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LILCENLAPDC BUNYANIRIC QEQF
NUNAVUMI MALIGALIUQTIT
LAW SOCIETY OF NUNAVUT
BARREAU DU NUNAVUT

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BACKGROUND

In July 2022, three months after the first sitting of the revised Nunavut Statutes Examination, four Nunavut-Based Law Program (NBLP) graduates wrote to the Law Society of Nunavut (LSN), arguing the bar admissions process perpetuated systemic barriers excluding Inuit from the legal profession. Supporting letters followed from Akitsiraq Law School¹ graduates, Senators, and legal organizations, including the Public Prosecution Service of Canada (PPSC) and the Legal Services Board of Nunavut (LSB). Each of the dozen letters urged the LSN to set aside the Nunavut Statutes Examination to support the success of students-at-law to increase Inuit and Nunavummiut lawyers in the Territory.

A month later, after reviewing the concerns raised, the LSN President waived the special examination requirement for NBLP graduates on August 31, 2022, recognizing the specialized training of students-at-law who completed their legal education in the Territory. The LSN also paused the special examination requirement until March 31, 2023, to allow time to reassess its purpose and structure.

To fulfill this commitment, the LSN Executive subsequently established a *Taskforce on the revision of the Nunavut Statutes Examination* (Taskforce) in January 2023. One of the four deliverables of the Taskforce was to determine how to best incorporate Nunavut's unique history, culture, and legal context into Nunavut's bar admission requirements, making them more relevant to community values. If the Taskforce recommended against a written examination, a sub-deliverable of the Taskforce was to suggest alternative method(s), if any, of evaluating bar admission applicants with respect to Nunavut's unique history, cultural and legal context.²

The following year, during a Special Meeting of the LSN on February 28, 2024, the LSN President announced the special examination in its current form will no longer be administered, meaning the Nunavut Statutes Examination would cease to be a requirement for admission to the Nunavut Bar. Further, the LSN shared that if a decision is taken for a special examination to be prescribed again in the future, it will be redrafted and take into account the Taskforce findings to ensure it is a defensible examination. In the interim, the decision was taken for Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education's (CPLED) Practice Readiness Education Program (PREP) to continue to serve as an option for the bar admission course, and its Capstone Assessment as the bar admission examination, satisfying the bar admission requirements under section 18(2) of the *Legal Profession Act*. The LSN also committed to working with CPLED to resolve concerns raised by Nunavut students-at-law, aiming to have all current students-at-law called to the bar by July 2024 through a fair and defensible process.

One of the six recommendations in the Taskforce's June 2023 report was to survey former students-at-law to identify issues impacting the student-at-law bar admissions process, particularly for Inuit students-at-law. The goal of the survey was to solicit feedback on barriers such as financial strain, mental health resources and supports, family obligations, discrimination and harassment, as well as the bar admission course and examination. The survey was also to seek input on flexibility in the articling period³ and the unique cultural,

¹ The Akitsiraq Law School Program (known also as Akitsiraq I) was a partnership between the University of Victoria Faculty of Law, Nunavut Arctic College and the Akitsiraq Law School Society. It offers Bachelor of Laws Degree (LL.B.) in Iqaluit, Nunavut to residents of Nunavut and the surrounding Arctic region.

² The third deliverable of the *Taskforce* was "If the Taskforce recommends against a written examination, the Taskforce will recommend alternative method(s), if any, of evaluating Bar admission applicants with respect to Nunavut's unique history, culture, and legal context."

³ For example, more explicit accommodations for maternity/parental/family leave during articles of clerkship.

historical, and legal context of Nunavut. While the primary focus of the survey was intended to be students-at-law, the Taskforce noted that articling principals, legal professionals, and Elders should also be consulted.

The Taskforce was of the view that conducting a student-at-law experience survey in Nunavut, following the example of other CPLED jurisdictions like Alberta, Manitoba, and Saskatchewan, would provide valuable insights to improve the experiences of students-at-law aspiring to practice law in the Territory.

In response to this recommendation, and to ensure students-at-law have the best opportunity to succeed while upholding defensible bar admission standards, the LSN circulated an 83-question survey in December 2023 to 59 current and former students-at-law. This list of students-at-law was compiled from LSN records of student-at-law applications since the creation of the LSN in 2000. This means the survey was distributed not only to students-at-law who were called to the Nunavut bar, but also to those who began but did not complete the Law Society of Nunavut's bar admissions process. Where contact information was out-of-date, efforts were made to find recent contact information.

The survey aimed to understand the experiences of students-at-law, including available supports and systemic barriers when navigating the LSN bar admissions process. With a 32 per cent response rate, the feedback provided has already informed and guided the LSN Executive and broader membership to make organizational changes in the spirit of creating a more inclusive and representative bar.

To support the ongoing review, oversight, and improvement of the articling and bar admissions process in Nunavut, a dedicated working group was established in July 2024. This Articling and Bar Admissions Working Group—soon to become a Committee—aims to ensure students-at-law are well-positioned to succeed in becoming practicing lawyers in the Territory. These survey results will inform the ongoing work of this Working Group/Committee, which includes making recommendations to the Executive Committee about articles of clerkship, the bar admission course, bar admission examination and any special examinations, in addition to building upon the recommendations made in the Taskforce report.

STUDENT-AT-LAW DEMOGRAPHICS

Placement in Legal Profession

At the time of the survey, over half of the respondents (53%) were practicing in Nunavut or elsewhere, and one quarter (26%) were still students-at-law. One respondent had completed bar admission requirements but was not yet called, another had withdrawn without completing the process, one was a non-practicing lawyer elsewhere, and one held inactive status with the Nunavut bar.

Year of Call to the Bar

Most respondents (44%) were called to the bar between 2021 and 2023, while three respondents (19%) were called between 2017 and 2020, and two respondents (13%) between 2013 and 2016. Only one respondent was called between 2005 and 2008. No respondents were called between 2000 and 2004 (the LSN's first years of operation) or between 2009 and 2012. Exact year of call was intentionally not captured to protect the anonymity of survey respondents.

Strong Representation from Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates

Nearly half (47%) of the respondents attended law school in Nunavut, indicating strong representation from NBLP graduates, which includes graduates of the Akitsiraq Law School Program⁴ (2001-2005) given no distinction was made in the survey between cohorts to protect respondents' anonymity considering Nunavut's small legal community.

BAR ADMISSION COURSE

Bar Admission Course Completed

Given the LSN has administered different bar admission courses over the past two decades, a range of bar admission course experiences among respondents was expected.

Most respondents (63%) completed the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education's (CPLED) Practice Readiness Education Program (PREP) (CPLED PREP), while one fifth (21%) completed the earlier version of CPLED (2014-2019), and one respondent (5%) completed the Law Society of British Columbia's Professional Legal Training Course (which was the recommended bar admission course for Akitsiraq Law School Program graduates), and one-tenth (11%) completed other, unspecified bar admission courses.

Time to Complete Bar Admission Course and/or Requirements

Seven respondents (37%) reported being given two to five hours per week to complete the bar admission course and/or requirements, while three (16%) were given six to ten hours, and four

⁴ The Akitsiraq Law School I Program was a partnership between the University of Victoria Faculty of Law, Nunavut Arctic College and the Akitsiraq Law Society (a Nunavut incorporated non-profit organization). It offered a Bachelor of Laws Degree (LL.B.) in Iqaluit, Nunavut to Nunavummiut and residents from the surrounding Arctic region. The program emerged after six Inuit law students who attended the University of Ottawa Faculty of Law in the mid-1990s all dropped out, isolated and short of money living so far in the South.

(21%) had more than 15 hours per week. Only one respondent said they were not given time during work hours to complete the bar admission course and/or requirements.

Overall Bar Admission Course Experience

Several key takeaways emerged when respondents were prompted to share their experience completing a bar admission course as part of the Nunavut's licensing requirements.

Flexibility Of Bar Admission Course Scheduling and Testing

Among respondents, slightly less than half (42%) agreed the course schedule and testing was sufficiently flexible to allow for adequate course engagement (16% strongly agreed, 26% agreed), while the same percentage 42% disagreed (16% disagreed, 26% strongly disagreed), and 16% were neutral, neither agreeing nor disagreeing. Overall, this highlights a divided perception in the flexibility of bar admission course scheduling and testing.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Six of the seven NBLP graduates who responded either disagreed or strongly disagreed, with none strongly agreeing, suggesting NBLP graduates particularly found the course schedule and testing inflexible.
- **By Year of Call to the Bar**
 - ◆ **2005-2008:** The one respondent who was called between 2005 and 2008 reported strongly agreeing that the bar admission course scheduling and testing was flexible.
 - ◆ **2013-2016:** Of the two respondents who were called between 2013 and 2016, one respondent (50%) reported they strongly agreed that the bar admission course scheduling and testing was flexible, whereas the other respondent (50%) agreed.
 - ◆ **2017-2020:** Of the three respondents who were called to the bar between 2017 and 2020, one strongly agreed (33%) the bar admission course scheduling and testing was flexible, one disagreed (33%) and one was neutral (33%).
 - ◆ **2021-2023:** Of the seven respondents who were called to the bar between 2021 and 2023, one strongly disagreed (14%) the bar admission course scheduling and testing was flexible, two disagreed (29%) and four agreed (57%).
 - ◆ **Not applicable:** Of the three respondents whose answer to this question of year of call to the bar was not applicable, two were neutral (67%) on the issue of whether the bar admission course scheduling and testing was flexible, and one strongly disagreed (33%).

