



NZLPE PREP

FAQ

Application for Assessment of Qualifications

I want to get admitted to practise in NZ, but I am not sure where to start. What do I do?

The first step to getting admitted in NZ is to submit an Application for Assessment of your Qualifications. The NZ Council of Legal Education is the government body in charge of the assessment process. Here is the Council's website <https://nzcle.org.nz/index.html>

Is there a form to use for my Application?

All applicants must complete the application form in Schedule 1 of the Council's Admission Brochure. Get a copy [here](#). The Council states "You may also attach a covering letter if you wish." NZLPE PREP highly recommends using a cover letter.

How long does the Council take to process my Application?

As stated in Section 10 of the Admission Brochure, 16 weeks minimum for non-admitted candidates. 16 weeks = 4 months. And yes, they really do take that long! If you are admitted in another country, it takes a little bit longer because there is an extra step involving the NZ Law Society.

Does NZLPE PREP provide assistance with my Application?

Yes! There are a few options on how we can help you make sure your Application is in order. Click [here](#) for more information.

Furthermore, you should go a step further than just turning in the required documents, if you want to increase the odds of getting a "good" result. For the majority of candidates the best expected result is that you will be assessed with having to sit the 6 Parts of the New Zealand Law and Practice Exam. ("NZLPE" or "LPE")

What do you mean by a "good" result?

The Council has the power to send candidates back to law school if your degree is found to NOT be equivalent to a NZ LLB. There are 2 aspects of equivalency – subject equivalence and degree equivalence. You must prove BOTH in order to receive an assessment result that does not require additional study at a university.

NZLPE PREP can help you get the best possible result based on your degree and circumstances. Click [here](#) to find out how!



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What are the possible Assessment Results?

There are many requirements you must meet in addition to showing your degree is equivalent. You must prove that you:

- Took a Legal Ethics course.
- Have practical experience or took a “profs” course.
- Are fluent in English.

If you are admitted in another country, you must prove that admission as well as that you are in good standing.

If you are presenting post-admission experience in support of your Application, which can improve your odds of meeting equivalency and/or showing practical experience, you must provide evidence of that work experience. The Council does not generally consider pre-admission experience; however, it does not hurt to include a description in your Application to bolster your overall strength as a candidate.

Can I get out of sitting the 6 Parts of the LPE?

No. Pretty much every candidate will be required to sit the LPE. In our experience, the only people who have received an exemption are those who have taught a course on the subject, based on NZ law, or who have a NZ LLB that is “stale” and can go show current experience/learning for the subject.

From Section 6 of the Admission Brochure – “Exemptions from Parts of the NZLP Examination are rare. However, exemptions are sometimes granted where an applicant has been teaching or tutoring for a period of time in one of the core law subjects at a New Zealand University, or where an applicant has attained extensive work experience in a core law area in New Zealand.”

Can I get out of taking the Professional Legal Studies Course?

Yes, if you can prove you have practical experience by other means. If you are admitted and have been practicing, that is usually sufficient. If you took a “profs” course in your home country, such as the LPC in the UK, that is sufficient.

Can I get out of taking a Legal Ethics course?

Yes, if you are admitted and have been practicing, or if you took a standalone ethics course in conjunction with your degree, or can prove something similar. If you have only done an LLB that included aspects of ethics, that is not sufficient.



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LPE – Preliminary Decisions

When can I sit for the LPE?

Technically, as soon as you submit your Application for Assessment you are eligible to sit the exams. Please note that the Council warns against doing so (see Section 6 of the Admission Brochure). The reason the Council dissuades this is because if you sit an exam before you get your Assessment Result, even if you pass that exam, if the Council assesses you with having to do degree study for the subject, you will still have to do that degree study regardless of the fact that you successfully passed the exam.

Do people sit before receiving their Assessment Result?

Yes, sometimes. NZLPE PREP can help you decide based on the strength of your Application whether it is risky to do so or not. Based on experience gained over years of assisting candidates, we can advise (with a high level of certainty) on the likely outcome of your Assessment Result, thus helping you decide the level of risk you are taking by sitting prior to getting your Result. Schedule a risk assessment [here](#).

Why would someone take that risk?

A few reasons. Some people have pressure from their employer to get the LPE and any other requirements done as soon as possible. Some people got their Assessment Result years ago and for whatever reason did not start taking the exams until close to their deadline.

What do you mean “close to their deadline”?

