

Area of Interest: Public Safety and Legal Studies

Paralegal

Ontario College Graduate Certificate

Program Code: 1316X01FWO

1 Year

Ottawa Campus

Our Program

Begin your path to a career as a paralegal.

The Paralegal Ontario College Graduate Certificate program prepares you to apply to the Law Society of Ontario (LSO) to become a licensed paralegal. This program is offered in three consecutive semesters followed by a mandatory 240-hour field placement.

This program is accredited by the LSO. It prepares you for a career in which you provide legal services to the public in specified areas of practice. Learn in a hands-on environment, acquiring practical skills from experienced and dedicated faculty.

Study areas of law that are relevant to the type of work a licensed paralegal can perform, as governed by the LSO. You learn about case management and trial preparation in areas such as:

- small claims court proceedings
- provincial offences and summary conviction matters
- proceedings before administrative tribunals

Complete hands-on activities, including participating in mock trials. Learn about ethics, professional responsibility and the requirements of running a legal services firm.

Benefit from completing a field placement lasting 240 hours. This gives you the opportunity to practise your skills and apply your knowledge to a real or simulated work environment.

For more information about becoming a licensed paralegal, visit <https://lso.ca/becoming-licensed/paralegal-licensing-process> .

- private and public sector law departments
- paralegal or law firms
- government agencies
- community legal clinics
- administrative tribunals

Or you may become a self-employed legal services provider.

Employment

A licence is required to practise in the defined areas of paralegal practice in Ontario. Upon licensing by the Law Society of Ontario, graduates may be self-employed or find employment in a variety of positions within the areas of paralegal practice with titles such as licensed paralegal, paralegal, independent paralegal, court agent, claims analyst, labour relations representative, grievance adjudication officer, legal assistant, law clerk, notary public, commissioner for taking oaths, municipal or provincial prosecutor, by-law enforcement officer, litigation paralegal, and accident benefits paralegal.

Learning Outcomes

The graduate has reliably demonstrated the ability to:

- Work within areas of permitted practice and articulate limitations on representation for paralegals.
- Develop and assess strategies which adhere to the professional and ethical requirements of the Paralegal Rules of Conduct.
- Research, analyze, interpret and apply the provisions of legislation and case law to client situations using proper legal citation methods.
- Conduct trial and tribunal advocacy in accordance with the permitted scope of practice of a paralegal by utilizing the applicable structure, process, and jurisdictional authority of courts and administrative tribunals.
- Select and employ effective human relations, interpersonal, and intervention strategies to assist in resolving conflicts.
- Develop a coherent case management strategy and execute it effectively.
- Select and utilize information technology resources and current industry computer software.
- Communicate effectively and persuasively, both orally and in writing, using accurate legal terminology.
- Create legal documents and correspondence required for use by clients and on behalf of clients.
- Investigate and utilize paralegal business practices competently and effectively.
- Develop time management and organizational skills to meet the timelines and limitation periods within a legal environment.
- Identify and apply discipline specific practices that contribute to the local and global community through social responsibility, economic commitment and environmental stewardship.

Program of Study

Level: 01	Courses	Hours
LAW1101	Fundamentals of Law and Legal Relationships	42.0
LAW1104	Legal Research and Writing	56.0
LAW1108	Torts and Contract IntERPreTation	42.0
LAW1113	Legal Drafting and Communications	42.0
LAW1114	Administrative Law	42.0
LAW1115	Legal Computer Applications	42.0
Level: 02	Courses	Hours
LAW1203	Employment Law	42.0
LAW1204	Tribunal Practice and Procedure	42.0
LAW1205	Provincial Offences/Motor Vehicle Offences	56.0
LAW1206	Procedure in Summary Conviction Matters	42.0
LAW1208	Residential Landlord and Tenant Law	42.0

LAW1209	Small Claims Court	42.0
Level: 03	Courses	Hours
FLD1302	Field Placement/Practicum	240.0
LAW1300	Alternative Dispute Resolution	42.0
LAW1302	Ethics and Professional Responsibility	42.0
LAW1304	Advocacy	56.0
LAW1305	Practice Management/Operating a Small Business	42.0
LAW1306	Evidence and the Litigation Process	42.0
LAW1307	Field Placement Prep for Paralegals	12.0
LAW1308	Legal Accounting	42.0

Fees for the 2025/2026 Academic Year

Tuition and related ancillary fees for this program can be viewed by using the Tuition and Fees Estimator tool at <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro/pay/fee-estimator/>.

Further information on fees can be found by visiting the Registrar's Office website at <http://www.algonquincollege.com/ro>.

Fees are subject to change.

In addition to tuition and related ancillary fees, you can expect the following expenses in this program:

- Textbook costs of approximately \$1,000 per term. Please note that e-texts are not permitted in open-book examinations in this program. You should confirm with your professor whether there are open-book examinations in the course before purchasing an e-text.
- Printing costs of approximately \$50 per term.
- Transportation costs to field placement locations (within OC Transpo and STO limits).

