

Information for Principals

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Practice Readiness Education Program

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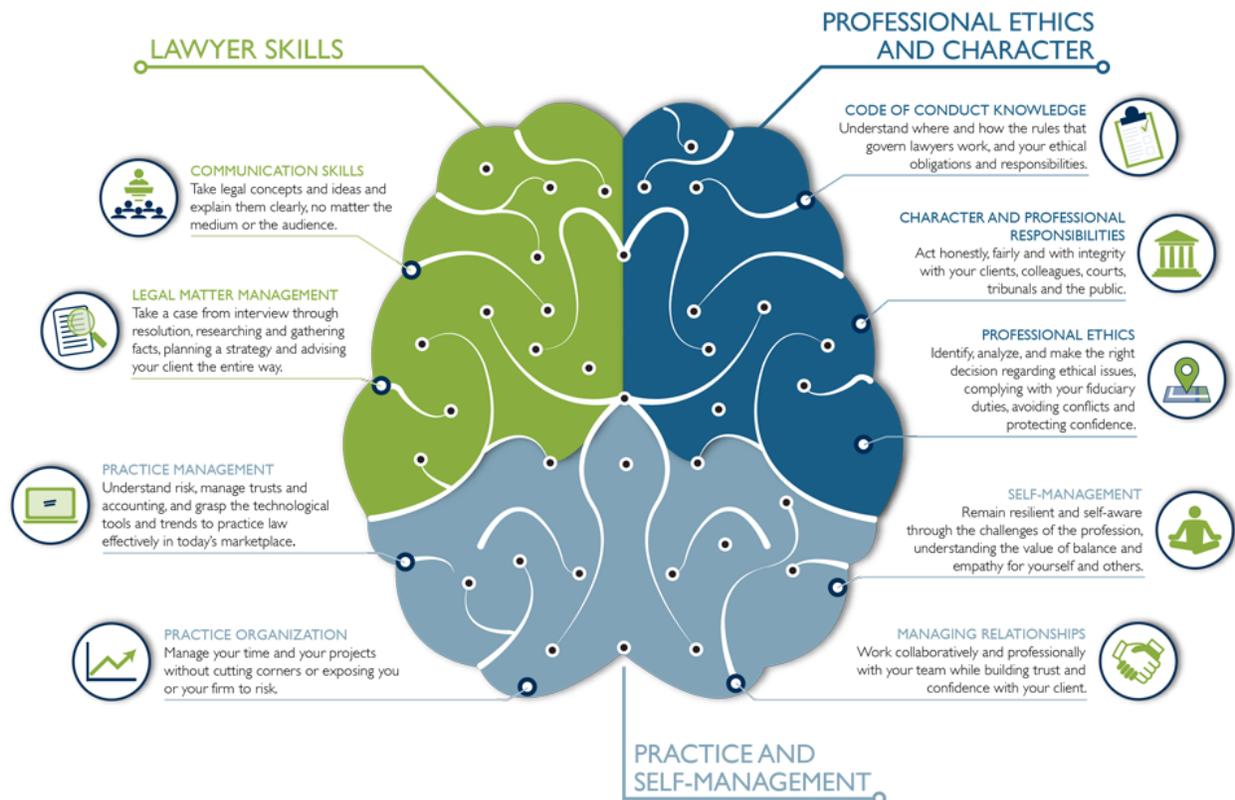
What is PREP?

PREP stands for the Practice Readiness Education Program. PREP assists articling students in gaining practical legal knowledge and competencies in lawyer skills, practice management, professional ethics, as well as the personal attributes needed to successfully practice law in Canada. Built on best practices from around the world, PREP delivers these practical skills and competencies in a consistent, integrated approach that combines interactive, transactional learning and simulation within four distinct phases. PREP is delivered by the Canadian Centre for Professional Legal Education (CPLED).

Competency Framework

CPLED has developed a Competency Framework to help guide students, facilitators, assessors and communicate to other stakeholders what specific skills and abilities PREP will help recent law school graduates develop over their articling period.

THE MIND OF A CPLED-TRAINED LAWYER





Practice Readiness Education Program

With the latest teaching and assessment tools, PREP uses a combination of in-person and online learning. CPLED's competency framework consists of three key categories:

Lawyer Skills: What a Lawyer Does

- Communication – Language, cross-cultural communication, oral and written communication and drafting/legal writing skills
- Legal matter management – taking a legal matter from initiation, planning, research, analysis and resolution.