**These results could however be skewed given the difference in scheduling of courses and testing over the years. No respondents also reported being called to the bar between 2009 and 2012.*

Quality of Bar Admission Course Materials

Nearly half of respondents (47%) agreed⁵ the quality of the materials sufficient for the student-at-law to succeed in meeting the objectives of each bar admission course module. Slightly over one third of respondents (37%) were however in disagreement⁶, with the remainder (16%) being neutral.

⁵ Two respondents (11%) strongly agreed, and seven respondents (37%) agreed.

⁶ Two respondents (11%) disagreed, and five respondents (26%) strongly disagreed.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates**: The quarter of respondents (26%) who strongly disagreed were all NBLP graduates, suggesting the quality of the bar admission course materials posed a greater challenge for NBLP graduates compared to their peers.
- **Variation Experience between Bar Admission Courses**
 - ◆ **CPLED PREP (2020-current)**: Of the thirteen respondents who reported completing CPLED PREP⁷, five strongly disagreed (38%) the quality of the bar admission course materials was sufficient for them to succeed in meeting the objectives of each course module. Another two respondents disagreed (15%), four agreed (31%) and two were neutral (15%).
 - ◆ **CPLED (2014-2019)**: Of the four respondents who reported completing CPLED between 2014 and 2019, three respondents agreed that the bar admission course materials were sufficient for them to succeed in meeting the objectives of each course module. The fourth respondent was neutral.
 - ◆ **Law Society of British Columbia's Professional Legal Training Course (PLTC)**: The sole respondent who completed the Law Society of British Columbia's PLTC strongly agreed that the bar admission course materials were sufficient for them to succeed in meeting the objectives of each bar admission course module.

Quality of Bar Admission Course Instruction

While slightly less than half (42%) of respondents found the quality of bar admission course instruction sufficient to understand the course requirements⁸, over one third of respondents (37%) did not⁹, and one fifth of respondents (21%) were neutral.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates**: Notably, almost three quarters of the respondents (71%) who disagreed were NBLP graduates, indicating they faced greater challenges with the bar admission course instruction than other students-at-law.
- **Variation Experience between Bar Admission Courses**
 - ◆ **CPLED PREP (2020-current)**: Of the twelve respondents who reported having completed CPLED PREP (or were currently in the process of completing CPLED PREP at the time of completing the survey), one third (33%) strongly disagreed the quality of their bar admission course instruction was sufficient to understand course requirements. Another two respondents disagreed (17%), two were neutral (17%) and four agreed (33%).¹⁰
 - ◆ **CPLED (2014-2019)**: Of the four respondents who completed CPLED between 2014 and 2019, all of whom reported going to law school in Southern Canada, two respondents (50%) agreed that the quality of bar admission course instruction was sufficient to under the course requirements, whereas the remaining two respondents (50%) were neutral.
 - ◆ **Law Society of British Columbia Professional Legal Training Course (PLTC)**: The one respondent who completed the PLTC between 2005-2008 strongly agreed the bar admission course instruction quality was sufficient to understand course

⁷ The respondent indicated they completed CPLED, but did not specify the year. Based on their other survey responses, it was inferred they completed CPLED PREP.

⁸ Two respondents (11%) strongly agreed, and six respondents (32%) agreed.

⁹ Two respondents (11%) disagreed, and five respondents (26%) strongly disagreed.

¹⁰ One respondent who reported not completing the bar admissions process reported having registered for CPLED but withdrawing. Given other survey results, it was inferred the respondent completed CPLED PREP.

requirements.

**While the Law Society of Alberta's bar admission course was offered to Nunavut students-at-law between 2001 and 2005 (the years after the creation of Nunavut when the Territory was developing their own bar admission program), no respondents reported having completed this bar admission course.¹¹*

Connection between Bar Admission Course Content and Law School Experience

Less than half of the respondents (42%) felt their bar admission course built on their law school experience¹², while almost two thirds (63%) disagreed¹³, with one fifth (21%) remaining neutral. This disagreement suggests a need for bar admission course competency frameworks to better align with law school training to avoid redundancy.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among this group, responses were mixed but tended toward dissatisfaction. Just over one-third (33%) of NBLP graduates agreed or strongly agreed that the course built on their law school experience, while just over half (56%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. One respondent (11%) was neutral. Compared to the general respondent pool, fewer NBLP graduates felt the course effectively built on their prior education, with most expressing disagreement or ambivalence. This indicates that NBLP graduates may experience a greater disconnect between their law school experience and the bar admission curriculum, underscoring the need for targeted improvements to better align the bar admission course and law school curriculums.

Bar Admission Course Included Information about Nunavut-specific Practice Requirements and Law

The bar admission course was widely seen as lacking valuable information about the unique practice requirements and law in Nunavut. Only one respondent (5%) strongly agreed the bar admission course included this type of content, while three quarters (74%)¹⁴ disagreed or strongly disagreed.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among NBLP graduates, dissatisfaction was even stronger, with eight of the nine NBLP graduates either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing (89%) the bar admission course included valuable information about unique practice requirements and law in Nunavut, and only one responding neutrally (11%). This suggests NBLP graduates, who may have had higher expectations for their bar admission course to include Nunavut-specific content, were particularly dissatisfied with its coverage.

Bar Admission Course Reflective of Diversity and Welcoming of Diverse Perspectives

Responses about whether the bar admission course reflected diversity and welcomed diverse perspectives were split: one quarter of respondents (26%) agreed, one fifth of respondents (21%) neither agreed nor disagreed, one fifth (21%) disagreed, one quarter (26%) strongly disagreed, and a smaller percentage (5%) unsure.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among NBLP graduates, the experience was notably less positive, with four NBLP graduates in strong disagreement, two in

¹¹ When the LSN was established, Nunavut lacked a local bar admissions course. In 2001, the Law Society of Alberta allowed Nunavut students-at-law to enroll in the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education (CPLED) program as a temporary solution. However, this required students to travel to Alberta for two sessions—five and three weeks long—during their articling year. They were also still required to complete the Nunavut Statutes Examination, in addition to the Law Society of Alberta's ten-month CPLED program, which served as Alberta's bar exam.

¹² Three respondents (16%) strongly agreed, and five respondents (26%) agreed.

¹³ Ten respondents (53%) strongly disagreed, and two respondents (11%) disagreed.

¹⁴ One fifth (21%) disagreed and slightly over one half (53%) strongly disagreed, totalling three quarters (74%) of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

disagreement, one neutral, and one in agreement. This suggests that NBLP graduates had a more negative perception of the bar admission course's diversity and inclusivity compared to the overall respondents.

Technology Available Supported Bar Admission Course Engagement

For the overall respondents, eight respondents (42%) agreed that technology supported their engagement with the bar admission course, two respondents (11%) were neutral, three respondents (16%) disagreed, and almost one third (32%) strongly disagreed, indicating significant issues with technological support.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** There was greater dissatisfaction with the technology for NBLP graduates compared to the overall respondents, with two thirds of NBLP graduates (67%) either strongly disagreeing or disagreeing compared to less than half of overall respondents. Conversely, while one third of NBLP graduates (33%) agreed that the technology available supported bar admission course engagement, this was notably less than the almost half of overall respondents in agreement.

Effectiveness and Engagement of the Manner of Course Instruction

The effectiveness and engagement of the manner of course instruction (e.g., in person, online, etc.) was met with mixed responses: one respondent (5%) strongly agreed, almost one third (32%) agreed, one fifth (21%) were neutral, three (16%) disagreed, and one quarter (26%) strongly disagreed.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Two thirds (66%) of NBLP graduates expressed dissatisfaction with the manner of course instruction.¹⁵ This reflects a more negative perception compared to the overall group of respondents who completed PREP, among whom over half (58%) expressed dissatisfaction.¹⁶ This comparison is particularly relevant because all NBLP graduates completed PREP, making the broader group of PREP completers an appropriate baseline.

Bar Admission Course's Instructional Materials¹⁷ Increased the Student-at-Law's Knowledge and Skills in the Practice of Law

There was a wide range of responses and experiences from students-at-law regarding the instructional materials provided in their bar admission course: one tenth (11%) strongly agreed, one fifth (21%) agreed, one quarter (26%) were neutral, one tenth (11%) disagreed, one quarter (26%) strongly disagreed, and a smaller number (5%) were unsure.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** NBLP graduates reported more dissatisfaction with the instructional materials than other respondents: over half of the NBLP graduates (56%) expressed strong disagreement or disagreement, one-third were neutral (33%), and one respondent was unsure (11%).

