



LawPrep Academy

2026

**Law
Admissions
Overview**

A Note Before You Start



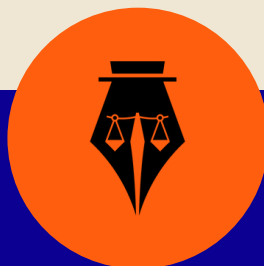
Hello, I'm Rhiannon Procktor. I studied law at Oxford, I run LawPrep Academy, and I also research the intersection of technology, law, and human rights.

This guide exists because when I was applying, nobody explained the process clearly or in one place. I had to figure out through trial and error that there were two different timelines, that the LNAT wasn't something you could revise for in the same way as A-Levels, or that personal statements needed to show thinking rather than listing activities.

This guide gives you the clarity I wish I'd had.

It's long, and that's deliberate. Law admissions isn't simple, and pretending it is does you no favours. But it's also structured so you can read what you need when you need it. Use this as a reference. Come back to sections as they become relevant. And if something's still unclear, email me at hello@lawprepacademy.co.uk.

Let's get started!



Part I: Understanding What You're Actually Preparing For

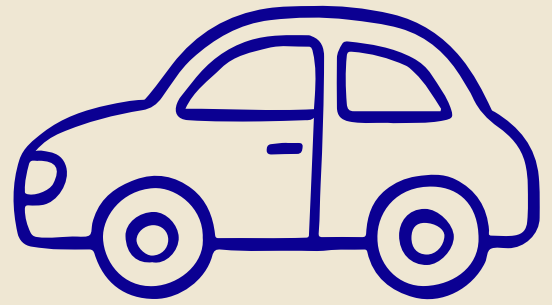


The Fundamental Misunderstanding

Most students think that they can approach the law admissions process in a similar way to their A-Levels. And that's completely understandable; however, it's often a waste of time.

Law admissions are a test of whether you can think like a legal academic. Whether you can read arguments critically, whether you can construct persuasive reasoning, or spot assumptions, evaluate evidence, and see logical flaws. These are skills, not content. And skills require different preparation than content does.

Think about learning to drive. You don't memorise facts about driving and then take the test. You practice the actual skill until it becomes second nature. The test measures what you can do, not what you know.



Your A-levels work differently because they're content-based. And quite often, the more you revise, the better you do. Chemistry exams test whether you understand chemical reactions. English exams test whether you know the books that they expect you to know and can analyse them.

The law admissions process works like the driving test, not the history exam.

The LNAT Section A tests your ability to identify arguments, spot assumptions, and evaluate reasoning. Section B tests whether you can construct a coherent argument under time pressure with no preparation. Your personal statement tests whether you engage with ideas or just consume them.

None of these are things you can cram the night before.

This distinction matters because it changes everything about how you prepare. If you think it's content, you'll try to memorise different things and likely struggle to prep. If you understand its skills, you'll practice deliberately.

Understanding the LNAT

This is the part that most students are worried about, and it's also the most difficult part to know how to prepare for without any guidance. So you need to think about which skills each section is testing:

Section A

- Identify conclusions - What is the author actually claiming?
- Spot assumptions - What must be true for this argument to work, even though it's not stated?
- Evaluate evidence - Does this evidence actually support the conclusion?
- See logical flaws - Where does the reasoning break down?
- Distinguish correlation from causation - Are these things related or does one cause the other?
- Recognize weaknesses and strengths - What would undermine or support this argument?

Section B

- Can you form a clear argument?
- Can you support it with reasoning and examples?
- Can you acknowledge and effectively address specific counterarguments?
- Can you write clearly and concisely under pressure?
- Can you identify key themes and tensions underpinning the question?

No research. No notes. No preparation. Just you and your ability to think on the spot. The prompts are deliberately broad and philosophical.

Why the LNAT Website Warns About Coaching

If you've looked at the LNAT website, you've seen their warning: be sceptical of expensive coaching that promises to "crack" the test or guarantee results.

They're right to warn you. Here's why.

