

Western Canada Competency Profile

Competencies for Entry to Legal Practice



Law Society
of British Columbia



 The Law Society
of Manitoba
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Competency Domain 1: Ethics and Professional Responsibilities

Demonstrate ethical and appropriate behaviour in all professional matters and respect equality and diversity.

Competency

Performance Indicators

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| 1.1 Fulfill ethical obligations and abide by professional standards | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adhere to provisions of applicable statutes, rules and codes that govern the legal profession• Recognize ethical issues and exercise good judgment in addressing them• Protect client confidentiality• Identify potential conflicts of interest and take action to avoid them |
| 1.2 Conduct oneself professionally | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate honesty, integrity and trustworthiness• Demonstrate professional courtesy, candour and civility in all dealings with clients, colleagues, the courts and others• Use the internet, social media and digital platforms appropriately• Demonstrate respect for the administration of justice and the rule of law• Engage in self-reflection to identify gaps in knowledge, skills and abilities• Recognize when tasks or matters fall outside one's own competence and respond appropriately• Seek out mentorship, professional development and experiential learning opportunities to maintain and enhance professional practice |
| 1.3 Respect the rights of all people to the equal protection and benefit of the law, and acknowledge the diversity of Canadian communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate awareness of how own values and conscious and unconscious biases affect one's perspectives and actions• Respect the diverse cultures, perspectives, backgrounds, experiences and identities of clients, co-workers and colleagues• Identify tools and services to facilitate access to justice• Act in accordance with principles of applicable human rights legislation |

Competency Domain 2:

Communication

Deliver clear, accurate and well-reasoned communications that support the advancement of matters.

Competency	Performance Indicators
2.1 Deliver clear and audience-centric communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adapt communications to different contexts and audiences, adjusting for tone and formality as suitable to the circumstances• Use plain language• Use appropriate and logical organization and structure for communications• Express concepts concisely, precisely, clearly and logically
2.2 Create quality legal documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare a variety of accurate legal documents (for example, transactional document, contract, opinion letter, pleading)• Draft effective, clear and well-organized legal documents• Identify, critically evaluate and adapt relevant document precedents and templates• Review legal documents for errors and inaccuracies
2.3 Communicate in a timely manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Respond to communications within reasonable time frames• Communicate status updates on an ongoing basis to all relevant parties

Competency Domain 3: Truth and Reconciliation

Understand the historical and current impacts that Canadian law has on Indigenous Peoples in Canada and how reconciliation can be incorporated into practice.

Competency

Performance Indicators

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| 3.1 Understand the experiences of the Indigenous Peoples of Canada | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate understanding of how colonial laws have impacted the Indigenous Peoples of Canada• Demonstrate understanding of systemic discrimination and its intergenerational impacts |
| 3.2 Understand how reconciliation with the Indigenous Peoples of Canada can be incorporated into legal practice | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demonstrate understanding of Calls to Action and Calls for Justice applicable to working with Indigenous Peoples• Consider applicability of Indigenous principles, laws, culture and perspectives |

Competency Domain 4:

Professional Relationship Management

Establish, maintain and conclude relationships with others in a professional and civil manner using a client-centred approach.

Competency	Performance Indicators
4.1 Determine suitability of establishing lawyer-client relationship	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assess own competency and capacity to undertake the matter Assess need for appropriate mentorship Assess risks or barriers, including potential conflicts, associated with potential client relationship Ascertain language needs of client and ability to communicate
4.2 Establish client relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Take steps to gain client confidence (for example, use active listening, communicate respectfully and empathetically) Confirm scope of client retainer
4.3 Manage client relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain and confirm client instructions on ongoing basis Proactively and regularly communicate to keep client apprised of progress in their matter Manage client expectations by clearly and honestly addressing time frames, fees, risks and possible outcomes Conclude or discontinue client relationships as appropriate
4.4 Establish and maintain professional relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate understanding of mentorship and building professional networks Demonstrate ability to collaborate Recognize external resources needed (for example, accountants, social workers, realtors) to support client or own professional needs Navigate relationships with other professionals supporting clients
4.5 Demonstrate emotional intelligence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrate awareness of the impact of emotion in interactions with others Engage in self-reflection to identify how own emotions may impact behaviour Engage in empathetic communication Engage in reflective listening Understand the applicability of trauma-informed approaches

Competency Domain 5: Critical Thinking and Analysis

Use critical thinking and analysis to support clients in pursuing their goals, priorities and broader interests.

Competency	Performance Indicators
5.1 Collect and evaluate all pertinent information	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gather information through interviews, searches, document review and other due diligence• Identify relevant legal, practical or client issues• Identify and respond to new information or changes in circumstances
5.2 Conduct legal research	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Identify when research may be required• Perform legal research using reasonably available tools and resources• Confirm, verify existence of and note up case citations and legal authorities• Interpret and evaluate substantive common law, statutes, regulations, rules, procedural matters, policy and theory
5.3 Perform legal analysis and develop strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Apply techniques of legal reasoning and argument to the findings or information gathered• Draw reasonable conclusions considering the legal issues, relevant facts and applicable law• Clearly and accurately report research process and findings• Generate matter-specific strategy and options and formulate practical recommendations

Competency Domain 6: Advice and Advocacy

Represent clients' interests, inform clients and advance clients' positions.

Competency	Performance Indicators
6.1 Ascertain client goals and set expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ascertain and confirm client goals, objectives, interests and expectations• Set reasonable expectations with client regarding matter and representation
6.2 Adopt client-centred approach	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Consider entirety of client's circumstances (for example, diversity, age, language, disability, socioeconomic and cultural context, business strategies, organizational structure) in all aspects of a matter• Verify that client understands information provided• Keep clients informed as is reasonable given the circumstances
6.3 Provide legal advice	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provide advice about the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing options or strategies, to support informed decision making or resolve the problem• Adapt legal strategy or approach as circumstances change
6.4 Represent client interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Act on instructions to further client objectives within the boundaries of the law and professional obligations• Identify and implement strategies that are responsive to client goals, objectives and interests, and that are relevant to the factual and legal context
6.5 Advocate effectively for client interests	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communicate the law and legal issues in language appropriate to the audience• Formulate and present persuasive, well-reasoned and accurate legal arguments• Identify and use advocacy techniques appropriate to factual and legal context

Competency Domain 7:

Practice Management and Well-being

Responsibly manage one's work and practice, including self, files, technology and risks.

Competency

Performance Indicators

7.1 Support own well-being and that of others

- Engage in self-reflection to recognize positive and negative influences on own well-being and professional performance
- Take necessary actions to support own health and well-being, including seeking resources where available
- Recognize inappropriate workplace behaviour and contribute to a healthy and respectful workplace culture

7.2 Manage work activities and files

- Prioritize and manage tasks; track and meet deadlines and limitation periods
- Identify when it is appropriate to delegate tasks and level of supervision needed
- Ensure quality of work produced by self and work delegated to others
- Use practice, project and file management systems and software
- Demonstrate awareness of responsibilities for management, tracking, retention and destruction of files
- Document matters clearly and appropriately
- Follow security protocols for information management

7.3 Use technology responsibly

- Demonstrate understanding of the benefits, limitations, risks and ethical implications of technologies
- Use appropriate strategies to mitigate cybersecurity risks

7.4 Understand billing, accounting and finance

- Demonstrate understanding of professional obligations regarding billing and accounting practices and trust accounting
- Demonstrate understanding of types of billing practices, including retainers and limited scope retainers, fees, and payment models
- Seek information to fill knowledge gaps related to financial and business management as required by own practice requirements



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