

LL.M. Admissions

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) from Non-U.S. Law School Graduates

Contents

1. Introduction to the law school.....	3
1.1 I did not receive the information packet I requested. What should I do?	3
1.2 I would like to visit the law school. What is the procedure?	4
2. Eligibility/TOEFL.....	4
2.1 What are the eligibility requirements for admission?	4
2.2 Is there a minimum grade-point average (G.P.A.) required?	4
2.3 What is your minimum TOEFL requirement?	4
2.4 I am taking the TOEFL exam but the test date may be after the application deadline. Can I still apply?	4
2.5 I took the TOEFL and my score is slightly below the minimum requirement. Am I still eligible for admission?	4
2.6 Does your program provide any English preparation courses?	4
2.7 I can take an English preparation course in the summer before beginning the program. Can I be granted conditional admission if my TOEFL score is below the minimum required score?	5
2.8 I have a first law degree from a non-English speaking university but I've been working at an English speaking company for several years. Am I exempt from taking the TOEFL?	5
2.9 I am from a country where English is the only official language. Can I be waived from the TOEFL requirement?	5
2.10 I am not from an English-speaking country but I went to law school in a country that is. Can I be waived from the TOEFL requirement?	5
2.11 Although my country is not officially only English-speaking, my university is, with English as the medium of instruction. Can I be waived from the TOEFL requirement?	5
2.12 I will graduate from my law school this summer. Am I eligible to apply for this coming fall?	5
2.13 I have a law degree from an online university. Am I eligible to apply?	6
2.14 I don't have a law degree but have worked in a law firm for several years. Am I eligible to apply?	6
2.15 I am a licensed lawyer. Am I eligible to apply?	6

2.16 I don't have a law degree, but I am a practicing patent attorney. Am I eligible for the LL.M. degree?	6
3. Applying	6
3.1 How do I apply?	6
3.2 Can I apply online?	6
3.3 Can I email my application documents to you?	7
3.4 Can I pay the application fee with a credit card?	7
3.5 How do I apply through LSAC?	7
3.6 When is the application deadline?	7
3.7 Do you have spring admission?	7
3.8 Does the LL.M. program have an early decision/early action process?	7
3.9 When may I submit my application?	7
3.10 I am unable to pay the application fee. Do you grant application fee waivers?	7
3.11 If I decide to withdraw my application after submission, can my application fee be refunded?	7
3.12 Do I need to include transcripts from all the schools I attended? What about certificate programs or high school diplomas?	8
3.13 Who should provide the recommendations?	8
3.14 Can I submit more than two letters of recommendation?	8
3.15 Do I have to submit the recommendation waiver forms?	8
3.16 What should my personal statement be about?	8
3.17 How long should my personal statement be?	8
3.18 Do you require a curriculum vitae or resume?	8
3.19 Do you require any additional application material?	8
3.20 Do you require an interview?	9
3.21 Do I have to disclose information about prior or pending criminal, disciplinary and/or academic problems in my application?	9
4. Admission	9
4.1 How can I check my application status?	9
4.2 How long after I submit my application should I expect to receive a decision?	9
4.3 Do I have a better chance of gaining admission if I apply early in the process?	9
4.4 Are my chances of gaining admission better if I apply to attend part-time rather than full-time? ...	9
4.5 If I am on the wait list, when can I expect to receive a final decision?	9
4.6 If I previously applied and was denied, can I reapply?	9
4.7 If I am admitted to the LL.M. program, how long do I have to decide whether I will attend?	10

