A Publication of the Law School Admission Council

2011–2012 LAW SCHOOL ADMISSION REFERENCE MANUAL

for Law School Administrators and Prelaw Advisors

LSAC.org

ABA488

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applicant data by the law school in its admission process.

The validity studies performed by LSAC for participating law schools use statistical regression analysis techniques to relate the grades obtained by first-year law students with the LSAT scores and undergraduate grade-point averages on file for these students as candidates. By the nature of these studies there is a long lag time from the time most candidates who become law school students earn LSAT scores and provide undergraduate grades until the validity study results for these students are available for use in the admission process.

For example, consider the first-year law school class for the 2008–2009 school year. Most of these students were applicants, earned their LSAT score, and provided undergraduate data during the 2007–2008 application year. A few students had test scores from testing years earlier than 2007–2008. The first-year grades were earned during the 2008–2009 school year and were reported to LSAC early in the fall of 2009. Following the receipt, entry, and checking of the first-year grades, the validity analyses were run, with the results reported later in the fall of 2009. Because this was the middle of the 2009–2010 application year, the first best opportunity to use validity study results to adjust the admission index and be consistent for all candidates in the application process was in the summer of 2010 for use with the 2010–2011 application year. Thus, for most candidates, LSAT scores earned in a given testing year will not be available for use with an admission index until three application years later.

By this schedule, validity study results using LSAT scores earned during the 2009–2010 testing year will be available for admission index use during the 2012–2013 application year.

Typically, LSAC uses three years of first-year grade data in the validity study process to smooth out the inevitable fluctuations that can occur from one year to another.

The LSAT and Guidance of Educationally Disadvantaged Candidates

The interaction of poverty, segregation, and unequal educational opportunity has created a group of students described conventionally as "educationally disadvantaged." Equal educational opportunity generally has not been available to African Americans, Latinos, Asian Americans, Native Americans, and other minority groups. Thus, when candidates from these racial/ethnic groups take tests such as the LSAT, questions sometimes arise concerning the interpretation of their test scores.

Scores on the LSAT, as on other tests of its kind, never completely represent the potential of any candidate. This is especially true for minority candidates whose educational experience, in and out of school, may have differed significantly from that of the majority of candidates.

It cannot be emphasized too often that uncritical use of test scores to forecast any individual candidate's performance is always inappropriate, but it may be especially so for those who were disadvantaged in their earlier educational preparation. It is best to consider as wide a range of information as possible for the most accurate

Score Distributions for the June 2008 Through February 2011 Testing Years Combined*

Score	Pct Below
180	99.9%
179	99.9%
178	99.9%
177	99.8%
176	99.6%
175	99.4%
174	99.2%
173	99.0%
172	98.6%
171	98.0%
170	97.3%
169	96.6%
168	95.7%
167	94.2%
166	93.1%
165	91.5%
164	89.7%
163	87.6%
162	85.5%
161	82.9%
160	79.9%
159	77.4%
158	74.1%
157	70.4%
156	66.9%
155	63.7%
154	59.8%
153	55.6%
152	51.7%
151	47.7%
150	44.2%
149	40.3%
148	36.3%
147	33.1%
146	29.5%
145	26.3%
144	23.1%
143	20.4%
142	17.9%
141	15.3%
140	13.4%
139	11.5%
138	9.8%
137	8.3%
136	6.9%
135	5.7%
134	4.7%
133	3.8%
132	3.3%
131	2.6%
130	2.0%
129	1.7%
128	1.4%
127	1.1%
126	0.9%
125	0.7%
124	0.5%
123	0.4%
122	0.3%
121	0.3%
120	0.0%

*Tests given under nonstandard conditions are not included.