

# Canadian Association of Muslim Women in Law

camwlaw@gmail.com

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October 30, 2014

LAW SOCIETY OF UPPER CANADA  
OSGOODE HALL  
130 QUEEN STREET WEST  
TORONTO, ONTARIO  
M5H 2N6

**DELIVERED VIA EMAIL: [ZPEREIRA@LSUC.ON.CA](mailto:ZPEREIRA@LSUC.ON.CA)**

Dear Treasurer Minor:

## **Re: Prohibition of “Religious Attire” During Barrister and Solicitor Licensing Examinations**

Thank you for your response to CAMWL’s inquiry about the Law Society’s *de facto* prohibition of “religious attire” during the Licensing Examinations. We appreciate that the Law Society will be reviewing its Examination Rules and Protocol in light of our inquiry.

We also thank you for the background and explanation about the Examination Rules and Protocol. We would note that although the Law Society’s accommodation of religious difference is helpful, a willingness to provide accommodation cannot pre-suppose the need to create different categories of applicants.

We are especially concerned that applicants should not bear additional burdens during the examination process simply because they may wear religious attire. This is particularly so in the absence of any evidence that religious attire poses a threat to the integrity of the examinations.

Accordingly, it is CAMWL’s respectful view that the *de facto* prohibition of religious attire is both unnecessary and unfair. As a result, CAMWL does not believe that the existence of accommodation should be the focus of this discussion. Rather, the focus must be on ensuring the open and equitable access of all applicants to entrance into the legal profession.

As you know, our organization is allied with and comprised of members of other organizations, who are also directly negatively affected by the Examination Rules and Protocol. It is our respectful view that in order to remain accountable to the legal profession, the Law Society must provide members of these affected groups with a meaningful opportunity to participate in the review and rulemaking process. Please see below for the list of 21 organisations of and for lawyers and law students who join us in our request to you.

Please let us know how we can further contribute our unique expertise, insight, and information to the review process. We also ask to be advised of a timeline by which we can expect this review to be initiated. Once again, we are encouraged by the Law Society’s decision to review its Examination Rules and Protocol.

We look forward to hearing from you shortly regarding next steps.

Thank you for your attention.

Sincerely,



Fathima Cader on behalf of  
Canadian Association of Muslim Women in Law  
[camwlaw@gmail.com](mailto:camwlaw@gmail.com)  
<http://camwl.wordpress.com>

Canadian Muslim Lawyers Association  
[contactCMLA@gmail.com](mailto:contactCMLA@gmail.com)  
<http://cmla-acam.ca>

cc (LSUC):

Equity Dept: [equity@suc.on.ca](mailto:equity@suc.on.ca)  
Racialised Licensees Working Group: [hgoldblatt@sgmlaw.com](mailto:hgoldblatt@sgmlaw.com),  
[janet.leiper@15bedford.com](mailto:janet.leiper@15bedford.com), [julianf@falconers.ca](mailto:julianf@falconers.ca)  
Equity and Aboriginal Issues Committee: [susanharelaw@gmail.com](mailto:susanharelaw@gmail.com), [symes@ssmlaw.ca](mailto:symes@ssmlaw.ca)  
Equity Advisory Group: [nishikawasandra@gmail.com](mailto:nishikawasandra@gmail.com)

cc (Endorsers):

A2J (University of Ottawa): [silmi.abdullah@gmail.com](mailto:silmi.abdullah@gmail.com)  
Black Law Students Association of Canada: [president@blsacanada.com](mailto:president@blsacanada.com)  
Canadian Association of Black Lawyers: [info@cabl.ca](mailto:info@cabl.ca)  
Free Speech Society (Osgoode Hall Law School): [christopherlos@osgoode.yorku.ca](mailto:christopherlos@osgoode.yorku.ca)  
Jewish Law Students' Association at Osgoode Hall Law School: [osgoodejlsa@gmail.com](mailto:osgoodejlsa@gmail.com)  
Jewish Law Students' Association at the University of Toronto:  
[zach.mammon@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:zach.mammon@mail.utoronto.ca)  
Law Students' Society of Ontario: [president@lssoc.ca](mailto:president@lssoc.ca)  
Law Union of Ontario: [lawunionofontario@gmail.com](mailto:lawunionofontario@gmail.com)  
Law Union at the University of Ottawa: [uottawa.lawunion@gmail.com](mailto:uottawa.lawunion@gmail.com)  
Law Union at the University of Toronto: [utlawunion@gmail.com](mailto:utlawunion@gmail.com)  
Law Union at the University of Windsor: [uwindsor.lawunion@gmail.com](mailto:uwindsor.lawunion@gmail.com)  
Muslim Law Students Association at Osgoode Hall Law School: [mlsaosgoode@gmail.com](mailto:mlsaosgoode@gmail.com)  
Muslim Law Students' Association at the University of Ottawa: [muslimlaw@gmail.com](mailto:muslimlaw@gmail.com)  
Muslim Law Students Association at the University of Toronto:  
[nabila.queshi@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:nabila.queshi@mail.utoronto.ca)  
National Muslim Law Students' Association: [NMLSACanada@gmail.com](mailto:NMLSACanada@gmail.com)  
Osgoode Society Against Institutional Injustice: [osaii@osgoode.yorku.ca](mailto:osaii@osgoode.yorku.ca)  
South Asian Bar Association: [jayashree.goswami@zurich.com](mailto:jayashree.goswami@zurich.com)  
South Asian Law Students Association at the University of Toronto:  
[salsautoronto@gmail.com](mailto:salsautoronto@gmail.com)  
South Asian Legal Clinic of Ontario: [baqik@lao.on.ca](mailto:baqik@lao.on.ca)  
Women's Legal Education and Action Fund: [k.stanton@leaf.ca](mailto:k.stanton@leaf.ca)  
Women's Legal Education and Action Fund at the University of Ottawa: [ottawa@leaf.ca](mailto:ottawa@leaf.ca)