4.8 What does the tuition deposit go towards?	10
4.9 If I send in my tuition deposit and then change my mind, will my deposit be refunded?	10
4.10 Can I defer?	10
5. Financial Aid	10
5.1 What forms of financial aid are offered?	10
5.2 How do I apply for a scholarship?	10
5.3 Are there any other forms of financial aid?	10
6. Cost of Study	11
6.1 What is the tuition for the LL.M. program?	11
6.2 What other expenses do I need to take into account?	11
6.3 What is the tuition for part-time students?	11
6.4 Am I eligible to work while I attend the LL.M. program?	11
7. Attendance	11
7.1 If I start the LL.M. program part-time, may I later change to full-time status? Or if I start full-time, can I later change to part-time?	11
7.2 I would like to transfer to the J.D. program after completing the LL.M. How is this done?	12
7.3 Can I enter as a non-degree student?	12
7.4 If I enter as a non-degree candidate, can I then transfer to the LL.M. program?	12
7.5 How long does it take to complete the LL.M. program?	12
7.6 If I begin the LL.M. at another school, may I transfer to GW's LL.M. program?	12
8. Student Life	12
8.1 What types of housing options are available?	12
8.2 Are there student organizations I may join?	12

1. Introduction to the law school

1.1 I did not receive the information packet I requested. What should I do?

It normally takes 2-4 weeks for an information packet to reach the recipient. If you do not receive it within this time period, please write to: igpo@law.gwu.edu.

In addition, you can access the latest issue of the [Law School Bulletin](#) online.

1.2 I would like to visit the law school. What is the procedure?

The Graduate Programs Office is staffed Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. except holidays when the university is closed. Any staff member would be happy to assist you and no appointment is necessary.

2. Eligibility/TOEFL

2.1 What are the eligibility requirements for admission?

We require all applicants to have a first law degree in good standing and proof of English language skills as demonstrated by an eligible score on the TOEFL or IELTS tests.

2.2 Is there a minimum grade-point average (G.P.A.) required?

No minimum G.P.A. is required. Applications are viewed holistically but successful applicants must have a superior academic record.

2.3 What is your minimum TOEFL requirement?

All eligible applicants must obtain a TOEFL score that meets or exceeds our minimum requirement of 100 on the TOEFL Internet-based test. We also accept the IELTS test with a minimum composite score of 7.0.

2.4 I am taking the TOEFL exam but the test date may be after the application deadline. Can I still apply?

To guarantee review of your application for the academic year for which you apply, we will need to receive your TOEFL score by our specified application deadlines.

2.5 I took the TOEFL and my score is slightly below the minimum requirement. Am I still eligible for admission?

If your TOEFL score is below the minimum requirement, we encourage you to re-take the test. You can send in your application and we are happy to hold it for review until you receive the required minimum score.

2.6 Does your program provide any English preparation courses?

No, we do not; however, there are English preparation courses outside the university, some of which include:

[The Institute for U.S. Law \(IUSLAW\)](#)

[Georgetown University, Center for Language Education and Development](#)

[LADO International College](#)

2.7 I can take an English preparation course in the summer before beginning the program. Can I be granted conditional admission if my TOEFL score is below the minimum required score?

We do not offer conditional admission. Admission is based on the credentials presented at the time of application. Strong applicants will meet or exceed eligibility requirements.

2.8 I have a first law degree from a non-English speaking university but I've been working at an English speaking company for several years. Am I exempt from taking the TOEFL?

No, the TOEFL is required for all applicants who did not receive their law degrees from a university or college where English is the sole medium of instruction.

2.9 I am from a country where English is the only official language. Can I be waived from the TOEFL requirement?

If you have a first law degree from a country where English is the only official language and the medium of instruction, you are automatically exempt from the TOEFL requirement.

2.10 I am not from an English-speaking country but I went to law school in a country that is. Can I be waived from the TOEFL requirement?

If you have a first law degree from a country where English is the only official language and the medium of instruction, you are automatically exempt from the TOEFL requirement.

2.11 Although my country is not officially only English-speaking, my university is, with English as the medium of instruction. Can I be waived from the TOEFL requirement?

If you have a law degree from an English-speaking institution but not a country where English is the official language, ensure that your transcript states that English is the medium of instruction or obtain such documentation from your university dean or registrar stating that "English is the sole medium of instruction" and you will be granted a TOEFL waiver.

2.12 I will graduate from my law school this summer. Am I eligible to apply for this coming fall?

If you will have completed all your coursework by the time you would start the LL.M. degree in mid-August, you may be eligible to apply for the fall semester; however, once you graduate, you will need to submit proof that you have been granted your degree either by providing an official transcript or official letter from your dean or registrar. Otherwise please apply for the following fall.