Bar Admission Course Instructors and Staff Interest in Helping Students-at-Law Learn

Overall responses regarding the engagement of instructors and staff with student-at-law learning were balanced, though more respondents expressed disagreement than agreement. Specifically, less than half (42%) agreed or strongly agreed that the instructors and staff were interested in helping students, while slightly more than half (53%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. This suggests a general sense of mixed perception, with a slight tendency toward

¹⁵ Four strongly disagreed (44%) and two disagreed (22%).

¹⁶ Four respondents strongly disagreed (44%) and three disagreed (33%) that the manner of course instruction (e.g. in person, online, etc.) of their bar admission course was effective and engaging.

¹⁷ Instructional materials include for example, books, readings, handouts, study guides, multimedia, software, etc.

dissatisfaction with instructor and staff engagement in student-at-law learning.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among the NBLP graduates, feedback on instructor engagement was predominantly negative, with over three quarters (78%) disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that they received adequate support, compared to slightly over half (53%) of the overall group. Only one-fifth (22%) of NBLP graduates agreed, and none were neutral or strongly agreed. This indicates that NBLP graduates reported a distinctly less favorable experience than the broader group, suggesting a need to further examine which aspects of instructor support or interaction fell short of their expectations.

Bar Admission Course Support of Newly Called Lawyers' Development

Overall, there was an even split between those who agreed or strongly agreed (42%) and those who disagreed or strongly disagreed (42%). However, the largest single group of respondents strongly disagreed (37%), indicating a significant portion felt they did not receive practical information to support their early development.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among NBLP graduates, dissatisfaction was slightly more pronounced: over half (55%) strongly disagreed that the course was practical for their needs. Only one-fifth (22%) agreed or strongly agreed, while two respondents were neutral (22%).

Course Organization Helped with Understanding of Underlying Concepts

Feedback was varied on the organization of the bar admission course. Of the overall respondents, two respondents (11%) strongly agreed it helped them with their understanding of underlying concepts, eight respondents (42%) agreed, one respondent (5%) neither agreed nor disagreed, two respondents (11%) disagreed, and six respondents (32%) strongly disagreed. A significant portion of respondents expressed positive sentiments, with over half (53%) agreeing or strongly agreeing. However, a significant portion (42%) also expressed dissatisfaction, either disagreeing or strongly disagreeing, indicating that the course organization was not universally well-received.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among the NBLP graduates, feedback was notably more critical. Over half strongly disagreed (56%), one-fifth disagreed (22%), one was neutral (11%), and one agreed (11%), pointing to a potential gap between the overall respondent experience and those who completed their legal education in the Territory.

Useful Feedback

The responses regarding the usefulness of feedback on assessments, writing assignments and evaluations reveal a significant gap in satisfaction. Out of the total respondents, one quarter (26%) agreed that the feedback was useful, while more than half (53%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. The remaining one fifth (21%) were neutral. This distribution strongly suggests many participants did not find the feedback valuable, which could potentially hinder their overall learning and development in the bar admission course.

- **Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates**

When analyzing the specific feedback for NBLP graduates, the picture becomes even more concerning. Almost all NBLP graduates (89%) disagreed with the usefulness of the feedback, while only one respondent (11%) was neutral. This indicates NBLP graduates experienced a significantly higher level of dissatisfaction with the utility of the feedback provided in the bar admission course compared to the general group.

BAR ADMISSION COURSE DELIVERY

Respondents expressed widespread frustration with the bar admission course, which has been administered by the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education (CPLED) since 2014. In 2020, CPLED updated the course to what is now referred to as the [Practice Readiness Education Program](#) (PREP). Given the course was originally developed for Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, frustrations largely centred on the bar admission course's lack of relevance to Nunavut's unique legal context. Other frustrations included limited assignment feedback and a lack of practical, hands-on training to prepare for legal practice in Nunavut.

Competency Development

Most Developed Competencies

CPLED and CPLED PREP learners [agreed or strongly agreed](#) they developed competency in the following three key areas:

- ◆ Code of Conduct Knowledge¹⁸ (56%);
- ◆ Character and Professional Responsibilities¹⁹ (59%); and
- ◆ Professional Ethics²⁰ (56%).

Least Developed Competencies

CPLED and CPLED PREP learners [strongly disagreed or disagreed](#) that they developed their competencies in the following five key areas:

- ◆ Communication Skills²¹ (56%);
- ◆ Managing Relationships²² (56%);
- ◆ Legal Matter Management²³ (56%);
- ◆ Practice Organization²⁴ (50%); and
- ◆ Self-Management²⁵ (39%).

Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates

- **NBLP graduates generally had a more negative experience with CPLED in developing the listed competencies** compared to the overall group of respondents.
- For most competencies, **a higher percentage of NBLP graduates strongly disagreed that the course helped them develop the competencies**. For example, almost half of NBLP graduates (44%) strongly disagreed the course helped them develop "*Communication Skills*", compared to one fifth of the overall respondents (21%). This

¹⁸ Understand where and how the rules that govern lawyers work, and your ethical obligations and responsibilities.

¹⁹ Act honestly, fairly and with integrity with your clients, colleagues, courts, tribunals and the public.

²⁰ Identify, analyse and make the right decision regarding ethical issues, complying with your fiduciary duties, avoiding conflicts and protecting confidence.

²¹ Take legal concepts and ideas and explain them clearly, no matter the medium or the audience.

²² Work collaboratively and professionally with your team while building trust and confidence with your client.

²³ Take a case from interview through resolution, researching and gathering facts, planning a strategy, and advising your client the entire way.

²⁴ Manage your time and your projects without cutting corners or exposing you or your firm to risk.

²⁵ Remain resilient and self-aware through the challenges of the profession, understanding the value of balance and empathy for yourself and others.

could be reflective of cultural differences in communication styles that would be highly relevant to practice in the Territory.

- Similarly, **slightly over half of NBLP graduates (56%) strongly disagreed that the course helped them develop competency in “Practice Organization”**, compared to almost one third of the overall respondents (32%).
- This **trend of higher disagreement among NBLP graduates is consistent across other competencies** such as “*Managing Relationships*”, “*Self-Management*”, and “*Code of Conduct Knowledge*”.

Areas for Improvement

Additionally, the survey results highlighted several key concerns and common experiences related to both the online and in-person delivery of the bar admission course over the past two decades, since the creation of Nunavut and in turn, the inception of the LSN:

- **Lack of Nunavut Specific Content:** Respondents criticized CPLED for its southern focus and lack of materials tailored to Nunavut’s legal context, such as applying territorial laws and learning more about practising law in the public sector. *This was seen as a significant gap, given that the main legal employers in the Territory—GN, PPSC, and LSB—are public institutions, while CPLED places heavy emphasis on private practice.* One respondent noted they had hoped to gain experience drafting pleadings specific to Nunavut but were required to choose a southern jurisdiction at the time of enrolment and follow its Rules of Court throughout the course. While they acknowledged the skills were transferable, they described this as an “extra hurdle” in the process. This also meant learners were also expected to switch between two sets of rules and precedents, an expectation not held for students-at-law completing their bar admission requirements in southern CPLED jurisdictions.
- **Technical and Logistical Barriers:** The online format posed significant challenges due to unreliable internet connectivity in Nunavut, with some facing technical difficulties that hindered their learning experience. While flexibility was valued, many described the virtual format as “artificial” and disengaging compared to in-person learning.
- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI):** Respondents raised concerns about a lack of meaningful EDI integration. The bar admission course appeared tailored to a narrow demographic, often excluding Inuit perspectives and failing to incorporate Inuit language or cultural learning methods. Some materials contained microaggressions or were viewed as discriminatory, exacerbating systemic inequities.
- **Practical Skills and Relevance:** Many found the courses overly theoretical, repetitive of law school content, and heavy on busy work disconnected from real-world tasks. Assignments were often seen as vague or unnecessarily complex, such as having to enter information multiple times on different platforms. Respondents wanted more hands-on training, including client interviews, court etiquette, and practical legal research using tools like CanLII. Despite these criticisms, CPLED’s focus on ethics and professional conduct was appreciated by some.
- **Financial and Personal Barriers:** Costs related to the program, including internet access and living expenses, were significant barriers for some students-at-law. There were reports that the LSN was dismissive of concerns regarding accommodations, parenting responsibilities, and other personal challenges.

- **Positive Aspects:** Despite the criticisms, flexibility in scheduling was appreciated, allowing many to balance work and study. In-person modules were praised for fostering networking opportunities and stronger community connections within Nunavut's legal landscape.