1. Most LNAT coaching treats it like an A-level. It tries to teach you "the content" of the test by just going over past papers without a structured curriculum targeted at actual skills. It promises shortcuts and tricks. This doesn't work because the LNAT isn't testing whether you've memorised anything. It's testing whether you can reason clearly.
2. You can't trick and hack your way through a reasoning test. The people who design the LNAT know exactly how most test-prep companies operate. The test is run out of the Faculty of Law at the University of Oxford. So, if you are going to invest in prep, invest in specialists who know how top faculties teach this style of thinking, and structure teaching accordingly.
3. You can't use templates to write good essays. Section B prompts are deliberately unpredictable. No memorised structure will work for every prompt. You need to think in the moment, and that requires building the skills.

Understanding the Skills

Developing the underlying skills, including:

- Reading arguments and immediately seeing what's stated vs. what's assumed
- Spotting when someone's reasoning doesn't actually support their conclusion and understanding other logical fallacies.
- Constructing your own arguments with clear structure and supporting evidence
- Writing persuasively when you haven't had time to research or prepare
- Learning the basics of argument mapping
- Understanding the differences between reasoning skills: e.g. formal and informal logic, deductive and inductive reasoning.

A Quick Exercise

Use this process on full texts, such as newspaper reports, or even individual paragraphs of academic writing. Get into the habit of mapping the argument and identifying key logical elements of the argument. This is how you start to develop the skills to read critically.

Step 1 — Identify the conclusion

Ask: What is the author trying to get me to believe/do?

Often indicated by: So, Therefore etc.

Step 2 — List the stated reasons

Underline sentences that support the conclusion.

Write them as bullets:

- Reason 1:
- Reason 2:

Step 3 — Find the missing assumptions

Ask: What must be true for these reasons to actually prove the conclusion?

Typical hidden assumptions:

- A definition is accepted
- No alternative cause exists
- The example is representative
- The evidence is credible/relevant

Step 4 — Test the link

Ask: Even if the reasons are true, could the conclusion still be false?

If yes → the reasoning is weak.

What is “Legal Thinking”?

Law schools talk about wanting to see "legal thinking" in your application. What does that actually mean and how do you show it in your application?

It doesn't mean you need to have studied law. You're applying for an undergraduate law degree, so they don't expect you to already be a lawyer or even to know what kind of law you are interested in. Rather, what they are looking for is evidence that you would be a good law student. For example:

1. Questioning assumptions

Most people accept arguments at face value. “Legal thinking” involves asking: what is this person assuming I already believe? What's not stated but must be true for this to work?

2. Evaluating evidence critically

Someone makes a claim. Legal thinking means asking: does the evidence they're providing actually support that claim? Could it support a different conclusion? What other evidence would I need to be convinced?

3. Seeing multiple perspectives

Legal thinking means being able to argue both sides. Understanding why someone might disagree with you. Acknowledging that reasonable people can reach different conclusions from the same facts. However, be careful as this does not mean sitting on the fence!

4. Distinguishing between "is" and "ought"

Legal thinking means thinking about the difference between "this is how the law currently works" and "this is how the law should work."

5. Connecting ideas across contexts

Legal thinking means noticing when a question in criminal law relates to something you read about in contract law. It involves seeing patterns and making connections that aren't obvious.

6. Caring about precision

Legal thinking means being specific. For example, not saying "the law should be fair" but defining what fairness means in this particular context and why it matters.

Anticipated Timeline 2027

We do not have the "official" confirmation of the timeline yet, but these are the standard dates used by universities. Please check the official dates, which will be available on the links at the bottom of this page once they have been updated. For more details, also refer to those links. Always check dates on the official website of the university that you are applying to.

