

Reflective Practice Across the Articling Lifecycle

Newfoundland and Labrador entry-to-practice perspective

International Symposium Series:
Reflective Practice for Legal Professionals

Plan

Reflect

Develop

Newfoundland and Labrador



LSNL Fact Sheet

A small law society operating in a relatively small jurisdiction

Founded: 1834

Practising members: 850

Total calls to the bar: 2,147 as of June 25, 2026

Annual new calls: < 50

BAC cohort size: Usually 25–35 students

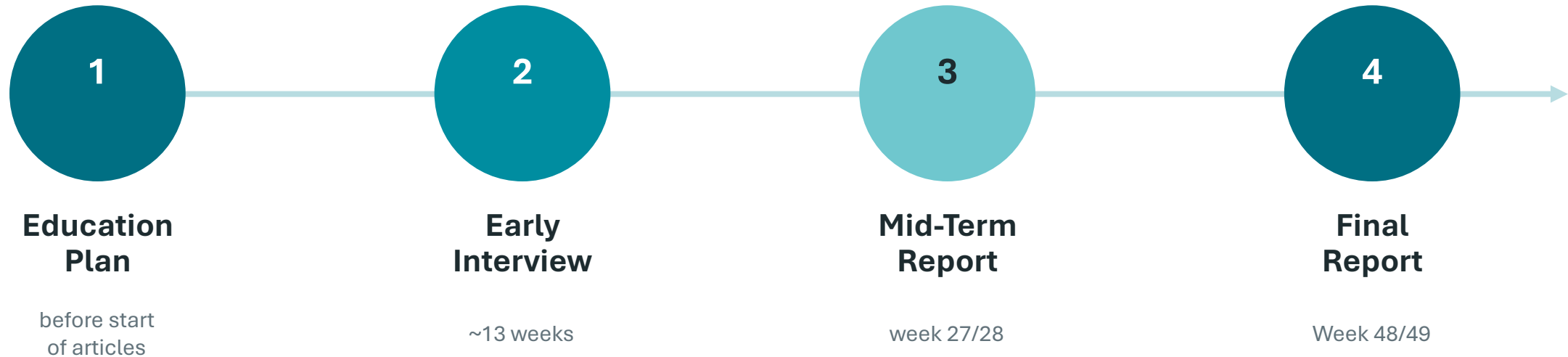
This scale makes it easier to iterate quickly and stay close to the student experience.

The shift: from assignment to framework



Reporting framework: reflection before, during, and after

The revised framework creates recurring reflective touchpoints, rather than asking for one-off reflection at the end.



Planning -> guided conversation -> structured assessment -> evidence of development

Mid-Term Report: reflection built into reporting

The report turns competency assessment into a reflective planning exercise.

Each competency domain is rated on experience received: 1 None • 2 Minimal • 3 Adequate • 4 Substantial • 5 Extensive

EXAMPLE COMPETENCY DOMAIN

**Competency Domain 1:
Ethics and Professional Responsibility**

Addresses the student’s ability to understand and uphold ethical and professional obligations, including awareness of the Code of Professional Conduct, sound judgment, professionalism, reliability, integrity, accountability, confidentiality, and participation in the administration of justice.

1

Prompt 1

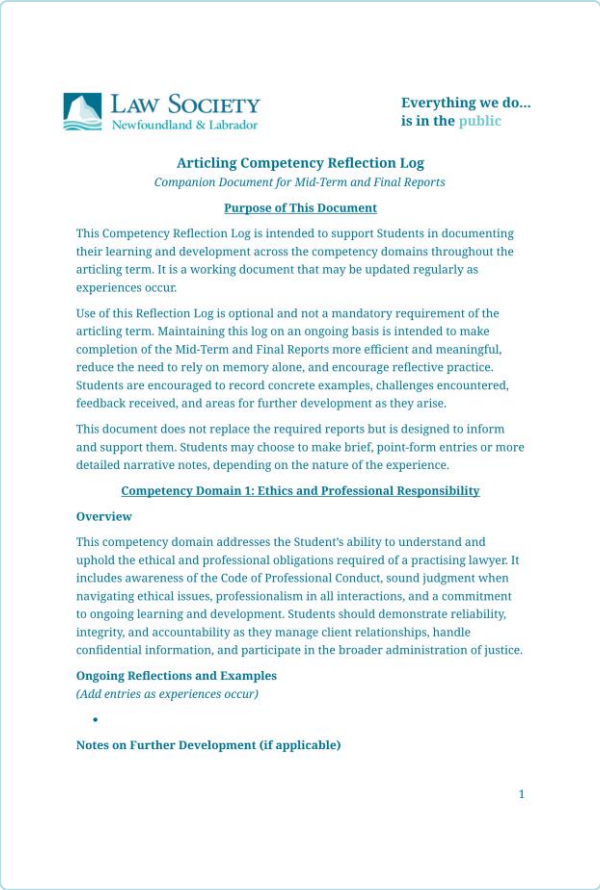
Describe the Student’s experience to date supporting this ranking.