Practice and Self-Management: How a Lawyer Practises

- Risk management
- Trust accounting
- Technology skills
- Time/project management
- Conflict management
- Relationship management
- Self-management

Professional Ethics and Character: Who a Lawyer is and How they Behave

- Knowledge of the Code of Conduct
- Decision-making regarding ethical issues
- Complying with fiduciary duties and professional conduct
- Protecting confidences
- Avoiding conflicts of interest
- Professional development
- Ethical, courteous and honest
- Non-discriminatory, principled and respectable
- Honest, trustworthy and honourable

To take a closer look at the elements of the Competency Framework check out [CPLED's website](#).



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Description of Program Elements

Procertas

Procertas is the first element of PREP completed by students. The Procertas Legal Technology Assessment (LTA) is a benchmarking and training platform to assess skills and provide training to improve the quality of work in Word, Excel, PowerPoint and Adobe Acrobat. Students are required to complete this element to improve their word processing skills and prepare them for success in the other elements of PREP.

Orientation

Before beginning to work through PREP, students review an online orientation video. The orientation provides the students with information about the phases of PREP and what is expected of them throughout the program. Students are also introduced to the concept of reflection and reflective practice.

The phases of PREP

PREP consists of four distinct phases; Foundation Modules, Foundation Workshops, Virtual Law Firm and Capstone.

Foundation Modules

In the first phase of PREP, the Foundation Modules are online modules that combine self-directed study and interactive assessments with multimedia learning to provide a foundation in all the CPLED competencies. Each module is described below:

1. The Effective Lawyer

Reports, studies, and testimonials demonstrate that success as a lawyer depends not only on lawyer skills, but also on personal attributes and skills. The purpose of this module is to provide students with an opportunity to focus on themselves as a person and provide guidance and tools to support them in meeting the demands of their professional and personal life, as well as to develop and maintain productive and healthy relationships with their colleagues and clients.

2. Professional Ethics and Character

Professional ethics and character are the foundation to a successful legal practice. Whether a lawyer is in private practice, government, or in-house counsel, professional ethics and character are critical to a lawyer's identity. In this module, students look at ethics and character as competencies and the building blocks to their legal career before focusing on professional ethics and character in three separate settings: professional ethics and character in the office; professional ethics and character in the profession; and, professional ethics and character in the community.

3. Indigenous Law, Cultures and People

In order to represent and work with Indigenous peoples, it is important for lawyers to understand their worldview, culture and history. Indigenous peoples represent a vast range of cultures and perspectives and this module aims to pique student's interest to learn more as they represent an Indigenous client, on Indigenous land claims, or with Indigenous colleagues. Perhaps, even more, it will give them some insight regarding their Indigenous neighbours, family, or fellow citizens, making it easier to work with them on their legal matters.



4. Oral Communication: Client Relationship Management

Effective oral communication is essential to legal practice. General communication skills form the backbone for each of these legal competencies. This module will examine the components of effective communication, the need for effective cross-cultural communication, and how to employ those communication skills to successfully manage client relationships.

5. Oral Communication: Interviewing

Interviewing is an integral part of a lawyer's practice. Whether a lawyer is performing an initial client interview, preparing witnesses or experts, or dealing with colleagues, solid interviewing skills, routinely applied and practiced, will bring ease and efficiency to their work. In this module students will learn to use a structured interview approach when interviewing a client and learn how to put clients at ease throughout the interview, acknowledging their feelings, and conveying a desire to help.

6. Oral Communication: Negotiating

Concluding an acquisition agreement, trying to settle a personal injury claim, or conferring with a client about pending legal matters – all of these situations require negotiation. Lawyers who cannot effectively negotiate cannot effectively practice law. This module will introduce students to negotiation principles, processes, and preparation guidance in order that they can obtain and deliver the best results for your clients.

7. Oral Communication: Advocacy

Oral advocacy is critical to effective oral communication and central to the skillset a lawyer must develop. Whether a lawyer is discussing matters within their law firm or law office, negotiating a settlement or resolution with counsel opposite, acting on behalf of a client on an application or motion, or representing a client at the trial or appellate level, strong oral advocacy is essential. In this module, students will learn about the importance of oral communication and advocacy, advocacy in applications and motions, and advocacy at trial.

