

CONTRACT B – 2021

INTRODUCTION

The Law of Contract B is a self-standing semester course that counts as a credit in the Faculty of Law in the LLB2, as well as comprising one of the six component courses in the Legal Theory 3 major in the Faculties of Humanities, Science and Commerce. Students who pass the Law of Contract B as part of the Legal Theory major are exempted from the course in the LLB curriculum.

The purpose of the course is to provide insight into the nature and function of the law of contract in South Africa. More particularly, and building upon the work done in Contract A:

- To provide students with an understanding of the contents of contracts, and how contracts are interpreted.
- To provide the students with a thorough understanding of how contractual rights are transferred, terminated and breached, and the remedies available for such breach.
- To assist students in being able to identify and solve authentic legal problems with regard to the negotiation and creation of contracts.
- To familiarise students with legal concepts and terminology commonly encountered in the law of contract.
- To assist students in extracting principles from law reports and other source material.

Credit Value

10 Credits at NQF level 7

Assumptions of Prior Learning

When entering this course, students need to be able to:

- Have an understanding of the legal concepts dealt with in Contract A.
- Be capable of writing and communicating in coherent English.
- Know how and where to access resources such as textbooks, law reports and statutes in the Law Library.
- Have a working knowledge of basic legal concepts and terminology.
- Be capable of independent learning.
- Read, analyse and extract principles from law reports and other source material.
- Understand the system of judicial precedent, and the important role precedent plays in private law.
- Have an understanding of legal problem-solving techniques, and how to apply these to solve legal problems.
- Have a working knowledge of legal referencing conventions, and to be able to apply these to their written work.
- Have a basic understanding of constitutional principles and how these principles impact on private law issues.

OUTCOMES

Critical Outcomes

Students will be able to:

- (a) identify and solve practical legal problems.
- (b) organise and manage themselves and their work load.
- (c) collect, analyse and evaluate information from the various sources of law, as well as information conveyed in the classroom environment.
- (d) communicate effectively in class debate and written assignments.
- (e) use technology in legal research.
- (f) recognise problem-solving contexts involving the law of contract.

Intended Specific Outcomes

The Law of Contract B course is designed so that students successfully completing this course should be able to achieve the following outcomes. The student should be able to:

- (a) Understand and analyse the contents of a contract, and to be able to analyse and evaluate how a contract is interpreted.
- (b) Understand, analyse and evaluate how contractual rights may be transferred.
- (c) Understand, analyse and evaluate the various ways in which a contractual relationship may be terminated.
- (d) Understand, analyse and evaluate the various ways in which a contract may be breached.
- (e) Understand, analyse and evaluate the various remedies for contractual breach.
- (f) Apply the knowledge acquired during the course to solve practical problems with regard to the operation, interpretation, termination and breach of contract.

TEACHING METHODS

In 2021, the course will be presented online. Recorded video lectures will be offered. In these lectures, the substantive law will be discussed, leading precedents from the case law will be analysed, and the views of leading academic commentators will be explained. There is a prescribed textbook for the course, which will guide the structure of lectures and provide reinforcement for the work done in lectures. Students are expected to assume responsibility for their learning by reading ahead before each lecture and consolidating afterwards. Several live online tutorial sessions will be offered, and which will focus on supplemental instruction specifically in so far as problem-solving – the main assessment mode of the course – is concerned. Some supplemental worksheets will be made available.

COURSE CONTENT

Classification of Terms

Important types of term having an effect on the operation of a contract

Conditions
Modus and *Dies*
Assumptions or Suppositions
Warranties

Interpretation of a Contract

The parol evidence rule
The principles of interpretation
Example of interpretation in action: Exemption clauses

Breach

Positive Malperformance
Repudiation and Anticipatory Breach
Negative Malperformance (*Mora*)

Remedies

Specific Performance
Reciprocity and the *exceptio non adimpleti contractus*
Cancellation
Damages
Penalty Stipulations
Interdict

The transfer of contractual obligations

Out and out cession
Cession in *securitatem debiti*

The Alteration and Termination of Contractual Obligations

Termination by Performance
Termination by Agreement
Termination by Operation of Law

Parties to contracts

RESOURCES

The core reading and study material for this course are the leading judgments on the aspects of the law of contract to be studied. These cases may be found in the law reports, which may be accessed in electronic form from the Law Library resources. For a full list of cases, see below.

As far as textbooks are concerned, although there is a prescribed text: Hutchison et al's *The Law of Contract in South Africa* 3 ed (OUP, 2017). Other recommended texts, of which there are copies in the Library, are:

Christie *The Law of Contract in South Africa* (2016), 7th edition, Butterworths.

Sharrock "The Law of Contract" in *LAWSA* Vol 5(1) (2nd ed) (2004) Butterworths: Durban.

Kerr *The Principles of the Law of Contract* (2002) 6th edition, Butterworths: Durban.

Van der Merwe, Van Huyssteen, Reinecke and Lubbe *Contract: General Principles* (2016) 5th edition, Juta: Cape Town.

Bhana, Bonthuys & Nortje *Student's Guide to the Law of Contract* (2015) 4th edition, Juta: Cape Town.

