



LSAC and the LSAT: A Proven Track Record of Supporting Legal Education



Key Insights About the LSAT

Created to promote greater access to legal education and designed in consultation with law schools, the LSAT is the trusted resource for law school admission:

- The LSAT is the **only** standardized test designed specifically for law school admission.
- Research consistently shows **the LSAT is the best single predictor of law school success**, even better than undergraduate GPA. Similarly, research consistently shows that the combination of the LSAT and undergraduate GPA provides the strongest prediction of law school success, as an invaluable component of a holistic admission process.
- The LSAT is designed in direct consultation with law schools, to assess the **critical reasoning, reading comprehension, and persuasive writing skills** that are critical to success in law school. Other tests are designed for different purposes and test different skills.
- LSAC conducts **correlation studies** and other research for individual schools — free of charge — on how LSAT scores and other applicant credentials correlate to student performance at their school. Schools have a long history of using the LSAT and know how to use the test and other predictors in their holistic admission process.
- Properly used, the LSAT is a **tool for increasing diversity**, identifying highly qualified candidates who might be overlooked on the basis of undergraduate institution, GPA, or other factors.
- **LSAC is far more than just the LSAT.** LSAC's single focus is legal education, so all of LSAC's energy and resources are devoted to expanding and diversifying the pool of law school candidates and programs to support students and schools.

About the LSAT®

The **Law School Admission Test® (LSAT)** is developed and administered by the Law School Admission Council, a not-for-profit organization devoted to advancing law and justice by encouraging diverse, talented individuals to study law and by supporting their enrollment and learning journeys from prelaw through practice. LSAC provides products and services that support candidates and schools throughout the law school admission process, and innovative solutions to expand and diversify the range of prelaw students, enhance student outcomes in law school, and support legal professionals throughout their careers.

- The LSAT provides law schools with a proven, standardized way to assess applicants' readiness for law school, as part of a holistic admission process.
- The LSAT is the **only** standardized test designed specifically for use in law school admission. Other standardized tests are designed for different purposes and assess different things.
- The LSAT is designed and periodically refined in direct consultation with law schools.



Demonstrated to be fair, valid, and reliable, the LSAT is more than a mere general skills test.

The LSAT measures the reading and reasoning skills essential for success in law school.

It measures the ability to read complex texts with understanding and insight, the ability to think critically, and the ability to analyze and evaluate the reasoning and arguments of others.

In LSAC's [periodic skills analysis studies](#), law school faculty consistently rate all of the skills assessed by the LSAT as the skills most essential to success in law school and legal practice. LSAC also uses reports from the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) and the American Bar Association (ABA), along with focus groups of students and law school faculty, to ensure the LSAT assesses the most relevant skills. Likewise, the **LSAT Writing** assessment is based on a prompt designed by legal writing faculty to mimic the sort of argumentation required in law school essays.

LSAT Format

The **LSAT** consists of four 35-minute sections of multiple-choice questions. Applicants to law school also take an unscored writing section, which is administered separately from the multiple-choice portion of the test on a secure online platform. Copies of test takers' writing samples are sent to all law schools to which they apply.

Multiple-choice sections include:

- One reading comprehension section, which measures the ability to read, with understanding and insight, lengthy and complex materials similar to those commonly encountered in law school
- One analytical reasoning section, which measures the ability to understand a structure of rule-based relationships and to draw logical conclusions about that structure
- One logical reasoning section, which measures the ability to analyze and critically evaluate arguments as they occur in ordinary language
- One unscored section (commonly referred to as the variable section) that is used to evaluate new test questions and ensure they are free from any form of bias



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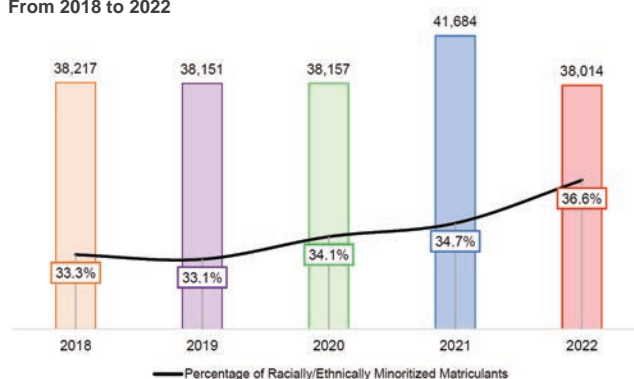
The LSAT and Diversity

Properly used, the LSAT can be an important tool for enhancing diversity in legal education. The LSAT provides a way for aspiring law students from less prestigious undergraduate institutions or economically challenged backgrounds to demonstrate their skills. In a test-optional or non-test admission process, admission decisions would rely on other factors that are heavily based on wealth and privilege, such as the prestige of an applicant's undergraduate school, GPA, letters of reference, extracurricular activities, essays, and other factors.