8. Legal Research, Fact Gathering and Case Management

Clients do not come to their lawyer with clearly laid out legal issues. They come to their lawyer with a problem or a goal and expect their lawyer to apply knowledge and judgment to help. To do that, lawyers engage in fact gathering, legal research, and case management. These all form part of the process of providing solutions to our clients. In this module students will cover the following topics: fact gathering, legal research, case management and trial preparation in order to effectively solve problems for clients.

9. Written Communication: Legal Writing

Communication skills are critically important to lawyers in all areas of practice. A poorly written or drafted document is not only a reflection on the competency of the lawyer who created it but may be the foundation for a potential lawsuit. Litigators, too, are judged by the quality of their writing. In this module students will review the basics of legal writing, and how to write an opinion letter, an advocacy letter, and a retainer agreement.

In this module students will learn how to identify and consider the direct and potential audiences of the communication. Students will also learn to adapt communication appropriately in



recognition of diverse backgrounds and the needs and sensitivities arising from an individual's circumstances. Students will explore the concept of using plain language and a tone consistent with the formality of the context.

10. Written Communication: Legal Drafting

In this module students will be introduced to drafting, which is a specialized form of writing. Lawyers need drafting skills regardless of the area in which they practice law as they create contracts, wills, settlement agreements, orders, affidavits, motions, pleadings, offers, and other documents every day. Finally, students will be taught how to draft accurate and legally enforceable documents, whether contentious or non-contentious.

11. Practice Management and Trust Accounting

While the practice of law is a profession, and lawyers are held to high standards of responsibility and ethics, it is also a business, which lawyers expect will provide them with a reasonable standard of living. The fact is, only a small percentage of claims against lawyers relate to substantive knowledge. The primary area of claims relates to lack of communication and inadequate investigation, many of which relate to lack of time and matter management. Practice management is a key element to becoming a successful lawyer. Lawyers must attend to the business aspects and rules of their practices from the appropriate management of the day-to-day activities of the practice, to competent financial management, including trust accounting. This module will deal with the breadth of these topics.

12. Technology Skills and Tools for Lawyers

As the use of technology increases in law practices, it is important for lawyers to have the technical skills to meet the business needs for the current legal market and to be aware of how technology can impact the practice of law. In this module students will learn the importance of developing competence in the basic office technology schools. Students will also learn the professional rules that should be considered with the use of technology and how technology can be used to help manage risk within a law firm (e.g., cyber security).

13. Lawyer Skills in Action

This multimedia allows students to see the oral skills for interviewing, negotiation and advocacy being performed as well as allows them to begin practicing written communication skills. The multimedia focuses on two scenarios; one in the area of Wills and Estates and the other in Criminal Law.

14. Practice Management in Action

This multimedia focuses on practice management and trust accounting. Students work through a scenario which allows them to become familiar with some basics of trust accounting as well as potential practice management issues.



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Foundation Workshops

In the Foundation Workshops, students will come together and interact with each other and their facilitators through interactive workshops that include role-playing in the areas of interviewing, negotiating, and advocacy. They will also participate in simulations and practice management.

The focus of the workshops is on integrating knowledge and skills development in social environments, getting feedback from both peers and experienced lawyers, and applying what students learned in the Foundation Modules. The workshops will prepare students to manage a legal matter during the next phase.

Virtual Law Firm

Returning to the online environment, students will put their foundational training to the test, working as lawyers in a virtual law firm, where they will manage cases in business law, criminal law, family law, and real estate.

These transactions include interviewing simulated clients within a learning management system to allow assessors with practice area expertise, and practice managers to assess students' skills, knowledge, and progress as they complete each task. Students will also receive coaching and mentoring from a Practice Manager for the duration of the practice rotations.

Capstone

In this final assessment, students will demonstrate their skills and competencies in one final simulation. They will complete tasks to demonstrate their competence in interviewing, negotiation, oral advocacy, legal writing, legal drafting, research as well as decision-making, providing their client with ethical and professional representation and using the appropriate case management and technical tools to guide their work. Finally, students will submit a final reflection on the entire program.

Procertas

Access

Students will receive their Procertas login credentials once their tuition fee payment has been processed and applied to their account. Please note it can take up to five business days to process payment.

Students will receive a welcome email message directly from Procertas with login information.

Time Commitment

The time to complete each of the above depends on the student's proficiency level at the beginning of the program. The estimated completion time per software program is approximately two to four hours.



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Completion Requirements

Students must complete Procertas training by the deadline that will be outlined in the [PREP schedule](#) and earn *qualified* or *expert* certification in:

- Microsoft Word, and
- Microsoft Excel, PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat.

