain any infractions against their college's or university's institutional codes. **You must report relevant institutional action even if it does not appear on your academic transcript, did not result in separation from the University, and/or if you believe the offenses to be minor.** This includes infractions of the Academic Code of Conduct and the Disciplinary Code higher than Reprimand, as well as academic standing notation of Suspension or Dismissal. Reprimands will continue to be part of your Brown internal record only.

The Academic standing status of Academic Warning (being one course behind) and Serious Warning (being two courses behind) no longer appear on Brown official transcripts. These designations are intended as a measure to encourage students to focus on successful strategies to proceed toward the completion of their Brown degrees. While they are not considered to be cases of institutional action, admission committees would scrutinize semesters during which you didn't complete a full course load. It would be good for you to provide context in your application or in an addendum. Applicants should report Suspension or Dismissal. They appear on official Brown transcripts and law schools will consider them as institutional action.

In addition to asking you to report institutional action, some schools and programs will require you to have a dean at Brown either certify that you have not been the subject of disciplinary action or state in writing the facts of any procedure and/or sanction against you. In most cases, reporting disciplinary action will not jeopardize your chances of admission as long as you have taken full responsibility for your actions and demonstrate self-reflection and personal growth.

Truthfulness is integral to being a successful attorney. It is therefore essential that you take seriously your responsibility to report institutional action. **Failure to report institutional action appropriately on your applications may be regarded by the law schools as a lapse in ethical judgment.** Moreover, you will be asked once again to report institutional action on applications to the bar after you have completed law school. **Failure to report institutional action could later jeopardize your admission to the**

**bar.** If you have concerns about your disciplinary or academic standing, consult with the Law Careers advisors and check your own record with the relevant campus offices before you begin your law school applications.

- **Submitting Your Dean Certifications**

When you receive dean certification requests, please first complete only your portion and then bring, mail, or email the forms to the Pre-Professional Advising Center office (information below). Please also complete the [Office Registration Form](#) on our website and anticipate one to two weeks for your certifications to be sent to the schools requesting them. Provide us with your email and phone number, and any relevant details and contact information for the school where we should send the completed form. If you are reporting institutional action, make sure you include your statement describing the incident in question and contact us for an advising conversation.

**Email:** [prelaw@brown.edu](mailto:prelaw@brown.edu)

**Mailing Address:**

Pre-Professional Advising Center  
Brown University  
Box 1996  
Providence, RI, 02912

**For physical drop-offs and FedEx/UPS/DHL Deliveries:**

Pre-Professional Advising Center  
Brown University  
Attn. Hanna Exel  
University Hall Suite 201  
One Prospect Street  
Providence, RI, 02912

## Application Process

The application process requires you to manage the elements described in the previous sections in a thoughtful and timely manner. Ensure that you are well aware of the details and the timelines for the various elements of the application. Reflecting on your educational and career objectives, exploring school information, choosing where to apply and what type of programs are best suited to your background and professional aspirations requires careful thought and longitudinal preparation.

**Deciding Where to Apply**



Many students approach this question by immediately thinking of a few top-rated schools and then deciding that those schools are the only ones they want to attend. While reputation can be an important factor, also consider a range of more substantive criteria. You might start by determining which schools accept students with GPAs and LSAT or GRE scores similar to yours, since these numbers inform much of the admission process. You can determine which schools are in your range based on your LSAT or GRE score and grade point average. There are a number of LSAT/GPA calculators on the Internet. We recommend that you explore the LSAC Undergraduate GPA/LSAT search tool first.

[https://officialguide.lsac.org/release/OfficialGuide\\_Default.aspx](https://officialguide.lsac.org/release/OfficialGuide_Default.aspx)

### **Choosing Law Schools**

Beyond the numbers, you might consider location, as well as particular areas of the law in which you are interested. While all law schools teach essentially the same curriculum, some offer specialized tracks or significant possible course work in certain areas of the law (e.g., public interest, government, corporate law). Some law schools also have special clinics or combined degree programs that might interest you. Finally, law schools disclose the rates at which their graduates pass the bar and find employment. Research these rates before deciding where to apply. You will find robust information from The American Bar Association (ABA), The National Association for Law Placement (NALP) and other credible sources on our website under Resources.