2.13 I have a law degree from an online university. Am I eligible to apply?

An eligible applicant must have a first law degree that was earned from a recognized institution outside the U.S. with classroom instruction. Generally, degrees from other kinds of universities do not meet our eligibility requirements.

2.14 I don't have a law degree but have worked in a law firm for several years. Am I eligible to apply?

An applicant must have a law degree to be eligible for admission.

2.15 I am a licensed lawyer. Am I eligible to apply?

Yes, licensed lawyers are eligible to apply. Being a licensed lawyer may increase an applicant's admission possibilities but only if the person already meets our minimum eligibility requirements; however, work experience alone does not qualify one for admission.

2.16 I don't have a law degree, but I am a practicing patent attorney. Am I eligible for the LL.M. degree?

We have a program specifically for patent attorneys without law degrees, the [Master of Science in Laws in Intellectual Property Law](#).

3. Applying

3.1 How do I apply?

The following materials are required for applying:

- 1) [Application form](#) and application fee of \$USD 80.
- 2) Personal statement
- 3) 2 letters of recommendation
- 4) Official transcript(s) with English translations, if applicable
- 5) Resume or CV
- 6) TOEFL or IELTS score (If applicable.) Please arrange for ETS or the British Council to send your score to us. Our institution and department code from the TOEFL is 5246-03.
- 7) [Scholarship application](#) and essay (if you would like to be considered for scholarship)

Application material should be sent to:

Graduate and International Programs
The George Washington University
Law School
2000 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20052

3.2 Can I apply online?

You can apply online through LSAC.

3.3 Can I email my application documents to you?

We cannot accept any emailed documents. Please either apply online at lsac.org or mail your documents to our H Street address above.

3.4 Can I pay the application fee with a credit card?

If you apply through LSAC, you pay the Law School application fee by credit card. Please note that applying through LSAC requires paying additional fees for LSAC services. If you are applying through paper, we can only accept checks, money orders or bank drafts drawn on US currency. We cannot accept wire transfers or cash for application fees.

3.5 How do I apply through LSAC?

Applying through LSAC allows you to send all your application material, including your letters of recommendations to LSAC for compilation. It is not obligatory to apply through LSAC, and it makes no difference to the review of your application. We do not require the Transcript Authentication and Evaluation Service. If you apply through LSAC, you do not have to send any of your supporting documents directly to us.

3.6 When is the application deadline?

- **March 1** for **scholarship consideration** for fall admission (All application materials along with the scholarship application and essay must be submitted by this deadline.)
- **March 15** for regular consideration for fall admission (All application materials must be submitted by this deadline.)

3.7 Do you have spring admission?

We do not offer spring admission for non-U.S. law school graduates; we only accept students for fall intake. Graduates of U.S. law schools may start in the spring semester.

3.8 Does the LL.M. program have an early decision/early action process?

No early decision or early action process is available; we admit on a rolling basis.

3.9 When may I submit my application?

Applicants may start submitting their applications in September of each year for entry the following fall.

3.10 I am unable to pay the application fee. Do you grant application fee waivers?

Although it is not guaranteed, we may consider you for a fee waiver if you include with your application a brief letter stating your reasons for seeking a fee waiver.

3.11 If I decide to withdraw my application after submission, can my application fee be refunded?

No, application fees are nonrefundable.

3.12 Do I need to include transcripts from all the schools I attended? What about certificate programs or high school diplomas?

We require original or notarized copies of transcripts from all post-secondary institutions of study (law schools), whether or not a degree was received. The transcripts must be accompanied by certified English translations. In addition, we also need verification of any post-secondary certificate programs you have completed. We do not require transcripts from secondary or primary institutions.

3.13 Who should provide the recommendations?

We prefer to have at least one recommendation from a professor or personnel from your previous law school who is able to evaluate your academic abilities. If you have been out of school for several years, it is acceptable for both of your recommendations to be from supervisors in employment, preferably in the law field. Do not submit recommendations from relatives or friends.

