

First-Year Performance LSAT and UGPA Correlation Studies

Reference Guide

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1 Overview

LSAC correlation studies provided by LSAC give you important information about the predictive validity of LSAT scores and undergraduate grade-point averages (UGPAs) at your law school and their relationship to your students' first-year law school grades. Previous correlation studies have confirmed that the LSAT score is a good predictor of first-year law school performance. The findings have also verified that the combination of LSAT score and UGPA is usually better at predicting first-year performance than either factor alone.

Year-to-year changes in the regression weights for LSAC correlation studies are common and have been the subject of numerous research studies. Research shows that combining the three most recent years of data controls these fluctuations. If less than three years of data are available for your school, the results may not be as stable and representative as they would be with three years of data.

Research also shows that average LSAT score is generally a better predictor of first-year performance than highest or most recent LSAT score. Therefore, for comparison, a report based on average LSAT scores, where multiple scores are available for individual students, will be included with reports based on highest LSAT scores.

For security and timely communication, transmission of reports will be handled electronically unless LSAC receives a request from you for paper communication. LSAC may use non-personally identifiable information to improve LSAC's product and service offerings to law schools. By continuing to participate in the LSAC correlation studies, you are agreeing to the secure electronic transmission of reports from LSAC and LSAC's noted use of data.

Correlation coefficients are a measure of the linear relationship between two variables. Values range from 1 for a perfect positive correlation to -1 for a perfect negative correlation. The magnitude of the coefficient indicates the strength of the correlation. A value of zero indicates that there is no correlation between the two variables.

LSAC correlation studies report the correlations among LSAT score, UGPA, and first-year average (FYA) as well as the correlation between predicted and actual FYA. These correlations may be underestimated for the matriculant study group because of a phenomenon known as *restriction of range*. Range restriction can occur when the distribution of values is narrower for matriculants than for the applicant pool. To estimate the correlations with FYA for this group, a multivariate correction for restriction of range is applied. The resulting correlations are expected to yield a better representation of the relationship among the variables than the correlations based on matriculants alone.

If you would like to receive the document *Predicting Probable Academic Performance: Quartile Probability Graphs*, please [contact LSAC](#). The graphs are based on the same data as your *Correlation of First-Year Performance with LSAT Score and UGPA* reports and may be viewed as a supplement to those reports.

Data Requirements

1.1 General

The LSAT Correlation Study process begins when you send us first-year class data for your fall entering class using ACES². Please submit your data to LSAC by the end of October of each calendar year.

The following data are required for each matriculant (LSAC will match student-identifying information and provide LSAT and UGPA data):

- Student-identifying information (LSAC account number, SSN)
- First-year average (FYA)
- Status (full-time or part-time)

1.2 Data Collection

After your school submits applicant decision information for your fall entering class using ACES² and our end-of-year data is finalized, LSAC provides an electronic roster in an Excel format in ACES² that includes instructions, a copy of a Grade Scale Information Form, and space for you to provide first-year data for each matriculant in your fall class.

We occasionally accept an Excel file created by a school for their fall entering class. LSAC will make every attempt to match the student data you provide and give you the LSAT data by matching the student-identifying information in your file with the data in our records, but if records cannot be matched, data will be incomplete, and the student cannot be included in the study. We recommend you use the Excel file provided by LSAC.

1.2.1 General Data Collection Instructions

- You can specify FYAs up to three decimal places.
- The last 4 digits of the SSN, middle initial, and birth date are not required, but we may need them to accurately match students to our records.
- Include all students who completed the first year of study.
- Do not omit anyone who withdrew, transferred, or was dismissed after the close of the first year.
- Students who did not complete the full year should be clearly identified using the appropriate status codes as listed in the Status Codes section on pages 4 and 5.
- If an FYA is unavailable, leave the field blank. *Do not* enter zeros for FYA unless this is the actual grade of a student who completed the full academic year.

- Student status should be classified as full-time or part-time based on each student’s first-year program. To maintain consistency across schools, the following definitions have been adopted based on ABA standards:
 - A **full-time** student is enrolled in classes for 12 or more credit hours in a term. Employment, either inside or outside law school, is limited to 20 hours per week.
 - A **part-time** student is enrolled in classes for less than 12 credit hours in a term. There is no limit on the number of hours employed.

We also accept the following file types: ASCII (text), *.db, *.dbf, *.mdb, *.pdf, *.wb*, *.wk*, *.xl*.

1.3 Required Data Fields

Field	Description
School Code	The 4-digit numeric ID for your school.
First Name, Last Name	Character data should be left-justified and may be in upper, lower, or mixed case.
Middle Initial	(Optional) <i>Please include if available.</i>
LSAC Account Number	Student number beginning with “L” followed by eight digits.
Date of Birth	MMDDYY format (no dashes or slashes) with leading zeros retained. For example, a birth date of May 9, 1992, would appear as 050992. Optional; <i>please include if available.</i>
First-Year Average	xxx.xxx format.
Status Code	Status codes are “F” for full-time students and “P” for part-time students. <i>Please use the additional status codes listed in the Status Codes section if your data includes students who did not complete the full year.</i>
Social Security Number	The last 4 digits of the SSN. (Optional if LSAC account number is available.)



1.4 Record Layout

Starting Column	Ending Column	Length	Description
1	4	4	School Code
5	16	12	Last Name
17	24	8	First Name
25	25	1	Middle Initial (optional)
26	34	9	LSAC Account Number (Lxxxxxxxx)
35	40	6	Date of Birth (MMDDYY) (optional)
41	47	7	First Year Average (xxx.xxx)
48	48	1	Full-Time/Part-Time Status <i>See Status Codes in section 2.5.</i>
49	52	4	SSN (last 4 digits; optional if LSAC account number exists)

1.5 Status Codes

1.5.1 Students Who Completed Their First Year of Law Studies

Students who completed their first year of law studies and who have a final FYA should be coded according to whether they were full-time or part-time students for this academic year.

Use these codes even if the student is not continuing at your school after the first year (i.e., they withdrew or were academically dismissed AFTER their first year).

The following definitions have been adopted based on ABA standards to maintain consistency:

Please use the codes listed below to identify the status of each student ***at the end of the academic year.***

- F for full-time
- P for part-time

- A **full-time** student is enrolled in classes for 12 or more credit hours in a term. Employment, either inside or outside law school, is limited to 20 hours per week.
- A **part-time** student is enrolled in classes for less than 12 credit hours in a term. There is no limit on the number of hours employed.

1.5.2 Students Who Did Not Complete Their First Year of Law Studies

Use these codes for students who *did not* complete their first year of law studies and *do not* have a final first-year average.

- A - Academic dismissal during the academic year
- I - Incomplete/unreleased grade for the academic year
- L - Leave of absence taken during the academic year
- W - Withdrew before or during the academic year
- D - Deceased
- T - Transfer student from another school
- V - Visiting student
- E - Enrolled in an earlier first-year class
- R - Deferred admission
- S - Entered in spring or summer term

2 Transferring Data Using ACES²

2.1 Receiving Data from LSAC

When a file is ready for you in ACES², the primary admission officer at your school will receive an email notification from corrstudy@LSAC.org.

To retrieve your file, or to create and submit your own roster to send to LSAC, go to File Processing in ACES². A step-by-step document is available on our support site.

Please contact corrstudy@LSAC.org with questions or concerns.