Orientation

Access

Students gain access to the orientation video after they have completed their Procertas requirement.

Time Commitment

The orientation is 90 minutes in length.

Completion Requirements

Students are required to complete a 10-question multiple choice quiz on the content of the orientation video. Students who have successfully completed the quiz will be provided access to the first Foundation Module, The Effective Lawyer.

Foundation Modules

As described above the Foundation Modules are the first phase of PREP. This phase provides students with the background knowledge they require to progress into the balance of PREP. Students are provided their user credentials and provided access to the Foundation Modules after completing the orientation.

Schedule

The Foundation Modules are open for four months commencing for the June intake on the first of June and closing at the end of September.

Time Commitment

The estimated time commitment for the Foundation Modules is 100 to 110 hours. The table below provides a breakdown of these hours for each module. To ensure students complete the modules in advance of the Foundation Workshops deadlines for completion of each module have been set.



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Foundation Module	Estimated Hours
The Effective Lawyer	11
Professional Ethics	11
Indigenous Law, Cultures and People	10
Client Relationship Management	5.5
Interviewing	4
Negotiating	4
Advocacy	4
Legal Research, Fact Gathering and Case Management	10.5
Legal Writing	3.5
Legal Drafting	3.5
Practice Management and Trust Accounting	9.5
Technology Skills and Tools	8.5
Multimedia: Legal Skills in Action	8
Multimedia: Practice Management in Action	3

Completion Requirements

Students are required to pass a quiz for each of the Foundation Modules, except for The Effective Lawyer and the two multimedia modules. Students are provided three opportunities to pass the quiz. If a student is not successful after three attempts, they will be permitted to proceed to the next module but will need to successfully complete a multi-topic quiz prior to being permitted to progress to the Foundation Workshops.

Foundation Workshops

The Foundation Workshops are a weeklong intensive interactive session in which students put into practice the knowledge they acquired from the Foundation Modules. Attendance is mandatory for the entire week and students are encouraged to be away from the office during this time. Students may not schedule work-related commitments such as client meetings or court appearances during this time.

The Foundation Workshops are experiential learning in which the students learn through performing their skills and observing others. It relies substantially on group work which requires students to be prepared not only for their benefit but for the benefit of the others in their group.



Schedule

Below is an overview schedule for the Foundation Workshops.

MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
Introduction	Welcome	Welcome	Welcome	Welcome
Meeting Your firm	Interviewing Workshop #2	Legal Drafting Workshop #1	Oral Advocacy Workshop #2	Trust Accounting Workshop
Constructive Feedback	BREAK (11:10-11:25)	BREAK (10:45-11:00)	BREAK (10:40-10:55)	BREAK (10:30-10:45)
Interviewing Workshop #1	Interviewing Workshop #2 Continued	Oral Advocacy Workshop #1	Oral Advocacy Workshop #2 Continued	Client Management Cultural Humility Indigenous Peoples
BREAK (10:30-10:45)	LUNCH (11:50-12:50)	LUNCH (12:00-1:00)	LUNCH (11:30-12:30)	LUNCH (12:00-1:00)
Interviewing Workshop #1 Continued	Negotiation Workshop #2	Oral Advocacy Workshop #1 Continued	Legal Drafting Workshop #2	Bias Privilege
LUNCH (12:15-1:15)	Legal Writing Workshop	Legal Research and Writing Workshop	Ethics and Practice Management Workshop	Revisiting Your Firm
Interviewing Workshop #1 Continued	BREAK (3:35-3:50)	BREAK (3:05-3:20)	BREAK (2:35-2:50)	BREAK (2:30-2:45)
BREAK (2:30-2:45)	Legal Writing Workshop Continued	Legal Research and Writing Workshop Continued	Ethics and Practice Management Workshop Continued	Attributes of a Lawyer
Negotiation Workshop #1	Conclusion	Conclusion	Conclusion	Introduction to the Virtual Law Firm and Capstone
Conclusion				Conclusion

Pework

To prepare for the Foundation Workshops students are required to review portions of the Foundation Modules, review and access interviewing videos, prepare for the activities on Day 1 and complete several written assignments. The prework must be completed and the written assignments must demonstrate reasonable effort in order for a student to be permitted to attend the Foundation Workshops.

