

# CHOOSE LAW



[WWW.LAW.UCT.AC.ZA](http://WWW.LAW.UCT.AC.ZA)

# Application & Admission

*All the information you need about how to apply to study at UCT's Faculty of Law is available in this booklet.*

UCT's Faculty of Law receives a large number of applications from prospective students hoping to study Law. Due to the limited number of places, the university is not able to admit all those who apply, and only the best applicants will be made an offer. Although the application process is very competitive, we encourage those with an interest in Law and who want to study Law to apply to UCT – if you don't apply, you can't be considered for a place in the Faculty of Law!

When applying to UCT, you will need to select the Faculty in which you wish to study, and you will then need to select the degree programme for which you are applying. UCT offers applicants a first choice and a second choice of degree when applying, and applicants are strongly advised to pick a second option.

For international students, it is important to note that there are limited places available for international applicants on the LLB programme. It is also **very important for international students to note that obtaining an LLB from a South African university, including UCT, does not entitle non-citizens to be admitted to legal practice in South Africa.**

Read this booklet carefully, and also have a look at our Faculty website for more information at [www.law.uct.ac.za/applying-uct-law](http://www.law.uct.ac.za/applying-uct-law). We look forward to receiving your application!

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## Admission to the “Combined Stream LLB” – this is a Humanities or Commerce Bachelor’s with a law major

Applicants wanting to do a combined stream LLB (with law subjects as part of their undergraduate degree and where the LLB degree programme is a two-year course undertaken after the first degree) must apply to the Faculty in which their undergraduate degree is located. Applicants to the Humanities and Commerce Faculties must meet the admission requirements of those Faculties.

Students who wish to do a major in law can only begin taking law subjects **in their second year of study**. Students are not automatically permitted to do these law subjects. The number of places available on the law major stream is limited and varies from year to year. Places are offered on a competitive basis to candidates with the highest first-year results and in accordance with the Law Faculty’s redress enrolment targets.

To be eligible for consideration for possible (but not guaranteed) admission to the law major stream of the BA/BSocSc or BCom/BBusSci degrees, candidates must either have achieved sufficient points in the NSC (or matric equivalent) and National Benchmark Tests to have qualified for admission to the four-year undergraduate LLB degree in their first year of study

OR

they must have attained an average of at least 65% in the case of Humanities students and 63% in the case of Commerce students on a first sitting of a full first year course load totaling at least 144 credits for Humanities students and 164 credits for Commerce students.

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**Note:** The 65% first year GPA for Humanities students and 63% first year GPA for Commerce students is the minimum requirement for a candidate to be eligible for consideration for a place on the law major on a competitive basis. It does not guarantee a place.

Given the large number of candidates who apply for the law major and the fact that places are limited and are offered on a competitive basis to candidates with the highest GPAs, it is likely that a candidate will require a GPA well above 65% or 63% to be offered a place on the law major.

UCT Humanities and Commerce students doing law subjects must apply during their final year to the Law Faculty for admission to the 2-year graduate LLB degree. This is the same application process as when applying for any degree programme at UCT. Performance in the Law courses may be taken into account and students must obtain a minimum cumulative GPA of at least 60% to be considered on a competitive basis for possible admission, taking into account the UCT's admissions policy.

**Remember:** if you are wanting to do a combined stream LLB, you need to apply to the Faculty in which your undergraduate or first degree programme sits – for example, if you want to do a BCom LLB, then you need to select the Faculty of Commerce for admission for your undergraduate studies.

## Admission to the undergraduate LLB

For the four-year straight LLB degree, applicants must specify the Faculty of Law when applying to University of Cape Town. All such applications are assessed on the basis of applicants' results in the National Senior Certificate (NSC) or other school-leaving examination, together with results in both the Academic Literacy and Quantitative Literacy components of the National Benchmark Tests (NBTs).

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## Admission to the three-year graduate LLB

For the three-year graduate LLB degree, applicants must select the Faculty of Law when applying.

**Please note:** This LLB programme is listed as **an undergraduate degree, and must be applied for in the Undergraduate section of UCT's application platform**. Applicants can only be considered for admission to this stream if they are a graduate of UCT or of another university or institution recognised by UCT.

