

Application Instructions

General Information

Berkeley Law enrolls a student body that is diverse, consisting of students from over 50 countries around the world. We seek to admit students who have the highest standards of professional excellence and integrity; who will bring vision, creativity, and commitment to their professional endeavors; and who will contribute to the learning environment of the law school by sharing their unique perspectives.

In evaluating LL.M. applicants, substantial consideration is given to grades and English language exam scores, and the thesis proposal. We also consider personal statements, letters of recommendation, legal experience, and other significant professional achievements.

Application Process Overview

Applicants must apply online through the Law School Admission Council's (LSAC) website at [LSAC.org](https://lsac.org), and electronic applications are required.

If you have any questions or technical difficulties using the online application system, contact the LSAC help desk at 215-968-1315 or llminfo@lsac.org. Berkeley Law cannot assist you with technical problems on the LSAC system.

If you cannot apply online due to lack of Internet access, you may request a paper application. Although paper applications generally take much longer to process, submitting a paper application will not affect your admission decision. Contact the Advanced Degree Programs Office by writing to llm@law.berkeley.edu to request a paper application.

Please note that all applications and supporting documents become the property of Berkeley Law and will not be returned. It is your responsibility to ensure that all items are submitted by December 18th. As such, you are encouraged to submit application materials before the deadline to allow time for an exchange of correspondence with the Advanced Degree Programs Office. Applications will not be reviewed until all required items have been received. Late applications will not be considered.

Application Timeline

We begin accepting applications on August 1st, after our application forms are made available.

Deadline - The deadline to apply for the LL.M. programs at Berkeley Law and postmark supplementary materials is midnight December 18th, Pacific Standard Time. We are aware that it takes a few weeks for LSAC to evaluate and assemble documents from the time they are received; as long as materials are sent by December 18th they are considered on time.

Communication - Once you submit your application, we will send an e-mail with instructions on how to check your application status online. We will also send an e-mail when your application is complete and ready for review. Please add our e-mail address (llm@law.berkeley.edu) to your address book to prevent such notices from being filtered as spam. Because we process a large number of applications, we ask that you do not telephone to inquire about your application status. Notices are sent by e-mail as decisions are made.

Application Review - While applications will be reviewed after the application deadline, we still encourage applicants to submit the application and supporting materials early, to avoid unforeseen complications.

Notification of Decision - The majority of applicants will receive their decision by the end of March. Admitted applicants will have three weeks to respond to Berkeley Law's offer of admission, and will be required to submit a \$1,000USD deposit if they choose to accept. Only an admission email from Berkeley Law constitutes an offer of admission.

Submitting Your Application Form

There are five major steps in order to submit your application form:

- 1) Read these instructions thoroughly and check the box to indicate you have read them.
- 2) Answer the application questions and save your answers.
- 3) Upload your Personal Statement, C.V., and Thesis Proposal to the Attachments section.
- 4) Preview your application pdf to confirm that all information is correct.
- 5) Pay the \$80 application fee.

Until you have paid the application fee, your application has not been fully submitted. Berkeley Law cannot access your application before it is submitted, and it must be submitted electronically before midnight December 18th, Pacific Standard

Time. After that time you will no longer be able to submit the application.

Please note: Submitting the application and sending documents to LSAC's Credential Assembly Service are two separate processes; you do not have to wait until LSAC receives your hard copy materials before submitting the application. We recommend that you submit the application as early as possible even if LSAC has not yet received your supporting documents so that we can access your information and begin processing the application.

LLM Credential Assembly Service

LSAC's LLM Credential Assembly Service (LLM CAS) simplifies the application process by centralizing the submission of application materials. Utilizing the LLM CAS, applicants need only send one set of documents to LSAC, who will assemble and distribute reports to the participating law schools of your choice.

LLM CAS consists of three parts: the Electronic Application Service, Document Assembly Service, and the International Transcript Authentication and Evaluation Service.