Reasonable effort

Pework will be reviewed by CPLED staff prior to students attending the Foundation Workshops. Pework that does not demonstrate reasonable effort will be flagged and students will be



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advised and provided an opportunity to address deficiencies. If the deficiencies are not addressed by the deadline provided the student will not be permitted to proceed to the Foundation Workshops and will be scheduled for a later session.

Reasonable effort is defined as a good faith effort on the part of the student to complete the assigned prework to the best of their ability. A reasonable effort for each assignment in the prework is defined in Schedule “A” of [CPLD’s policy and procedure regarding Progression through PREP](#).

Time Commitment

The suggested time commitment for the prework is 20 hours. The weeklong Foundation Workshops run most days from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. In addition, each evening there is approximately 1 to 2 hours of homework.

Requirements to progress

Students must be in full attendance, participate and behave professionally to successfully complete the Foundation Workshops. Any failure on a student’s part to meet the requirements will result in them being suspended from PREP and rescheduled for a future session of the Foundation Workshops.

Virtual Law Firm

The Virtual Law Firm consists of three online rotation; Business Law, Criminal Law and Family Law/Real Estate. Students work through various tasks on simulated files and are assessed on their performance in the various competencies they have practiced in the Foundation Workshops.

Schedule

The Virtual Law Firm takes place over three months. Students spend the first two weeks of each rotation (3 weeks in the case of Family Law/Real Estate) working on their assigned tasks. There is then a week for assessments to be completed and during the last week, students reflect on their performance and meet with their Practice Managers.

Building Confidence

The Virtual Law Firm is an opportunity for students to begin building confidence in their abilities to exercise their professional judgment and manage their practice. To assist students in building their confidence, the first rotation of the Virtual Law Firm provides them with educational supports including precedents, templates, due dates and assignment descriptions. Students are advised to work on the file as if it is their own and encouraged to include comments in their work setting out how they exercised their professional judgment.

As the Virtual Law Firm progresses students are provided with less structure and are expected to begin locating precedents and templates on their own as well as making their own determination as to the amount of time they should spend on each task. In the final rotation, students are provided only with due dates and an overview of the skill area for each assignment. They must use their acquired practice management skills to appropriately plan their time to ensure all the assigned tasks are completed.



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Time Commitment

The estimated time commitment for the Virtual Law is 85 hours over three months (25 hours each for Business Law and Criminal Law and 35 hours for Family Law/Real Estate). The majority of this time is used during the first two or three weeks of each rotation. The balance is used for reflection and a 30-minute meeting each rotation with the student's Practice Manager.

Requirements to Progress

To successfully complete the Virtual Law Firm, students must

- complete all assignments no later than the due date for the reflection in each rotation,
- attend all practice management meetings, and
- behave professionally throughout the Virtual Law Firm.

Failure to meet any of these requirements will result in a student being suspended from PREP and enrolled in a future session of the Virtual Law Firm.

Capstone

The Capstone is the final phase of PREP. It is the phase where students must demonstrate the competencies they have acquired throughout the program. It also determines whether a student has reached the necessary level of competency (Entry-Level Competence) to be called to the Bar.

Schedule

The Capstone is a four-day intensive simulation. Students must be in attendance for all four days. Days usually run from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Students should not schedule any work or personal commitments during this time.

Time Commitment

The time commitment for the Capstone is 32 hours. Students must be available throughout all four days.

Release of Results

The results for the Capstone will be released no later than 6 weeks after the completion of the final Capstone for that intake.

Requirements for Success

Students must demonstrate Entry-Level Competence over all the competencies in the Capstone to be successful.



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Communications

CPLED strives to keep principals apprised about both PREP and their student's progress. Principals should expect to receive, at minimum, communications from CPLED before each phase of PREP.

Principals should be aware that information regarding each phase of PREP is also shared with students via Handbooks, D2L email and Discussion Boards.

General Communications

Prior to each phase of PREP principals will be provided with information regarding the student's time commitment, deadlines, and background information about that phase. To ensure you receive these communications please arrange to have admin@cpled.ca noted as a safe sender by your network.

Specific Communications

CPLED wishes to work with principals to assist in preparing their students for the practice of law. CPLED will keep principals apprised of their student's progress through PREP as well as in the event of any issues arising with regards to the student's effort, attitude or behaviour. For more information about when CPLED may contact a principal regarding their student see [CPLED's policy regarding Information provided to Principals.](#)

Please note that principals will only be notified about a student's progress in the event the student is not progressing to the next phase or is unsuccessful at the Capstone.