Applicants must obtain a minimum cumulative average of at least 65% in a standard undergraduate degree to be considered for possible admission to the graduate LLB (This average is calculated from your results over of all years of your undergraduate degree), and, secondary school-leaving results will also be considered. Places are limited and are allocated to applicants with the highest cumulative GPA and Weighted Point Score (WPS) on a competitive basis and in accordance with the University's admissions policy. Given the large number of applicants and the limited number of places, it is likely that applicants will require a higher cumulative GPA and WPS to actually receive place.

Prominent UCT Law graduates include Justices Kate O'Regan and Albie Sachs, formerly of the Constitutional Court; Judges Fikile Bam, Dennis Davis, Shehnaz Meer, Vincent Saldahna & Owen Rogers; the late Minister of Justice, Dullah Omar; and other well-known legal figures such as Norman Arendse, Fink Haysom & Dumisa Ntsebeza.

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# Requirements for 2026

## Admissions Bands

Offers are considered by the Law Faculty according to three different admissions bands. These are Bands A, B and C as in the table below.

Applicants' NSC (or matric equivalent) results are converted into a Faculty Points Score (FPS), a score out of 600 calculated by adding together an applicant's six matric subject marks (excluding Life Orientation).

For applicants who have socio-economic disadvantage related to home and/or schooling circumstance, a Weighted Point Score (WPS) will also be considered alongside the FPS and National Benchmark Test results.

The Faculty also has a redress category, with a lower FPS requirement than the general category, to ensure that those with historical disadvantage stand a fair chance of admission to UCT Law.

This ensures greater fairness in the assessment and admission process.

## The National Benchmark Tests

All applicants to UCT who are normally resident in or at school in South Africa are required to write the National Benchmark Tests (NBTs) in Academic Literacy and Quantitative Literacy (the AQL test). The results of an applicant's NBTs are considered as part of an application.

**PLEASE NOTE:** applicants do not need to complete the Maths NBT for admission to Law. International applicants are not required to write these tests.

## Graduate applicants and National Benchmark Tests

Applicants to the 3-year graduate LLB programme are not required to write the NBTs.

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## Admission Bands

BAND	ELIGIBLE	ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS
Band A FPS	All SA applicants	<b>Guaranteed admission</b> <b>FPS:</b> 500 or above <b>NBT:</b> AL (proficient) QL (Intermediate)
Band B WPS	All SA applicants	<b>Probable admission</b> Weighted Points Score (only in Band B) – this will be determined by weighting the FPS by your disadvantage factor. You will be able to see this factor during the application process <b>WPS:</b> 500 or above <b>NBT:</b> AL (proficient) QL (Intermediate)
Band C FPS	Only SA applicants in targeted redress categories	<b>Possible admission</b> <b>FPS:</b> 470 or above <b>NBT:</b> AL (proficient) QL (Intermediate)
No Band	International applicants with NSC	<b>Probable admission</b> <b>FPS:</b> 510 or above <b>NBT:</b> AL (proficient) QL (Intermediate)

## Disadvantage Factor and Weighted Point Score

[For further information regarding the FPS and WPS, please consult p.17 in the 2027 UCT Undergraduate Prospectus.](#)

## Transferring/ Non-SA students

International applicants or students wishing to transfer from another Faculty within UCT or from another university should contact the Law Faculty Office on [law-studies@uct.ac.za](mailto:law-studies@uct.ac.za) for details on the application and

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admissions process.

[For further information regarding the international entrance requirements, please consult p.62 in the 2027 UCT Undergraduate Prospectus.](#)

[For information on transferring into Law studies, further information is available on p.63 of the 2027 UCT Undergraduate Prospectus.](#)

## Conditional and early offers of a place on the LLB programme

Conditional offers will usually be made only once two sets of internal school examination results and the NBT results are available. In exceptional cases, where the applicant is unable to write the NBTs and the school results that are available place the applicant in Band A or Band B, a conditional offer may be made on the basis of the FPS results alone. Such applicants will still be required to write the NBTs before the offer is made final. The last opportunity to do so will be in October in your year of application, so please visit the NBT site to find out test dates and requirements - <https://www.nbt.ac.za/>.

**Please note:** the NBTs are run centrally as a national initiative and are not administered by the University of Cape Town.

## Scholarships

The Faculty of Law offers a number of scholarships annually, that are awarded on the basis of academic merit. These scholarships are specifically to address transformation of both the Faculty and the legal profession more broadly, and are therefore focused toward students from historical disadvantage. These scholarships are highly competitive and can be applied for – see the Faculty website for information at [www.law.uct.ac.za/scholarship-funding](http://www.law.uct.ac.za/scholarship-funding), and for links to the UCT

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booklet on undergraduate funding which includes additional external bursary opportunities for which law students may be eligible.