While there is more work to be done, it is important to note that the fall 2021 and fall 2022 incoming law school classes were the most diverse in history — and each year, more than 98% of matriculants used the LSAT as part of their application.

- In 2021, 34.7% of the incoming fall class identified as students of color, at that time the largest percentage in history.
- In 2022, **36.6% of the incoming fall class identified as students of color**, by far the largest percentage in history.

The Total Number of Matriculants and Percentage of Students of Color From 2018 to 2022



Source: 2018 to 2022 LSAC Matriculant Data. The bars represent the number of total matriculants for each year. The line graph shows the percentage of students of color in each matriculant class year.

Test Validity

Year after year, research conducted with the cooperation of ABA-accredited law schools consistently shows that the LSAT is the **strongest single predictor** of first-year law school success — even better than undergraduate GPA — and that the combination of the LSAT and undergraduate GPA provides the strongest prediction of law school success as part of a holistic admission process. This is not surprising, given the LSAT is the **only** test specifically designed for law school admission.

Test validity can be defined as the extent to which a test accurately measures what it is meant to measure. **Validity is made up of a number of different components**, but two of the key components of validity for the purposes of law school admission are **construct validity** and **predictive validity**.



Construct validity consists of measuring the right skills in the right way. In other words, a test has construct validity with respect to law school admission if it measures skills that are directly necessary for success in law school, and if it measures those skills accurately and effectively. The LSAT was designed specifically for this purpose, and it is constantly revalidated for this purpose.



Predictive validity refers to the extent to which a test accurately predicts the relevant outcome. LSAC conducts large-scale studies of the LSAT's predictive validity every year and makes the results available to all member schools.

In short, because the LSAT is designed to accurately measure the skills that are critical to success in law school (construct validity) and it predicts first-year law school performance more accurately than any other single factor (predictive validity), the LSAT is a valuable tool for admission professionals to use in crafting their successful incoming classes, as part of their holistic admission process.

LSAT Scores

The LSAT is scored on a scale from 120 to 180. This score scale has been used in law school admission since 1991. Admission offices, therefore, have deep experience with LSAT scores, as well as access to reams of data on scores and how students at various score points have historically performed at their individual schools. Scores on other tests are not backed by this kind of historical data from previous admission cycles, nor is there reliable data on how performance on other tests compares to performance on the LSAT.

Comparisons of percentile ranks on different standardized tests can be inaccurate and misleading, as different tests assess different skills and percentile ranks place individual test takers in relation to the rest of the population that has taken the same test in recent years. The various graduate-level tests in use today have distinct populations, and those populations are quite different in terms of the distribution of abilities and other characteristics. Percentile ranks on two different standardized tests cannot be compared directly. There is no “correction” or tool that can make the scores and percentiles from disparate tests directly comparable to each other.

Year after year, **LSAT Correlation Studies** show that LSAT scores are the most accurate individual predictor of first-year law school performance. The best predictor of all, however, is a combination of LSAT score and Undergraduate Grade-Point Average (UGPA). Using LSAC’s data and First-Year Averages reported by schools, LSAC creates a customized, predictive index that combines LSAT score and UGPA for each member school.

Correlation studies are conducted for individual schools, and school-specific results are reported exclusively to the schools whose data are analyzed. Correlation studies help member law schools determine how to weight applicant credentials to customize admission to their specific law schools. LSAC conducts studies every cycle — free of charge to participating law schools — on the effectiveness of the LSAT as well as other predictors of law school performance used in the admission process. Thus, schools know how well the test and other predictors are performing within their own admission process.



