



INSOL
INTERNATIONAL



PROGRAMME IN SOUTH AFRICAN INSOLVENCY LAW AND PRACTICE 2023

Summative Assessment (Examination): Paper 1

Date: 23 - 24 November 2023

Time limit: 24 hours (from 13:00 SAST on 23 November to 13:00 SAST on 24 November 2023)

EXAMINER

Ms B Bennett

MODERATORS

Ms R Bekker Dr D Burdette Ms J Calitz Mr Z Cassim Mr E Levenstein

It is imperative that all candidates read and take cognisance of the examination instructions on the next page.

All candidates are expected to comply with ALL the instructions.

MARK AWARDED 87/100

INSTRUCTIONS

1. This assessment paper will be made available at **13:00 (1 pm) SAST on Thursday 23 November 2023** and must be returned / submitted by **13:00 (1 pm) SAST on Friday 24 November 2023**. Please note that assessments returned late will not be accepted.
2. All assessments must be submitted electronically in Microsoft Word format, using a standard A4 size page and an 11-point Avenir Next font (if the Avenir Next font is not available on your PC, please select the Arial font). This document has been set up with these parameters – **please do not change the document settings in any way. DO NOT** submit your assessment in PDF format as it will be returned to you unmarked.
3. No limit has been set for the length of your answers to the questions. Please be guided by the mark allocation for each question. More often than not, one fact / statement will earn one mark (unless it is obvious from the question that this is not the case). Candidates who include very long answers in the hope it will cover the answer the examiners are looking for, will be appropriately penalised.
4. You must save this document using the following format: **studentID.Paper1Summative**. An example would be something along the following lines: 202223-336.Paper1Summative. **Please also include the filename as a footer to each page of the assessment** (this has been pre-populated for you, merely replace the words “studentID” with the student number allocated to you). Do not include your name or any other identifying words in your file name. **Assessments that do not comply with this instruction will be returned to candidates unmarked.**
5. The assessment can be downloaded from your student portal on the INSOL International website. The assessment must likewise be returned via your student portal as per the instructions in the Course Handbook for this course. **If for any reason candidates are unable to access their student portal, the answer script must be returned by e-mail to david.burdette@insol.org.**
6. Due to the high incidence of load shedding currently taking place across South Africa, candidates are required to determine whether any load shedding is scheduled during the examination period and, if so, to make alternative arrangements to write elsewhere if at all possible.
7. Enquiries during the time that the assessment is written must be directed to David Burdette at **david.burdette@insol.org** or by WhatsApp on +44 7545 773890 or Brenda Bennett at **brenda.bennett@insol.org** or by WhatsApp on +27 66 2282 010. Please note that enquiries will only be responded to during UK office hours (which are 9 am to 5 pm GMT, or 11 am to 7 pm SAST).

8. While the assessments are open-book assessments, it is important to note that candidates **may not receive any assistance from any person** during the 24 hours that the assessment is written. **Answers must be written in the candidate's own words; answers that are copied and pasted from the text of the course notes (or any other source) will be treated as plagiarism and persons who make themselves guilty of this will forfeit the assessment and disciplinary charges will follow.** When submitting their answers, candidates will be asked to confirm that the work is their own, that they have worked independently and that all external sources used have been properly cited. If you submit your assessment by e-mail, a statement to this effect should be included in the e-mail.
9. Once a candidate's assessment has been uploaded to their student portal (in line with the instructions in the Course Handbook), a confirmatory e-mail will be auto-generated confirming that the assessment has been uploaded. If the confirmatory e-mail is not received within five minutes after uploading the assessment, candidates are requested to first check their junk / spam folders before e-mailing the Course Leader to inform him that the auto-generated e-mail was not received.
10. If a candidate is unable to complete this summative assessment (examination), please note that a re-sit assessment will only be given if there are exceptional circumstances that prevent the candidate from completing or submitting it (such as illness). Feedback on the final assessment will be provided within four weeks of the paper having been written - please do not enquire about your marks before four weeks have elapsed.
11. You are required to answer this paper by typing the answers directly into the spaces provided (indicated by text that states [Type your answer here]). For multiple-choice questions, please highlight your answer in yellow, as per the instructions included under the first question.
12. Unless otherwise indicated, all references to sections are references to sections of the Insolvency Act 1936.

