

PARALEGAL COMPASS

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WORDS OF WISDOM

ADVICE FOR EXCELLING IN YOUR PARALEGAL PROGRAM FROM PROFESSOR ARLENE BLATT

"Attend all classes – both physically and mentally. Simply showing up to class is not enough. Be focused and engaged – on the lecture (not your smartphone!) Ask questions, participate in discussions, and complete all in-class exercises and reviews."

"Learn by understanding and applying, not by memorizing. Solutions to legal problems are arrived at by applying the law, not by defining it. Always make sure you understand legal concepts well enough to be able to explain them to someone else. As Albert Einstein said: If you can't explain it simply, you don't understand it well enough."



OPTIMIZE YOUR NOTE-TAKING FOR SUCCESS

KEY STRATEGIES TO HELP YOU BENEFIT FROM YOUR LECTURES

During class, it can be tempting to passively transcribe the lecture word for word. This will leave you with an abundance of information and no indication of what is important. Instead, become an active listener with these note-taking strategies:

1. Read Before Class: Reading before the lecture will familiarize you with the topic your instructor is covering. This will allow you to focus on how your instructor is expanding on and contextualizing the information, which is more beneficial than scrambling to write down and understand concepts simultaneously during class.

[CONTINUED ON PG 2]



2 USEFUL ONLINE RESOURCES FOR
PARALEGAL STUDENTS



3 SALARY FACTS: MEDIAN INCOME
RANGE FOR ONTARIO PARALEGALS



4 SAMPLE STUDY PLAN FOR THE
P1 PARALEGAL LICENSING EXAM



OPTIMIZE YOUR NOTE-TAKING FOR SUCCESS

[CONTINUED FROM PG 1]

2. Summarize the Lecture: Information retention requires summarizing what the instructor is saying by putting it into your own words. Wait for your instructor to finish a thought or make a point before writing it down. As they are talking, think about what they are saying, what it means, and what is important. After they finish making a point, write down a summary of what they said that makes sense to you.

3. Make Connections: During your lecture, focus on making mental connections between the points your instructor is making, your readings, and past lectures. Write these connections in your notes, then review and expand on them later. The goal of each of your courses is to help you develop a comprehensive picture of the law so that you can understand how the different ideas and concepts fit together.



ONLINE RESOURCES FOR PARALEGALS

PARALEGAL NEWS AND GUIDANCE

emondexamprep.ca/topics/blog
lsuc.on.ca/licensingprocessparalegal
ontarioparalegalassociation.com
paralegalsscope.com
online-paralegal-programs.com

GOVERNMENT RESOURCES

CanLII: canlii.org/en
e-Laws: ontario.ca/laws

PARALEGAL FACEBOOK GROUPS

facebook.com/groups/ParalegalsConnect
facebook.com/groups/ParalegalCorner
facebook.com/groups/ParalegalNetwork

LINKEDIN GROUPS

Paralegal Student Network: goo.gl/fDROOa
Ontario Paralegal Association: goo.gl/Ke6sBj
The Paralegal Group: goo.gl/yLxTYA

FREE LEGAL GLOSSARY

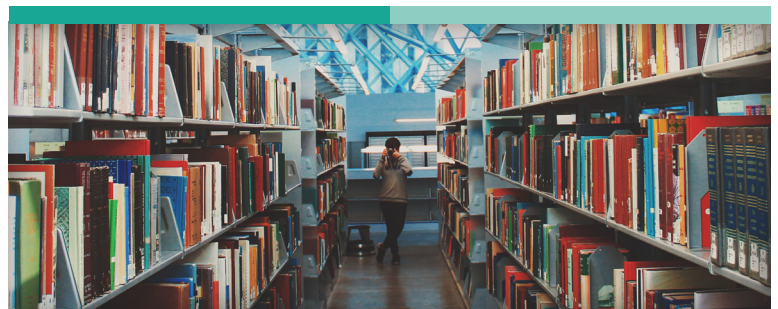
Specific goods: Specific, identifiable chattels that have been singled out for contract purposes.

Injunction: 1. A court order that prohibits someone from doing some act or compels someone to do some act; 2. A court order intended to prevent future harm, enjoining a defendant to cease an activity or not do it at all.

Mitigation of damages: The rule that persons claiming damages must take action to minimize the harm they suffer.

Parol evidence rule: If a contract is in writing and is clear, no other written or oral evidence is admissible to contradict, vary, or interpret the agreement.

