

MAKERERE



UNIVERSITY

**PROFICIENCIES FOR STUDYING LAW AND ACADEMIC
ACHIEVEMENT: RELEVANCY OF PRIOR STUDIES**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN
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ABSTRACT

Prior studies are consensually regarded to demonstrate competencies required for enrollees to excel in their subsequent academic endeavors. However, the various subjects undertaken by pre-university law students may affect the attainment of these competences. The objective of this study therefore was to assess the relevancy of prior studies in predicting competencies required by entering students of law to excel academically on the program. The investigations were based on administrative data of enrollees of Bachelors of Laws at Makerere University in the period 2005-2007. Attainment in subjects done at the Advanced Level (A-Level) of secondary education was adopted as a measure of enrollees' prior studies. The Cumulative Grade Point Average (CGPA) in the four-year stipulated period of bachelor's studies was adopted as a measure of enrollees' academic achievement. The academic achievement was assessed by enrollees' characteristics and attainment in prior studies using a panel data approach based on a Random Effects model.

In the results, mean CGPAs attained in the first (3.01), second (3.04), third (3.12) and fourth (3.19) years of study points to a "Lower Second" class degree obtained by a considerable number of graduates on the program. In the multivariable analysis, about 81% of differentials in academic achievement was attributed to variations across students. Particularly, higher CGPAs were significantly noted among: students on the government entry scheme, those in the 2005 cohort, students with a high weighted score adopted on admission to the program, as well as those who obtained grade A in Literature, History and Divinity at their A-Level.

The findings support literature that consensually regards these subjects to predict proficiencies required by entering students of law. Thus, admission requirement on the BLL should be revised to take into account the competence of enrollees in these subjects rather than depending solely on either the outcome of pre-entry examinations and/or a pooled index of enrollees' attainment in their A-Level of secondary education.