12th May - UCAS opens

August 1st - LNAT registration period opens

September 1st - LNAT testing starts

15 Sep 2026

Latest LNAT registration to sit
before October 15th for Oxbridge

15 Oct 2026

Deadline for both the LNAT and UCAS

**Late Nov - Early
Dec 2026**

Interview offers sent via email

Dec 2026

Interviews held for both Oxford and
Cambridge

Early-Mid Jan 2027

Decisions released in early-Jan
for Oxford, and late Jan for
Cambridge

31 Dec 2026

Kings, UCL and LSE:
Deadline for the LNAT

14 Jan 2027

Kings, UCL and LSE:
Deadline for UCAS

Bristol and Durham:
Deadline for UCAS and LNAT

**All Other UK LNAT
universities:**
Deadline for UCAS

Jan 25 2027

Other LNAT universities:
Last day that you can sit the
LNAT

<https://lnat.ac.uk/registration/dates-and-deadlines/>

<https://www.ucas.com/applying/applying-to-university/dates-and-deadlines-for-uni-applications>



Part II: Understanding How to Prepare

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Phase I: Foundation Building

When: Now until May/June (for Oxbridge) or until August/September (for other unis)

What you're doing: Becoming the kind of person who does well on the LNAT

This doesn't feel like "prep" because it isn't endless past papers. But it's building the cognitive muscles the LNAT measures.

Read things that make you think

Not necessarily law books, but they can be articles, opinion pieces, popular philosophy or book reviews. Anything that presents an argument and asks you to engage with it.

And practice questioning what you read:

- What is the author actually claiming?
- What evidence are they using?
- Does that evidence support their conclusion?
- What are they assuming I already believe?
- Could I argue the opposite using different evidence?

It's worth learning how arguments work, understanding logical reasoning, and being able to construct your own arguments because then you are preparing for the LNAT without ever having opened a practice paper, hence why it is such a big part of our teaching!

Visit a court

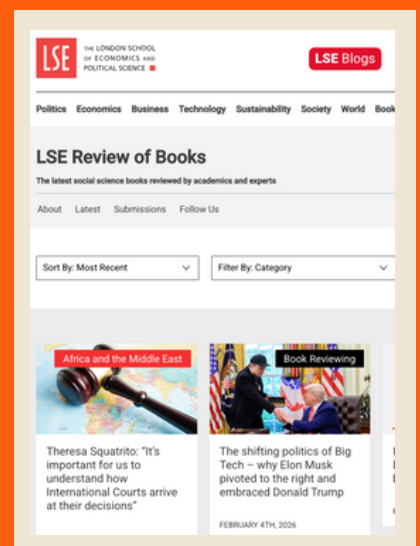
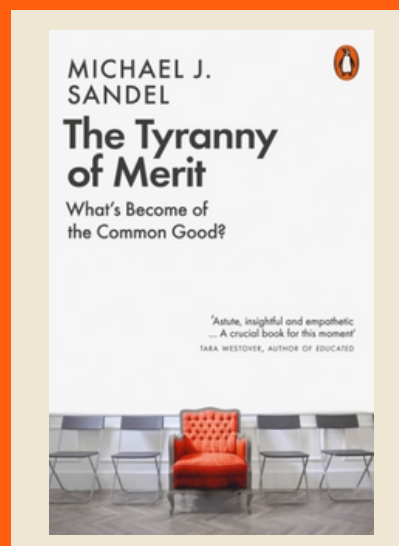
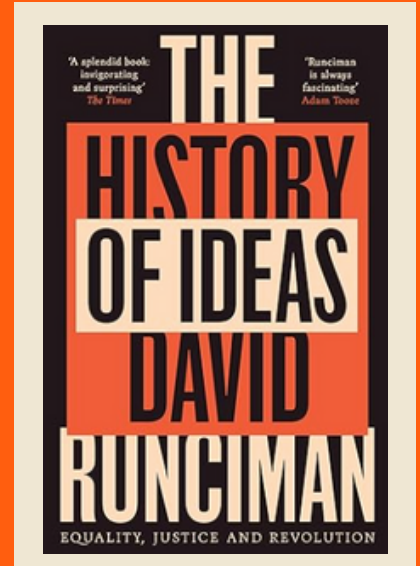
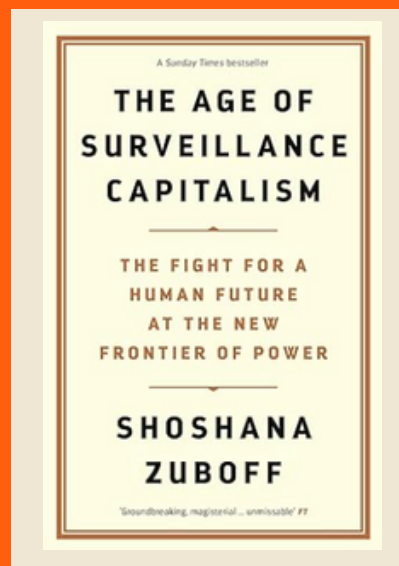
Both the Crown Court and the magistrates' court are free and open to the public.