Admission Requirements for the 2026/2027 Academic Year

Program Eligibility

- Ontario College Diploma, Ontario College Advanced Diploma, Degree or equivalent.
- Applicants with international transcripts must provide proof of the subject specific requirements noted above and may be required to provide proof of language proficiency. Domestic applicants with international transcripts must be evaluated through the International Credential Assessment Service of Canada (ICAS) or World Education Services (WES).
- IELTS-International English Language Testing Service (Academic) Overall band of 6.5 with a minimum of 6.0 in each band; OR TOEFL-Internet-based (iBT)-overall 88, with a minimum of 22 in each component: Reading 22; Listening 22; Speaking 22; Writing 22; OR Duolingo English Test (DET) Overall 120, minimum of 120 in Literacy and no score below 105.

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Application Information

PARALEGAL Program Code 1316X01FWO

Applications to full-time day programs must be submitted with official transcripts showing completion of the academic admission requirements through:

ontariocolleges.ca
60 Corporate Court
Guelph, Ontario N1G 5J3
1-888-892-2228

Applications for Fall Term and Winter Term admission received by February 1 will be given equal consideration. Applications received after February 1 will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis as long as places are available.

International applicants applying from out-of-country can obtain the International Student Application Form at <https://algonquincollege.my.site.com/myac360/s/self-registration-page> or by contacting the Registrar's Office.

For further information on the admissions process, contact:

Registrar's Office
Algonquin College
1385 Woodroffe Ave
Ottawa, ON K2G 1V8
Contact: <https://www.algonquincollege.com/ro/>

Additional Information

The 240-hour field placement can take place at any point during the four months following your successful completion of the three consecutive semesters of course work.

Note: A student is not eligible to enroll in LAW1307 or FLD1301 until the student is in his or her final semester of study.

Note: Due to Law Society of Ontario requirements, this program is offered on campus in a classroom format only.

Note: The courses in this program must satisfy the course competencies for each course as established by the LSO. For this reason, the LSO has indicated that exemptions/transfer credits may only be accepted for courses taken in another LSO-accredited paralegal program. In order to qualify for an exemption/transfer credit, the course must cover all of the LSO competencies covered by the Algonquin College paralegal course for which an exemption is sought.

Contact Information

Program Coordinator(s)

- Marcia Green, <mailto:greenm@algonquincollege.com>, 613-727-4723, ext. 5201

Course Descriptions

FLD1302 Field Placement/Practicum

Possessing real-world experience in the paralegal field is desirable from an employer's perspective and a requirement for practice. Students who meet all necessary academic requirements benefit from opportunities to apply their knowledge in a workplace or simulated workplace setting by participating in an unpaid mandatory field placement at the end of the student's final semester. Students apply acquired skills and the ability to apply academic knowledge and demonstrate professional skills in the workplace is assessed. A student is eligible to enrol in this course only in the student's final semester.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1101 Fundamentals of Law and Legal Relationships

An appreciation of the history and development of legal principles and relationships is essential to becoming an effective legal practitioner. Students develop a framework of reference for further study in specific areas of law. Major topics include the structure of the Canadian political and legal system and the creation of legal relationships in a variety of circumstances, including business structures, consumer relationships and intellectual property matters. Through experiential learning and independent research, students explore and observe the operation and functions of the legal system.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1104 Legal Research and Writing

Effective preparation for court and tribunal appearances, as well as providing advice to clients, requires research of relevant law. Students locate and appraise traditional and electronic resources to conduct legal research. Students analyze primary sources of law, the use of secondary sources of law, and the use of case briefs. Students apply their research in the drafting of research memoranda using standard citation rules.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1108 Torts and Contract IntERpretation

A tort is a private or civil wrong. Torts, particularly negligence, form the subject of numerous litigation matters. Students analyze the elements of tort law actions. Contracts are an integral part of many legal relationships, and students interpret and evaluate various contracts and clauses to analyze their legal meaning and consider legal consequences. With respect to both tort and contract law, students determine the legal elements required to prove or defend against a Small Claims Court claim.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1113 Legal Drafting and Communications

Clear written communication is essential to correctly convey information to clients and others in the provision of legal services. Students illustrate their writing skills with strong emphasis on effective communication and drafting in the legal environment. Students construct, compose and revise routine legal documents, produce legal correspondence responsive to client needs, and interpret, analyze and create legal precedents.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1114 Administrative Law

Fundamental legal principles underlie the creation and functioning of administrative agencies, boards and tribunals. Students analyze enabling legislation to examine the jurisdiction, functions and procedures of administrative tribunals; consider the basic principles of administrative law; and

interpret tribunal decisions. Procedures relating to judicial review and appeals are considered and Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms' claims and remedies are appraised.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1115 Legal Computer Applications