PART 1 - MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS (20 MARKS)

ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS

QUESTION 1

Questions 1.1 – 1.20 are multiple-choice questions designed to assess your ability to think critically about the subject. Please read each question carefully before reading the answer options. Be aware that some questions may seem to have more than one right answer, but you are to look for the one that makes the most sense and is the most correct. When you have a clear idea of the question, find your answer and **mark your selection on the answer sheet by highlighting the relevant paragraph in yellow**. Select only **ONE** answer. Candidates who select more than one answer will receive no mark for that specific question. Each of the 20 questions count 1 mark.

Question 1.1

Select the **correct** statement:

Which of the following **does not** constitute an act of insolvency?

- (a) If the debtor makes, or attempts to make, any disposition of any of his property which has, or would have the effect of prejudicing his creditors or preferring one creditor above another.
- (b) If the debtor removes, or attempts to remove, any of his property with intent to prejudice his creditors or to prefer one creditor above another.
- (c) Where judgment is given against the debtor and it appears from the return by the office that he has not found sufficient disposable property to satisfy the judgment (*nulla bona* return).
- (d) A debtor who is over-indebted and unable to pay his debts and has applied for debt review. ✓

Question 1.2

Select the **correct** statement:

Indicate which of the following courts have jurisdiction to sequestrate an estate of a debtor:

- (a) Magistrate's Court.
- (b) Regional Court.
- (c) Local or Provincial Division of the High Court. ✓

- (d) Both (a) and (c).

Question 1.3

Select the **correct** statement:

The granting of a winding-up order:

- (a) Suspends all civil proceedings until the appointment of a liquidator. ✓
- (b) Has no effect on pending civil proceedings.
- (c) Suspends all civil proceedings until the winding-up process has been completed.
- (d) Immediately ends all pending civil proceedings which must be instituted again after the winding-up process has been completed.

Question 1.4

Select the **correct** statement:

Property acquired by an insolvent after sequestration of his estate:

- (a) Generally forms part of the insolvent estate. ✓
- (b) Does not form part of the insolvent estate.
- (c) Vests in the division of the High Court that granted the sequestration order.
- (d) Vests in the Master and, after his or her appointment, in the trustee of the insolvent estate until an offer of composition has been accepted.

Question 1.5

Indicate the **incorrect** statement:

- (a) The insolvent is not entitled to enter into contracts after sequestration. ✓
- (b) The insolvent may, with the written consent of the trustee enter into a contract by which he or she disposes of property of his or her estate.
- (c) The insolvent may enter into an engagement contract after sequestration.
- (d) The insolvent may enter into a contract if it does not affect his estate negatively.

Question 1.6

Select the **correct** statement:

Which of the following statements accurately reflects the treatment of municipal debts related to immovable property under the Insolvency Act and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 2000?

- (a) Municipal debts incurred within three years immediately preceding the date of sequestration are considered as part of the costs of realising the property.
- (b) Municipalities have the authority to embargo the transfer of property until all outstanding municipal debts, irrespective of the two-year period, are fully settled.
- (c) Section 118(2) of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act takes precedence over section 89(1) of the Insolvency Act, determining the applicable period for calculating municipal debts.
- (d) The Court in *City of Johannesburg v Kaplan NO* clarified that all service charges, basic fees, and refuse removal fees are considered taxes under section 89(5) of the Insolvency Act. ✓

Question 1.7

Select the **correct** statement:

- (a) The trustee's remuneration (fee) is determined by a tariff which is laid down by statute, but which must thereafter be taxed by the Master or the Registrar.
- (b) The trustee's remuneration (fee) is determined by a tariff which is laid down by statute, but which must thereafter be taxed by the Registrar.
- (c) The trustee's remuneration (fee) is determined by a tariff which is laid down by statute, but which must thereafter be taxed by the Master. ✓
- (d) The trustee's remuneration (fee) is determined by a tariff which is laid down by statute, but which must thereafter be taxed by the Master or the Court.

Question 1.8

Select the **correct** statement:

Section 44(1) of the Insolvency Act deals with the time limit for proof of claims. Which case decided that the time limit of three months after the closing of the second meeting, except with the leave of the court or the Master, also applies to liquidations?