You're not going to take notes or write an essay about it. Just observe and watch how barristers construct arguments. Notice how judges weigh evidence. See the gap between law as written and law as applied.

The goal of this phase is to build the habit of thinking critically and the foundations of logical reasoning.

Time commitment: Low. 2-3 hours per week.

Some good examples:



FYI, we run a monthly book club on Substack which may be a useful place to start!!



Take a Diagnostic Test

Do one of the two official LNAT practice tests under timed conditions to assess your score.

Do not stress about the score, it's very common for it to be much lower than you were anticipating.

Get feedback on your first essays. To prepare best, it ought to be someone who understands precisely how the LNAT is marked by top law schools and which skills are being tested.

Phase II: Active Prep

May/June (Oxbridge) or Aug/Sept onwards

Identify Your Weak Areas

The LNAT has patterns. Not in the sense that you can "hack" them, but in the sense that certain reasoning skills come up repeatedly:

- Assumptions - Questions asking what must be true for the argument to work
- Inferences - Questions asking what can be concluded from the passage
- Literary - Questions asking about how the author uses certain words, or the meaning of phrases in context.
- Main Point - Questions asking what the author's central claim is
- Parallel Reasoning - Questions asking which argument has the same structure

Figure out where you're weak. That's what you practice.



Deliberate Practice

You can turn news articles and things that you are reading into practice.

As part of our materials, we have targeted practice questions that you can work through, but there are plenty of free resources out there that you can use to practice. For example, if you routinely get stuck on assumption questions, then start breaking down the assumptions in two op-ed pieces per week.

The other thing to remember is that reviewing your practice papers is just as important as doing them.

Students are quite often surprised that when we review papers in class, we also go over and explain the answers that they got correct. The important thing is that you understand the reasoning behind every question, not just 'well, it seemed the best of a lot of bad answers.'



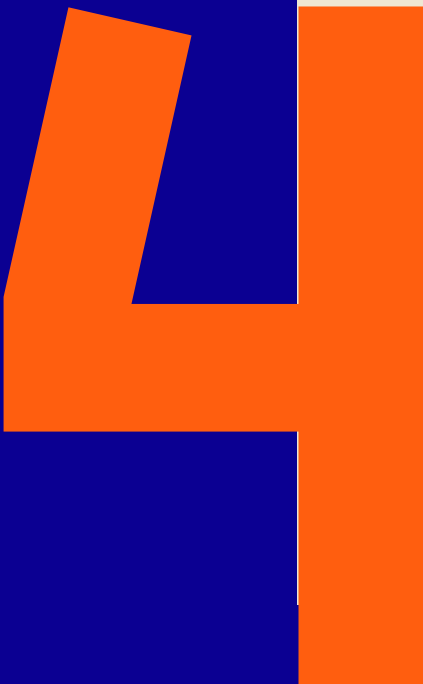
Exam Condition Preparation

Start taking full timed tests (95 minutes, 42 questions).

After each test:

- Note your score, but don't obsess over it
- Identify which question types you missed
- Review wrong answers to understand where your reasoning failed
- Adjust your practice focus based on what you're still getting wrong

Track your improvement. Not just your score, but which skills are getting stronger. This is motivating and helps you see what's working.



Preparing for Section B

Most students obsess over Section A because it has a numerical score and they ignore Section B until the last minute.

This is a mistake.

Section B is read directly by admissions tutors. It's often what can separate applicants with similar Section A scores. It's also the part where you can't fake it or 'get lucky' by guessing the correct answer. Equally, the mark schemes are often nothing like A-Level, so don't think that doing well at A-Level History guarantees a good Section B score!