Electronic Application Service - Berkeley Law requires use of the Electronic Application Service (\$35USD), which allows you to transmit your application online.

Document Assembly Service - Berkeley Law requires use of the Document Assembly Service (\$50USD plus \$30 report fee), through which LSAC will collect transcripts, letters of recommendation, and English proficiency exam score(s) and distribute them to the law schools of your choice. This service does not include authentication or evaluation of transcripts.

International Transcript Authentication and Evaluation Service (\$135USD in addition to the Document Assembly Service and report fee) - Use is optional for applicants educated outside the US. This service is highly recommended but not required, and includes authentication and evaluation of transcripts, degrees/diplomas graduation certificates, and rank statements.

In order to access and submit our online application, you must purchase either the Electronic Application Service and Document Assembly Service (\$85USD) or the Electronic Application Service, Document Assembly Service, AND International Transcript Authentication and Evaluation Service (\$220USD total). Your Credential Assembly Service account will be active for five years.

We strongly advise applicants to register for the LLM Credential Assembly Service and submit their materials well in advance of the application deadline. LSAC recommends applicants register four to six weeks before their first application deadline. Although Berkeley Law's deadline to postmark materials is December 18th, it is recommended to have materials sent as early as possible to allow sufficient time for processing.

Please do not send English proficiency exam scores, letters of recommendation, and any transcripts submitted through LLM CAS to Berkeley Law; instead you must send these promptly to LSAC so that they can be processed and transmitted to us by the application deadline. Further details about this service may be found on LSAC's website at <https://www.lsac.org/llm-other-law-program-applicants/application-process-llm-other-law-programs/llm-credential-assembly>.

Application Checklist

See below for further details on each required item. Please do not send paper copies of any materials uploaded to the online application or sent to LSAC.

- Application form - submit online via LSAC by December 18, 2021
- Official academic records - the issuing institution(s) should send directly to LSAC
- Two letters of recommendation - send to LSAC with their Letter of Recommendation Form
- TOEFL/IELTS score - request that the score report be sent to LSAC
OR request an English Language Requirement Waiver
- Personal Statement - upload to online application
- Curriculum vitae (c.v.) or résumé - upload to online application
- Thesis Proposal Summary - upload to online application
- Writing sample (optional) - upload to online application
- \$80USD application fee - pay by credit card while submitting online application

*Note about the application fee - if you are applying for both the LL.M. thesis track and the traditional and/or professional track, we will waive one of the application fees so that you only have to pay it once. Please write to llm@law.berkeley.edu including your LSAC account number, name, and that you are submitting two of our LL.M. applications, and we will provide a code to waive one of the application fees.

Academic Records

Applicants must submit official academic records showing graded course work, dates of enrollment and award of degree(s). A copy of the actual degree or state examination for all university and law school study is also required, if this information is not included on the transcript.

These records must be sent directly to LSAC from the appropriate issuing institution, and applicants must use LSAC's Transcript Request Form, which will be available at the completion of your LLM CAS registration. All official documents must be received by LSAC in a sealed institution envelope. Documents sent by the applicant or without the Transcript Request Form will not be accepted. Transcripts received by LSAC become their property and cannot be returned to the applicant or the issuing institution.

If the institution offers to print transcripts in either the native language or in English, order both to be sent to LSAC. If the institution does not offer English translation, it is the applicant's responsibility to make sure an English translation is sent to LSAC. The translation may be done by anyone as long as it is a literal translation, and need not be certified.

For more information on sending academic records to LSAC's LLM CAS, go to <https://www.lsac.org/llm-other-law-program-applicants/application-process-llm-other-law-programs/application-0>.

Letters of Recommendation

Berkeley Law requires two letters of recommendation and will accept a third if you feel it will strengthen your application. We strongly prefer that at least one letter comes from one of your law professors.