Negligent misrepresentation : A careless representation made by a defendant while having no reasonable basis to believe it to be true that results in foreseeable injury to another.



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3 ESSENTIAL SKILLS EVERY PARALEGAL NEEDS TO HAVE

1. Writing: Paralegals must frequently draft memos, motions, pleadings, and other documents, so their legal writing should be clear, concise, and in plain language. Practice when you write and edit your assignments. Delete unnecessary words and replace legal jargon with plain language when possible.

Tip: Read it out loud - you will be more likely to notice spelling, grammar, and awkward wording mistakes.

2. Attention to Detail: Paralegals are required to work on the details of a task, such as drafting memos for a case. You need to be comprehensive in your research and explanation of your findings. Omitting an important detail can have a big impact on the outcome of a case. *Tip: Practice being thorough in all of your school assignments. Students often ask when they should stop researching. The answer is when you keep coming across the same information and can't find anything new.*

3. Multi-tasking and organization: Law is a world of strict deadlines and high stakes. Late assignments can be detrimental to a client's case. In order to make sure everything is completed on time, you need to be able to switch between assignments, organize your time effectively, and prioritize tasks. *TIP: Try applying this mindset to your schoolwork. Organize your schedule to complete the most important tasks first and be realistic about how much time each task will take. Always leave room in your schedule for surprises.*

STARTING SALARY

HOW MUCH WILL YOU EARN WHEN YOU BEGIN?



The median starting salary for a paralegal in Ontario is \$43,604. Looking to maximize your earning potential? Consider working for the government, or starting your own private practice once you've gained some experience. *Source: www.payscale.com | goo.gl/a2jm4U*

POTENTIAL SALARY

HOW MUCH CAN YOU EARN IN FUTURE?



The median salary for a paralegal with an established career is \$63,108, and some earn up to \$83,898. But the real reward is job satisfaction, which most paralegals rate as 5/5. *Source: www.payscale.com*



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ADVICE, PRACTICE EXAMS, AND REVIEW COURSES

To prepare for the LSUC Licensing Exam, you must study 750 pages of material and be able to answer challenging substantive and ethical questions. Emond Exam Prep offers materials and programs to help you prepare for and pass your licensing exam, including:

- **170-question practice exam** with subject performance analytics, correct answers, and detailed explanations.
- **18-hour online preparation course** with substantive lectures on paralegal competencies.
- **Exam preparation manual** that outlines strategies to help you succeed on the licensing exam.

- 1 • Plan
- 2 • Read
- 3 • Index
- 4 • Practice
- 5 • Review

SAMPLE STUDY PLAN: THE P1 LICENSING EXAM

PREPARING FOR THE P1 EXAM IS NO SMALL UNDERTAKING. YOU WILL RECEIVE HUNDREDS OF PAGES OF INFORMATION YOU'LL NEED TO KNOW AND A LIST OF COMPETENCIES YOU NEED TO POSSESS AS A PARALEGAL. WHILE IT MIGHT SEEM DAUNTING, THE FOLLOWING OUTLINE WILL HELP YOU OPTIMIZE YOUR STUDYING TIME.

1. PLAN

The exam will test you in three ways: Knowledge/Comprehension, Application, and Critical Thinking. Knowing how you will be tested will help you understand how you should tailor your studying, so plan accordingly.

2. READ

Once you understand how the LSUC is going to test you, you should read through your materials. The first time, read them passively to gain a high-level understanding of what material is covered, and in what order. After reading through each chapter, create a summary of the main points that stand out. Try to create a study schedule that will allow you to read the materials a second time as well, focusing on details and sections you find challenging.

5. REVIEW

After completing practice exams you should review material you struggled with or need to become more familiar with. Actively test yourself on the competencies provided by the LSUC. Active studying with help you understand the "big picture," retain information, and get to know the structure of your materials even better.

3. INDEX

An index is an alphabetized list of key terms, each with a corresponding page number. During your second reading of the materials, you should be building your index or annotating the detailed table of contents provided with the materials. It is impossible to memorize all of the materials, and reference materials like these will help you locate information quickly during the exam.

4. PRACTICE

Next, you should use practice exams to test your knowledge and your indices. Practice tests will allow you to simulate the conditions of the exam and practice using your indices. This will also help you find and fix mistakes in your indices before exam day arrives.

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INSPIRATION

"Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do."

– Potter Stewart

"Success is the sum of small efforts, repeated day-in and day-out."

– Robert Collier

"There are no shortcuts to any place worth going."

– Beverly Sills