2

Prompt 2

If ranking is 1 or 2, describe how additional experience will be obtained in the second half of articling.

Reflection Log: evidence over memory



The log is optional, but it solves a practical problem: by mid-term and final reporting, students may not remember the details that best evidence growth.

- **Experience** tasks, files, interactions
- **Concrete example** what happened
- **Feedback** what was learned
- **Development need** what comes next

Mapped to all 10 competency domains; designed to inform the required Mid-Term and Final Reports.

 Law Society of Ontario Nouvelles de l'Ordre Everything we do... is in the public interest. Articulating Compromise: Reflection Log <i>(Compromise Document for Self-Talk and Peer-Talk)</i> Purpose and This Document This Compromise Reflection Log is intended to encourage students in documenting their learning and development across the compromise domains throughout the articling log. It is a working document that will be updated regularly as experiences occur. Use of this Reflection Log is optional and not a mandatory requirement of the articling term. Maintaining this log as an ongoing basis is intended to make completion of the Self-Talk and Peer-Talk Reports more efficient and meaningful, reduce the need to rely on memory alone, and encourage reflective practice. Students are encouraged to record concrete examples, challenges encountered, feedback received, and areas for further development as they arise. This document does not require the required reports to be designed to inform and support them. Students may wish to make brief, point-form notes or more detailed narrative notes, depending on the nature of the experience. Competency Domains 1, Ethics and Professional Responsibility Overview This competency domain addresses the Student's ability to understand and uphold the ethical and professional obligations of a practicing lawyer. It includes a number of the Core Professional Values, some of which are being navigated through ethical issues, professionalism in all interactions, and a commitment to ongoing learning and development. It also includes the ability to demonstrate integrity, and accountability by one's manner client relationships, leading to the development of trust, and participation in the broader administration of justice. Ongoing Reflections and Examples <i>(Self-Talk or experience occur)</i> Notes on Further Development (if applicable)	• Competency Domain 2: Communication Overview This competency domain address the Student's ability to communicate clearly, effectively, and professionally in all aspects of legal practice. It encompasses oral and written communication, the use of plain language, and the capacity to tailor messages to different audiences and contexts. It includes the ability to listen attentively, actively engage questions, convey legal concepts in understandable terms, and manage communications in both in-person and virtual environments. Effective communication also requires timely response, professional tone, and the ability to handle sensitive or difficult situations with empathy and clarity. Ongoing Reflections and Examples <i>(Self-Talk or experience occur)</i> Notes on Further Development (if applicable) • Competency Domain 3: Managing Professional Relationships Overview This competency domain focuses on the Student's ability to build, maintain, and enhance professional relationships with clients, colleagues, and other stakeholders. It includes understanding how to manage client expectations in a timely format, establishing clear boundaries, and managing expectations by the creative. It also includes the ability to demonstrate professionalism, courtesy in all interactions, while also recognizing and responding appropriately to conflicts, disagreements, or changing circumstances. This domain also requires the ability to work respectfully and ethically in diverse environments, including an awareness of cultural, social, and individual differences, and an understanding of how systemic factors can affect client experiences and legal outcomes.	• Ongoing Reflections and Examples <i>(Self-Talk or experience occur)</i> • Notes on Further Development (if applicable) • Competency Domain 4: Truth and Reconciliation Overview This competency domain addresses the Student's understanding of the historical and contemporary experience of Indigenous Peoples and the role of lawyers in advancing reconciliation. It includes awareness of the impacts of colonization, systemic racism, and intergenerational trauma, as well as an understanding of Indigenous legal traditions and their place within Canada's legal framework. Students should demonstrate cultural humility, recognize the importance of ongoing respect with Indigenous clients and communities, and integrate reconciliation principles into their approach to legal practice. This domain reflects the broader community responsibility to support equitable, culturally relevant, and respectful legal outcomes. Ongoing Reflections and Examples <i>(Self-Talk or experience occur)</i> • Notes on Further Development (if applicable) • Competency Domain 5: Critical Thinking and Legal Analysis Overview This competency domain focuses on the Student's ability to think critically, gather and assess relevant information, and apply sound legal reasoning to a client's circumstances. It includes determining what information is relevant,	• effective legal research using appropriate tools, and evaluating the validity and relevance of legal authorities. Students should be able to interpret statutes, rules, and precedents; draw logical conclusions, and develop strategy, practical recommendations. This domain reflects the established foundation of legal practice, requiring creative, logical thinking, and the ability to adapt to new information as it arises. Ongoing Reflections and Examples <i>(Self-Talk or experience occur)</i> • Notes on Further Development (if applicable) • Competency Domain 6: Ethics and Advocacy Overview This competency domain addresses the Student's ability to understand client goals, provide accurate and practical legal advice, and advocate effectively for their interests. It includes identifying client goals, using critical analysis, and tailoring advice to the client's circumstances. Students are expected to apply their legal analysis to develop strong arguments, manage ethics and risks, and ensure clients understand the recommendations provided. Advocacy skills include providing persuasive arguments, selecting appropriate ethical techniques, and advocating a client's position ethically and effectively in negotiations, hearings, or other legal processes. Ongoing Reflections and Examples <i>(Self-Talk or experience occur)</i> • Notes on Further Development (if applicable) • Competency Domain 7: Litigation and Transactional Skills Overview
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Outgoing Reflections and Examples
(Add entries as experiences occur)