To send Letters of Recommendation to LSAC - 1) Log in to your LLM CAS account and click on Letters of Recommendation. 2) Add your recommenders' names and contact information. 3) Assign the appropriate letters to each school using the letter ID number. 4) An email will be sent to each of your recommenders requesting them to complete and upload a letter for you, or you may print the required recommender forms to provide to your recommenders if they prefer to submit a letter by paper.

The LSAC Letter of Recommendation Form must accompany each letter. Letters without a signed form will be returned to the sender. Letters processed by LSAC become their property and cannot be returned or copied.

For more information on submitting letters of recommendation to LSAC's LLM CAS, go to <https://www.lsac.org/llm-and-non-jd-applicants/llm-non-jd-application-process/application-requirements/letters>.

English Language Requirements

Berkeley Law requires Official Score Reports of the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) before admitting an applicant whose primary language is not English. For the 2022-23 application, we are also accepting the TOEFL iBT Special Home Edition and the IELTS Indicator, but are not accepting the TOEFL ITP Plus for China. Scores for these alternative tests should be submitted to LSAC in the usual method as described below.

Applicants whose primary language is English (including US and Canadian citizens) should submit a waiver request as instructed below.

TOEFL - The minimum score required is 100 on the internet-based TOEFL, or 600 on the paper-based test. There is no subscore requirement. Information about test dates and registration procedures is available at most universities and US consulates and on the TOEFL website at www.toefl.org.

TOEFL scores that are more than two years old at the time of application cannot be considered; applicants must retake the test to submit a more recent score. Applicants should register for the TOEFL in time to ensure that the Official Score Report will be issued by the December 18th application deadline.

LSAC has arranged to receive TOEFL scores electronically; to have your TOEFL score report sent to LSAC, place an order to their institution code 8395.

IELTS - The minimum score required is 7 on a 9 point scale (overall score) on the Academic Modules. There is no subscore requirement. To register for the IELTS, consult the IELTS website at <http://ielts.org> to locate the office of the test center where you plan to take the test.

LSAC has arranged to receive IELTS scores electronically; to have your IELTS score report sent to LSAC, contact the test center directly where you took the IELTS and request that your test scores be sent electronically to LSAC.

For more information on submitting a TOEFL or IELTS score report to LSAC's LLM CAS, go to <https://www.lsac.org/llm-and-non-jd-applicants/llm-non-jd-application-process/application-requirements/english>.

English Language Requirement Waiver Requests - You may request an English Language Requirement Waiver if either of

the following criteria apply:

- 1) you have attended a US university for full-time study for a minimum of one academic year with a 3.0/B average or higher, OR
- 2) you have earned a degree from a foreign university in which the sole language of instruction is English, OR
- 3) you are a native English speaker.

To request a waiver, check the "Yes" button for Question 1 under English Requirement and choose the appropriate reason from the drop down options. If your waiver is based on education in English, you must submit official academic records through LSAC to verify your eligibility. We do not waive the English Language Requirement based on work experience in English.

Applicants whose primary language is English (including US and Canadian citizens, if eligible) should submit a waiver request; Berkeley Law will not assume English proficiency for any applicant.

Personal Statement

One written essay is required of all applicants. Because only a limited number of qualified applicants may be admitted each year, the Advanced Degree Programs Committee gives careful consideration to each applicant's essay.

The Personal Statement should describe your legal interests, the particular area of study you intend to undertake as a law student, the reasons you wish to study at Berkeley Law, and your professional plans or goals following completion of your degree. Since the Advanced Degree Programs Committee does not grant interviews, you may also use the statement to describe aspects of yourself that are not apparent from your other application materials. The Personal Statement should be written without assistance from others, and should be limited to three pages of double-spaced text.

The Personal Statement must be uploaded to the attachments section of the online application.

C.V. (Curriculum Vitae)

The Curriculum Vitae should provide a synopsis of your educational and academic background and skills. This summary should include professional experience, research experience, publications, presentations, awards, honors, and affiliations.

The Curriculum Vitae must be uploaded to the attachments section of the online application.

