



## Guidelines for Letter Writers for Law School Applicants

### To Letter Writers:

We thank you for agreeing to write a letter of recommendation for an aspiring lawyer. We realize that you are taking valuable time from your busy schedules to contribute. We would like to offer you some guidelines to help you make this task more manageable. If you have any questions please feel free to contact the Office of Preprofessional Advising at [preprofessional@columbia.edu](mailto:preprofessional@columbia.edu).

### What are they looking for?

Law schools request that applicants submit usually two and at most 3-4 letters of reference. These letters are read carefully in the application process. We have found that the most useful letters include the following:

- 1) Explanation of relationship between applicant and referee**
- 2) Information on applicant's personal characteristics:** (i.e. integrity, reliability, determination, motivation, honesty, professionalism, leadership, character, maturity, etc.)
- 3) Information regarding applicant's social Skills:** (i.e. interpersonal skills, ability to interact with others in groups, ability to establish peer relationships, etc.)
- 4) Comparative information:** How does this student compare to others whom you have taught or with whom you have worked?
- 5) Assessment of applicant's academic potential:** (if applicable to relationship) – Is this student ready for the rigors of their intended program of study? Do they have good critical thinking, problem solving, writing and analytical skills?

### Formatting:

A letter written for a prelaw student will be sent as part of their application to the schools where they have applied. Please be sure that your letters are written professionally, appear on official letterhead, and are signed.

### Where should I send this letter?

The applicant should provide you with a link that will enable you to upload your letter directly to the Law School Admission Council's Credential Assembly Service (CAS).

However if you have not been provided a link, letters may also be sent to [preprofessional@columbia.edu](mailto:preprofessional@columbia.edu), provided the document (PDF preferred) appears on letterhead with a handwritten signature.