

Legal Administrative Specialist

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

This intensive program covers many aspects of the legal profession. Students will learn the proper procedures and terminology used in the legal system. Subject areas will include wills and estates, real estate, corporate and commercial law, civil litigation, and family law. Students will also enhance their keyboarding and transcription skills, and receive extensive hands-on training in word processing.

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

As a legal administrative assistant, the graduate can be the vital link between the lawyer and the client. This program, in conjunction with strong interpersonal and communication skills and a professional and self-confident attitude prepares the graduate for a career in either a large legal organization or a small legal practice. Every office needs well-trained support staff – the challenges and opportunities are therefore endless.

PREREQUISITES

- Grade 12 or equivalent or mature student status
- Clear Conduct Certificate

GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A student must obtain an overall grade, in each module of at least 70% in order to graduate and receive a diploma. A student must complete all requirements of Student Success Strategies as well as the Field Placement requirements.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Course	Hours
Student Success Strategies	20
Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals	40
Software Lab: Word Processing	40
Software Lab: Spreadsheets	40
Software Lab: Presentations	40
Software Lab: Database Management	40
General Law Office Procedures	20
Civil Litigation	60
Corporate and Commercial Law	40
Family Law Level I	40
Wills and Estates Level I	20
Real Estate Law Level I	60
Principles of Canadian Law and Legal Terminology	20
Document Formatting	80
Business Math	40
Writing for Comprehension	40
Image Development	20
Business Communications	80
Office Skills	80
Bookkeeping Fundamentals	40
Career Planning and Preparation Level I	20
Career Planning and Preparation Level II	20
Field Placement	8 Weeks
TOTAL WEEKS	53

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COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Student Success Strategies

In this orientation module, emphasis is placed on thinking about achieving success from Day One. This module stresses the importance of developing non-technical skills to enhance personal, academic, and career success. This includes understanding learning styles and honing practical study skills, such as memory, reading, note-and test-taking techniques. Personal exercises will focus on teamwork, decision making and problem solving skills, setting SMART goals and maintaining a positive attitude; techniques for managing change, stress and conflict will also be explored.

Software Lab: Computer Fundamentals

Through a combination of theory and hands-on-practice, this module examines the role and use of the computer in today's workplace. Emphasis is placed on those computers outfitted with the Microsoft Windows operating system. Students will review basic computer concepts, Windows OS usage, and complete hands-on training exercises in business-standard software applications, including Microsoft Outlook and Microsoft Word. Keyboarding skills are also honed via daily keyboarding exercises and drills.

Software Lab: Word Processing

This software lab module consists of online training and assessment in Microsoft Word, and builds on the skills introduced in Computer Fundamentals. Students learn a comprehensive set of skills, with coverage including formatting text for layout and appearance, formatting document sections, using styles, working with header/footer content, inserting and formatting tables, graphics and pictures, working with templates and themes, using advanced editing features, and working with mailing tools.

Software Lab: Spreadsheets

This software lab module consists of online training and assessment in Microsoft Excel. Students learn a comprehensive set of skills, with coverage including creating, formatting and printing worksheets, creating simple and advanced formulas, using mathematical, logical, statistical and financial functions, creating and modifying charts and pivot tables, and using data tools.

Software Lab: Presentations

This software lab module consists of online training and assessment in Microsoft PowerPoint. Students learn a comprehensive set of skills centered around the creation of attractive, professional-looking presentations. Students learn how to effectively use and format animations, transitions, pictures, audio, video, charts and tables, as well incorporate speaker notes and annotations into their presentations.

Software Lab: Database Management

This software lab module consists of online training and assessment in Microsoft Access. Students learn a comprehensive set of skills, including creating and modifying database tables, defining table relationships, sorting data, creating simple and advanced queries, creating and formatting forms and reports, and creating and running macros.

General Law Office Procedures

This module introduces the student to the law-office environment and the day-to-day procedures affecting all support staff. The effective operation of a transcription system is also covered and students gain an awareness of practical skills necessary to be a competent legal administrative assistant. Topics

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include the role of the lawyer and the role of legal support staff, the principle of confidentiality, trust versus general accounting, the tickler (reminder) system, file management, time sheets, telephone techniques, managing accounts, legal correspondence, legal letter composition and punctuation, memoranda and legal instruments.

Civil Litigation

In this module students are introduced to the court system within the province. Subjects include the basic rules of the court, the processing of a civil action from the originating process to The Bill of Costs, the procedural steps of applications as well as the procedural steps of motion proceedings. Details of procedures and documents used in actions, applications, introductory proceedings and procedures (issuing, service, filing, and entry) are examined.

Corporate and Commercial Law

This module introduces the various forms of business ownership, including proprietorships and partnerships, franchises, licenses, and joint ventures, along with the steps required to incorporate, including incorporation and organization procedures, maintenance of the minute book and post incorporation matters, corporate structure and corporate documentation. Additionally, basic legal procedures and documents associated with buying and selling business assets, commercial transactions and instruments, along with the registration of a security interest in personal property, including the Personal Property Security Act, are discussed.

