Frequently Asked Questions – JD

Admissions and Application

Is the JD programme offered on a full-time or part-time basis? Can I join the programme in January?

The JD programme is conducted only on a full-time basis and in Singapore. There is only one intake in August.

Can I apply for the JD if I did not obtain the required Second Class Upper Honours degree, but have a Master of Laws degree and some work experience?

Yes, we can consider such applications. Each application will be assessed carefully on its own merits by the Admissions Committee.

Can I apply for the JD programme if I do not meet the English requirement?

No, we require applicants to have a strong proficiency in English in order to cope with the rigorous curriculum demands. Applicants would need to meet our English requirement in order to apply for the programme. All shortlisted applicants must undergo a written test and interview in February.

If my LLB degree is not obtained in an English-medium university, but I have a Masters degree from an English-medium one, can I be exempted from providing a TOEFL or IELTS score?

Please provide a letter from your current employer/supervisor to confirm your English proficiency. Exemption from providing a TOEFL/ IELTS score is on a case-by-case basis. If shortlisted, you must still undergo a written test and interview in January.

For further details, please refer to https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/admissions/admin_requirements.html.

I have an LLB degree and plan to apply for the 2-year JD programme. I read that law graduates from a civil law country or a non-gazetted common law university may apply. May I know what does a 'non-gazetted common law university' mean?

It refers to a university which teaches common law, such as those in UK, Australia and New Zealand, but is not in the approved list maintained by the Singapore Institute of Legal Education (SILE) set out at https://www.sile.edu.sg/qualified-person

May I know what is the scope of the interview and test and the assessment criteria, so as to be better prepared?

The interview will be conducted by two faculty members who will be assessing a shortlisted candidate's analytical ability, competency in spoken English and suitability to embark on the JD programme that may qualify him or her for legal practice in Singapore. Interview questions for admission into the 2-year and 3-year JD programme will be calibrated differently to take into account the candidate's prior work experience.

For the 3-year JD programme, the written test comprises a hypothetical scenario that assumes no legal knowledge, and assesses the candidate's analytical ability and comprehension, and the standard of written English. The written test for the 2-year JD programme assesses the candidate's analytical ability and comprehension, the standard of written English and will require the candidate to draw comparisons of a legal problem with the laws of a jurisdiction that the candidate is familiar with.

Shortlisted candidates should ensure a functional email at all times for communication.

May I know when the interview and test dates are?

The dates for the 2025 interviews and the written test are as follows:

Interviews/Test	Day/Dates
Interviews	Friday, 21 February and Saturday, 22 February 2025
Written test	Thursday, 20 February 2025

Note: The Faculty reserves the right to make further changes. Please check our website regularly for updates. Only shortlisted candidates will be provided with instructions for the interview and test.

Programme Requirements

Is there a Class of Honours for the JD?

JD students are graded separately from LLB and LLM students. Successful completion of the JD programme leads to the award of the following classes of degrees: JD (Highest Distinction), JD (Distinction), JD (Merit) and JD. For purposes of seeking admission to the Singapore Bar, students must attain at least a JD (Merit) to be considered a Qualified Person under the Legal Profession (Qualified Persons) Rules. More details of grading and criteria for award of JD degrees may be found at https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/student_matters/grad_prog/jd_deg_class.html.

How does the acceleration option work for the JD?

For the 3-year JD comprising 120-124 units to be completed in six semesters, this may be accelerated in some cases for completion within 2.5 years subject to the approval of Vice Dean (Academic Affairs), who will take into consideration the student's first year's exam grades. Under this accelerated option, the balance of the 80 units will be completed in the remaining three semesters. There is no acceleration option for the 2-year JD.

Can I be exempted from certain compulsory modules in the 2-year JD programme?

Yes. Exemptions from certain compulsory courses will be determined by Vice Dean (Academic Affairs) on a case-by-case basis taking into account considerations such as subjects previously studied in the candidate's previous law degree and the candidate's relevant work experience. The candidates will then have the opportunity to read more elective courses to make up the credits for graduation and successfully complete a total of 84-86 units for the 2-year JD degree. This means that candidates will have more elective space to read courses in our specialisation clusters such as Asian Legal Studies, Civil Law, Corporate & Financial Services Law, Intellectual Property & Technology Law, International & Comparative Law, International Arbitration & Dispute Resolution Maritime Law, and Private Law.

How is the JD taught?

As far as possible, the JD cohort will be taught in one section for the seminar-style compulsory courses: for example, Criminal Law, Company Law and Equity & Trusts. For compulsory courses taught in lecture-tutorial style, the JD students will attend the same lectures as the LLB students, but will be placed in separate tutorial group(s) from the LLB students: Torts, Contract, Property, Constitutional & Administrative Law and Evidence. In some compulsory and skills-based courses,

they will be mingled with the LLB Students: Singapore Law in Context, Legal Analysis, Research & Communication, Trial Advocacy/Corporate Deals, and Pro Bono Service.

For the elective courses, the JD students will be integrated into the same class with the LLB and LLM students, but will be graded separately from the LLB and LLM students.

For further details, please refer to https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/student_matters/grad_prog/jd_deg_reqm.html.

Practice and Careers

If I am a foreign student, can I practise in Singapore and in my own country when I graduate?

In order to practise law in Singapore, you will need to obtain at least a JD (with Merit) from NUS. After that, you must complete the requirements of practical training and exam for the Singapore bar. You must pass **Part B of the Bar Examinations** before you are entitled to serve the **Practice Training Period** (see Rule 3(1) of the **Legal Profession (Practice Training Period) Rules 2009**). More information is available on the SILE website at https://www.sile.edu.sg/.

However, other jurisdictions will have their own requirements for admission and you must enquire or refer to the local bar websites of each jurisdiction for entry requirements and details.

I am a Singapore citizen looking to do the JD programme while continuing to work at my present job. Is it possible?

The JD is a full-time degree programme. While we do not require candidates to resign from their existing jobs to be enrolled, we do not grant extensions for assignments or accord special treatment to candidates who miss classes as a result of employment commitments.

Scholarships and Financial Matters

What are the tuition fees like?

Please visit https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/admissions/fees.html for our fee information. The fees will be subject to prevailing Goods & Services Tax (GST). In addition to the tuition fees, there are some mandatory miscellaneous fees payable.

The JD programme is a graduate programme and does not enjoy tuition grant from the Singapore government.

Are there any financial assistance available?

Please visit https://law1a.nus.edu.sg/admissions/sch_requirements.html to see financial assistance available.

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