

Legal Profession Admission Board

Australian Constitutional Law

March 2021

Comments by the Examiner

Examiner's General Observations

- (1) As was the case in prior examinations, all of Australian Constitutional Law was examined in the March Exam, including materials previously the subject of the Assignment.
- (2) From the outset, it should be noted that the Summer 2020-2021 session, undertaken as it was during the COVID pandemic, did make some already difficult situations all that much harder. Lessons were conducted by a mixture of in-person and Zoom/Remote Learning. I also made myself available via telephone to help students through their various problems and issues. Overall, my "*improvise/adapt/overcome*" approach, which had been practiced in the Winter 2020 session, again worked well in the Summer 2020-2021 session.
- (3) As in all prior exams, there was a significant amount of factual material to get on top of and comprehend. However, there had been, already, significant assistance extended by me to the students in respect of preparation for this Exam. There had also been extensive memoranda sent out by me during the course and, especially, before the Exam.
- (4) It was my expectation that student candidates would be conversant with all of the Constitution, with all of the key cases, as well as know all the material covered in lectures. In respect of knowing the Constitution and key cases, the requirement to have a ready familiarity with both had been stressed, repeatedly, from the course's first lecture.

- (5) The Exam itself was composed of four problem questions each worth 20%, which, when added to the earlier Assignment worth 20%, comprised the marks for this subject.
- (6) In answering each of the questions, student candidates displayed a good understanding of Australian Constitutional Law, as well as the key cases and problems of the topic area.
- (7) Overall, 156 students sat the Exam. There was an enormous disparity of marks, with the top mark being 88%. Over all, it was a pleasing result, noting the issues and challenges again posed by teaching what is, for many, a very difficult subject, in this Covid era.
- (8) This cohort was a good group to teach, they adapted well to the COVID era, and my best wishes for all that lies ahead for them.

*Connolly 22. APR. 2021*

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Examiner in Australian Constitutional Law