

LSAC STRATEGIC PLAN



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Law School Admission Council

Strategic Mission

The Law School Admission Council will be a global leader in promoting innovative assessments, administrative services for schools and students, educational programs, diversity initiatives, and other activities.

History

The Law School Admission Council (LSAC) was founded in 1947 to help coordinate, facilitate, and enhance the law school admission process. Until 1980, LSAC was a volunteer organization that contracted with the Educational Testing Service to produce the Law School Admission Test and to implement the Law School Data Assembly Service.

In 1980, the LSAC Board decided to become an independent testing and research organization and moved the offices to Newtown, Pennsylvania in 1981. A law student loan program initiated by the Council in 1983 to provide “loans of last resort” to law students was spun off as an independent nonprofit—the Access Group—in 1993.

In 1993, LSAC began an expansion of its services that ultimately resulted in the addition of a letter of recommendation service, electronic applications to all ABA-approved law schools, ACES (Admission Communication and Exchange System) and ACES², ADMIT-M admission office software, adding ABA data to the *Official Guide to Law Schools* as the result of a joint publishing arrangement, more Law School Forums, and new efforts to achieve diversity in legal education and the profession.

LSAC has maintained the high quality of the LSAT while continuing to expand its technology-based services. As a result, LSAC, law schools, and law school candidates are increasingly interdependent. This partnership demands consideration of new revenue opportunities in order to insure the continuation of services in the face of uncertain applicant volumes and challenges to LSAC’s standardized testing revenue in the United States.

This strategic plan reflects LSAC’s commitment to the LSAT and its ability to offer technology services to new entities. It is LSAC’s intention to develop products and services that produce alternative sources of revenue, to continue international outreach, to support research that benefits the legal profession, to develop and promote diversity initiatives, to continue to provide the highest quality admission services, and to improve communications with all of its constituencies.



Core Values

Reliable, Valid, and Useful Assessments and Information

The Council values the organization's role as the primary source of reliable and useful assessments of candidates for admission to law school and of reliable and useful information for all persons interested in access to legal education.

Support for Member Schools

The Council values the organization's role as a critical partner for law school admission offices. LSAC provides law schools with services and products that enhance efficiencies in the admission process. Law schools rely on the LSAT to provide an essential standard to aid in the evaluation of candidates. The test is based on solid research and is validated continuously.

Support for Admission Professionals

The Council values the organization's role as the primary professional organization for law school admission professionals and will continue to support admission personnel through education, training, professional development, and networking.

Support for the Admission Process

The Council values LSAC's role as a critical partner for prospective law students. Providing support, education, and tools for prelaw advisors is part of this partnership.

By administering the Law School Admission Test, making available fee waivers and low-cost test-preparation materials, facilitating recruitment, and compiling credentials and applications, LSAC plays a valuable role in simplifying the admission process for prospective law students.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

The Council values its leadership role in promoting and providing access to legal education, as well as in emphasizing and communicating the value of diversity in both legal education and the legal profession.

Research

The Council values the continuous monitoring and improvement of its assessments and information services, and the advancement of test development, psychometrics, and legal education through its own research and the research it sponsors.

Volunteerism

The Council values the commitment of members of the law school community who volunteer their intellect, creativity, time, and effort to the achievement of the goals of the organization.

Professional Staff

The Council values the retention and support of a highly competent and diverse professional staff.

Fiscal Responsibility

The Council values the maintenance of a financial position and level of resources that will allow the organization to accomplish its objectives.

Objective: Continue to produce the premier test for law school admission.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Analyze LSAT takers by race/ethnicity.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DoE required changes to race/ethnicity reporting that may affect year-to-year comparisons of LSAT data. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • June 2009 data analyzed. • Continuing to review data.
Redesign test development management process.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase flexibility of TD item reviewing and writing tasks leading to a more efficient and effective method. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initial trial nearing completion. Preparing for full implementation.
Enhance security procedures.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase fairness and validity of the test. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Test Center observation program in progress. • Test Center staff training program launched. Training ongoing. Webinar system to be launched in 2011. • New statistical monitoring techniques introduced.
Develop additional tools for test preparation and familiarization.	2010–2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide inexpensive alternative to commercial test preparation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New materials (including electronic) are being developed and marketed. • Existing materials being analyzed for new formats. • The Official LSAT Handbook published July 2010. E-book formatting in progress.

Objective: Develop new, and enhance existing, products and comprehensive services for schools, candidates and LSAC staff for the purpose of simplifying the admission process.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Develop ACES ² .	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a law school-specific data management and reporting system for admissions. • Provide seamless data communications between LSAC and the schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollout of US schools completed; Canada, Puerto Rico and Australia to be done in 2010. • Enhancements ongoing based on schools' requests. • Focusing on paperless file-review functionality.
Redesign the LLM service.	Spring 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand existing service to be similar to JD service, including e-apps, letters-of-recommendation, transcript evaluation, candidate referral service, ACES². • Potential source of approximately \$500,000 of net revenue. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In design stage, working with Services and Programs subcommittee. • Workshops held in San Francisco, Boston, Chicago, and Atlanta. • Production of collateral materials in progress.
Simplify law school application life-cycle.	Spring 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a single place for each school to manage the 100+ school-specific options for LSAC processing and delivery of data to schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Released April 2010.
Rewrite online Official Guide.	Summer 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design for consistency with other parts of candidate website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed, also tested and revised for accessibility for screen readers.
Develop and introduce FlexApp.	2010–2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a tool for schools to produce an accessible application. • Reduce cost to produce electronic applications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under development.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Develop candidate evaluations.	Summer 2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide a noncognitive skills and characteristics evaluation to supplement the existing letter of recommendation service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development complete; released August 2010. • Monitoring feedback and usage by law schools, candidates, and evaluators.
Analyze LSAC reports.	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehensive analysis of data and information reports provided to law schools to fill gaps and eliminate those not useful. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Services and Programs subcommittee reviewing reports.
Rewrite test center management system.	Spring 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New design for test management system will enhance efficiency and security of LSAC test center administration, including seat assignment and test material shipping and tracking. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requirements being developed.
Provide subsidies for Forums and annual meeting.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enable law school representatives to attend Forums and the annual meeting despite school cutbacks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Forum participation and annual meeting attendance have benefitted from initial subsidies.
Administer fee waivers.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide access to LSAC services to candidates who cannot afford them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implemented online fee waiver appeal review system to enhance efficiency of appeal reviews.
"Internationalize" data fields.	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Standardize input for international candidates. • Accept non-English characters so that names can match IDs, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under development.

