

UNIVERSITY OF OTAGO
LAW ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE
APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION TO THE LLB (SECOND YEAR) PROGRAMME
EXPLANATORY NOTES

1. These notes explain the admissions process into the Second Year Law course at the University of Otago. You should read them in full, together with the [LLB Regulations](#).
2. Applications are made online, via eVision. The deadline is **1 October**. If you **fail** The Legal System this year, you will not be considered. To be eligible for admission, you must have passed non-law papers worth at least 72 points.
3. The Law Admissions Committee meets in December and then January to decide applications for admission. Unless you are applying from another New Zealand university, your application is considered in December. Our members consist of the Chair, the Dean of the Faculty of Law and representatives from: Faculty of Law staff; the Division of Humanities; Māori staff; the Faculty's student body and the New Zealand Law Society.
4. We may admit you under section 5. Remaining applicants are divided into four categories (A-D) as detailed in Appendix I, and treated accordingly. This provides for category A, B and C applicants to be admitted based on their academic records. **Category A** applicants have passed The Legal System at the University of Otago. **Category B** is our graduate entry pathway into taking Second Year Law subjects concurrently with The Legal System. **Category C** applicants have passed the equivalent of The Legal System at another New Zealand university. **Category D** is for when the other categories do not apply. International students are treated separately (section 7)

Most applicants are in Category A. Provided you are eligible and achieve at least a B- average threshold in your non-law papers (calculated according to Appendix I), you will ordinarily be admitted if your mark in The Legal System is at or above the qualifying mark we set for that year. Category C applicants may be admitted if they demonstrate equivalent achievement.

If you are in Category A or C and are not otherwise admitted, you may still be admitted if we are satisfied that you are likely to cope with the demands of Second Year Law and the LLB despite not achieving the qualifying mark in The Legal System and/or the non-law threshold. Your application will be considered on that basis if: you make a claim under section 9 accompanied by supporting documents; you achieve at least the qualifying mark in The Legal System; or you achieve an A-average and at least three A grades in your non-law papers. If section 6 applies to you, your application may be considered on the same basis.

5. Te Tiriti o Waitangi | the Treaty of Waitangi guides our Admissions policy. Te Tiriti o Waitangi is Aotearoa New Zealand's founding constitutional document. The Education and Training Act 2020 requires us to honour te Tiriti o Waitangi and to give effect to its principles. We are proud to do so, and are guided by the University of Otago's Te Aka Matua 2030 | Māori Strategic Framework 2030. If you are a student of Māori descent we can consider your application on the basis of a minimum academic standard that we determine. If you have provided the University with verified evidence of your iwi affiliations and/or your family ancestry,¹ we will do so. If you have not done so, but have indicated your Māori descent in your application or self-identified ethnicity, you will be asked to provide that information.

6. As stated in the University of Otago's Te Rautaki Arara Tōkeke | Equity and Diversity Strategic Framework, the special status of Pacific Islands' students is recognised and expressed in the Pacific Strategic Framework 2022-30. If you are a student of indigenous Pacific ancestry, we may take this into account in determining your application. You will need to provide the University with verified evidence of your indigenous Pacific ancestry before submitting your application to ensure that we can take it into account.¹ If you are unable to do so, please let us know.

¹ See <https://www.otago.ac.nz/study/otago666451.html> for further information on the process for verification of ancestry.

7. If you are enrolled as an International Student, we will check to see that you have met the conditions attached to your entry to Second Year. If you have not, but your marks would qualify you for entry if you were not an International Student, we *may* still consider your application.

8. If you are relying on results from an institution other than the University of Otago you must provide a **certified** copy of your complete academic record (notification of results is insufficient) by submitting it using the University of Otago eVision portal. **Unless you do this, we will not consider your application.** We may also require details of your marks beyond letter grades.

9. We are willing to consider a claim that your academic record does not reflect your true ability; and/or that exceptional reasons warrant your admission. Such claims might be made on a number of bases, (including illness, bereavement, disability, social or economic background, reduced access to educational opportunities). The University of Otago's policy documents including Te Rautaki Arara Tōkeke | Equity and Diversity Strategic Framework may be relevant in considering them.