How to practice effectively:

1. Do it properly - Set a timer for 40 minutes. Pick a prompt you haven't seen before. No notes, or research: just write!

2. Spend 5-10 minutes planning

Don't skip this! A clear plan makes the writing flow.

Outline:

- Your line of argument (what you're arguing)
- 2-3 main points supporting it
- Examples for each point
- Counterarguments for each point
- Your response to those counterarguments

3. Write clearly

The two words I always drill into my students when it comes to academic writing are: concise and precise. Say what you mean and mean what you say. Better to write clearly than try and stuff the essay full of 'fancy sounding' vocabulary.

4. Include these elements:

- Clear line of argument - What's your actual argument and how does it answer the specific question asked?
- Specific examples - Concrete, real-world examples make arguments persuasive. Vague generalities don't. Make sure that your examples are directly related to your specific point.
- Counterarguments - Acknowledge the other side, and address the strongest version of that argument: "Some might argue X. However..." is more persuasive than ignoring opposing views.
- Logical structure - Each paragraph should follow from the last. The reader shouldn't wonder why you're suddenly talking about something different. You should be signposting this in the introduction.



Part III:

Super-Curriculars and Work Experience

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What are “Super Curriculars”?

Extra-curricular: Activities outside academics (sports, music, volunteering, Duke of Edinburgh)

Super-curricular: Academic enrichment beyond your syllabus

For law applications, super-curriculars matter more than extracurriculars. Not because extracurriculars are worthless, but because the focus is on your ability to study law. Does DofE show this? Probably not.

Three ideas of (free!) supercurriculars:

1. Reading

This is the easiest way to build your personal statement and prepare. Costs nothing (find PDFs on the internet) or borrow books from a library.

The mistake that many students make is reading books that they think are ‘impressive’ simply for the sake of it. Start with what interests you. If you force yourself through a boring book because you think you “should,” you won’t engage properly, and it’ll be obvious in your statement.

2. Podcasts and Lectures

Cambridge explicitly lists podcasts and lectures as valuable super-curriculars. They're right.

Good podcasts:

- Law in Action (BBC Radio 4) - current legal issues, accessible
- Main Justice (MSNow) - follows Trump’s Justice Department
- The Secret Barrister Podcast - criminal justice system from a practitioner
- Neurotech Now - podcast run by the Centre for Neurotechnology and Law

3. Essay Competition (or research project)

These are so valuable, even if you don't win anything. In fact, one of the only questions that I got asked at the interview on my personal statement was about an essay that I had mentioned! The best thing is that your reasoning is completely individual to you, and it is evidence of original, critical thinking.

You don't have to enter essay competitions, although this is the easiest way. Nothing is stopping you from starting a personal research project of your own, doing an EPQ, or writing a few articles/blog posts for a Substack or student newspaper.

What about Work Experience?

So many students that I speak to are worried about not having work experience. The truth is that it is absolutely not expected. Plus, you're applying for an academic law degree, not a training contract, and admissions tutors know that work experience isn't accessible to everyone.