Application of industry computer software is essential to manage a paralegal practice and to create legal documents and correspondence that effectively deal with client matters. Students navigate the essential features of the computer operating system and word processing software to produce and manipulate legal documentation. Students examine presentation, spreadsheet and accounting software and their use in a legal services environment.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1203 Employment Law

Legal issues related to the employment relationship arise in the context of client matters as well as in the operation of a legal practice. Students analyze workplace legislation and identify legal issues relating to the workplace such as employment standards, human rights, discrimination, workplace safety and pay equity. Students assess and recommend the most effective and practical way to represent individuals in both unionized and non-unionized workplace disputes within the scope of paralegal practice.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1204 Tribunal Practice and Procedure

Tribunals adopt a variety of procedures to carry out their legislative mandate. Students identify and interpret enabling legislation to determine tribunal jurisdiction. Students examine the rules and procedures of a variety of administrative tribunals. Students analyze and apply these rules and procedures to prepare required documentation and to participate in oral or written mock hearings.

Prerequisite(s): LAW1114
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1205 Provincial Offences/Motor Vehicle Offences

Provincial offences cover a broad spectrum of prohibited activities under a variety of legislative frameworks. Students prepare for the representation of individuals involved in provincial offences or Highway Traffic Act proceedings. Review of applicable provincial legislation is undertaken, with emphasis on demonstration of the procedural steps required when representing a client.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1206 Procedure in Summary Conviction Matters

Summary conviction matters, which involve less serious criminal offences and less formal and complex proceedings, are included in the paralegal scope of practice. Students analyze relevant sections of the Criminal Code and pertinent federal legislation in order to provide effective representation to clients in these matters. Students generate and present information that is relevant to a summary conviction procedure.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1208 Residential Landlord and Tenant Law

A significant area of practice for paralegals involves landlord and tenant disputes. Students analyze the legislation and contracts which govern the landlord and tenant relationship, as well as draft the forms and apply procedures used to resolve landlord and tenant matters. The role and regulation of landlord and tenant disputes by the provincial administrative tribunal is illustrated through a mock hearing and/or mediation.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1209 Small Claims Court

Conduct of Small Claims Court trials represent a significant component of paralegal practice. Students examine and apply the rules governing procedures before the Court and the statutes governing the Court's jurisdiction. Students identify and apply the steps necessary to bring an action in Small Claims Court through to enforcement of the Court's judgment.

Prerequisite(s): LAW1108
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1300 Alternative Dispute Resolution

Participation in Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) by parties in conflict is an alternative to the adversarial nature of litigation proceedings. Students compare and categorize available dispute resolution mechanisms for the client, such as negotiation, mediation and arbitration, and recommend the appropriate option. Through role play and presentations, students assess the benefits of and practical applications for negotiation and mediation.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1302 Ethics and Professional Responsibility

Paralegals have an ethical obligation to their clients and are accountable to the Law Society of Ontario for their professional practice. Students identify and evaluate the role of the paralegal and the application of the Paralegal Rules of Conduct to a professional practice. Emphasis is placed on the application of ethical principles in professional and client relationships through an analysis of case studies.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1304 Advocacy

Effective advocacy requires many skills, including strategic, analytical and communication skills. Students gather relevant information to analyze and plan a client matter. Students consider courtroom etiquette and preparation in order to manage the litigation process. Students illustrate their knowledge of the principles of advocacy, including their ability to evaluate a proceeding and devise a plan of action, by conducting mock proceedings incorporating many aspects of the trial and hearing process.

Prerequisite(s): LAW1209
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1305 Practice Management/Operating a Small Business

Paralegals may operate a private practice, and their success is dependent on effective business practices. Students identify and evaluate the essential elements of operating a private practice. Office systems are considered, as well as financial and insurance obligations, staff supervision and the principles of operating a small business in the context of a legal service provider regulated by the Law Society of Ontario.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1306 Evidence and the Litigation Process

Proof of facts to be entered into evidence before courts and tribunals is subject to statutory and common law rules. These rules must be assessed in the context of the adversarial process. Students identify and summarize the rules of evidence, and then specify and evaluate the appropriate application of these rules within the adversarial process. The nature of the court/tribunal process is considered from the commencement of proceedings to their conclusion.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1307 Field Placement Prep for Paralegals

Students participate in preparatory sessions outlining the responsibilities and obligations related to the program's mandatory field placement. Students focus on communication skills, resume development, effective work etiquette, professionalism, civility and ethics in these preparatory sessions. A student is eligible to enrol in this course only in the student's final semester.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none

LAW1308 Legal Accounting

Paralegals may operate a private practice and must meet minimum financial and reporting obligations set out by the Law Society of Ontario. Students apply general accounting principles as well as trust account requirements set out in the Law Society By-Laws. Students employ manual and electronic accounting systems to create and maintain accounting and reporting processes and records appropriate for a legal services office environment.

Prerequisite(s): none
Corerequisite(s):none