**Please note:** The Faculty is only able to award scholarships to students who already have a year of UCT Law courses on their transcript.

The Faculty also awards a small number of merit-based entrance scholarships on the basis of school-leaving examination and NBT results. These are awarded at the discretion of the Faculty and cannot be applied for. Further information about conditions and eligibility is available at <https://uct.ac.za/dsa/student-funding-administration-scholarships/entrance-scholarships>

## NSFAS – National Student Financial Assistance Scheme

The NSFAS funding scheme is a national government initiative that is run external to UCT and those students seeking funding support for their studies must apply to NSFAS directly via their platform at [www.nsfas.org.za](http://www.nsfas.org.za). For additional funding information related to attending UCT, please consult <https://uct.ac.za/dsa/student-financial-aid>.

**PLEASE NOTE: NSFAS only supports the 4-year undergraduate LLB, and does not currently fund the graduate LLB programmes.** A loan-scheme was initiated in 2024 for students of graduate programmes who meet certain financial criteria – further information is available at the NSFAS link above.

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# Why Law?

There are many reasons why people choose to study Law. These include, amongst many others, being able to earn a good, secure living (because at some point, everybody needs a lawyer); status, as a traditional profession with good income potential; acquiring the skills to make a difference in the world; using Law to ensure access to justice amongst marginalised communities; having the knowledge and skills to make a real impact in specialised areas of commerce – eg. shipping, tax and contracts; contributing to the quality and security of people’s lives by ensuring they have their personal legal documentation in order; and contributing to academic knowledge about how the law is developed, practiced, implemented and accessed. These are just a few reasons.

Many students come to study Law, knowing with certainty that they want to work in the Law sector. These students don’t usually require convincing or persuasion, and may have had a long-time passion for and interest in Law. This can often arise from life experience – for example, someone who has seen and experienced injustice first-hand may be committed to spending their lives working for justice.

For those who aren’t sure what they want to study, and who perhaps have a choice of offers from a university, here are a few good reasons why studying Law is an excellent choice:

## **Make a difference**

Law is one route to contributing to changing and improving people’s lives, by ensuring access to justice for those who are not able to afford legal fees, and by providing legal advice and representation to marginalised communities.

## **Combine theory and practice**

All Law schools seek to ensure that students learn, understand and can argue legal theory and the theoretical underpinnings of the Law. However, some Law schools (such as UCT) also ensure that practical experience in Law is a core component of

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the degree programme – for example, running mock courts and moot competitions. Central to the UCT Law programme is pro bono community service that students are required to do as part of their qualification.

## Make the case

Law education is about cases – actual examples of cases that have been argued and judged in a real court. Cases are used to demonstrate various theoretical points and how theory is applied in practice. This approach also serves to maintain an understanding of how the law is applied in practice.

## Follow a skilled professional path

Good law schools will ensure that their graduates have a minimum set of competences and skills. Here are a few of the skills essential to a career in Law:

- *Critical analysis* – being able to read, understand, analyse and make up your own mind
- *Writing* – being able to draft a clear written argument
- *Research* – being able to find relevant case law in support of a legal argument
- *Argument and presentation* – being able clearly to formulate and argue your position or point (often taught through moot competitions in and between law schools).
- *Sharing ideas* – it is required in Law that you are able to argue complex ideas in simple terms, so that not only other law professionals but also your clients are able to understand you.

All of these skills – and the many others you will learn at Law school – are in high demand in other sectors, so moving industries or professional focus from Law to something else after graduation is relatively easy, adding to Law graduates' mobility in terms of career, income potential and other factors in choosing your course of study.

We call these “transferable skills” as they are useful in many contexts and make the LLB a flexible qualification and a **great career choice**.

## In high demand

Law graduates enjoy excellent career prospects. The rigour of a Law school

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education, and the range of skills in which excellence is required for graduation, ensures that law graduates are sought after across a range of areas.

### Clear career pathways

There are a number of options for those graduating with a Law degree – including doing a postgraduate Law Masters (LLM), taking up a position as a candidate attorney at a law firm or doing a Legal Practice course, for example.