3.14 Can I submit more than two letters of recommendation?

We require two letters of recommendation. You may submit additional recommendations if you feel strongly that doing so will enhance the quality of your application.

3.15 Do I have to submit the recommendation waiver forms?

Yes, you are required to submit the recommendation waiver form for each recommendation that you submit. It indicates whether you choose to waive your rights to see the recommendation letter or not.

3.16 What should my personal statement be about?

It should include any information that may be helpful to the admissions committee in their evaluation of your application, such as reasons you wish to pursue graduate study, a discussion of your background, or an explanation of any unusual aspects of your academic record.

3.17 How long should my personal statement be?

A typical personal statement is 2-3 pages.

3.18 Do you require a curriculum vitae or resume?

Yes, please include a curriculum vitae or resume that highlights your professional, academic and extracurricular experiences.

3.19 Do you require any additional application material?

No additional application material is required for admission consideration other than what was listed above. Additional material is considered supplemental and will be reviewed after first reviewing your required application documents but they do not guarantee admission.

3.20 Do you require an interview?

An interview is not required to review your application although you may request one if you feel it may help further explain some aspects of your application. Please e-mail igpo@law.gwu.edu with a your request.

3.21 Do I have to disclose information about prior or pending criminal, disciplinary and/or academic problems in my application?

Yes, failure to disclose such information may cause your admission to be rescinded.

4. Admission

4.1 How can I check my application status?

After we receive your application, you will be given access to the [Application Status Online](#) checker. You will be given a login and password that you can use to check your status online.

4.2 How long after I submit my application should I expect to receive a decision?

All applications are reviewed on a rolling basis, meaning, the earlier we receive an application that is complete with all required supporting documentation, the sooner you will receive a decision. It typically takes admissions 2-4 weeks to issue a decision. We will notify you via e-mail and then mail you your decision letter.

4.3 Do I have a better chance of gaining admission if I apply early in the process?

Admission is granted solely on the strength of your application record. Although we do not have an early decision deadline, the earlier you apply, the sooner you will receive a decision but this does not guarantee a better chance of admission.

4.4 Are my chances of gaining admission better if I apply to attend part-time rather than full-time?

Candidates requesting an F-1 or J-1 student visa cannot apply to attend part-time because of visa restrictions. We use the same admission standards for both part-time and full-time study so applicants' chances of admission are the same regardless of whether they attend part-time or full-time.

4.5 If I am on the wait list, when can I expect to receive a final decision?

If you have been placed on the wait list, we will try our best to issue you a response as soon as possible, but no later than May or June.

4.6 If I previously applied and was denied, can I reapply?

Yes, you may reapply, but we will require a new application with any new information on how your candidacy has changed.

4.7 If I am admitted to the LL.M. program, how long do I have to decide whether I will attend?

When you receive your admissions letter, you will be given an acceptance deadline date for you to confirm your attendance with a \$500 tuition deposit, after which date your seat in the program will no longer be held.

4.8 What does the tuition deposit go towards?

Tuition deposits are credited towards your first semester of tuition.

4.9 If I send in my tuition deposit and then change my mind, will my deposit be refunded?

No, tuition deposits are nonrefundable.

4.10 Can I defer?

You may defer your admission to the following academic year if you provide written notice to our office of your intention to defer and the reason for the request.

5. Financial Aid

5.1 What forms of financial aid are offered?

The following scholarships are available for international LL.M. applicants:

- **Thomas Buerghenthal Scholarship** covers full or partial tuition and is awarded on the basis of academic merit and financial need.
- **Ben Gupta Endowed Fund for International Legal Education** provides need-based scholarships to students from the developing world.
- **The Licks Attorneys LLM Scholarship** provides tuition assistance to Brazilian law school graduates.
- **Richard P. Momsen Fun for Brazilian Law Graduates** provides tuition assistance to Brazilian law students with a special interest in U.S. constitutional law or intellectual property law.

These scholarships cover tuition only.