You have 10 years from the time you receive your Assessment Result to complete all of the requirements imposed on you and to get your Completion Certificate.

Can I take all 6 Parts of the LPE at once?

Yes, you can, but it is not advised by the Council, or by NZLPE PREP in most circumstances. Everyone’s ability to prepare for these exams is different, and will be influenced by how similar your law school courses were to NZ’s. For a one-on-one discussion of how you should best tackle the LPE, schedule a consultation [here](#).

Can I decide whether to take 1 Part, or 3 Parts, etc?

Yes. You decide which Part(s) you want to sit for each sitting. Just be mindful of the deadlines to get your paperwork in. If you are sitting in NZ it is usually 1 month prior to the exams, and if you are sitting overseas it is usually 3 months prior to.



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How do I decide which exam to take first, whether to take multiple exams, etc?

There are a lot of factors that influence these decisions, which are different for each person. If you are assessed with 4 Parts of the LPE and 2 subjects at university, your decision-making process will be different from someone taking all 6 Parts. If you are working full-time and/or have family commitments, your decision-making process will be different from someone fresh out of school with unlimited study time.

There are 2 exams that are open book and 4 exams that are closed book. That impacts how you pair up exams. If you excelled at Contracts in law school but were abysmal at Criminal law, that could impact which exams you take first.

For a one-on-one discussion of how you should best tackle the LPE and any other requirements, schedule a consultation [here](#).



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LPE – Sitting the Exams

How many sittings a year are there?

2. Currently the Council is holding sittings in July and November. Consult their website for specific dates. Traditionally sittings were in February and July; however, disruptions due to Covid have changed the schedule. There is no guarantee that the July/November schedule will stay the same.

Where can I sit?

Currently you can sit at any NZ law school or at a designated location in the UK, near London.

Does the Council or any organisation offer tuition assistance? The exam fees are crazy expensive!

Unfortunately, no. The Council offers partial refunds in some circumstances, should you fall ill or have some other complication impacting your ability to sit once you have already registered. Consult the Council website for the refund rules.

What is the pass mark?

50 marks.

If I fail an exam, can I sit it again?

Yes. However, you should consult with NZLPE PREP before doing so. There is a Compensation Pass available once you pass 5 out of the 6 exams (or 3 out of 4 for example, if you are only required to sit 4); however, there are multiple factors that impact the likelihood of the Council granting you this Pass. So you should avoid re-sitting an exam in certain circumstances, and repeated attempts can make it less likely that you will be able to get the Compensation Pass.



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What should I do if I am sick on/prior to exam day, or if I suffer some other catastrophic event such as a family death?

The Council offers a Concession Pass in those circumstances; however, you **MUST** submit your request within 7 DAYS of sitting the exam. You should always attempt the exam on the off chance you pass. You can [schedule a consultation](#) with NZLPE PREP, either prior to sitting or right after, for assistance with writing your Concession Pass request.

Can I type the exams?

No. The exams are handwritten.



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LPE – After the Exam

What should I do if I fail an exam?

You should always submit a request for a copy of your exam script and also get the Examiner's Comments. These are helpful tools in figuring out why you received a failing mark, and what you can do to improve for next time.

Beginning January 2023 the Council now includes your actual mark in the Result Notification, as well as instructions on how to request scripts/comments.

NOTE: You must submit these requests within 1 month of receiving your Result Notification.

Does NZLPE PREP offer advice on why I failed an exam?

Yes. Based on years of experience reading examiner comments and figuring out different examiners' styles of grading, we can help you figure out where you missed the mark.

How long does it take to get a Result Notification after sitting an exam?

Depend on the time of the year! The drawback of a November sitting is that the Council offices close for an extended period of time over December/January, so for example the November 2022 exam results did not come out until 1 February 2023.

You should plan on a minimum of 1 month to get results and on average 1.5 months.

I have completed all of the requirements in my Assessment Result. Now what?

Now you need to apply for a Completion Certificate. You cannot move forward with getting admitted to practice until you get this final document from the Council. Take note that around the December holidays, there is a cutoff date of when the Council will accept applications for Completion Certificates.

Further, once you get to this stage, you need to start figuring out how and where in NZ you will apply to be admitted. You will have to plan ahead and make sure you get your application for admission in on time, which you cannot do until you get the Completion Certificate. The admission process is primarily geared towards NZ LLB graduates, so LPE candidates have to adhere to that schedule.

You can [schedule a consultation](#) with NZLPE PREP for assistance with these applications.