Admission offices understand what LSAT scores and their schools’ index mean for their schools. Other qualifications submitted by applicants vary widely and can be difficult to compare directly; even undergraduate GPAs can be very difficult to interpret and compare — depending on major, undergraduate institution, and so on. LSAT scores provide law schools with one measure by which all applicants can be compared directly.

Properly used, the LSAT is an important tool for enhancing diversity. The LSAT is a standardized way for individuals from less prestigious schools or economically challenged backgrounds to demonstrate their skills. In the absence of the LSAT, admission decisions would increasingly rely on other factors that are heavily based on wealth and privilege, such as the prestige of an applicant’s undergraduate institution, undergraduate GPA, letters of reference, extracurricular activities, essays, and other factors.

Recent research indicates that a GPA-based admission approach, without the input provided by the LSAT, could exclude 8% to 27% of highly qualified individuals from minoritized communities.

In short, **LSAT scores and the index** provide information that can be very helpful to schools in making admission decisions. But at the same time, it is important to bear in mind that test scores should always be considered in the context of a holistic review process, one that considers scores within a broader assessment of applicants’ complete files.

Helping Students and Schools

LSAC is best known for the Law School Admission Test, but **LSAC is far more than just the test**. LSAC invests enormous time and resources to help expand the pool of individuals interested in pursuing legal education, and LSAC offers a wide range of programs to support students and schools. LSAC's sole focus is legal education, so all of LSAC's energy and resources are devoted to advancing legal education.

- **Law School Forums** — Every year, LSAC hosts [Law School Forums](#), large innovative, interactive events that give thousands of prospective law students the chance to meet directly with representatives from our member law schools, to get more information about the application process, financial aid, the LSAT, diversity in law school, and other topics. LSAC now offers both in-person and virtual Law School Forums, which each provide opportunities for one-on-one interactions between schools and prospective law students.
- **Identifying potentially qualified individuals on behalf of member law schools** — Through LSAC's exclusive focus on legal education, we are able to identify prospective law students who register to participate in Law School Forums and the [Candidate Referral Service](#). Adhering to all applicable privacy laws and individuals' preferences, LSAC shares contact information for these individuals with our member law schools (with the students' permission), providing schools with an important source of potential applicants.
- **Online advertising and other efforts to attract prospective applicants** — LSAC invests heavily in advertising campaigns and other forms of outreach to attract students who may not be considering law school to learn more about whether a career in law is right for them. These efforts are focused on expanding and diversifying the pool of law school applicants and helping them continue their legal education journeys.
- **Information and Guidance** — LSAC provides [experienced and knowledgeable](#) professionals to ensure prospective law students have information about law school admission, test preparation, financial aid, and other topics. This expert guidance can be provided, either in person or virtually, upon request by prelaw advisors, admission professionals, and pipeline programs.
- **Prelaw Undergraduate Scholars Program** — The [PLUS Program](#) is designed to increase the number of lawyers from underrepresented groups by introducing first- and second-year college students to the skills important for success in law school, while also making them aware of the wide variety of professional opportunities for lawyers. The program is funded by LSAC's Diversity Initiatives Fund, and all LSAC member law schools are eligible to host programs. Since the program began in 2002, we have had more than 30 law schools host PLUS programs, with more than 2,700 students participating.
- **LawHub™** — Initially launched in March 2020, LSAC's LawHub is evolving to become a destination for individuals at every stage of their legal career. LawHub provides free LSAT prep tutorials and practice tests, as well as other free content. LawHub's premium subscribers have access to more than 70 genuine LSAT practice tests as well as content on how to navigate the law school admission process and succeed in law school. LSAC also provides free Official LSAT Prep through [Khan Academy](#).
- **Professional Growth and Development** — As part of LSAC's commitment to legal education, LSAC provides a variety of [training and professional development](#) opportunities for deans, admission officers, prelaw advisors, and other law school leaders.
- **Student Success** — LSAC provides tools, technology, and programs to help support the diverse needs of students from the point of admission through their law school years and beyond. In addition to assessment tools and admission tools that can help schools provide academic and other support to students, LSAC provides a wide range of programming for students, including [Law School Unmasked](#), [Law School Success](#), [Modern Law Practice](#), and [Professional Identity Formation](#).

These initiatives are just the tip of the iceberg. LSAC provides a wide range of programs and services to support schools, students, and the legal education ecosystem.