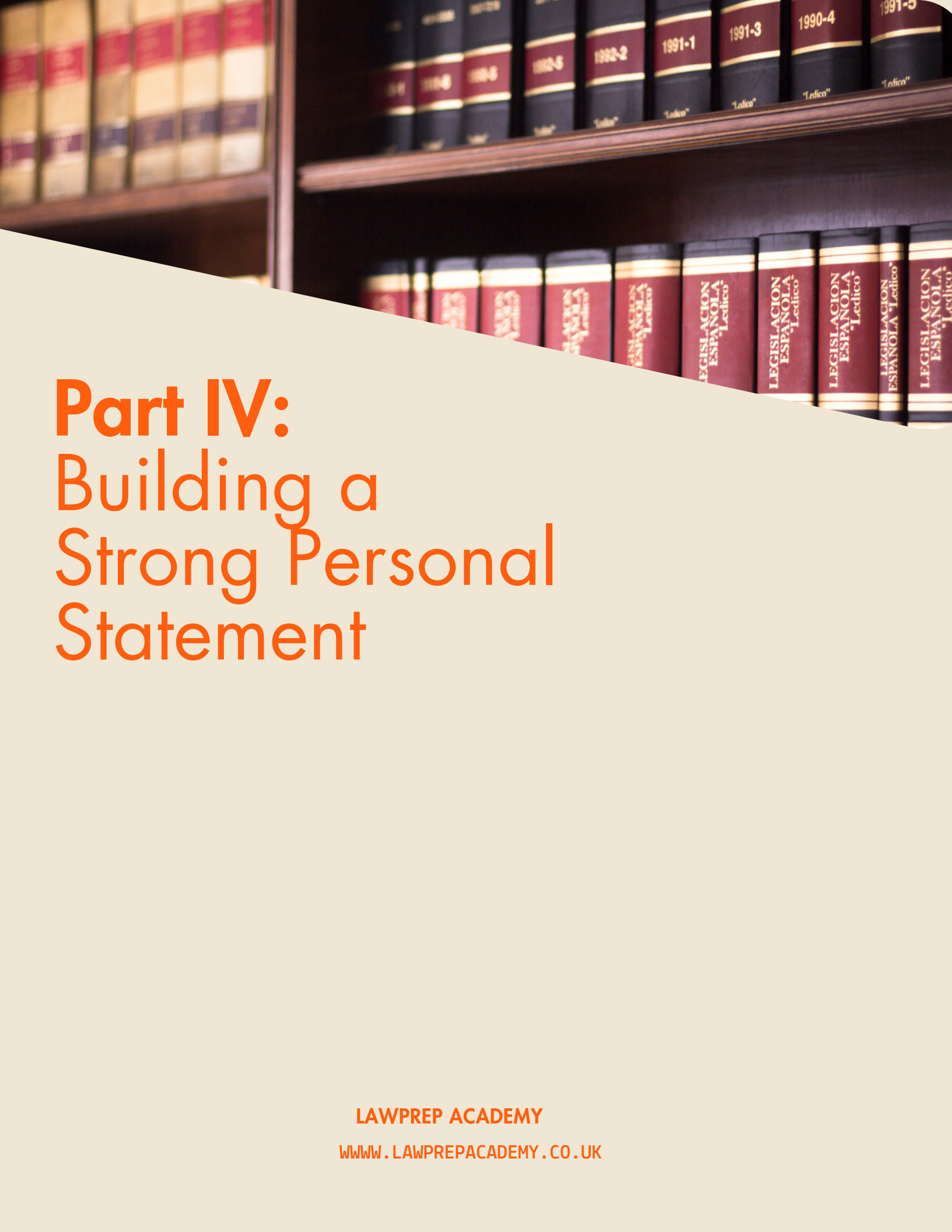
If you can't get work experience, don't panic. Court visits, reading, essay competitions, and evidence of individual engagement with concepts matter far more in the overall process. If you can get work experience, then great, it's a really good way to see if you like law and get some hands-on experience. Plus it gives you something personal and specific to write about in the personal statement - BUT you have to use it well.

Don't just list "I completed a week at [firm]", show what you learned. What made you think differently?

Think about the difference between the following:

A. "I completed work experience at a commercial law firm where I learned about how solicitors work and found it interesting."

B. "Observing contract negotiations at a commercial firm, I was struck by how much turns on precise wording. Replacing 'shall' with 'may' completely changed the obligation. To understand more, I read Lord Hoffmann's speech on contractual interpretation."



Part IV: Building a Strong Personal Statement

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Understanding the Personal Statement

Before you even start writing, it's good to think about the purpose of the personal statement. It's not intended to be a CV or an autobiography, but rather tutors mainly use it to find the answer to the questions:

Is there evidence that this person can engage with ideas at university level? Would this student contribute meaningfully to our academic community? Do they show the same qualities we've seen in students who thrive here?

You'll notice that those are broad questions, but that's because whilst all universities are looking for the same core skills, certain universities may prioritise different aspects of a candidate's profile. For example, Oxford and Cambridge's tutorial/supervision system means they're particularly interested in students who would do well with that teaching method, while internationally-focused London universities or courses with a year abroad often look for evidence of a global perspective and curiosity about different legal systems.

