

ADMISSIONS POLICY

The faculty's admissions policy is to select applicants who are best suited to studying law in McGill's uniquely comparative, transsystemic, and bilingual environment. Diversity and excellence are essential to our Faculty. Indeed, our Faculty's excellence is based on its diversity.

Our admissions process is holistic, meaning that reviewers look at all aspects of an application to get a sense of the candidate as a whole. Committee reviewers assess the applicant's academic record, linguistic abilities, personal motivations for studying law, extracurricular, community, or professional activities, and letters of reference (see Supporting Documents).

In addition, applicants must demonstrate substantial reading ability in, and oral comprehension of, both English and French (see Language Requirements).

The Admissions Committee is looking for applicants who have the ability to succeed academically in our rigorous academic program, as well as indicators of intellectual curiosity, community engagement, insight (cultural, economic, political, social, and otherwise), leadership skills, ability to work with others, openness to diversity, maturity, ethical sense, and judgement, and potential for development through opportunity or adversity, among other criteria. We do not use GPA or LSAT cut-offs, and we do not have quotas for categories of applicants.

We seek to create a diverse community of learners drawn from across Quebec, Canada, and beyond, in which there is a wide range of career aspirations, backgrounds, and life experiences. This approach contributes to the rich and dynamic learning environment for which McGill Law has become known.

The Faculty of Law is committed to equity and diversity. We welcome applications from Indigenous peoples, people with disabilities, racialized people, 2SLGBTQ+ people, women, people from an economically disadvantaged background, and others who may face systemic barriers that impact their access to education.

The B.C.L./J.D. is a limited enrolment program for which admission is competitive. Each year, the Faculty admits approximately 180 new students. The number of applications is approximately eight times greater than the number of available places. Unfortunately, every year we must refuse many qualified candidates due to lack of space in the program.

Files are reviewed by the Admissions Office and the Faculty's Admissions Committee, which is composed of full-time faculty members appointed by the Dean, senior law students selected by the Law Students' Association Executive; the Assistant Dean (Inclusion – Black and Indigenous Flourishing), and the Assistant Dean (Admissions and Recruitment).

Educational Requirements

Candidates must have a minimum of 60 credits of university studies, or a Diploma of College Studies (DCS) from a Quebec College of General and Professional Education (CEGEP), before starting their law studies. Students with a French Baccalaureate from Quebec (*Collège international Marie de France* or *Collège Stanislas*) are also eligible to apply.

Candidates from a French Baccalaureate program completed outside of Quebec, International Baccalaureate programs, or who are finishing high school are not eligible to apply.

Admission to the program is highly competitive. Almost all students admitted in the University category will have completed an undergraduate degree before starting our B.C.L./J.D. program.

In our holistic review process, there are no minimum thresholds for GPA, LSAT score, nor R-score. While the numerical aspects of the applicant's file are not, in themselves, decisive, students admitted to McGill Law, nonetheless, tend to have outstanding academic records, in addition to their other qualities. Applicants may consult the statistics on our website for a sense of how their academic indicators may impact the likelihood of admission.

Note: Candidates admitted directly from CEGEP or a Quebec French Baccalaureate who are interested in practising in the United States should be aware that bar admission requirements in a number of states include studies at the university level before studying law.

Note: Applicants are not eligible to apply directly from a French Baccalaureate program completed outside of Quebec or from high school. Applicants must meet the eligibility requirement mentioned above.

Language Requirements

McGill's B.C.L./J.D. program is offered in a bilingual (French and English) environment. Candidates must demonstrate that they are at least passively bilingual, which means that they have at a minimum an advanced proficiency in one language and an advanced intermediate level of reading and oral comprehension in another. The faculty uses the standards set in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages to evaluate language proficiency, and expects candidates to meet one of the following sets of minimal standards:

- C1 proficiency in English and a B2 level in reading and oral comprehension in French; or
- C1 proficiency in French and B2 level of reading and oral comprehension in English.

Passive bilingualism is a minimum requirement, not a competitive admissions asset.

The Faculty's policy of passive bilingualism permits students to submit written work, write exams, and ask questions in class in either English or French, regardless of the language of instruction. Students may fulfil their Moot Court requirements in English or French. First-year courses are offered in English and French, and a number of upper-year courses are offered in one language only. While examination questions are set in the language in which a course is given, any examination may contain extensive passages in either French or English. Due to space limitations, it is not always possible for students to be registered in courses given in their preferred language. Almost all first-year students will be registered in at least one class in a French section.

If no evidence of passive bilingualism in French or English appears in the application, the candidate will be refused admission.

To demonstrate that they meet bilingualism requirements, candidates must indicate in their application how they acquired both English and French. They must also submit transcripts from any post-secondary English and French language courses they have taken. The Admissions

Committee reviews each candidate's CV and references to take into account work or volunteering experiences in each language.