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Notes on Further Development (if applicable)

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Purpose: make reflection ordinary, regular, and usable.

Updated reflective practice assignment



LAW SOCIETY

Newfoundland & Labrador

Everything we do...
is in the public interest.

Mid-Term Reflective Practice Assignment

Introduction to Reflective Practice

Effective legal education involves the development and integration of knowledge, skills, and values such that the student, once called to the bar, is equipped with the capacity to think and conduct themselves as a legal professional in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct and the Law Society's bar admission program. The Law Society's bar admission program employs a range of pedagogical approaches to support this development. One such approach, increasingly relied upon in professional education, is reflective practice.

Reflective practice is a structured and intentional process through which individuals examine what they have learned, accomplished, and experienced, including reflecting on successes, challenges, and the approaches taken in particular situations. Through this process, individuals consider how their actions and decisions contributed to particular outcomes and identify adjustments that may improve future performance. Reflective practice is continuous and requires openness to multiple perspectives and approaches to professional decision-making. In doing so, it deepens learning from experience and supports the integration of knowledge, skills, and professional values.

Purpose of Assignment

This Mid-Term Reflective Practice Assignment is intended to provide students with an opportunity to pause and take stock of their articling experience to date, consider their developing competence across the Competency Framework, and identify learning goals for the remainder of the articling term. Reflection encourages students to think about professional decision-making in context and to maximize learning from their experiences.

Students are required to review and discuss this assignment with their principal prior to submission. This discussion is an important component of the reflective process. Principals are well placed to provide context, feedback, and guidance based on their observations of the student's work and professional development. Reviewing the assignment together also supports alignment between the student's self-assessment and the principal's assessment, helps identify appropriate learning opportunities for the remainder of articling, and promotes open communication regarding expectations and progression.

Instructions

Students must complete this assignment and review it with their principal before the Mid-Term Report is finalized. The completed assignment must be submitted to the Law Society together with the Mid-Term Report.