- (a) *Stone & Stewart v Master of the Supreme Court*;
- (b) *Mayo v De Monthlehu*; ✓
- (c) *Wishart v BHP Billiton Energy Coal South Africa Limited*;
- (d) None of the above.

Question 1.9

Indicate whether the following statement is **true** or **false**:

Confidentiality is a defence that can be raised by a witness who has been subpoenaed to an enquiry.

- (a) True
- (b) False ✓

Question 1.10

Select the **correct** statement:

The property of the insolvent's spouse, married out of community of property to the insolvent:

- (a) Vests in the Master and thereafter in the trustee after his appointment as such. ✓
- (b) Does not vest in the Master or the trustee of the insolvent.
- (c) Vests in the division of the High Court that granted the sequestration order.
- (d) Only vests in the trustee when the High Court on application by a creditor of the estate grants an order for the vesting of the property.

Question 1.11

Select the **correct** statement:

In terms of section 346 of the Companies Act 1973, an application for the winding-up of an insolvent company by court order may be made by:

- (a) The company itself.
- (b) One or more of its creditors (including contingent or prospective creditors).

(c) A shareholder.

(d) Jointly by any or all the parties in (a), (b) or (c). ✓

Question 1.12

Select the **correct** statement relating to special meetings of creditors:

(a) The primary purpose of a special meeting is to allow creditors to vote on important matters related to the insolvent estate. The trustee must convene a special meeting when requested by the insolvent, regardless of expenses.

(b) Special meetings are convened for creditors to prove their claims, and the trustee must convene one if requested by an interested person who tenders payment of all expenses related to the meeting. ✓

(c) The main objective of a special meeting is to finalise the distribution of assets to creditors and must be convened by the trustee after the second meeting.

(d) A special meeting cannot be convened for the purpose of interrogating an insolvent as the primary purpose of a special meeting is to prove claims.

Question 1.13

Indicate whether the following statement is **true** or **false**:

The perfecting of a general notarial bond can go as far as the bondholder being allowed to take over the debtor's business as a going concern.

(a) True ✓

(b) False

Question 1.14

Select the **correct** statement:

Which of the following statement is correct in relation to a compromise between a company and its creditors in terms of section 155 of the Companies Act 71 of 2008?

(a) A proposal for a compromise in terms of section 155 is adopted by the creditors of the company, or a class of creditors, if it is supported by a majority in number representing at least 75% in value of the creditors or class present and voting in person or by proxy.

(b) Section 155 does not apply where a company is under business rescue proceedings.

- (c) A liquidator where a company is being wound up may propose an arrangement or a compromise of the company's financial obligations.
- (d) Paragraphs (a) and (c) are correct.
- (e) Paragraphs (a), (b), (c) and (d) are correct. ✓

Question 1.15

Select the **correct** statement:

Under what circumstances can a mortgage bondholder insist on selling immovable property free from a lease entered into prior to sequestration?

- (a) The bondholder, as a secured creditor, can always insist on selling the property free from a lease, regardless of when the lease was entered into.
- (b) If the lease was entered into after the registration of a mortgage bond, the bondholder may insist on selling the property free from the lease, provided the sale subject to the lease did not realise enough to pay the bondholder's secured claim. ✓
- (c) The property must always be sold subject to the lease, regardless of when the lease was entered into.
- (d) If the property is sold without reference to a lease concluded after the registration of a mortgage bond, the sale is valid even if it did not realise enough to pay the mortgage bond in full.

Question 1.16

Select the **correct** statement:

There are three steps that must be taken to determine whether a specific provision of the Insolvency Act 1936 applies to the liquidation of a company. These steps include:

- (a) Whether the provision is capable of being applied in a winding-up.
- (b) Whether the matter is specifically provided for by the Companies Act.
- (c) Whether the provision applies to the type of winding-up.
- (d) Only paragraphs (a) and (c) are correct.
- (e) Paragraphs (a), (b) and (c) are correct. ✓

Question 1.17

Select the **correct** statement relating to rehabilitation:

- (a) Rehabilitation is also available to partnerships, companies and other legal entities, allowing them to apply for a fresh start.
- (b) Automatic rehabilitation occurs after a period of 10 years from the date of provisional sequestration, unless ordered otherwise by the court upon application by an interested person. ✓
- (c) Since the insolvency of an individual affects a person's status, any Court may grant a rehabilitation order.
- (d) When an insolvent applies to the court for rehabilitation, the insolvent is not expected to repay a contribution that creditors had to pay, as rehabilitation results in the release of an insolvent person from their pre-sequestration debts and affords the insolvent the opportunity to make a so-called "fresh start".