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/advising/law-school/resources>

### **Learning About Individual Schools**

Pre-Law Advising organizes a number of programs, including Brown's Professional School Fair, admission dean panels, and information sessions that expose you to information about legal education and particular law schools. We encourage all students and alumni to attend so that they can interact with admission officials in person. Many of these events are available to alumni far from campus live through Zoom. There are several good sources of information about different schools on the Internet. Explore different schools' websites in addition to the information you will find on the LSAC website. Most of them offer extensive information about the school, the faculty, the courses, and special programs or clinics. The ABA/LSAC Official Guide offers an online, searchable database of law schools which you can search by keywords, geography, average LSAT, and other criteria. To access the online database, consult the site below.

<https://officialguide.lsac.org/Release/SchoolsABADData/SchoolsAndLocations.aspx>

Data is available about employment trends and statistics for individual schools from organizations such as the ABA and NALP. These are also listed under Resources on our website. While most information is available online, there are good print resources too. Make sure the sources you consult are official and credible. There are a few useful books in our small reference library in the Pre-Professional Advising Center.

### **Number of Schools to Which to Apply**

Some students and alumni apply to only two or three schools, especially if they are certain of the geographical area where they want to be, while others apply to 12 or more. We recommend that students apply to half a dozen to a dozen schools across a range of options, typically including one or two dream schools and a couple of good safety schools. Choose the bulk of the schools on your list by the fit of your credentials with their GPA/LSAT ranges. Then certainly look for a substantive fit between your backgrounds and aspirations, intersected by the schools' particulars.

### **Early Decision and Early Action Programs**

Most law schools have Early Decision Programs, Early Action Programs, or both. Those are designed for applicants with particular interest in and suitable background for a specific law school. **Individual law school programs vary in their regulations and requirements, and it is your responsibility to be aware of all details for the specific programs of interest to you.** Law schools also have specific deadlines for these types of application processes. We recommend that you consider Early Decision Programs only if the strength of your application and your interests are a particularly good match for the school's admission requirements. In most cases, applicants are better off applying to a balanced list of schools than to a single one.

- **Early Action Programs are non-binding**, meaning that you can apply to other law schools and are not bound by an obligation to accept an admission offer. If you apply through an Early Action Program, you will be informed about the admission decision earlier than regular applicants.
- **Early Decision Programs are binding**. You will be required to sign an agreement that you will accept the school's offer if you are admitted and will withdraw your applications from all other law schools.

### **Fees and Fee Waivers**

The application process involves the payment of several fees. For a list of LSAT and CAS fees, including exam registration, postponement, relocation, and cancellation, consult: <https://www.lsac.org/lsat/lsat-dates-deadlines-score-release-dates/lsat-cas-fees-and-refunds>

Individual Law schools have application fees as well. Applicants with a high level of financial need may qualify for application and LSAT fee waivers through LSAC and individual law schools. Information about LSAC's fee waiver program can be found on the web site below:

<http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/fee-waivers> Schools' policies about application fee waivers vary. You should check the policy for each school to which you wish to apply.

### **Deferring Admission**

Generally, deferrals are allowed for specific reasons such as fellowships, enriching work, academic opportunities, or compelling personal circumstances. Deferrals must be requested in writing shortly after you have been admitted and are decided on a case-by-case basis. **Criteria and rules for deferral vary from school to school.** Thus, before requesting a deferral from any law school, be sure you fully understand their deferral policy. We do not recommend applying to law school with the intention of asking for a deferral. If you believe you will need an additional year or two before attending law school, we strongly advise you to postpone your application until you know that you are ready to start your legal education. This can not only help you gain clarity about your decision to pursue legal education and career, but can also strengthen your admission credentials. Consult with the Law Careers advisors if you have questions about timing your law school application of considering a deferral request once admitted.

### **Diversity in Law School**

The Law School Admission Council, individual law schools, professional and student organizations have committed to providing information and resources of interest to students from under-served and under-represented backgrounds in law school and in the profession. As you explore your interest in law, and when you begin your preparation to apply to law school, consult the plentiful resources to build community, prepare for the LSAT, and become familiar with various support programs and systems that LSAC, NALP and other professional organizations have provided. You will find such materials posted on our website under Resources, as well as on the LSAC website under Diversity in Law School.