Online Bar Admission Course Delivery

Respondents flagged several issues with bar admission courses that were delivered entirely online, with few positive aspects noted:

- **Internet and Connectivity Issues:** Respondents highlighted how the online delivery of CPLED does not accommodate internet connectivity problems, which are a common issue in the Territory. The course's reliance on stable internet made it challenging for respondents in areas with unreliable service, and there was no alternative provided for those facing connectivity problems. The platform also had technical difficulties, such as microphone recognition issues during certain modules. When one respondent raised internet connectivity as a concern to their mentor, they felt like their concern was not taken seriously.
- **Lack of Flexibility for Illness:** CPLED's policy regarding illness and obtaining doctor's notes was criticized as overly rigid and impractical, particularly in many of Nunavut's communities, where access to healthcare and doctors is limited.
- **Challenges with Online Format:** While the online format provided flexibility, especially for balancing the course with full-time work, many respondents found it challenging and "artificial." The entirely online structure was seen as less effective for certain modules, with some suggesting that in-person components would be beneficial.
- **Time Zone Issues:** The time difference between Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba (the jurisdictions where CPLED is based) and Nunavut posed additional challenges for respondents, complicating their ability to fully engage with the course.
- **Overall Frustration:** There was a general sense of frustration with the course, with one respondent noting that the experience felt unnecessary and offered little added value in terms of knowledge or skills for practicing law in Nunavut.
- **Positive Feedback:** While most feedback was critical of the online format, one respondent praised the technology and equipment used, and another appreciated the flexibility of online learning, which allowed them to maintain full-time employment.

In-Person Bar Admission Course Delivery

- **In-Person Modules as a Valuable Learning and Networking Opportunity:** One respondent described their bar admission course consisting of three multi-day in-person modules, highlighting how they were not only a valuable learning experience but also an opportunity for prospective lawyers to network and connect with fellow members of the Nunavut legal community. Given that nearly half of respondents (44%) were called to the bar between 2021 and 2023, they likely completed their bar admission course entirely or partially online due to COVID, making their experience atypical.
- **In-Person Bar Admission Course Outside of the Territory:** One respondent described completing the Law Society of British Columbia's in-person, paper-based Professional Legal Training Course. At the time, this course was taught by a live instructor in British Columbia and was to be completed in addition to the Nunavut Statutes Examination.

- **More Opportunities for Discussion and Q&A:** One respondent noted that the vague wording of CPLED's assignments and concepts made them difficult to understand. They criticized the program's "slow-moving and opaque bureaucracy" and suggested replacing delayed email responses with opportunities for in-person discussions and direct question and answers.

Gaps or Barriers to CPLED/CPLED PREP Participation

- **Clarity and Application of Law:** One student-at-law reported confusion over which law to apply in certain assignments, as some required Nunavut law while others used Manitoba law. They also mentioned mixed feelings about the course being easy but lacking depth, and that the delayed feedback from instructors made it more difficult to improve on assignments moving forward.
- **Accommodation of Indigenous First Language Speakers and Regional Differences:** There was criticism of CPLED not accommodating those who speak an Indigenous language as their first language or those from different regions. The need to learn and apply laws from southern provinces (e.g., Manitoba or Alberta) was seen as unnecessary and irrelevant to Nunavut, creating frustration for students-at-law seeking to practice in northern jurisdictions.
- **Internet Connectivity Issues:** Several respondents mentioned internet issues, including disruptions during live interviews or assignments, which negatively impacted their performance and confidence, especially in remote areas with unreliable internet.
- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Concerns:** There was strong concern that CPLED did not adequately implement equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) principles. While the program included some resources on cultural competency, many respondents felt its overall focus was too narrow—reflecting a traditional, outdated image of a lawyer that fails to align with the diverse, modern realities of legal practice. One respondent noted that "course materials were rife with both microaggressions and blatantly discriminatory components impacting a broad range of marginalized groups," several of which they identified with. Others echoed this sentiment, stating that some course content perpetuated systemic inequities. This is particularly troubling in the context of Nunavut, where the population is predominantly Inuit. The lack of cultural relevance and sensitivity in CPLED has been flagged not only as a barrier to increasing the number of Inuit lawyers in the Territory, but also as an access to justice issue—especially for Inuit who are unilingual or for whom English is a second language.
- **Financial Barriers:** The cost of the program and its impact on the ability of students-at-law to meet basic needs like internet, food, and shelter was a barrier for some respondents. One respondent expressed frustration over what they felt was the LSN's dismissive response to concerns about the financial strain.
- **Access to Feedback and Accommodations:** Respondents found feedback provided by instructors on assignments often vague or unhelpful. Some also reported challenges collaborating with students from other regions (i.e., Manitoba) given "different realities", as well as a lack of accommodations for disabilities, parenting responsibilities, and other personal needs.
- **Concerns with Online Format:** The online format was not universally suitable, with some respondents struggling with limited communication in large groups and a format that didn't align with their learning preferences.

- **In-Person Participation and Costs:** One respondent opted to travel to Alberta for the CPLED Capstone Assessment to avoid internet issues in Nunavut, incurring out-of-pocket expenses. They also faced stress due to having to learn Alberta's laws and court system, which was unrelated to their practice area in Nunavut.
- **No Barriers for Some:** A few respondents reported no significant barriers and appreciated the financial flexibility of the program, allowing them to work while studying, unlike many who had to take time off for studies or to write examinations. Others felt included in discussions and didn't encounter any barriers related to the program.

ARTICLES OF CLERKSHIP

Articling Location

Two-thirds of respondents (69%) completed their articles of clerkship in their preferred location. Three (16%) considered Ottawa but were unable to, while two each considered Yellowknife and the Qikiqtaaluk Region. One respondent each considered the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot Regions. Another noted they would have liked to article in British Columbia.

Barriers to Articling in Region of Choice

Several respondents described barriers to articling in their preferred region. One noted that although they articulated where they wanted, there were very few positions in private law firms within the territory, with most paid opportunities—sometimes with housing—being limited to institutions like the GN, LSB, and PPSC. Another had hoped to secure a clerkship but was dissuaded when LSN would only consider it for partial articles. One respondent initially planned to article in Quebec but was ultimately able to do so in their preferred location, Nunavut. Another expressed interest in articling outside Iqaluit or partially in British Columbia but faced unclear and inconsistent guidance from LSN, significant delays in articling confirmation, and limited policy infrastructure for non-Akitsiraq graduates, creating both financial and administrative hardship. One respondent split their articles between Nunavut and a private Ottawa law firm focused on Nunavut Inuit organizations and businesses.

Variety of Articling Rotations

One quarter of respondents (26%) completed articling rotations with the GN, followed by arms-length organizations/NGOs (20%). Other practice settings included the federal government (14%), sole practitioners (9%), boutique law firms (6%), mid-size law firms (9%), large law firms (6%), and corporate settings (6%). No respondents articulated with other territorial or provincial governments or in academic settings.

Number of Articling Rotations²⁶

Almost half of the respondents completed two articling rotations (47%), whereas 16% completed one rotation and almost one third (32%) completed three. No respondents completed four or more articling rotations.

²⁶ This question did not distinguish whether the rotations were completed with a single employer or different employers.

Job Offer after Articling Placement

Almost half of the respondents (42%) reported being offered a position at the firm/organization where they completed their articles of clerkship, while two respondents (11%) reported not being offered a position. One quarter of respondents (26%) were offered a position where they completed their articles of clerkship but accepted an offer elsewhere.

- **Call Back Rate of Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Of the NBLP graduates who responded to the survey and who also completed their bar admission requirements, half (50%) were offered a position at the firm/organization where they completed their articles of clerkship. Two other respondents were offered a position but accepted an offer elsewhere. One NBLP graduate reported not being offered a position after completing their articles of clerkship.

Workload

Two thirds of respondents (68%) expected to work the number of hours they did during articling, whereas **one-fifth (21%) reported working more than expected**. A smaller percentage (11%) reported working less than expected.

Most Positive Aspects of Articling Experience

The three most positive aspects of the respondents' articles of clerkship were: getting hands-on experience (17%), being exposed to specific areas of legal practice that interested them (15%) and working on interesting files (13%).

Satisfaction with Articling Experience

Nearly half of respondents (47%) were very satisfied with their articling experience, while another third (32%) were satisfied. Only one respondent (5%) was very dissatisfied, and another (5%) was dissatisfied. Two respondents (11%) were neutral.

- **Increased Articling Experience Satisfaction among Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates:** Among the NBLP graduates, two thirds (67%) were very satisfied, with one each (11%) reporting as very dissatisfied, dissatisfied and satisfied.

Unique Challenges to Securing Articling Placements in Nunavut

Respondents highlighted challenges in securing articling placements in Nunavut, with most paid positions (including those with housing) available only in the public sector (i.e., the GN, LSB and PPSC). While there were a handful of opportunities in the private sector, the lack of competitive compensation posed a barrier to pursuing these opportunities.

Unclear Policies and Procedures

One respondent expressed frustration in attempting to secure a clerkship, as the LSN would only recognize it as partial articling. The process was further hindered by unclear policies, slow responses, and delayed confirmation of articling status. The respondent struggled with months of uncertainty and a lack of clear guidance, finding the experience stressful due to the LSN's ad hoc decision-making and unresponsiveness, particularly during the summer period.

Length of Articling Period

Some suggested counting the bar admission course towards the articling period to reduce the length from twelve months to eight months.