Question 1.18

Indicate whether the following statement is **true** or **false**:

There is no provision in the Companies Act 1973 determining that the liquidator's report, or resolutions that the liquidator wishes to adopt, must be posted to creditors. The provisions of section 81(1)*bis* of the Insolvency Act do not apply to companies.

- (a) True ✓
- (b) False

Question 1.19

Select the **incorrect** statement relating to a partnership:

- (a) A partnership is a legal entity, at common law, having an existence separate from the individual partners. ✓
- (b) The "assets" of the partnership are indistinguishable from the assets of the partners.
- (c) The "partnership debts" are in law the debts *in solidum* (jointly and severally) of all partners.
- (d) A partnership creditor can sue the partners, if necessary, the one after the other, for the partnership debt.

Question 1.20

Select the **correct** statement:

Which of the following statements describes the position of employees during business rescue proceedings?

- (a) During a company's business rescue proceedings, employees of the company immediately before the beginning of those proceedings continue to be so employed on the same terms and conditions, except to the extent that changes occur in the ordinary course of attrition, or the employees and the company agree on different terms and conditions of employment, in accordance with applicable labour laws. ✓
- (b) During a company's business rescue proceedings, the business rescue practitioner can unilaterally vary the employment terms and conditions of the employees of the company immediately before the beginning of those proceedings, subject to the approval of the company's creditors at the first meeting of creditors.
- (c) During a company's business rescue proceedings, all employment contracts that existed immediately before the beginning of those proceedings are automatically suspended.
- (d) All of the above

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**** END OF QUESTION 1 ****

QUESTION 2 FOLLOWS ON NEXT PAGE / ...

PART 2 - SEQUESTRATION (40 MARKS)

QUESTION 2

Questions 2.1 - 2.9 are based on the set of facts provided below. Answer ALL the questions.

Mr and Mrs Solar were married to each other out community of property in 2012. They reside in a four-bedroom property in an upmarket country estate on the beautiful east coast in Ballito, KwaZulu-Natal. The immovable property is subject to a mortgage bond in favour of ABC Bank. The marital home is fully furnished and the Solar's acquired some beautiful luxury and antique furnishings during the course of their marriage. In the latter part of 2021 Mr Solar donates a valuable and timeless Victorian sofa and server to his wife which she proudly exhibits in the home. The remaining furniture and antiques have been paid for in cash, apart from the photocopier in the home office which is subject to a lease agreement concluded with Speedy Copiers (Pty) Ltd by Mr Solar.

Mr Solar also owns a small apartment in Florence, Italy where the family enjoy spending their annual holiday.

Mr Solar drives a 2022 BMW X5 which was purchased on instalment sale agreement and financed by FCM Vehicle Finance Ltd. Mrs Solar drives a 2016 Hyundai i20 which Mr Solar purchased from Mr Green in terms of an ordinary credit sale agreement. The agreement was concluded on 5 August 2022. Mr Solar paid a deposit in the sum of R20,000 and by agreement ownership in the vehicle had passed on delivery. The balance of R80,000 is due to be paid by way of monthly instalments of R10,000 each until the balance is paid, to date, Mr Solar has paid R40,000 in terms of the agreement.

On 5 December 2022 and after being pressured by Mr Hasty, an irate creditor who loaned Mr Solar money, Mr Solar delivers one of his valuable antique clocks to him to settle his debt in full.

On 5 January 2023 an application for the sequestration of the estate of Mr Solar is filed in the KwaZulu-Natal High Court Division, Durban at the instance of Axit Finance in respect of an unpaid personal loan. Mr Solar's estate is provisionally sequestrated on 15 January 2023 and the order is made final on 20 February 2023.

On the date of sequestration Mr Solar is a director of an accounting firm, Sum-It-Up (Pty) Ltd and earns a generous salary of R120,000 per month. Mrs Solar works at the local high school as a teacher and earns R25,000 per month.