<https://www.lsac.org/discover-law/diversity-law-school>

### **International Applicants**

Law schools vary in their admission policies for international applicants. Check with each of the individual schools in which you are interested to learn about their policies. If you are not a native speaker of English, you may be required to take the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL). If you have more than a year's worth of coursework from a foreign university, you may be required to submit a transcript from that institution. In addition, you may be required to demonstrate the ability to pay for your legal education. Legal education in the United States is financed largely through loans backed by the federal government. Applicants who are not U.S. citizens or residents are not eligible for these loans. Some school-based grants and scholarships are available, though these rarely cover the entire cost of law education. At most schools, 80% or more of students graduate with some amount of debt, often exceeding \$100,000. Applicants who are not U.S. citizens or residents are advised to consider carefully the utility of a J.D. from a U.S. law school for their career goals. Below are a few factors that could help you evaluate this proposition. Do you envision working for a U.S. company in your country of residence, or in third countries; working for a foreign company in the U.S.; working for the government of your country of residence or international and supranational organizations where knowledge of U.S. law is useful?

If you decide to apply, we urge you to do so as early as possible in the application process to ensure that visas and other documents are completed prior to matriculation to law school, if admitted.

## Financing Your Law Education

The cost of attending law school (tuition, fees, books, living expenses, etc.) can be as much as \$80,000 per year. A small number of schools currently have annual attendance costs just above \$100,000. You may qualify for scholarships at individual schools based on need, merit, or other criteria. Some schools offer need but not merit-based aid, and vice-versa. However, financial aid comes mostly in the form of loans. Therefore, you should expect to borrow money to cover the majority of your costs. According to Law School Transparency, 2020 graduates' average borrowing was \$93,131 for public school; and \$134,147 for private school. Notably, these data do not include the interest accruing on the loans during law school or during repayment. Furthermore, individual students' borrowed amounts vary widely, depending on their ability to pay, any scholarship amounts, and schools attended. <https://data.lawschooltransparency.com/costs/federal-investment/>

Financial assistance is offered by governmental sources (e.g., Federal Direct Loans, or Federal Perkins Loans), Work-Study programs and private

sources, which may be based on your credit (e.g., Graduate PLUS loans). Income-based repayment plans, or loan forgiveness programs could also help with educational costs. Explore all options available to you. Ensuring that your credit history and practices are in order and learning about financial options and their costs are essential for making an informed decision to matriculate to a law school or whether/when to apply in the first place. Law schools also vary in their policies about determining applicants' independent status, so be sure you learn what information would be expected from your parents or legal guardians.

Financial aid and scholarship information, including lots of useful resources and links to funding sources, is available on LSAC's website:

<https://www.lsac.org/choosing-law-school/paying-law-school> Consult individual law schools' financial offers and terms, particularly in regard to school-specific aid, repayment options and private lending.

Current Brown students may consider the competitive Liman Fellowship. For more information, consult:

<https://www.brown.edu/academics/college/swearer/programs/arthur-liman-public-interest-fellowship/211>.

## A Few Key Resources

### Within Brown

Pre-Law Advising

Website: <http://www.brown.edu/go/lawcareers>

Center for Careers and Life After Brown (CareerLAB)

Website: <http://brown.edu/campus-life/support/careerlab>

The Swearer Center for Public Service

Website: <http://swearercenter.brown.edu>

The Writing Center

Website: [http://www.brown.edu/Student\\_Services/Writing\\_Center](http://www.brown.edu/Student_Services/Writing_Center)

Office of the Registrar

Website: <http://brown.edu/Administration/Registrar>

Division of Campus Life

Website: <https://www.brown.edu/about/administration/vp-campus-life/home>

Brown Alumni Association

Website: <http://alumni.brown.edu>

### And Outside Brown

Law School Admission Council

(LSAC) Web site:

<http://www.lsac.org>

E- mail: [LSACinfo@LSAC.org](mailto:LSACinfo@LSAC.org)

Phone: 215.968.1001

Address: Law School Admission Council, 662 Penn Street, Newtown, PA, 18940

LSAT Dates

Consult <https://www.lsac.org/lsat/lsat-dates-deadlines-score-release-dates> for all domestic and international dates, as well as for special dates for Sabbath observers.





## Pre-Law Advising

Brown Pre-Professional Advising Center

University Hall

One Prospect Street, Second Floor

Tel: (401) 863-2781

[www.brown.edu/go/lawcareers](http://www.brown.edu/go/lawcareers)