So, how do you demonstrate these qualities in a PS?

Start by going to your target university websites and looking at how they describe their law course and what it teaches students. Break this down into the type of profile that your target school is looking for, then make a mind map of how you demonstrate those qualities. You then have a nice basis to pull from when working on your personal statement.

Take this from the Durham LLB course overview. I've highlighted some things, but read it and think about the types of qualities that a person who would suit the learning style here may have.

You can go far deeper than just the course page. Look at blogs, LinkedIn, and anything where the law faculty is publishing information about them. You can then paint a really vivid picture of what they are looking for in your personal statement.

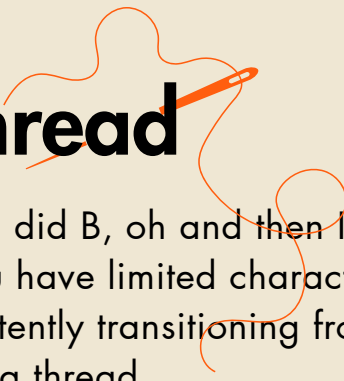
Learning

Learning takes the form of lectures, tutorials and seminars. We place great emphasis on high-quality small-group teaching. The small-group teaching format and one-on-one attention from a personal academic advisor are embedded into the learning experience to help you get more out of your studies. You'll also benefit from one-to-one support and self-directed learning to develop your critical thinking skills.

As you progress through the course, there is an increased focus on self-directed learning and independent research, particularly around the dissertation, as you begin to prepare for professional life or postgraduate study.

Specialist facilities in the Law School include an interactive Harvard-style lecture theatre and academic workrooms. The moot court and pro bono room give you the space to develop your skills in a simulated legal environment.

Finding a Thread



What we want to avoid is just listing "I did A, I did B, oh and then I did C." Firstly, it is repetitive to read, but secondly, you have limited characters to work with and don't want to waste them consistently transitioning from one idea to another. So I recommend trying to find a thread.

Students often think their interests are random. Contract law. Sexual offences. Completely unrelated, right?

Then we dig deeper.

"Why contract law?" "I'm interested in what makes an agreement valid."

"Why sexual offences?" "I'm interested in consent and where the boundaries are."

Suddenly, we realise they've been circling the same question the whole time: autonomy, consent, what you actually agree to, when agreements are real.

Your thread is the connecting theme in your interests.

It's what you keep coming back to, even when you're looking at different areas of law.

It might be:

- How law balances individual rights with collective goods
- The gap between law as written and law as applied
- Questions of fairness and who gets to define it
- How law responds (or fails to respond) to social change
- The role of discretion vs. rigid rules

Often, it is difficult to find your thread on your own. It's worth talking it through with a tutor, parent or friend. As you describe your interests, some key ideas are likely to come up in conversation. You don't need to force a thread. It's usually already there, you just need to draw it out.

Common Mistakes

Mistake 1: Not Addressing the Questions

The new personal statement structure is both a blessing and a curse. It gives you a clear structure, but that means admissions tutors can instantly spot who has not understood what the question is asking. Notice the word prepare keeps appearing. It's not asking what you've done, but how you have prepared. Goes back to our 'which qualities make a good law student' exercise above. It also implies forethought, not a list of activities.

Mistake 2: Writing Chronologically

"In Year 10, I became interested in law. In Year 11, I..." Admissions tutors don't need a timeline of your 'legal awakening'. The new structure gives you permission to organise by theme, not by date. Stronger students use this brilliantly and focus on grouping skills as opposed to listing achievements.

Mistake 3: Namedropping Rather than Showing Engagement

"I read Letters to a Law Student and found it interesting." Congratulations, so did 3,000 other applicants. The question asks how you've prepared, not what you've consumed. Admissions tutors can tell the difference between a student who listed books and one who engaged with ideas.