## Careers in Law

To become an attorney or an advocate you need an LLB (Bachelor of Laws) degree. An LLB is the universal general qualification for the practice of law, although the content of LLB programmes differs from country to country, and from university to university.

At the University of Cape Town, students are taught the fundamentals of South African law and the South African legal system. At the same time, students are taught three crucial skills, namely:

- to read, comprehend and critically evaluate complex documents
- to write clearly, logically, coherently and succinctly
- to analyse and solve problems with a good grasp of the issues, options and implications.

Some of the many possible law-based career paths are set out below.

**Academic:** A Bachelor of Laws (LLB) is the first step to an academic career. The LLB is equivalent to an Honours degree, and UCT does not therefore offer an Honours degree in Law. LLB graduates wishing to study further would continue into the Master of Laws (LLM) or Postgraduate Diploma programmes. These options offer a very broad range of **post**graduate courses from which to select a

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specialisation. LLB graduates could then continue on to do a PhD degree.

**Advocate:** An LLB graduate wanting to become an advocate must undergo one year's training (called “pupillage”) with a practising Advocate who would be a member of the Bar. The “pupil” then has to write an examination and, if they pass, would be admitted to the Bar. Only South African citizens and permanent residents can be admitted as advocates in South Africa. The work of an advocate generally involves research, drafting opinions and pleadings, and presenting cases in court, most often - though not exclusively - in the High Court. Advocates must be briefed or instructed by attorneys, and do not take instruction from members of the public.

**Attorney:** For an LLB graduate to become an attorney, they need to do their “articles” at a law firm – which means serving as a candidate attorney with a practising attorney. After this, candidate attorneys write a professional examination set by the relevant provincial law society to become an attorney. Only South African citizens and permanent residents can be admitted as attorneys in South Africa. Attorneys' work includes drafting legal documents, negotiating settlements of disputes, and preparing cases for presentation in court. Attorneys take instructions from members of the public and, if necessary, may brief or seek an opinion from an advocate.

**Business:** Law graduates are employed across the whole business spectrum, from small firms to large corporations, for example as legal advisors in tax, real estate, labour relations, contracts, public information, mergers & acquisitions, and other areas. Lawyers are forensic auditors and ombudsmen, ethics and employment officers, policy and legislative analysts, legal editors, researchers and writers. There is a world of options around what kind of company to work in, what sort of business sector to position oneself in, and where a law graduate could best apply their skills.

**Government:** Government departments at national, provincial and local levels all employ lawyers as do the National Parliament, provincial legislatures and municipal councils. There is no sector of government in which lawyers do not play a role. For example, the Department of Justice employs state attorneys, prosecutors,

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legal drafters and of course magistrates and judges. Law graduates interested in international law can join the departments of Foreign Affairs or Trade and Industry. Again, as with the business sector, the options are wide open.

**NGOs and public benefit organisations:** Many Law graduates who are committed to social justice and the transformation of South African and global society seek work in the non-profit and social change sector, using their knowledge of and skills in the field of law to effect change. Researchers and lobbyists with law qualifications are in demand by such civil society organisations.

**A Law degree equips graduates with finely-honed skills that set them apart, so that becoming a lawyer is only one of many options.**

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# Why study Law at UCT?

**Whether you choose to be a lawyer in the corporate world, or an academic, or to work for government or in the non-profit sector, the UCT LLB degree is an excellent foundation for a wide range of careers.**

These are the top reasons for studying Law at UCT:

1. UCT Law graduates are highly sought after, not only in South Africa but internationally – ensuring improved opportunities on graduation
2. UCT LLB students will graduate with the full set of skills required in legal practice, with plenty of opportunities during the degree programme to enhance these skills further
3. The UCT Faculty of Law is rated among the Top 150 Law Schools in the world (QS World University Rankings)
4. UCT attracts excellent students from diverse backgrounds, ensuring a rich learning environment
5. Our aim at UCT Law is to train the next generation of skilled legal professionals who will ensure the maintenance and strengthening of an open, free and democratic South Africa and who will secure our capacity to contribute to and shape law at a global level
6. UCT Law offers three different programme options to attain an LLB degree – a combined BA LLB or BCom LLB; a 4-year **straight undergraduate LLB**; or a graduate LLB programme (3 years) that can be undertaken after completing an undergraduate non-law degree
7. We are home to over 100 academic staff in the Faculty, 21 of whom have National Research Foundation (NRF) ratings – based on the quality of their research publication, their standing internationally amongst their peers, and other factors. These ratings are hard to achieve, and UCT Law