De Wet and Van Wyk *Die Suid-Afrikaanse Kontrakereg en Handelsreg* (1992) 5th edition, Butterworths: Durban.

Lubbe and Murray *Farlam and Hathaway: Contract – Cases, Materials and Commentary* (1988) Juta: Cape Town.

Hawthorne and Pretorius *Contract Law Casebook* (2010) 3rd edition, Juta: Cape Town.

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

Specific Outcomes (On completion of this course, the student should be able to:)	Assessment Criteria (What evidence must the student provide to show that they are competent? The student must be able to:)	Assessment Tasks (The evidence will be gathered in the following way. The student may be expected to:)
Understand and analyse the contents of a contract, and to explain and evaluate how a contract is interpreted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identify, discuss and explain the various common forms of contractual term found in contracts, and problems associated with these. - To analyse, compare and distinguish the various types of term. - Explain and analyse how contracts are interpreted. - Critique the process of contractual interpretation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write up coherent material, supported by authority, explaining and critically analysing the process of contractual interpretation. - Present in written form case notes or an analytical discussion of a case on the leading precedents discussed and examined on the various forms of contractual term. - Be presented with a contract,

		<p>and to be able to identify and explain, with reference to authority, various types of contractual clause, and how these are to be compared and contrasted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Embed all the above techniques in presenting answers to problems involving the contents of a contract and their interpretation.
<p>Understand, analyse and evaluate how contractual rights may be transferred.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss and explain the concepts of compromise, delegation, assignment and cession. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write up coherent material, supported by authority, explaining the requirements that have to be met for either compromise, delegation, assignment or cession. - present case notes or an analytical discussion of cases on the leading precedents discussed and examined on these topics. - present written evidence of an ability to compare and contrast the different ways in which contractual rights may be transferred. - Embed all the above techniques in presenting answers to problems involving the transfer of contractual rights.
<p>Understand, analyse and evaluate the various ways in which a contractual relationship may be terminated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss, analyse and evaluate the various ways in which a contract may be terminated, either by law or by an act of the parties. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write up coherent material, supported by authority, explaining the various ways in which a contract may be terminated. - present case notes or an analytical discussion of cases on the leading precedents discussed and examined on the forms of termination. - Embed all the above techniques in presenting answers to problems involving termination.
<p>Understand, analyse and evaluate the various ways in which a contract may be breached.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Discuss, analyse and evaluate the various ways in which a contract may be breached. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Write up coherent material, supported by authority, explaining the various forms of breach and how these are contrasted. - present case notes or an analytical discussion of cases on the leading precedents of the

		forms of breach. - Embed all the above techniques in presenting answers to problems involving breach.
Understand, analyse and evaluate the various remedies for contractual breach.	- Discuss, analyse and evaluate the nature and scope of the various remedies available in law where a contract has been breached.	Write up coherent material, supported by authority, explaining the various forms of remedy and how these contrast. - present case notes or an analytical discussion of cases on the leading precedents of the forms of remedy. - Embed all the above techniques in presenting answers to problems involving breach.
Apply the knowledge acquired during the course to solve practical problems with regard to the operation, interpretation, termination and breach of a contract.	- Identify the relevant legal problem or issue. - Select and discuss the relevant legal precedents with regard to that issue. - Apply the law to the facts in order to come to a reasoned conclusion about the problem, and the legal remedies that might flow from the finding, or propose a new solution to the problem.	- Write judgments or opinions in which a practical problem is analysed and solved on the basis of the relevant law and precedents, legal outcomes are predicted, and new or novel solutions are suggested or proposed, if necessary.

ASSESSMENT

The final mark for the course is comprised of the following components:

Summative Examination:	out of 70 marks
Continuous Assessment:	out of 30 marks
Total:	100 marks

Test/Writing Task

There is one test for this course, which is usually written either late in the first term or early in the second term. The test will be out of 12 marks, and the test counts 40% of the continuous assessment component of the course. The test is compulsory. It is likely that this will be done through the Quiz function on Ruconnected. Further arrangements will be communicated in due course due to the fluid covid situation.

Assignment

There is one major assignment for this course, which is normally submitted towards the middle of the second term. The assignment is an authentic one, and will require the students to write a mock judgment: the student must imagine that he or she is a judge who has to

resolve a contractual dispute brought before his or her court. The assignment should be approximately 2000 words in length, and will have to be thoroughly researched, and correctly referenced and presented. The assignment counts 60%, or 18 marks, of the class-mark component of the course. The assignment is compulsory. It is likely that this will be submitted on-line through the Assignment function on Ruconnected. Further arrangements will be communicated in due course due to the fluid covid situation.

Summative examination

One two-hour summative paper will be written in June/July. The summative will be out of 70 marks. All questions will be compulsory. The questions will require students both to be able to explain legal rules and principles in a theoretical sense, to write case notes on leading precedents, as well as to apply their knowledge to solving practical problems in authentic contexts. The examination is compulsory. An external examiner assesses the quality of both the examination paper and the students' answers. It is likely that this will be done through the Quiz function on RUconnected. Further arrangements will be communicated in due course due to the fluid covid situation.

EVALUATION

This course is evaluated in line with Faculty policies.