



Dear Law Society staff,

November 26, 2020

RE: 2021-2022 licensing exam delivery

With only a few months remaining in the 2020-2021 licensing cycle, the Law Students' Society of Ontario (LSSO) recognizes the importance of engaging in proactive discussions regarding the state of licensing exams during the 2021-2022 licensing cycle. Given the Law Society's success in having implemented remote exam delivery this year, the continuation of online licensing exam delivery into the 2021-2022 licensing cycle remains the only solution to address the continuing uncertainties faced by law students and licensing candidates in light of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The LSSO was actively involved in discussions with the Law Society concerning licensing exams this past year. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, we advocated on behalf of Ontario law students for the transition to online delivery of licensing exams. We met with members of the Professional Development & Competence Committee and with Law Society staff to provide feedback and perspectives that were crucial to decisions made concerning the licensing process. We look forward to continuing these important discussions, and we welcome any updates on the Law Society's progress in evaluating its future delivery of licensing exams.

As the representative body for all of Ontario's undergraduate law students, the LSSO has the capacity to direct important information to students through our various channels. In addition to the direct advocacy that we engaged in, we have also acted as a conduit in providing information to students about issues relating to the amended licensing and recruitment processes. The LSSO organized two webinars in partnership with Law Society staff and the OCI Working Group to provide a forum for students to engage directly with the LSO on these issues. These webinars have since been viewed hundreds of times on our website, and we continue to assume a critical role in disseminating relevant information to Ontario law students.

We have received overwhelmingly positive feedback from hundreds of licensing candidates regarding the delivery of online licensing exams this cycle. We recognize the challenges that were posed by the implementation of a novel exam delivery model in unprecedented circumstances. However, where candidates faced exceptional technical issues, the feedback we received indicates that proctors were flexible and assured students that there would be no adverse impact on that candidate's ability to complete their examination. Overall, any issues experienced by candidates were localized and resolved quickly. While candidates were initially apprehensive of the transition to the new delivery model, the new format ultimately proved to be very successful.

The COVID-19 pandemic is far from over, and uncertainty continues among students regarding the state of next year's licensing exams. The Law Society's quick response this year in transitioning to remote exam delivery was effective in maintaining confidence among licensing candidates that steps were being taken to mitigate the effects of the pandemic on their licensure. It appears likely that public health measures will remain in place into the next licensing cycle. Additionally, students have acclimated to the remote delivery of classes and examinations in law school, and this is expected to continue well into 2021. Maintaining online exam delivery would proactively address uncertainties regarding next year's exams and Ontario law students would welcome this decision.

We look forward to continuing to engage in discussions with the Law Society regarding the 2021-2022 licensing cycle. We urge the Law Society to continue considering the perspective of law students as it addresses these important issues.

Sincerely,

Victor Turcanu

President, Law Students' Society of Ontario