ARTICLING PRINCIPAL SUPERVISION

Frequency of Meetings with Articling Principal

Two respondents (11%) reported meeting their articling principals in-person on a quarterly basis during their articles of clerkship, while the others met with theirs daily (26%), weekly (42%) or biweekly (21%).²⁷ No respondents indicated they did not meet with their principal in person during their articles of clerkship. To note, the LSN has not fixed an expected meeting frequency as part of articling principal supervision requirements.

Methods to Provide Mentorship and Feedback

The most preferred method used by articling principals to provide mentorship/feedback during the respondents' articles of clerkship was "in-person" (53%), followed by "email, telephone or videoconferencing" (38%). Additionally, a smaller percentage of respondents (6%) indicated that feedback was provided through a "third party"²⁸. **An area of concern is that one respondent reported not receiving mentorship and/or feedback from their articling principal during their articles of clerkship.**

Barriers to Adequate Student-at-Law Supervision

The **most frequently reported barrier to receiving adequate supervision as a student-at-law was limited in-person interaction with their articling principal and colleagues due to frequent team travel** (17%). Other selected barriers included short articling rotations, reliance on videoconferencing instead of in-person meetings, and demanding workloads that limited time for meetings with the articling principal/mentor/supervisor (each cited by 8% of respondents). No respondents indicated that excessive paperwork or administrative tasks posed a barrier to receiving adequate supervision as a student-at-law.

Additional insights pointed to systemic and contextual challenges, including:

- **Articling principals who were overworked, stressed, or had demanding schedules**, which limited their ability to provide consistent supervision and mentorship.
- **COVID-19 and lockdowns**, which disrupted regular in-person engagement.
- **Difficulties finding suitable articling principals**, particularly due to unclear policies on articling principal eligibility and requirements. For example, one respondent reported their articling principal having to be dually called in Nunavut and British Columbia and being unclear whether the LSN would accept their articles at the time for this reason.
- **Uneven experiences depending on employer**—some respondents praised articling rotations in the public sector for their strong student-at-law supervision, while noting minimal legal work and mentorship in external placements.
- **Articling principal's lack of familiarity with CPLED PREP**, which sometimes limited the support students-at-law received on this component of their training. Some respondents emphasized that while their articling principals were knowledgeable and supportive in practical legal work in the Territory, they were not equipped to offer much guidance on PREP. One respondent noted that their principal who had completed PREP provided

²⁷ If respondents had more than one articling principal, they were asked to select the answer that represented the average number of times.

²⁸ This was defined to include another lawyer or person at the firm/organization.

regular guidance and feedback on CPLED assignments, while the other—though unfamiliar with PREP—was still supportive by allowing time and reducing workload.

- **Mixed supervision experiences with different articling principals**, ranging from highly engaged to largely absent. One respondent noted that one articling principal was disengaged, while the other, despite being from a different practice area, checked in occasionally—a pace the respondent found reasonable.

Despite these barriers, several respondents also described **positive articling experiences**, particularly in public sector placements, and expressed appreciation for articling principals who went above and beyond within challenging contexts. One respondent described articling in Nunavut as “an amazing experience and very developmental”.

ARTICLING PLAN

Use of LSN Articling Plan

Over half of the respondents (58%) used the LSN Articling Plan (see *Appendix I*) to develop their articling plan, one quarter (26%) did not, and the remainder (16%) partially used it. Some relied on workplace templates, while others encountered barriers like limited internet access or outdated plans.

Articling Plan Utility

Mixed opinions emerged on the utility of the articling plan. Several respondents described the plan as a formality or administrative chore that was rarely used or referenced during their articles. Some noted that their plans were minimal, bare-bones, or ignored entirely, and a few expressed that articling principals were not actively involved in developing the plan. However, others found the plan helpful for setting expectations, tracking goals, or guiding the overall articling experience—especially when it was actively followed or adapted over time. A few respondents recognized that its utility may depend on the work environment or the student-at-law’s ability to advocate for a structured articling experience.

Involvement in Articling Plan Development

- Two thirds of respondents (64%) indicated the **articling principal was either minimally²⁹ or equally involved³⁰** with the student-at-law, with half of the latter (16%) being NBLP graduates.
- Fewer respondents (21%) reported **the articling principal, firm and/or organization led the process³¹**, all of whom were NBLP graduates.
- One respondent (5%) reported the **articling principal as uninvolved³²**, leaving the student-at-law solely responsible.
- Two respondents (11%), both NBLP graduates, indicated the **articling principal relied on LSN’s assistance³³**.

²⁹ Student-at-law develops a substantive draft articling plan that the principal reviews and approves.

³⁰ The principal and the student-at-law collaborates in developing an articling plan, with the process viewed as being a learning opportunity for the student-at-law.

³¹ A standard internal articling plan is reviewed with each student-at-law upon recruitment.

³² Student-at-law is exclusively responsible for developing an articling plan.

³³ The LSN provided the student-at-law with assistance in developing the articling plan.

Barriers in Articling Plan Development

Many survey respondents identified recurring barriers related to communication and structural challenges. A common complaint was the slow or unresponsive communication from the LSN, which caused significant stress and uncertainty. Several noted a limited number of articling principals offering paid articling positions with housing, especially post-pandemic, which restricted opportunities, particularly in private practice. Other barriers included unclear processes and confusing paperwork, difficulties accommodating rotations, and financial constraints such as lack of reliable internet access, which compounded stress and burnout. A few respondents reported no significant barriers, highlighting accessible articling principals or helpful support from the LSN Chief Executive Officer. Some emphasized the need for clearer expectations around the time commitment required for CPLED.

Reasons for Delays

Delays in filing articling plans were linked to both institutional and logistical issues. Respondents highlighted slow or unclear communication from the LSN, difficulty navigating forms, approval delays and capacity issues, including quorum challenges. Some also pointed to broader systemic or Nunavut-specific issues, like a shortage of articling principals, housing instability, and Nunavut's unique work environment. Some delays were due to evolving job placements or the need to adjust rotations after starting. In a few cases, plans were reported to have been submitted on time but approved late.

Other Accompanying Documents

Most respondents did not believe that additional documents (e.g., a workplan or performance assessment) would have helped clarify expectations during their articles. One-fifth (17%) did however feel such documents would have been useful.

Recommendations to Improve Articling Plan

While the survey question was intended to solicit answers on the articling plan, many responses centered on dissatisfaction with CPLED and called for its reform. Several respondents criticized CPLED as southern-focused, incompatible with Nunavut's legal context, and inaccessible. They also noted how the course's focus on private practice is not reflective of Nunavut's legal community, where most legal work occurs in the public sector. Suggestions included replacing CPLED with a Nunavut-specific bar examination or implementing an offline alternative. Others recommended counting the bar admission course towards the 12-month articling period.³⁴

Additional recommendations included:

- providing more support and guidance for articling principals;
- streamlining the student-at-law admission forms;
- bolstering LSN involvement and support;
- tailoring for students-at-law in smaller and/or general placements; and
- clearly outlining lawyering competencies and how students will meet through their articles of clerkship.

³⁴ For example, if the bar admission course is an intensive four-month program, the articling period should be shortened to eight months to complete the required total of 12 months.

STUDENT-AT-LAW TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Knowledge of Student-at-Law Obligations

Over two thirds (68%) of respondents felt sufficiently knowledgeable³⁵ about their obligations as students-at-law before taking on the role. One quarter (25%) were very knowledgeable³⁶, and one respondent (5%) felt not very knowledgeable³⁷.

Exposure to Different Practice Areas During Articles

Almost two thirds of respondents (63%) were exposed to two to three practice areas during their articles of clerkship, one fifth (21%) were exposed to only one area of practice, and one tenth (11%) indicated their articles of clerkship covered most practice areas. One respondent noted however that their articles of clerkship covered most practice areas in the context of the public sector, acknowledging this is different than the private sector.

Use of Secondments/Rotations to Explore Additional Practice Areas

Almost two thirds (63%) engaged in secondments/rotations to explore additional practice areas, while slightly over one third (37%) did not. Many found secondments beneficial for exposure to diverse legal fields and shaping career preferences.

Arranging Rotations

Some respondents reported using personal networks to arrange rotations, with one suggestion for creating a posting bank to help students-at-law find opportunities, especially in Nunavut communities outside of Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet and Cambridge Bay.

Supportive Mentorship and Benefits

Several respondents noted their appreciation for their articling principals' support and found rotating through different mentors and fields valuable for developing a broader understanding of law and future career direction.

Challenges and Limitations

Some respondents faced issues with complicated processes, staffing delays, and articling rotations that did not align with their desired career trajectory.

General Feedback on Rotationality

Most found their articling rotations beneficial, although some experienced organizational difficulties or had to arrange additional rotations due to contract issues. Overall, respondents considered rotations a valuable part of their bar admission experience despite the challenges.

Practice Areas Students-at-Law Want to Develop During Articles

Respondents identified **administrative law** (53%) and **Indigenous law** (53%) as the most critical practice areas of development for students-at-law during their articles of clerkship.