5.2 How do I apply for a scholarship?

To apply for these scholarships, applicants must submit their entire application with the statement of purpose, [scholarship application](#) with a separate essay and all supporting documentation no later than March 1.

5.3 Are there any other forms of financial aid?

No other forms of aid are offered through our program. Candidates are encouraged to look for outside sources of aid for international students:

- [EduPASS](#)

- [Iranian American Bar Association](#)
- [TOEFL Scholarship](#)

If you are a U.S. citizen or permanent resident, you are eligible for federal financial aid. Please contact the Law School financial aid office at finaid@law.gwu.edu or visit [FAFSA](#).

6. Cost of Study

6.1 What is the tuition for the LL.M. program?

Tuition is based on credit hour. The LL.M. program requires 24 credits. For the 2016- 2017 year, the cost per credit is \$1,980.00 for a total program cost of \$47,520.

6.2 What other expenses do I need to take into account?

Living expenses for the duration of the one-year program based on 2016-2017 costs are estimated to be a minimum of \$20,850. Students should also plan to take into account \$500 for books and \$2,650 for required health insurance. Students requesting an F-1 or J-1 visa from The George Washington University will need to show the availability to pay for the total cost of their study and living expenses.

6.3 What is the tuition for part-time students?

The tuition for part-time students is the same as that for full-time students: \$1,980 per credit, with 24 credits required to complete the program. Students who attend part-time must complete the program within two years. Students who require an F-1 or J-1 visa are not permitted to attend school part-time due to visa restrictions.

6.4 Am I eligible to work while I attend the LL.M. program?

Students on an F-1 or J-1 visa may only work on campus and for no more than 20 hours per week. U.S. citizens or permanent residents, or those with legal permits to work in the U.S. are allowed to work with no restrictions.

7. Attendance

7.1 If I start the LL.M. program part-time, may I later change to full-time status? Or if I start full-time, can I later change to part-time?

Only students who do not require an F-1 or J-1 visa may apply to attend part-time. Some part-time students may switch to full-time although it may take additional time to complete the program. Similarly, students who begin full-time may drop down to part-time status after having received permission from the director. Students who attend part-time have a limit of two years to complete the program.

7.2 I would like to transfer to the J.D. program after completing the LL.M. How is this done?

Although highly competitive, it is possible to apply for a transfer to the J.D. program. An applicant must notify the J.D. admissions office in writing by November 1, successfully complete at least one course from the required J.D. curriculum during their first semester of LL.M. enrollment and take the LSAT no later than December. The applicant must also request that Graduate and International Programs send all previous academic records and TOEFL scores to the J.D. admissions office by February

7.3 Can I enter as a non-degree student?

A limited number of law school graduates may be admitted on a case-by-case basis in non-degree status to take up to 6 hours of credit. Applicants should contact Graduate and International Programs for directions. Entrance requirements for non-degree students are the same as those for degree candidates.

7.4 If I enter as a non-degree candidate, can I then transfer to the LL.M. program?

Non-degree students who subsequently apply for and are granted admission to a graduate program as a degree candidate may have the credits earned at the Law School applied toward degree requirements; however, admission as a degree candidate is not guaranteed. Enrollment in individual courses as a non-degree student will depend on space availability.

7.5 How long does it take to complete the LL.M. program?

The LL.M. program takes one academic year to complete, that is, two semesters, fall and spring, if you attend full-time. If you attend part-time, you have a limit of two years to complete the program.

7.6 If I begin the LL.M. at another school, may I transfer to GW's LL.M. program?

No, we do not accept transfer credits from any other LL.M. program.

8. Student Life

8.1 What types of housing options are available?

[GW Housing](#) office offers accommodations for graduate law students in two buildings, Columbia Plaza and the The Aston. Most students find and/or share off-campus apartments in the Foggy Bottom or nearby areas. In addition, the subway system makes it easy to live in Arlington, Virginia, or the Maryland suburbs and ride into campus.

8.2 Are there student organizations I may join?

GW Law hosts more than 60 [student organizations](#).