

A Level Law Transition Task:

Part 1:

Outlined below are sections 1-7 of a piece of legislation on your Paper 1 syllabus. Take a read through this and try to answer the questions that follow **using internet resources**.

Please submit your completed answers as a Word document via email to mrh@stdoms.ac.uk, ensuring that you clearly indicate your name and surname.

Theft Act 1968

Basic definition of theft

1.

- (1) A person is guilty of theft if he dishonestly appropriates property belonging to another with the intention of permanently depriving the other of it; and 'thief' and 'steal' shall be construed accordingly.
- (2) It is immaterial whether the appropriation is made with a view to gain, or is made for the thief's own benefit.
- (3) The five following sections of this Act shall have effect as regards the interpretation and operation of this section (and, except as otherwise provided by this Act, shall apply only for purposes of this section).

2.

- (1) A person's appropriation of property belonging to another is not to be regarded as dishonest –
 - (a) if he appropriates the property in the belief that he has in law the right to deprive the other of it, on behalf of himself or of a third person; or
 - (b) if he appropriates the property in the belief that he would have the other's consent if the other knew of the appropriation and the circumstances of it; or
 - (c) (except where the property came to him as trustee or personal representative) if he appropriates the property in the belief that the person to whom the property belongs cannot be discovered by taking reasonable steps.
- (2) A person's appropriation of property belonging to another may be dishonest notwithstanding that he is willing to pay for the property.

3.

- (1) Any assumption by a person of the rights of an owner amounts to an appropriation, and this includes, where he has come by the property (innocently or not) without stealing it, any later assumption of a right to it by keeping or dealing with it as owner.
- (2) Where property or a right or interest in property is or purports to be transferred for value to a person acting in good faith, no later assumption by him of rights which he believed

himself to be acquiring shall, by reason of any defect in the transferor's title, amount to theft of the property.

4.

- (1) 'Property' includes money and all other property, real or personal, including things in action and other intangible property.
- (2) A person cannot steal land, or things forming part of land and severed from it by him or by his directions, except in the following cases, that is to say –
 - (a) when he is a trustee or personal representative, or is authorised by power of attorney, or as liquidator of a company, or otherwise, to sell or dispose of land belonging to another, and he appropriates the land or anything forming part of it by dealing with it in breach of the confidence reposed in him; or
 - (b) when he is not in possession of the land and appropriates anything forming part of the land by severing it or causing it to be severed, or after it has been severed; or
 - (c) when, being in possession of the land under a tenancy, he appropriates the whole or part of any fixture or structure let to be used with the land.

For purposes of this subsection 'land' does not include incorporeal hereditaments; 'tenancy' means a tenancy for years or any less period and includes an agreement for such a tenancy, but a person who after the end of a tenancy remains in possession as statutory tenant or otherwise is to be treated as having possession under the tenancy, and 'let' shall be construed accordingly.

- (3) A person who picks mushrooms growing wild on any land, or who picks flowers, fruit or foliage from a plant wild on any land, does not (although not in possession of the land) steal what he picks, unless he does it for reward or for sale or other commercial purpose. For purposes of this subsection 'mushroom' includes any fungus, and 'plant' includes any shrub or tree.
- (4) Wild creatures, tamed or untamed, shall be regarded as property; but a person cannot steal a wild creature not tamed nor ordinarily kept in captivity, or the carcase of any such creature, unless either it has been reduced into possession by or on behalf of another person and possession of it has not since been lost or abandoned, or another person is in course of reducing it into possession.

5.

- (1) Property shall be regarded as belonging to any person having possession or control of it, or having in it any proprietary right or interest (not being an equitable interest arising only from an agreement to transfer or grant an interest).
- (2) Where property is subject to a trust, the persons to whom it belongs shall be regarded as including any person having a right to enforce the trust, and an intention to defeat the trust shall be regarded accordingly as an intention to deprive of the property any person having that right.
- (3) Where a person receives property from or on account of another, and is under an obligation to the other to retain and deal with that property or its proceeds in a particular

way, the property or proceeds shall be regarded (as against him) as belonging to the other.

- (4) Where a person gets property by another's mistake, and is under an obligation to make restoration (in whole or in part) of the property or its proceeds or of the value thereof, then to the extent of that obligation the property or proceeds shall be regarded (as against him) as belonging to the person entitled to restoration, and an intention not to make restoration shall be regarded accordingly as an intention to deprive that person of the property or proceeds.
- (5) Property of a corporation sole shall be regarded as belonging to the corporation notwithstanding a vacancy in the corporation.

6.

- (1) A person appropriating property belonging to another without meaning the other permanently to lose the thing itself is nevertheless to be regarded as having the intention of permanently depriving the other of it if his intention is to treat the thing as his own to dispose of regardless of the other's rights; and a borrowing or lending of it may amount to so treating it if, but only if, the borrowing or lending is for a period and in circumstances making it equivalent to an outright taking or disposal.
- (2) Without prejudice to the generality of sub-s (1) above, where a person, having possession or control (lawfully or not) of property belonging to another, parts with the property under a condition as to its return which he may not be able to perform, this (if done for purposes of his own and without the other's authority) amounts to treating the property as his own to dispose of regardless of the other's rights.

7.

A person guilty of theft shall on conviction on indictment be liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding seven years.

Questions:

- 1. Which **institution** created the Theft Act 1968?
- 2. Very briefly, **who** is found in that institution?
- 3. **Why** was this law made?
- 4. Why do you think this institution has **the power** to make this law?
- 5. Research the court case of [Oxford v Moss \(1979\)](#). Which of the **sections** 1-6 above did this case relate to and why?
- 6. What **point of law** did the case decide?

7. **Who** made that decision?
8. Why do you think that those people had **the power** to make this decision?

Part 2:

Take a look at the exam question below. Based on your reading of the law above, try to answer the questions that follow **referring to the actual law**:

AQA Paper 1 2023, Q. 8

Dan volunteered to help his neighbour, Emma, build a patio in her garden. Emma asked that Dan clear a space for the patio and put any waste, including plants, in her rubbish bin. When Emma left Dan alone in the garden, he dug several plants out of the ground he was clearing. He then moved the plants and replanted them in his own garden.

When the patio was completed, Emma was so grateful for Dan's help that she told him to go into the kitchen and take £20 from her bag. Dan took £30 from Emma's bag as he believed he was entitled to more money because of the amount of time he had spent on the project.

Advise Dan of his criminal liability in relation to the theft of the plants and the extra £10.

Questions:

1. What **type of property** would the **plants** be classed as and why?
2. Why might Dan argue that he did not steal the **plants**?
3. Why might Dan argue that he did not steal the **£10**?
4. Explain why he **may or may not be successful** arguing these points.
5. If Dan took a mobile phone picture of Emma's credit card to capture its details and put it back in her bag, would that be likely to amount to theft? Briefly explain your answer, **referring to the relevant law**.
6. If Dan was found guilty of theft, what is the maximum sentence he might face?
7. Do you think he would receive this sentence? Give reasons for your answer.