³⁵ "Sufficiently knowledgeable" was defined as the student-at-law knowing the overall expectation but being unclear on the specific details.

³⁶ "Very knowledgeable" was defined as the student-at-law having clear expectations.

³⁷ "Not very knowledgeable" was defined as the student-at-law having no idea what to expect or they felt unprepared.

Civil litigation (47%), criminal law (47%), and wills and estates (47%) were also highlighted as significant practice areas to develop. In contrast, there was no desire in further developing competency in the areas of securities law, tax law or bankruptcy.

Identified Training Gaps

- **Mental Health Support:** Respondents reported a lack of training on trauma-informed practice and mental health resources, noting the profession's challenging and emotionally taxing nature, particularly in Nunavut. Psychological training and self-care tools were also suggested.
- **Courtroom and Professional Dynamics:** Skills like judicial etiquette, courtroom processes, and managing interpersonal dynamics (e.g., difficult lawyers) were underdeveloped.
- **Practical Knowledge:** Limited exposure to the [Nunavut Rules of Court](#), filing processes, and private bar referrals were frequently mentioned gaps.

Ways to Better Equip Students-at-Law for Practice

- **Hands-On Experience:** Respondents emphasized the need for more practical legal experience, such as court exposure and rotations with private firms, rather than focusing primarily on administrative or research-based tasks.
- **Training and Skills Development:** Enhanced training in statutory interpretation, advocacy, client management, and legal ethics tailored to the Nunavut legal context was strongly desired. Suggestions included incorporating instruction on Inuktitut pronunciation and syllabics to better serve the community.
- **Mentorship and Feedback:** Respondents highlighted the need for structured mentorship from senior lawyers, better support for articling principals, and consistent guidance for CPLED PREP work.
- **Reforming CPLED/Bar Admission Process:** Many felt CPLED took too much time away from practical learning opportunities and recommended more Nunavut-specific, in-person evaluations instead of online, distance learning.
- **Judicial and Legal System Exposure:** Calls for mandatory observation at the Nunavut Court of Justice and improved training on the [Nunavut Rules of Court](#) were common.
- **Supportive Infrastructure:** Housing assistance, access to practice management software, and improved communication with the LSN were identified as key areas where greater support could be offered to students-at-law to ready them for practice.

Reported Level of Preparedness for Legal Practice by Students-at-Law

Over half of respondents (58%) felt adequately prepared for practice after completing the bar admissions process, while a smaller portion (16%) felt somewhat prepared. Only one respondent reported feeling very unprepared. Among NBLP graduates, half (50%) felt prepared, one third (33%) somewhat prepared, and less than one fifth (16%) unprepared.

Factors Impacting Practice Readiness

Respondents appreciated the experience gained from rotations and mentorship but stressed that previous work experience often played the biggest role in their readiness for practice.

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Respondents reported developing the following [competencies](#) during their articling rotations:

Most Developed Competencies

- [Ability to observe client confidentiality](#)³⁸ was reported to be the most strongly developed competency during the respondents' articling rotations, with almost all respondents (93%) either agreeing or strongly agreeing it was developed.
- Other competencies strongly developed competencies included the ability to conduct legal research³⁹, ability to conduct factual research⁴⁰, effective legal writing⁴¹ and knowledge of the LSN Rules and Model Code of Conduct⁴².

Least Developed Competencies

The competencies that respondents reported to have least developed – those where the respondents reported the lowest number of “strongly agreed” answers and the greatest number of “unsure”, “neutral” and “disagree” responses – included:

- staff and office management⁴³;
- attendance at contested hearings⁴⁴;
- attendance at settlement conferences⁴⁵;
- retaining and reporting requirements⁴⁶; and
- responding to motions or applications⁴⁷.

³⁸ [“Ability to observe client confidentiality”](#) is defined by the LSN as “discuss[ing] the lawyer’s duty to preserve client confidentiality and the appropriate measures to be taken when asked by a client to do something that would breach professional obligations”.

³⁹ [“Ability to conduct legal research”](#) is defined by the LSN as “identifying and analyzing issues (including substantive and procedural issues) and applicable areas of law. Interpreting, applying, and communicating research results”.

⁴⁰ [“Ability to conduct factual research”](#) is defined by the LSN as “gather[ing] and organiz[ing] information to present a comprehensive set of facts and regularly conducts due diligence” and “review[ing] and/or summariz[ing] relevant documentation (e.g., transcripts, client’s personal or internal files, corporate minute books, contracts, files maintained by government or administrative bodies)”.

⁴¹ [“Effective legal writing”](#) is defined by the LSN as “drafting legal documents that are well-structured, clear, succinct and that meet the intended purpose of each document”, “ensuring accuracy of content (including effective use of precedents, and formulation of legal argument, analysis, advice or submissions), grammar, and punctuation” and “using appropriate tone”.

⁴² [“Knowledge of the LSN Rules and Model Code of Conduct”](#) is defined by the LSN as the “ability to exhibit knowledge through overall performance, carrying out obligations and dealings, including by adhering to the highest ethical standards and demonstrating courtesy and good character in all dealings.”

⁴³ [“Staff and office management”](#) is defined by the LSN as “collaboration, teamwork, and good relations with office staff”.

⁴⁴ [“Attendance at contested hearings”](#) is defined by the LSN as “conducting a motion, application, or simple hearing. Presents a well-reasoned and clear legal argument, analysis, and submissions; demeanour and body language convey confidence and knowledge of the case/materials”.

⁴⁵ [“Attendance at settlement conferences”](#) is defined by the LSN as “advocating in a non-adjudicative context”, “preparing for and negotiating a matter on behalf of a client, including documenting a settlement and/or preparing for and representing or co-representing a client at a mediation” and “negotiating the resolution of a dispute or legal problem”.

⁴⁶ [“Retaining and Reporting Requirements”](#) is defined by the LSN as “observ[ing] procedures related to engagements/retainers and/or documenting the scope of services including advice given to the client and instructions received from the client” and “us[ing] time docketing system and/or follow the process for recording expenses and disbursements”.

⁴⁷ [“Responding to motions or applications”](#) is defined by the LSN as “identifying and analyzing the issues raised by the other party in Application or Motion materials” and “[d]eveloping an appropriate response and specifying next steps or actions that further the client’s interests”.

STUDENT-AT-LAW MENTORSHIP

Mentor Profile

- **Articling Principals** (43%) were the most common person in a student-at-law's firm/organization to take on a mentorship role during their articles of clerkship.
- The second most common was **another lawyer at the firm/organization** (33%), followed by someone outside the firm and/or organization (13%).
- **Another person at the firm/organization** was also someone that took on a mentorship role for three respondents (8%).
- One respondent reported an **Elder** taking on a mentorship role, and another reported they had **many mentors**, including members of the Bench and Justices of the Peace (JPs).

Mentorship Received During Articles of Clerkship

- **Feedback on Work Performance:** When asked whether the student-at-law receives or received regular feedback on their work performance, slightly less than half (47%) strongly agreed, one third (32%) agreed, 16% were neutral, and 5% disagreed.
- **Feedback on Skills Development:** When asked whether the student-at-law receives and/or received regular feedback on their skills development, over three quarters (79%) strongly agreed or agreed⁴⁸, with fewer being neutral (16%) or in disagreement (5%).
- **Availability to Answer Questions or Offer Clarifications:** When asked whether someone is/was available to answer the student-at-law's questions or clarify things when they needed help, almost all respondents (94%) either strongly agreed or agreed⁴⁹, with the remainder (6%) in disagreement.
- **Overall Satisfaction:** When asked if overall respondents were satisfied with the mentoring received during their articles of clerkship, over half of the respondents (53%) reported they strongly agreed, one fifth (21%) agreed, another one fifth (21%) were neutral and the remainder (5%) disagreed.

STUDENT-AT-LAW COMPENSATION AND LEAVE

Compensation as a Student-at-Law

- Five respondents (26%) reported having earned \$80,000 - \$99,999, another five (26%) having earned \$60,000 - \$79,999, and three (16%) having earned \$40,000 - \$59,999. One respondent preferred not to specify.
- **One respondent earned \$60,000 - \$80,000 for part of their articles but received no compensation for the remainder, raising concerns of students-at-law not receiving compensation for their work.**

⁴⁸ 37% strongly agreed and 42% agreed.

⁴⁹ 50% strongly agreed and 44% agreed.

- Similarly, another respondent received compensation for six months, with it being unclear if they were compensated for the remaining portion of their articles.
- One respondent earned \$120,000, while another could not recall the amount but felt it was insufficient.

Additional Funding

The Nunavut Law Foundation (18%) was the most common additional funding source to support the bar admission process. One respondent received funding from PPSC for a second CPLED PREP attempt, and another received funding from the LSB. No respondents reported funding from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), though it was listed as an option. Over half of the respondents (53%) accessed no additional funding, and a smaller portion (12%) reported none was required.

