

Butterworths' Questions and Answers: Evidence**By Dorne Boniface****Butterworths, 2000, pp 296, \$36**

The law of evidence is usually one of the final hurdles encountered by students during the law degree. It is ordinarily met with a degree of apprehension as those who have tackled the discipline the previous year convey their heart-felt sympathy and best wishes when gleefully handing over their well-thumbed texts. However, the Butterworths' Question and Answers series, and in particular the Evidence edition, is an excellent way to reduce the anxiety of this subject by providing a useful and concise companion for any student delving into the complexities of evidence law.

Although the text is by no means a comprehensive guide to the law of evidence, this was not the primary aim of the author. Rather the text is designed to assist students in consolidating their knowledge and importantly to reduce complex concepts to a practical level, a fundamental skill in examinations and in practice. Nevertheless, Boniface covers a broad range of issues dealt with in the area of Evidence law including relevance, hearsay, unreliable evidence and opinion evidence to name but a few.

The format of the text is clear, each chapter outlining the key issues to be concerned with when embarking on a specific area of evidence law. This is a welcome inclusion for many students as often it is an all too familiar trap for students to get lost in the complexities of evidence law and lose sight of the key issues. Thus Boniface sets them out clearly (in point-form) so that students are aware of which areas to focus on from the beginning of each chapter.

The second major component of each chapter is a sample question that generally covers all the key issues. Also included are time limits for each question, a useful addition with respect to exam preparation. The problem is then followed by an answer plan outlining (once again in point-form) the key issues which the question raises with a concise outline of the necessary areas of law requiring discussion and how this law applies to the facts of the problem.

A sample answer then follows the plan answer. This section contains a detailed description of how the facts of the problem interrelate with the law. Thus students can view how the issues can be represented systematically which assists in increasing a student's practical understanding of the topic. Examiner's comments form the fourth section of each chapter, providing a helpful evaluation of the strengths and weaknesses of the sample answer. Importantly for students, this section

tion contains a valuable insight into what examiners look for when marking exam answers in evidence law. The final component of each chapter concerns common errors to avoid when answering exam questions. This section is a fitting final component which acts as a simple summary easily referable to and invaluable in preparing for exams.

Overall the text is a useful addition for a student embarking upon the law of evidence. Its content is geared almost entirely to preparation for exam situations and provided that it is used for this purpose students will find it a valuable addition to their evidence library. Nevertheless, this text should not be used as a substitute for a comprehensive evidence text and without a fundamental understanding of the law of evidence. Also, the text has a strong focus on the position in NSW, which is under the jurisdiction of the *Uniform Evidence Act 1995* (this Act is also operative in the Commonwealth and ACT jurisdictions). Although reference is made to the position in other states, such comparisons are thin and students in these states need to be cautious when relying on the key issues and guide answers in this respect.

*Tracey Brewer**

Butterworths' Student Companions: Administrative Law

Anne Ardagh

Fourth Edition, Butterworths, 2000, 123pp, \$19

Ploughing through mountains of cases is often a laborious and ultimately unrewarding task. When reading through a 50-page judgment, it is irritating to discover the eventual conclusions to be superfluous, or even worse, an excruciating restatement of the obvious. The *Butterworths' Student Companions* series aims to provide crisp summaries of important cases in a wide range of legal fields, allowing the student to grasp legal principles with ruthless economy.

This latest collection of cases, compiled and summarised by Anne Ardagh, a Senior Lecturer in law and head of the Financial Studies Department at Charles Sturt University, attempts to encapsulate those cases deemed 'essential reading' for any student of administrative law. This is an ambitious project: administrative law is a notoriously nebulous area, and, being a relatively new legal field, it is inevitable that cases for study will overlap with certain other areas (in

* BA/LLB (Hons) (University of Tasmania).