Objective: Develop new products and services that produce alternative sources of revenue in order to address price elasticity; uncertain volumes; current challenges to market share; the possibility of paradigm shifts in the economy, legal education, and the legal profession; and other concerns.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Develop Skills Readiness Inventory (SRI).	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRI provides recommendations based on current skills to potential law school students and others thinking about post-graduate education. Potential for sales is small to very large. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRI was introduced on a limited basis in October 2009, and an expanded version was released in September 2010. • Plans for future enhancements are ongoing. • Developing and executing a marketing plan.
Provide technical and operational resources to administer MPRE for NCBE.	TBD		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions underway. • Implementation target date is uncertain.
Research and begin development of a standardized online interview.	2010–2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Groundwork for a possible new product or service. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First round of focus groups completed. Prototype under development for future research.
Expand LSAT use in India.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position LSAT—India as premier law admission test. • Generate new revenue stream. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First India test given for one school in May 2009 for 500 test takers. • Working with partner in India to enlist additional schools; 5 added for 2010 administration. 2011 recruitment underway. • Will evaluate viability annually after each administration.
Expand LSAT use in China.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position LSAT as premier test for English-language programs in China. • Generate potential new revenue stream. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two tests successfully administered to entering first-year students at Peking Transnational Law School to determine correlation. Initial results very positive. • School using test for 2010 admission. • Planning for 2011 administration underway.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Explore testing opportunities in Korea.	2010–2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Potential new revenue stream through licensing LSAT questions for translation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall 2010 translation experiment completed. Licensing discussions may follow based on results.
Expand use of LSAT in Australia.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish the LSAT as the standard for graduate law programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Australian sensitivity guideline development completed. • LSAC positioned for signing on additional law schools when they move to a graduate JD model. • Expanded distribution channels for prep materials in Australia under development.
Continue relationship with Central European University.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand market for the LSAT. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special CEU administrations will continue. • CEU will accept standard LSAT scores from candidates who have them.
Revise business plan for international activities.	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand market for the LSAT by replicating successful models. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Awaiting conclusion of May 2010 LSAT—India administration and 2011 law school sign-ons, and conclusion of Korean translation experiment.

Objective: Produce and support useful, relevant, and timely research consistent with LSAC’s mission.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Work with Higher Education Research Institute on freshmen survey research.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Better understand pipeline issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Proposal for research has been approved by HERI and data have been transferred. Data analysis is ongoing.
Analyze new racial/ethnic data collection methods.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow member law schools to better compare applicant data to national data similar to revised DoE requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LSAC’s systems and processes changed in anticipation of new reporting requirements for 2010 entering class. Monitoring self-reporting by candidates to identify any data-continuity issues.
Research noncognitive factors that contribute to success in legal profession.	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Determine information that is useful in admission. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Working on contract with external group.

Objective: Continue to develop and engage in programs and initiatives that improve access to and diversity in legal education and the legal profession.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Maintain DiscoverLaw.org website.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides a means of communicating with students considering legal education and the legal profession. • Provides supportive community for potential law students from minority groups. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Website has been established and is being continuously updated with fresh content. • Grants have been awarded to DiscoverLaw.org (formerly Plus) institutes.
Plan pipeline conferences.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce law schools to pipeline programs to increase pool of diverse candidates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions regarding 2011 and future conferences ongoing.
Assist law schools with academic assistance programs.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law school faculty and staff will have opportunities for training to provide academic assistance. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning underway for 2010 topical workshops. • Developed LSAC academic assistance website; monitor usage.
Conduct college diversity officers conference.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pipeline development. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning underway.

Objective: Develop a corporate identity and improve communications about LSAC and its products and services.

ACTION	TIMEFRAME	BENEFIT	STATUS
Rebrand LSAC.	Ongoing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish a strong LSAC brand that can be used both domestically and internationally. • Update LSAC image and messaging. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rollout completed. • Merging of LSACnet into LSAC.org completed in summer 2010 for single, strong web portal for LSAC. • Continuing effort to rebrand some individual items as they are rolled out.
Create a plan to communicate LSAC's value to constituents and others.	2010–2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a better understanding of and demand for LSAC products and services. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Created and broadly distributed LSAC Services List. • Working with PR consultant to develop additional communication strategies. • Initiating project to develop a content-management system to ensure consistency in describing LSAC and its services. • Continuing to explore social media and other new technology for promoting LSAC products and services, particularly Forums and DiscoverLaw.org
Publish LSAC Strategic Plan online.	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide better access for all who need to review/update the plan. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completed.