Mistake 4: Not Leaving Enough Time to Edit

First drafts are **almost always** too long, too vague, and too self-indulgent. The character limit exists for a reason: it forces you to choose what matters most. That choice is part of the admissions process itself. Can you identify your strongest evidence of preparation? Can you make every sentence work? Can you write concisely? You can't do that the night before the deadline. Your first draft is your raw material. Somewhere between your seventh and fifteenth draft is probably your personal statement.

Final Thoughts

It is really normal to feel overwhelmed about applying for law. You're competing against thousands of excellent students for limited places at universities with incredibly high standards. So I thought that I would end this guide with a few things to bear in mind.

You don't need to be perfect. You need to show you can think clearly, engage with ideas, and work at university level.

You can't cram this. The LNAT tests skills you develop over time. Your personal statement needs to show genuine engagement. Start early enough that the process feels manageable. If you are starting late, there's no reason why you can't succeed, but it's certainly easier to give yourself more than two weeks or so!

Prestige matters less than you think. What matters is finding a university where you'll thrive, learn effectively, and be happy for three years. You can succeed wherever you go.

Many (but not all!) "advantages" are just information. Other students don't have magic abilities, but rather, they have access to information, guidance, and resources. This guide gives you the basic information. The work is still yours to do.

The students who succeed aren't necessarily the smartest. They're the ones who understand what's being tested and prepare accordingly.

Start building the skills. Engage with ideas. Practice deliberately. Give yourself enough time. And remember that this process, as stressful as it is, is also the beginning of something incredibly exciting.

Good luck!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rhannon". The signature is stylized with a large, flowing 'R' and a cursive script for the rest of the name.

Founder, LawPrep Academy
BA (Oxon), Licence(Paris II)



Smarter Prep for ★ Sharper Minds

Take the guesswork out of law school admissions preparation with data-driven, structured programmes to prepare you for the LNAT, personal statement, interviews and preparation for first-year.

Getting into top law schools is harder than ever

Let's be honest: the numbers are brutal. Oxford gets about 10 applications for every single place on the law course. Cambridge is similar. And everyone applying has outstanding grades.

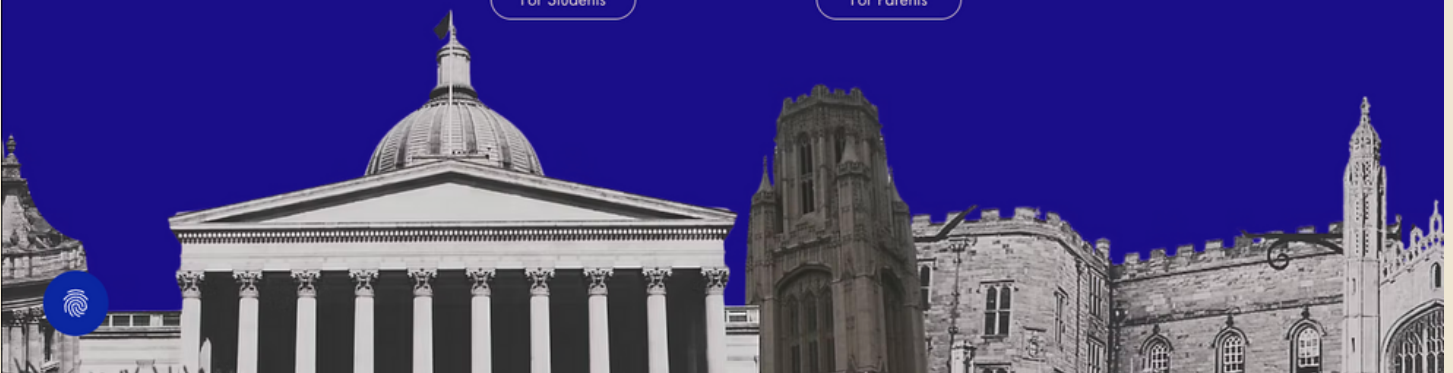
So what makes the difference? Preparation that's actually targeted at what matters. LNAT strategies that work. Personal statements that demonstrate developed thinking, not just achievements. Interview skills you can practice and improve.

The difference isn't always raw talent. It's often about knowing exactly what to prepare for, and doing it properly.

That's where we come in.

For Students

For Parents



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