In order to get a sense of the level of reading comprehension that is expected of McGill Law students, candidates are encouraged to visit the website of the Supreme Court of Canada and to read judgments in English and in French.

Candidates intending to proceed to the Bar of Quebec or the Board of Notaries of Quebec should carefully review Language Requirements for Professions. The Charter of the French Language imposes certain mandatory language requirements on attorneys and notaries who practise in Quebec.

Please visit the Faculty of Law Eligibility page for more information on our language testing, conditional admissions, demonstration of bilingualism, and exemptions.

Indigenous Applicants

McGill Law is committed to recruiting and supporting Indigenous students and we welcome dialogue with prospective B.C.L./J.D. applicants. First Nations (Status, Non-Status), Inuit, Métis, or Indigenous persons with ties to Turtle Island are strongly encouraged to apply to the Faculty of Law and are invited to self-identify on their application form. For more information on this applicant category and rationale for this category, please visit the Indigenous Applicants page. Indigenous applicants retain the option of applying to the other applicant categories instead of applying to the Indigenous applicant category. If they elect to do so, they must follow the instructions and deadlines for applying to these categories.

Self-identification allows McGill to inform Indigenous students of specific services and funding opportunities and to assess our progress in the recruitment and retention of Indigenous students.

Linguistic Support

We acknowledge that our bilingualism admission requirement may represent an added challenge for some Indigenous applicants for whom English or French may be their third language, and potentially perceived as a colonizing influence. Applicants are encouraged not to exclude themselves from applying on linguistic grounds, and are encouraged to speak with us regarding any concerns on this point. Financial support is available to admitted Indigenous candidates who wish to improve their abilities in English or French before starting the program and to continue to address a relative weakness in English or French during legal studies here. This program is generously supported by the McCarthy Tétrault Fund for Language Training. Please contact us to find out more.

Indigenous Student Financial Assistance

McGill has established a funding program for Indigenous students, made possible in part by Indspire, an Indigenous-led registered charity that invests in the education of Indigenous peoples of Canada.

Indigenous Research and Experiential Opportunities

McGill offers Indigenous students the opportunity to study and complete research with a wide range of legal scholars in English and French. The faculty is host to a vibrant Indigenous Law Association and the Indigenous Human Rights Initiatives. McGill also gives Indigenous students the possibility to acquire practical experience working at the Legal Clinic at Kahnawà:ke, to participate in the Faculty's L.E.X. (Law-

Éducation-Connexion) program with the Kahnawà:ke Survival School, as well as the chance to participate in the national Kawaskimhon Moot or to complete a Minor at McGill in Indigenous Studies. Students can apply to partake in a term away at the Indigenous Peoples Law & Policy Program at the University of Arizona, and the Intensive Program in Indigenous Lands, Resources & Governments at York University's Osgoode Hall Law School. In 2022, McGill Law partnered with the Treaty Relations Commission of Manitoba to offer as a pilot project a month-long Anishinaabe Law Field School. For more information on various opportunities for Indigenous students at the faculty and at McGill University, please visit our Indigenous Initiatives page.

Indigenous students may be eligible for numerous sources of financial support.

First Peoples' House

McGill's First Peoples' House provides a sense of community and a voice for Indigenous students who have left their communities to study at McGill. A "home away from home", First Peoples' House offers a mentorship program, computer facilities, guest lectures, elder visits, academic counselling, an ever expanding resource centre, as well as student housing.

Indigenous Law Centre Programming

The Indigenous Law Centre at the University of Saskatchewan offers a curriculum and programming that aims to facilitate access to legal education for Indigenous peoples, to promote the development of the law and the legal system in Canada in ways which better accommodate the advancement of Indigenous peoples and communities, and to disseminate information concerning Indigenous peoples and the law. We encourage all incoming Indigenous students to explore the opportunities available at the Indigenous Law Centre before beginning their legal studies.

Honesty and Integrity of Applicants

McGill University and the Faculty of Law value honesty and integrity. Applicants to the Faculty of Law are expected to conduct themselves accordingly. The submission of false, incomplete, inconsistent, or misleading information, or any omission that may result in a false or misleading conclusion, constitutes misconduct in the admission process. Instances of such misconduct include, as examples: the submission of a personal statement that was not written by the applicant, and failure to disclose an LSAT score.

A finding of misconduct in the application process may lead to a refusal or, if an offer of admission has already been extended, a withdrawal of the offer at the sole discretion of the University. Intent is not an element of a finding of misconduct.

As a member school of the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC), McGill's Faculty of Law reserves the right to report any misconduct to the LSAC's Misconduct and Irregularities in the Admissions Process Subcommittee for its investigation.