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is very proud of the excellence of its staff, recognised through their NRF ratings

8. UCT Law hosts at least 14 world-class research units, focused on various aspects of legal theory, practice and implementation
9. UCT Law is unique in requiring all LLB students to perform a certain number of hours of community service, which ensures that UCT Law students graduate not only with some experience of law in practice, but also with a sense of their role in society
10. Our excellent law library is linked to major international electronic databases, and also provides access to the top law journals and more than 85 000 books in its constantly-updated hard-copy and e-book collections
11. The Faculty has the fantastic Oliver Tambo Moot Court in which students practice their skills in legal argument
12. At the UCT Faculty of Law we are committed to furthering the goals of the Constitution.

# What courses do I take for Law?

**There are three routes to attaining an LLB degree, outlined below.**

- a Humanities or Commerce undergraduate degree with a Law major, followed by a 2-year graduate LLB programme
- a four-year undergraduate LLB
- a three-year graduate LLB option for those who already have an undergraduate degree unrelated to Law.

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Regardless of which degree route you choose, all Law students must complete the core curriculum. See the courses outlined in the table below.

Undergraduate LLB (4 years)	BA/ BCom/ BSocSci & LLB (5 years) BBusSci & LLB (6 years)	Graduate LLB (3 years)
<b>CORE CURRICULUM</b>		
<i>Preliminary Year</i>	<i>Intermediate Year</i>	<i>Final Year</i>
Foundations of South African Law South African Private Law: Systems & Context Law of Persons and Family Law of Property Law of Succession Constitutional Law	Corporation Law International Law Criminal Law African Customary Law Law of Delict Law of Contract Jurisprudence Community Service	Labour Law Commercial Transactions Law Administrative Law Law of Evidence Criminal Procedure Civil Procedure Integrative Assessment Moot

## Electives

**In addition to core courses, undergraduate LLB students must complete** one English course or Word Power, and two first-year level semester courses in another Faculty); two semester courses (or a whole course) in a single language, and two second-year level semester courses in one discipline in another Faculty. Students with a score of less than 66% on the Quantitative Literacy portion of the National Benchmark Tests are also required to complete a course in Quantitative Literacy. Those with scores of 66%

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and above (who do not have to take the Quantitative Literacy course) are required to complete another first-year level semester course in another Faculty.

Final year students can choose from the following *lectures & exams* electives:

<b>Private Law</b>	<b>Commercial Law</b>	<b>Public Law</b>
South African Mineral Law: Theory, Context and Reform The Law of Cession Conflict of Laws	Dispute Resolution Insurance Law Copyright & Patents Trade Marks & Unlawful Competition International Trade and Maritime Law Tax Law A Tax Law B Trusts and Estate Planning Ways of Doing Business Cyberlaw	Public Interest Litigation Criminology: Selected Issues Environmental Law European Union Law International Criminal Law and Africa International Human Rights Law and the Constitution Refugee and Immigration Law Local Government Law

Final year students can choose from the following *seminars & research paper* electives (amongst others):

<b>Private Law</b>	<b>Commercial Law</b>	<b>Public Law</b>
Independent Research Option Advanced Property Law: Capita Selecta Civil Justice Reform Jurisprudence and South African Law Rhetoric, Law and Society Legal Pluralism, Religion, Culture and Human Rights Spatial Justice, Ubuntu and the Nomos of Apartheid The South African Law of Delict in Theoretical and Comparative Perspective	Independent Research Option Theory and Practice of Commercial Regulation and Governance Competition Law Banking Law Current Developments in Company Law Development, Labour and Social Policy Moot Caput Law and Regional Integration in Africa	Independent Research Option Constitutional Litigation Criminal Justice & the Constitution Social Justice & the Constitution Women and Law

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# Contact Us



## Law Faculty Office

[Law-studies@uct.ac.za](mailto:Law-studies@uct.ac.za) | +27 21 650 3086

## Law Marketing Office

[Law-marketing@uct.ac.za](mailto:Law-marketing@uct.ac.za) | +27 21 650 5602

[lawcares@uct.ac.za](mailto:lawcares@uct.ac.za)

[www.law.uct.ac.za](http://www.law.uct.ac.za) | @uctlaw

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