

ANSWERING A CASE-STUDY ORIENTED QUESTION

Specially in Company Law, Business Law and Audit & Assurance

Hello Dear Friends!!!

As we all know that now a days, our papers are based entirely on case studies. We read in almost every message from our president, vice president and chairman of Board of Studies that our exams are going to be more and more practical oriented. In Law, Audit, Taxation, Accountancy so many questions are based on case laws/practical situations.

If we answer the case laws in a logical and coherent manner, it's really easy to get marks.

I share my experience with all of you. While preparing for IPCC exams, we must spend a huge amount of time in studying and analyzing Board of Studies publications (Study Materials/Modules, Compilations, Suggested Answers, Revision Test Papers, Practice Manuals and Model Test Papers).

In my view, this technique should be followed to answer a case study oriented question:-

1st Paragraph:-

When you read the question, try to recall the relevant provisions/sections of law/Act.

In the 1st paragraph you have to write those provisions of law on which the question is based. In case of questions based on Accounting Standards, you have to write the relevant extract/matter of the Accounting Standard. And if you can also mention the paragraph number of Accounting Standard, do mention it. It makes a very good impression.

Many a times, the question is based on a specific case law

E.g. In Contract Act - *Balfour vs. Balfour*

In Companies Act - *Saloman vs. Saloman & Co. Ltd.*

In these kinds of questions, our answer remains incomplete till we don't write that particular case law.

So, in these kinds of questions, you can directly start your answer with a reference to that specific case law provided you remember it. It will show that you have correctly interpreted/understood the question and the examiner will get impressed like anything.

Mentioning the correct case law will surely fetch you high marks.

Your answer should start like this if you remember that particular case law. The very first line should be "The question is based on the case law ____"

Your answer should start like this if you remember the section number

"As per Sec. ____ of ____ Act, ____ (year) "

And your answer should start like this in case you do not remember the section number

"As per the provisions of ____ Act, ____ (year)"

Never write wrong section number and never mention a fake/imaginary case law because the examiner is not a fool. If you do this, he/she may get angry and you can be the victim. Case laws and section numbers should form part of your answer but only when you are confident about them. Be very careful about it.

2nd Paragraph:-

In the 2nd paragraph, write the facts and circumstances of the given case. Write, what is given in the question.

Your wordings can be-

"In the present case" or "In the given case"

3rd Paragraph:-

Now you have to arrive at a decision by comparing 1st paragraph and 2nd paragraph i.e. what is written in law and what is the present case. This is the most important part of the answer.

You should make a right decision.

Support your decision with a case law, if any. This is crucial. Quoting an appropriate case law strengthens the quality of answer and makes the answer complete and elegant. Mentioning a relevant case law also justifies the reached decision.

So this is the manner in which a professional examination question must be answered. If you follow it, you will definitely score high.

SOME GOOD TIPS

1. Quoting section numbers and case laws are absolutely necessary to secure full marks. Don't think that it's not required at IPCC/PCC/PE-II/Intermediate level.

You can see the suggested answers/compilation. They do quote section numbers and case laws in almost all answers.

2. A good command over English is also a pre requisite for writing a quality answer.
3. Go through the Suggested Answers/Compilation to become familiar with this kind of writing style.
4. In Law, it is the writing style that matters the most and helps in fetching marks. Almost all students know the answer but they don't know how to present the answer. If we are asked to answer a question in terms of yes/no, we can easily answer. But elaborating that same answer, using the phrases/words of statute/law, drafting the answer in a nice order are the areas where students are lacking. So fine tune your writing style.
5. Law has got its own language. We can't write the answer in our language. Most of the students think that even if they write the answer in general language, they will get marks but it is not so. Language of statute differs significantly from general English in certain circumstances/cases. Law has certain phrases, certain words, we need to learn them and reproduce them in our answers. Try to learn the language of law. Otherwise it becomes a bit difficult to score high.
6. Make a habit of referring to the bare Acts. It will facilitate better understanding.
7. Please read the examiners' comments on students' performance (given at the end of suggested answers) to get an insight about what the examiners want us to write, what they are expecting from us and what are the mistakes which students generally commit. And then avoid doing those mistakes and try to improve on those areas.
8. Law is a scoring paper. And it becomes easier to score when the paper is case study oriented. Because we can't remember the complete section but we can recall a part of the section and reproduce the same in our answer. If the question paper has flat questions which simply require writing a complete section in the answer, we can't score as high as we can in case studies oriented paper.
So don't think that it is tough to score when the paper is case study based.

9. Even if your answer is wrong i.e. the decision at which you have arrived is not right, you won't get zero marks. You will be given due credit if you have written the correct provisions and facts of the case.
10. **In Auditing**, there are certain words/group of words which are used quite frequently like "Sufficient Appropriate Audit Evidence", "Nature, Time and Extent of Audit Procedures to be performed". So these words have to be mugged up. In Auditing there are three leading case laws:
- a) In Re Kingston Cotton Mills (Responsibility of Auditors)
 - b) London and General Bank (Responsibility of Auditors)
 - c) Chantry Martyn vs. Martyn (Ownership of Working Papers)
- Keep these case laws in mind and write them if something comes on the above topics.
- If possible, **read Company Audit from the bare Act** because in the module and other reference books the topic is given in a very scattered manner. If you read bare Act once and then read the module/reference book, you will be able to grasp it pretty quickly and since company audit holds a great significance in terms of marks, I strongly recommend you to refer to the original Act. You need to read only 6-7 pages of the bare Act to finish Company Audit and I think you should go for it.
11. You can follow this technique for Taxation, Audit and Accounting Standards also.
12. Take time to read the question. Understand it properly. Law is all about interpreting, analyzing and then applying the mind judiciously to handle practical situations. So understand the law properly.

I hope it will help you.

I sincerely request everyone to give their valuable suggestions and thoughts. Please let me know me if I have missed out something.

IPCC Students - Always feel free to contact me if you have any kind of problem in any subject. If I am able to solve that problem I'll definitely try.

HAPPY STUDYING AND ALL THE VERY BEST FOR YOUR EXAMS!!!

Bye...Take Care...

Cheers!!! Be Happy & Keep Smiling!!! ☺ ☺

Thanks & Regards,

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