Family Law Level I

This module offers an overview of the legal principles governing the drafting, preparation, and execution of domestic contracts and the processing of all types of divorce proceedings, as well as familiarization with family law proceedings. Specific topics include court jurisdictions, defended and undefended divorces, the Family Relations Act and domestic contracts.

Wills and Estates Level I

This module provides an overview of the legal principles and practices governing the making of a will. Students will learn the terminology used in wills, the steps in preparation and execution of the will along with the process of obtaining letters and administering the estate. Other topics include estate planning, intestacy, codicils, holograph wills, grant of letters probate and grant of letters of administration, transmission of assets, the roles of the Wills Act, Wills Variation Act, and the Estate Administration Act as well as understanding of the role of the law firm and personal representatives.

Real Estate Law Level I

This module focuses on the acquisition, sale, and mortgaging of residential property and all related documentation. Students will understand the role of the legal administrative assistant when representing a purchaser or vendor. Topics include the land registry system, the contract of purchase and sale, transfer of an estate in fee simple, statement as to citizenship, purchase and sale transactions, purchase tax return, statement of adjustments, mortgage transactions, related affidavits, declarations and certificates, as well as typical types of correspondence.

Principles of Canadian Law and Legal Terminology

This is the final Legal Specialization Level I module of the program and represents a comprehensive review of all previous legal modules. This review illustrates the intertwining nature and degree of overlap

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between the various areas of law and helps students prepare for the comprehensive final examination. For Paralegal students, this module also serves as preparation for the Legal Specialization Level II modules.

Document Formatting

Students practice identifying and applying standard formatting to a variety of typical business documents, while continuing to develop their keyboarding speed and accuracy along with their proofreading skills. Formatting of business documents includes practice with block-style and modified block-style letters, memoranda, reports bound and unbound, reports with lists and displayed text, memo style reports, formal reports (including title page, table of contents, bibliography, etc.), purchase orders, press releases, agendas, minutes of meetings, itineraries and various types of envelopes. Keyboarding drills and timings, as well as practice with language arts, are also included.

Business Math

This module provides the students with an understanding of arithmetic, mathematics, and measurements used in common business and industry environments. At the end of the module the student will be able to define whole numbers, fractions, decimals and percentages; become familiar with equations and formulae; and learn the use of graphs.

Writing for Comprehension

Through lectures, textbook exercises, and classroom labs, this module teaches students the skills and knowledge necessary to apply basic business writing skills when creating various memos; routine letters; good news letters; persuasive and bad news letters; presentations; and meeting agendas.

Image Development

This module teaches the student how to develop and manage a professional image. Topics include: appearance-visual and verbal, interpersonal interaction, business etiquette, and networking skills. At the end of the module, students will have an appreciation and understanding of the importance of a professional image in the business environment.

Business Communications

Excellent communication skills are essential in the smooth operation of a business office. In this module, the emphasis is not on the memorization of the rules governing the English language but on the application of basic conventions to produce grammatically correct communications. With this emphasis on clear expression of thought and intent, topics covered include grammar, spelling, punctuation, proofreading and editing, the communication process, written and oral communication techniques, overcoming communication barriers, written and oral routine orders, inquiries and replies, delivering good and bad news; communication within an organization (upward, lateral, and downward) and using technology as a communication tool (fax, email and messaging).

Office Skills

The daily routines of a modern business office are examined, and the skills necessary to assist in the smooth operation of the office are presented. A variety of learning methods may be used including lecture, discussion, role-plays, case studies and work simulations. Topics include the role of office support personnel, professional and reception skills, information management, incoming and outgoing mail procedures and office filing systems.

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Bookkeeping Fundamentals

This module introduces fundamental bookkeeping principles and practices for small businesses. Students will study the accounting equation, account categories, the debit and credit system of bookkeeping, and correcting entries. Regular business transactions and adjusting journal entries are recorded, and the trial balance and basic financial statements are prepared.

Career Planning and Preparation Level I

This module introduces tools for planning and preparing for a successful job search, so that students can maintain a career-focused approach throughout their education program. Students will learn about the "Hidden" Job Market and ways to access it in their upcoming job search, how to research opportunities and network for industry contacts, and use appropriate etiquette when communicating with prospective employers. Students will identify their personal skills, values and preferences for the workplace, begin preparation of a professional resume and references, and organize proof documents for their career portfolio. Class discussions on various self-management topics introduced in Student Success Strategies will round out this module, which is a pre-requisite for Career Planning and Preparation - Level II.

Career Planning and Preparation Level II

This module continues to build on the concepts and skills introduced in Career Planning and Preparation - Level I. Students will learn how to conduct an effective job search and identify various methods of applying for work with today's technology. Students will create a personal list of "Top Employers" and target current industry opportunities, while finalizing their professional resume, portfolio and career correspondence. Students will learn to identify the different types and forms of interviews, practice responding to typical questions, and practice follow-up, evaluation and negotiation techniques they can use to ensure success. Self-management topics from Career Planning and Preparation - Level I will be reviewed, with a focus towards on-the-job success in both learner placements and post-graduate employment.

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