Coverage of Bar Admission Expenses

The most common expense covered by firms/organizations during the bar admission process was the bar course admission fee (53%), followed by the student-at-law application fee⁵⁰ (42%). Other expenses covered included the bar admission examination fee (37%), the special examination fee (16%), and the call to bar fee (16%). Three respondents (16%) also reported that no expenses were covered by their firm/organization. Other possible fees not included in the survey question are the annual renewal fee.⁵¹

Number of Days of Leave⁵²

One-third (32%) of respondents had no agreed-upon leave. Others reported less than 15 days (21%), less than 10 days (11%), less than five days (5%), and more than 15 days (5%). One noted the LSN policy limits leave (including sick) to 15 days, influencing their leave despite firm flexibility. Another had pro-rated government leave, and one received time off as needed without a set limit.

Other Types of Leave Offered

Other types of leave offered by the respondents' firms/organizations included maternity/parental leave (21%), family leave (11%), medical leave (37%), religious leave (11%), bereavement/compassionate leave (32%), IQ/leave for Indigenous employees to engage in traditional practices including land-based activities (26%) and other leave (42%), including sick and special leave. Some respondents reported that other types of leave were available in addition to those listed, but they were not aware of the full offering.

⁵⁰ As of February 7, 2025, the student-at-law application fee is \$367.50 (*application fee: \$100 + admission fee: \$250 + 5% GST = \$367.50*).

⁵¹ As of 28 May 2025, the Annual Renewal Fee is \$157.50 (*\$150 + 5% GST*).

⁵² If the respondent had more than one articling rotation, they were asked to select the average or elaborate using the "other" option provided below.

WORKPLACE TRAINING AND CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL EDUCATION

While over half of respondents (68%) reported having opportunities to learn about culturally competent and trauma-informed legal practice, **one third (32%) of respondents reported receiving no training in areas** (Question #53), such as:

- cross-cultural competency;
- colonialism and intergenerational trauma;
- workplace conflict resolution;
- anti-racism/discrimination;
- Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI);
- workplace harassment;
- leadership/mentorship; and
- LSN regulatory requirements.

Among those who reported receiving training, **cross-cultural competency was the most reported training received (37%)**, followed by “LSN regulatory requirements and practice management information” (26%) and “workplace harassment training” (21%) (Question #52). Training in other areas was limited, indicating a need to increase training opportunities in these areas.

Students-at-law highlighted **both formal and informal opportunities to learn about culturally competent and trauma-informed legal practice**. Formal opportunities included federal government and GN training sessions, though scheduling conflicts were raised as an issue. Informal learning through mentorship, daily practice, and community events was emphasized, with mentorship from Inuit colleagues and engagement with Elders flagged as being particularly valuable. There was however a lack of structured programs explicitly addressing these practices, which often left students-at-law to establish their own experiential and self-directed learning opportunities.

BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

Despite the challenges, **a significant majority of respondents (74%) would recommend doing an articling clerkship in Nunavut**, with many respondents highlighting the unique and valuable experiences it offers.⁵³ However, some would only make this recommendation if the student-at-law intends to work in the public sector and stay in the Territory after being called.

The Nunavut Bar is described as small and supportive, providing opportunities that may not be available in southern jurisdictions. Some respondents had very supportive experiences, particularly with organizations like the PPSC and the LSB, with many respondents heralding the well-trained staff and mentorship available through these opportunities.

There was, however, consensus that **while articling in the Territory can be rewarding, students-at-law faced many challenges which impeded their success**.

⁵³ While the question was “Thinking more generally about your clerkship, would you recommend doing a clerkship in Nunavut to prospective students-at-law?”, clarification that this question was regarding an articling clerkship.

These challenges included:

- lack of support with the steep learning curve (47%);
- difficulty accessing mental health supports (47%);
- unclear expectations (42%);
- minimal compensation (42%); and
- limited articling placements (42%).

Other common challenges were lack of mentorship (37%), insufficient feedback (37%) and workload management (37%) (*Question #55*).

Housing⁵⁴

- **About a quarter of respondents received housing or a housing subsidy for their entire articles of clerkship**, while another quarter received housing or a housing subsidy for only one of their articling rotations.
- **Almost one third did not receive any housing support.** Specific situations included respondents who already owned a home, received hotel accommodation, or received housing through their federal government role.
- While most respondents did not find the lack of housing a barrier to accepting an articling rotation, two graduates of southern law schools did.
- **Issues related to housing were particularly significant for NBLP graduates**, with one graduate experiencing “worry if they could make it until the next month” after accepting an articling position without housing, and another not considering rotations outside of the Territory due to a lack of available housing, noting that their access to housing was through a home they had purchased prior to becoming a student-at-law.
- Another respondent, who completed their legal education in southern Canada and completed the Law Society of British Columbia’s Professional Legal Training Course, reported that “somehow they made it work” despite not having a housing subsidy, and that they “survived” but “it wasn’t easy”.
- Some respondents also elaborated on the challenges of finding housing and the lack of support provided by employers and legal organizations.

Travel and Relocation Costs

Most respondents did not decline articling placements due to travel or relocation costs, but two did, including one NBLP graduate. Another graduate did not consider out-of-territory rotations due to these costs, and one paid their own expenses to article in Ottawa. Relocation support was also a concern, with some contracts covering only the student-at-law’s cost to travel to the place of employment.

Financial Challenges

Many respondents identified unpaid rotations and insufficient income from articling positions as significant barriers. Financial difficulties were common amongst respondents, with salaries reportedly often not covering basic living expenses. It was noted that without financial privilege,

⁵⁴ The two questions asked were: (1) “Was housing and/or a housing subsidy provided to you during your articles of clerkship?” and (2) “Were you ever unable to accept an articling rotation with a potential firm or organization because of lack of available housing?”

managing essential needs like housing, food, and internet made it challenging to succeed as a student-at-law in the Territory.

Family and Personal Needs

Childcare and family responsibilities posed significant challenges, especially for young parents balancing legal training with caregiving. Respondents also faced personal challenges such as family circumstances, financial pressures, and social isolation. One respondent felt their “family’s future and [their] career seemed to be held in the balance for the first half of their articles,” while another felt discouraged from taking time off after hearing “senior lawyers loudly complaining [in their workplace] about support staff being absent for cultural activities or family reasons”.

Lack of Support for Foreign-Trained Lawyers

A lack of clear policies and support for students-at-law with foreign law degrees was identified given the requirement to obtain additional accreditation and complete preparation courses through the [National Committee on Accreditation](#) (NCA) prior to being admitted as a student-at-law in the Territory.⁵⁵

Technology and Internet Access

Students-at-law in Nunavut faced significant challenges related to internet and technology access, with inconsistent and expensive internet connectivity making it difficult to complete online components of their bar admissions program. Outdated or insufficient equipment further hindered their ability to participate in virtual meetings, access legal databases, and complete assignments. These barriers added stress and obstacles, impacting their ability to succeed in their studies and professional development.

Relevance of Legal Training to Nunavut

There was strong feedback that Continuing Legal Education (CLE) and licensing requirements should be more tailored to Nunavut or jurisdictions most relevant to Inuit communities.

Bar Admission Course and Examination

- **CPLED:** Time commitment involved with completing CPLED was viewed as unrealistic, detracting from practical learning during articles. Many respondents found the program ineffective and poorly suited to Nunavut’s needs, with some describing it as a “horrific experience” and calling for a Nunavut-specific bar course. Concerns were also raised about the Nunavut Statutes Examination and the overall heavy reliance on distance education to complete their bar admission requirements.

- **Language Availability and Accessibility**

One quarter of respondents (26%) reported that relying on bar admission courses (e.g., CPLED PREP) and examinations from other jurisdictions (e.g., Capstone Assessment), which are not available in all of Nunavut’s official languages, impacted their experience. This did not affect the remaining three quarters of respondents (74%).

**The May 2022 sitting of the Nunavut Statutes Examination marked the first time the examination was available in three different language formats: English/Inuktitut, English/French or French/Inuktitut.*

- ◆ **Inuktitut-First Language:** One respondent highlighted how the inability to learn in Inuktitut led to misunderstandings, while another Inuktitut-first language

⁵⁵ The FLSC National Committee on National Accreditation (NCA) assesses the legal education and professional experience of individuals who obtained their credentials outside of Canada or in a Canadian civil law program.

student-at-law, noted how the examination timeframe was insufficient and created an unnecessary barrier.

- ◆ **CPLED:** Others expressed concerns about the lack of alignment with Nunavut's legal context—such as having to follow Saskatchewan legal conventions in CPLED, which differed significantly from their legal education and training. One student-at-law raised this issue directly with CPLED and met virtually with a representative, who acknowledged the concern had merit but explained that Nunavut precedents, laws, and forms could not be used because the grading rubric was not designed to accommodate them. Another respondent described the abrupt transition from a Nunavut-based legal education to adapting to a southern jurisdiction's standards when completing CPLED as an avoidable hardship.
- ◆ **Language Accessibility:** Some respondents emphasized the importance of language accessibility, stressing the need for bar admission course materials in Inuktitut—even if this would not directly affect their own experience.