Thesis Proposal Summary

The Thesis Proposal Summary should summarize the specific research project you would like to work on while at Berkeley Law, and should be limited to one page of double-spaced text.

A good thesis proposal summary should be:

Specific: What exactly will you argue or demonstrate in your paper? Your proposal should not be vague.

Concise: Be sure to limit your proposal summary to one page of double-spaced text; reviewers will stop reading after the maximum page limit, which could negatively impact their evaluation of your proposal.

Realistic: Your thesis will be written in one academic year, and keep in mind that you will also be taking classes and have other commitments along with research and writing. Make sure that your topic is sufficiently narrow; many proposals are rejected because the scope of the project is too broad.

Indicate the types of research resources you will need to use and whether you have access to the resources on your own or from another institution (including data sets, legal databases from specific jurisdictions, or commentary and analysis in a particular language or a specific topic). In most cases, it is unrealistic to perform primary research and collect data yourself, unless it is very limited in scope and you already have the connections that you need to arrange the research.

Well-Written: Evidence of clear and grammatically correct writing is important to the reviewers, so proofread your proposal summary and any other documents you submit. Make sure that your spelling, punctuation, and phrasing conform with U.S. legal writing standards. See [this article](#) for some writing tips. Citations may be used but are not required.

The thesis summary should be uploaded to the attachments section of the online application.

Writing Sample

Applicants may also submit a significant piece of writing, which displays the candidate's analytical and expository skills on a legal policy or similar topic. Suitable pieces of writing include a thesis (or portion thereof), an article written in conjunction with a class, or a similar item. There is no formal length requirement for the writing sample; it should be substantial enough to

display the analytical and expository skills relevant to scholarly work. The writing sample should represent your own original writing.

The writing sample should be uploaded to the attachments section of the online application.

Application Fee

Each application must be accompanied by the nonrefundable application fee of \$80USD, which should be paid by credit card via the online application. Please note that the only opportunity to pay the application fee by credit card is during the online application process.

If your fee is to be paid by a sponsoring agency or if currency regulations in your country require separate or delayed payment, please inform the Advanced Degree Programs Office.

*Note about the application fee - if you are applying for both the LL.M. thesis track and the traditional and/or executive track, we will waive one of the application fees so that you only have to pay it once. Please write to llm@law.berkeley.edu including your LSAC account number, name, and that you are submitting both of our LL.M. applications, and we will provide a code to waive one of the application fees.

Financial Aid

For the most updated information on financial aid, go to <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/academics/llm/tuition-financial-aid/>.

Reapplying

Applicants who have previously applied and wish to reapply must submit a new application form and pay the \$80USD application fee, in addition to purchasing LSAC's Document Assembly Service if they haven't already.

Previous application documents sent to LSAC's LLM CAS are retained for five years, and a report will be automatically sent once your application is submitted.

Previous application documents not sent to LSAC's LLM CAS are retained for one year and may be used again if you so request. If you wish to re-use materials in your new application, e-mail the Advanced Degree Programs Office at llm@law.berkeley.edu specifying which materials. If your TOEFL/IELTS scores are more than two years old at the time you submit your application, you must take the test again and submit a new score report. Previous application materials will NOT be automatically associated with your current application unless requested.

Misconduct & Irregularities

Ethical conduct is expected and required in all of your interactions with LSAC and law schools. Misconduct and irregularities in the admission process can have serious consequences. Go to <https://www.lsac.org/applying-law-school/misconduct-irregularities> for more details.

Contact Information

For more information, visit our website at <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/academics/llm/>. Frequently asked questions are answered at <https://www.law.berkeley.edu/academics/llm/faq/>. If you have questions that are not answered on our website, please contact the Advanced Degree Programs Office by calling +1-510-642-1476 or sending an e-mail to llm@law.berkeley.edu. Office hours are 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM Monday - Thursday, and 10:00 AM to 2:00PM Friday, Pacific Time.