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Diversity, Equity, and Fairness

LSAC invests in processes that ensure test questions are fair. In addition, LSAC invests in programs that encourage underrepresented students to consider law and make prospective law students aware of the skills tested on the LSAT.

All questions on the test undergo a lengthy **multistep process** to ensure they are free from any form of bias and fair to all relevant population subgroups.

Internally, all LSAC test developers are trained in professional standards of fairness and anti-bias best practices. Every test question is reviewed for appropriate content and fairness to all groups and backgrounds at three separate stages: initial writing/development, pretest, and final operational test section review. Every item is also reviewed for fairness by external experts representing all relevant subgroups, applying rigorous professional standards and their external perspective. Finally, every item is field tested as part of an unscored section in an actual LSAT administration, then subjected to a detailed statistical check for impact on subgroups; items that show any unfair impact at the unscored stage are rejected and never used on a scored test.

LSAC strongly believes that standardized assessments should be only one important element in a holistic admission process; LSAC has published [guidelines](#) and [policies](#) on how the LSAT should and should not be used. Properly used, the LSAT can be a [tool for enhancing diversity](#) in legal education and providing opportunity for students from diverse backgrounds, as well as those from different social and economic statuses, by measuring skill development without regard for where the student was educated.



Ensuring Access

LSAC is committed to promoting access and equity in legal education and the legal profession.

To pursue its mission, LSAC is dedicated to ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to take the LSAT and demonstrate their skills in a fair and equitable manner. From test design through implementation and delivery, LSAC works to address all aspects of accessibility in testing to reduce barriers and foster a pipeline of prospective law school applicants from widely diverse backgrounds.

While the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020 created many challenges for students, schools, and the delivery of standardized tests, LSAC took action to create an online testing program and practices that minimize impediments to taking the LSAT. The LSAT's online testing platform includes many **built-in accessibility features**, such as text-size enlargement, line spacing, three different colors for highlighting, and an underlining function, all as recommended by accessibility experts. Further, the platform features color settings to address a wide range of needs including color blindness, light sensitivity, and color preference.

Additionally, LSAC has worked to ensure that online testing does not create barriers for students. LSAC recognizes that some students do not have access to a suitable computer, or reliable internet service, or a quiet place to test.

- To address these needs, LSAC sends a **free loaner device** to any test taker who requests one to take the LSAT; since online testing began in May 2020, LSAC has provided more than 10,000 free loaner devices to test takers.
- Similarly, LSAC offers **hotel reimbursements** for any test taker who does not have reliable internet or a quiet place to test; since May 2020, LSAC has provided more than 4,500 hotel reimbursements to test takers.
- This assistance is important to **LSAC's diversity, equity, and access efforts**. More than 70% of the test takers who have requested and received loaner devices and/or hotel reimbursements are students of color.
- **The fall 2021 and 2022 matriculation reports** underscore the importance of this assistance — more than 1,000 fall 2021 matriculants and 1,600 fall 2022 matriculants made use of LSAC's free loaner devices or hotel reimbursements, or both, as part of their application process.

Moreover, LSAC remains steadfastly committed to assisting individuals who have documented disabilities and request **testing accommodations** to take the LSAT. LSAC offers a [wide range of options](#) for individuals who require accommodations for taking the test including additional testing time, additional break time, and alternate testing formats such as paper-and-pencil or braille printed tests. Information about the availability of testing accommodations can be found on LSAC's website as well as in each individual's online LSAC account. Individuals with disabilities are encouraged to submit all new requests for testing accommodations directly through their accounts in advance of the request deadlines.

Individuals with a history of prior accommodation(s) on certain other standardized postsecondary admission tests may demonstrate eligibility for LSAT accommodation(s) through a streamlined documentation process, provided they meet the eligibility criteria. Any individual who has previously received testing accommodations for the LSAT will be automatically approved to receive the same accommodations if they register to retake the test, without having to submit a new request for accommodations or any new supporting documentation.

Our goal is to ensure that every test taker has the accommodations and resources they need to do their best work on the LSAT to demonstrate their true skills and abilities.





About LSAC






LSAC's mission is to advance law and justice by encouraging diverse, talented individuals to study law and by supporting their enrollment and learning journeys from prelaw through practice.

Contact Us

LSAC is here to answer your questions.
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