Articling

- **Securing an Articling Position:** There was a scramble for positions, with respondents expressing concern about the availability of employment opportunities after significant investment in their legal education.
- **Mentorship:** Strong mentorship and guidance were highlighted as crucial, with suggestions to expand articling positions and ensure adequate staffing. The work in Nunavut was described as incredible and varied, providing hands-on experience and opportunities to learn from mentors and Elders, which is invaluable for those pursuing a meaningful career in law in Nunavut. However, a lack of available mentors in private practice was reported, making it difficult for students interested in areas not covered by government practice.
- **Impact of Articling Principals' Language Proficiency in Nunavut's Official Languages:** Most respondents indicated that their articling principals were not able to converse with them in all of Nunavut's official languages. Several noted that this did not significantly impact their experience, especially if they and their articling principals shared English or French. However, some respondents expressed challenges, particularly when articling principals were unilingual English speakers and could not support work involving Inuktitut or French. A few mentioned missing opportunities to communicate fully in Inuktitut, their first language, which affected understanding.
- **Language Training Offerings:** A lack of formal support for Inuktitut and legal terminology was flagged by another respondent, who reported having to rely instead on non-lawyer Inuit staff. Their articling principal provided some training—such as a French legal terminology course, an Inuktitut language course at the Nunavut Arctic College, and standard GN-provided Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit (IQ) courses—but it was not tailored to the demands of their legal work, such as conducting bail hearings or simple witness examinations.
- **Cultural Considerations:** Responses varied, with some noting flexibility in rotations or articling placements and scheduling, particularly regarding LSN/CPLED aspects. However, the majority felt the bar admission process lacked sufficient cultural accommodation. Several respondents criticized CPLED as being created and run by non-Indigenous people, with little integration of Inuit learning methods or Inuktitut language. Traditional cultural activities were reportedly limited or discouraged during articling, and

the process overall was seen as lacking Nunavut-specific content. A few noted that while law school offered more cultural relevance, the bar admission process did not reflect this or fully address the evolving application of common law in the Arctic. Some respondents were unsure or felt the question was difficult to answer.

- **Discrimination, Racism and Accommodation:** Racism, sexism, and disability-related discrimination were major issues, with some respondents sharing personal experiences of harassment, lack of accommodation, and discrimination. One respondent, who was called to the bar between 2005 and 2008, reported that “zero accommodation was possible” at the time they completed their articles (see *Questions #64, and #79 to #83*).

Bar Admission Course or Examination Retake

High Retake Rate

Almost one half of respondents (47%) had to retake a bar admission course, examination and/or the Nunavut Statutes Examination, indicating challenges in students-at-law passing these examinations and/or courses on the first attempt.

Majority Passed on First Attempt

Over half of the respondents (53%) did not have to retake an examination, suggesting many students-at-law were able to pass their examinations and/or courses on their first attempt.

Retake Rate for Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates

Of those who had to retake a bar admission course, bar admission examination and/or the Nunavut Statutes Examination, over half (55%) were NBLP graduates. This indicates that NBLP graduates had a slightly higher retake rate when compared to the overall rate (47%).

Recommending Nunavut Articles to Prospective Students-at-Law

Respondents had mixed opinions on articling in Nunavut. Some recommended it for those planning to stay in the Territory, particularly for those interested in working in government or legal aid, citing the unique opportunities to learn and engage with local legal issues.

However, many raised concerns about challenges such as limited housing, low compensation, lack of mentorship in private practice, and the logistical difficulties of balancing articling with the completion of other bar admission course requirements. Several respondents noted issues with the LSN's support, with some describing the Nunavut bar as unsupportive or even “hostile”, particularly when engaging with non-resident members.

Despite these challenges, others highlighted the rewarding and varied work, valuable mentorship from resident lawyers and Elders, and the chance to gain hands-on legal experience in practice areas often underrepresented in southern jurisdictions.

ACCOMMODATION

The survey results indicate a range of accommodations offered to students-at-law, with varying levels of support and involvement from firms/organizations and the LSN. The process for requesting accommodations, particularly with CPLED, was seen as a barrier for some respondents.

Accommodation Availability

The two most common accommodations offered by firms/organizations to students-at-law was time off for medical appointments (23%) and alternative work location (including working from home) (21%). Other accommodations that were commonly available were flexible work or job sharing (11%), relocation of workspace within the workplace (9%) and ensuring washrooms and other office facilities are accessible (9%). Visual communication supports were not reportedly offered as an accommodation by firms/organizations to students-at-law.

Other Accommodations Offered

Other types of accommodations offered by firms/organizations included use of the internet and space after hours, temporary change to a different workspace, and time off to do CPLED.

Requirements for Processing Accommodation Requests

Regarding firm or organizational requirements to process accommodation requests, **informal agreements were most common**, with one third (32%) reporting this requirement, compared to formal requests (16%). Two respondents (11%) submitted medical documentation as part of their request.

LSN Involvement

Only one respondent (6%) reported the LSN being involved in their accommodation request, while another respondent (6%) indicated partial involvement. Over half of the respondents (58%) stated the LSN was not involved in their accommodation requests, with the remaining one-fifth (21%) noting this was not applicable to their situation. Three respondents (16%) reported LSN involvement to be helpful in their request for accommodation.

Barriers to Requesting Accommodations

Some respondents reporting facing significant challenges, particularly with the CPLED process, which was seen as lengthy and complicated. On the other hand, some respondents reported facing no barriers, either with CPLED or their employer.

STUDENT-AT-LAW MENTAL WELLBEING

Impact of Mental Wellbeing on Ability to Succeed

Over half of the respondents (53%) reported that their participation in a bar admissions course affected their mental wellbeing to the point that it hindered their ability to succeed in a bar admissions program.

Mental Health Supports in the Workplace

One third of respondents (33%) reported that their workplaces were adequately resourced to offer mental health supports during their articles of clerkship. Another one quarter (28%) reported that some articling rotations were, whereas others were not. **The remaining one third (39%) reported that their workplaces were not adequately resourced to offer this type of support.**

Nunavut Lawyer Assistance Program (NuLAP)

Almost two thirds of respondents (63%) reported they were made aware of NuLAP during either the onboarding process or at any point during their articling rotation(s). Another one-fifth (21%) reported they were unsure and the remaining (16%) reported they were not made aware.

Other Mental Health Resources Shared During Articling Rotations

During their articling rotations, the GN's Employee and Family Assistance Program was shared with one fifth (21%) of respondents, with one-tenth (11%) receiving information about the Government of Canada's Employee Assistance Program (EAP), and the remainder (16%) being informed about CPLED's Mental Health and Wellness Resources/Crisis Services Canada. Additionally, one respondent was given information about the Kamatsiaqtut Nunavut Helpline, and another was shared the Hope for Wellness Helpline. However, **nearly one third (32%) reported no mental health or wellness resources were shared with them during their articling rotations.**

HARASSMENT AND DISCRIMINATION

The scope of discrimination and harassment was communicated to respondents to include actions related to age, ancestry, colour, race, citizenship, ethnic origin, place of origin, creed, disability, family status, marital status, gender identity, gender expression, sex and/or sexual orientation, or other factors.

Discrimination and/or Harassment during the Recruitment Process

While most respondents (74%) did not report experiencing discrimination and/or harassment during the recruitment process for any of their articling rotations, three respondents (16%) reported they did, and two respondents (11%) were unsure.

Experiences of Discrimination during Articles of Clerkship

While one third of respondents (33%) did not report experiencing discrimination during their articles of clerkship, one fifth (22%) of respondents reported they did. Two fifths (44%) reported they were not sure.⁵⁶

Experiences of Harassment during Articles of Clerkship

One quarter of respondents (26%) reported experiencing harassment during their articles of clerkship by someone at the firm/organization, with one respondent (5%) reporting that they were unsure about whether they experienced harassment during their articles of clerkship.

Available Resources

For those that reported that they experience discrimination and/or harassment, one third (36%) reported that they did not have resources available to address the issue they experienced, with the remaining two-thirds (64%) reporting they were unsure.

Experiences of Nunavut-Based Law Program Graduates

Three-fifths of NBLP graduates (60%) reported experiencing discrimination and one half (50%) reported experiencing harassment during their articles of clerkship, compared to 45% reported experiencing discrimination and 35% reported experiencing harassment in the overall group. The overall results also showed reports of discrimination and harassment, but the incidence was slightly lower compared to NBLP graduates.

Experiences or Available Resources to Help Address Discrimination and/or Harassment during Bar Admissions Process

One respondent flagged an experience stemming from course materials, with a CPLED practice manager who reportedly told a student-at-law to "suck it up." Another respondent noted inappropriate or insensitive behavior from southern lawyers towards Inuit students-at-law, reflecting a lack of cultural awareness. While one respondent described their experience positively, they acknowledged it was not without the stress and suggested implementing self-care workshops. Another recommendation was for regular feedback from students-at-law to help address these issues.

⁵⁶ There was an error with this question that was corrected while the survey was live. The third option, "not sure" was initially written as simply "not". The answers from both were compiled in the final survey results to make for eight respondents who were not sure.