If you have suffered unexpected and significant impairment in relation to assessment (for final examinations, within a 14 day period of the exam), you should promptly apply to the University for [Special Consideration](#). If you do not do so, but make a claim under this section concerning matters that could have been addressed by Special Consideration, we will decline your claim unless satisfied it was reasonable not to apply for Special Consideration. Essentially, **do not make a claim under this section *instead of* applying for Special Consideration.** If your application for Special Consideration is successful, we will consider the matters raised in that application to have been dealt with by the outcome of the Special Consideration process. If it is unsuccessful, you can still raise those matters in a claim under this section – they are distinct processes.

To make a claim under this section please select the relevant checkbox in the Application Form and supply appropriate supporting documents to law.admissions@otago.ac.nz by **15 November**. Include a cover letter explaining the nature of your claim as well as corroborative material substantiating its key points (e.g. medical certificates). We will not consider claims made by applicants who have failed The Legal System.

10. The very fact that admission to the Second Year Law course is restricted means that a large number of applicants will be unsuccessful, and disappointed. Disappointment is not a sufficient reason for requesting that we reconsider our decision but if you believe that the decision was in some way unfair or that in coming to the decision there has been some failure of procedure you may ask us to reconsider. To do so you must email law.admissions@otago.ac.nz by the second Friday in January, outlining your reasons for requesting a reconsideration and attaching any substantiating evidence (e.g. a medical certificate). We will consider the request for reconsideration in the January meeting.

Should we confirm our initial decision, you may apply for leave to appeal to an Appeals Board established by the University of Otago. Please see the [Appeals Statute 2011](#) for details, including important deadlines.

Appendix I – Categorisation of Applicants

CATEGORY A: You passed The Legal System at the University of Otago.

If you have passed non-law papers worth at least 72 points, your admission will be based on whether your most recent Legal System mark is at or above the qualifying mark set for that year, provided that you have also reached a threshold standard of at least a B- average in your non-law papers:

- (a) Across your best non-law papers worth 72 points (which is normally four papers) in the regular academic year in which you have most recently taken LAWS101 (ie excluding summer school and pre-Christmas summer school); or
- (b) Across your most recent non-law papers worth 72 points, provided that you failed no more than one paper in the time taken to obtain those points. If your most recent university-level study was not at the University of Otago, section 8 applies.

Achieving this threshold indicates a general academic aptitude, important to coping with the demands of Second Year Law and the LLB generally.

Pre-Christmas summer school results in the year of application are not included in the calculations, but may be raised as part of a claim made under section 9.

CATEGORY B: You are a University graduate with a strong academic record and wish to take Second Year Law subjects concurrently with The Legal System.

We will consider whether applicants' academic records justify admission to Second Year Law concurrently with taking The Legal System paper. Applicants will not have previously taken the examination in The Legal System at the University of Otago.

The minimum requirement for consideration under this category is a strong academic record in an undergraduate university degree. As a general guideline we encourage applicants with a GPA of 6.0 or greater to apply under this Category. Applicants with a Bachelor's degree with First or Upper Second Class Honours; or a postgraduate qualification such as a Master's or PhD degree are also encouraged to apply under this Category.

Applicants for concurrent study who wish to raise matters beyond their academic records should do so by applying under Category D.

CATEGORY C: You have passed The Legal System at another New Zealand university.

We will consider you for admission if we are satisfied that your academic record demonstrates achievement at least equivalent to the minimum standard required for admission in Category A under this Appendix. We will need to be satisfied that the University of Otago will grant non-law [transfer credit](#) worth at least 72 points towards a degree; and credit you with The Legal System paper. Please contact student.development@otago.ac.nz as soon as possible to discuss the transfer credit process. You will also need to comply with section 8.

CATEGORY D: You do not belong to any of the above categories.

We recognise that your particular circumstances, such as your background and any law-related experience, may demonstrate your suitability for the LLB programme. We welcome applications to that effect. Explain to us why you ought to be admitted into the programme and if you wish to apply to take Second Year Law subjects concurrently with The Legal System. Please provide relevant corroborative material substantiating your key points, and ensure your contact details are updated in the University of Otago eVision portal.