Responses should be thoughtful, candid, and grounded in the student's articling experience to date. There is no minimum or maximum length for submissions; students should provide sufficient detail to meaningfully address each question. Personally identifiable information and confidential client information must be omitted from all submissions.

1

To assist with this assignment, students are encouraged to keep informal reflective notes throughout their articling term. While tools such as spell checkers or grammar assistants may be used to improve clarity, the substance of this assignment must reflect the student's own experiences and thinking. The learning and professional growth intended by reflective practice can only occur when students engage directly and honestly with their own experiences.

The submission must address each of the following components:

1. Area of Strength

Identify one competency domain in which you believe you are currently strongest.

In your submission, you should:

- explain why you have identified this domain;
- refer to specific experiences, tasks, or responsibilities that have contributed to your strength in this domain; and
- where applicable, reference any feedback you have received with respect to this domain.

2. Area(s) for Development

Identify at least one competency domain that you are prioritizing for further development.

In your submission, you should:

- explain why you are prioritizing this/these competency domain(s);
- describe what you have found challenging with respect to the development of this/these domain(s); and
- identify any supports, experiences, or opportunities that you believe would assist your development in this/these area(s).

3. Learning Goals for the Remainder of Articling

Identify two learning goals for the remainder of your articling term. Each goal must be:

- specific;
- realistic; and
- clearly linked to a competency domain.

For each goal, describe:

- the actions you will take;
- any support or guidance you may require; and
- how you will know you have made progress.

2

Students connect experience, competence, feedback, and forward planning.

1

Area of strength

Strongest competency domain • Specific tasks/responsibilities • Feedback received, where applicable

2

Area(s) for development

Priority domain(s) • What has been challenging • Supports, experiences, opportunities needed

3

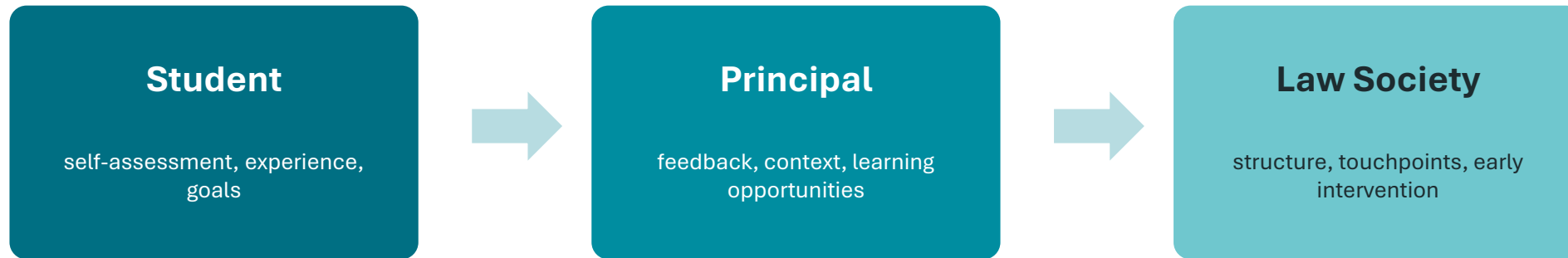
Learning goals

Two specific and realistic goals • Clearly linked to competency domains • Actions, support, and progress markers

Students must review and discuss the assignment with their principal before submission.

The assignment is not just private reflection

The Mid-Term Report requires confirmation that the student and principal reviewed the assignment together.



Reflection becomes a supervision conversation, not just a written submission.

Design goal: align self-assessment, feedback, and learning opportunities.

What changes in the supervision conversation

● From general impressions → to competency-specific evidence

● From late problems → to earlier intervention

● From exposure by chance → to intentional learning opportunities

● From completion mindset → to professional development mindset

Design principles: developmental, competency-based, relationship-centred, and iterative.

Where we are now

First year of the revised framework. Deliberately iterative.

- **Better self-assessment**
Students connect experience to competency evidence.
- **Better conversations**
Principals and students discuss development earlier.
- **Better refinement**
The framework evolves from student and principal feedback.

Everything we do is in the public interest.

Closing idea

Not a form. A habit.

The aim is to cultivate reflective habits early, so competence continues to develop after call.