Two months after the final order of sequestration is granted, Mr Solar inherits R500,000 from his father, which inheritance he accepts on 1 May 2023. Mrs Solar decides to resign from her position at the local school and receives a pension pay out of R600,000. Mr Solar has a life-insurance policy in terms of which he is the life insured. The surrender value of the

policy is R800,000 and the policy has been in force from 1 February 2018. In December 2022 a job opportunity as a sales representative, earning an average income and just sufficient for Mr Solar to support his family, becomes available to Mr Solar and the Solar family decide to relocate to Gauteng.

Ms Abel is appointed as the provisional trustee of Mr Solar's estate and the trustee's appointment is made final at the first meeting of creditors on 10 April 2023. The second meeting of creditors is held on 5 June 2023. Axit Finance fails to lodge its claim at either the first or second meeting and approaches Ms Abel on 6 September 2023 to prove its claim.

Question 2.1

On the date of the sequestration order of Mr Solar, the principle known as *concursum creditorum* will apply. Explain the concept of *concursum creditorum* and how this will affect the creditors of the estate. In your answer refer to relevant case law. (4)

[*Concursum creditorum* effectively draws a line in the sand in terms of the position of the insolvent and establishes manner in which the remaining assets belonging to the insolvent estate will be distributed amongst its creditors depending on their ranking. To note with a *concursum creditorum* the interest of the general body of creditors supersedes that of the individual creditors. ✓]

In *Walker v Syfret* ✓ the court explained the effect of *concursum creditorum* on the insolvent (that it "crystallizes his position") and the insolvent estate ("the hand of the law being laid on it") and how creditors should be treated ✓ ("the rights of the general body of creditors have to be taken into consideration" and any creditor's claim is as it was when *concursum creditorum* was established and cannot be altered to the detriment of other creditors).] ✓

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Question 2.1

Write a short paragraph and explain what possible remedy is available to Ms Abel to deal with the antique clock which Mr Solar delivered to Mr Hasty in full and final settlement of his claim. In your answer refer to the relevant section of the Insolvency Act that will apply and what requirements must be met. (7)

[The couple is married out of community of property and the facts presented above indicate that Mr Solar delivered "one of his" antique clocks to Mr Hasty, therefore it seems like the antique belonged to Mr Solar. However the 4th line in the text does also say that the Solar's acquired antique furnishings during their marriage. Therefore I have assumed that the antique clock delivered to Mr Hasty belonged to both Mr Solar (being the insolvent debtor) and Mrs Solar (being the solvent debtor).

On sequestration of Mr Solvent, his assets eventually vest with the trustee of his insolvent estate (Ms Abel). Assets of Mrs Solar will also vest with the trustee of Mr Solar's insolvent estate as per section 21 of the Insolvency Act.

Mr Solar's actions, by disposing a valuable asset to Mr Hasty as full settlement of his debt, can be considered to be an impeachable disposition/transaction as it could be seen to have been entered into at a time when Mr Solar was insolvent (this happened within six months prior to sequestration - this is the date of the provisional order being 15 January 2023 since this was a compulsory sequestration).

Furthermore this action was to the detriment of the balance of creditors and amounted to a preference to Mr Hasty.

There is a statutory remedy, specifically section 29 of the Insolvency Act which deals with voidable preferences (i.e. where there is a debtor & creditor relationship and the debt of one creditor is paid or a certain creditor's security position improves relative to other creditors of the insolvent estate; the former applies in this instance).

Ms Abel can demand the return of the asset from Mr Hasty or apply to a court to set the voidable transaction aside and to declare that the trustee is entitled to recover the asset (or its value) and to distribute it based on the rules of insolvency. Mr Hasty (as the recipient of the property) does not have a defense in terms of section 29, as the intention of Mr Solar was to prefer Mr Hasty.]

Section 30(1) deals with undue preferences (1) - the trustee must prove (1) - (a) that there was a disposition of property (1) - (b) that was made any time before sequestration (1) - (c) at a time when the insolvent's liabilities exceeded his assets (1) - (d) that the disposition was made with the intention of preferring one of his creditors above another (1) - (e) the trustee must also prove the subjective intention of the debtor, which can be shown that the debtor was aware of the debtor's insolvent estate or contemplated sequestration but nevertheless made the disposition (1)

Question 2.2

Axit Finance, as the applicant creditor seeking a provisional order of sequestration against Mr Solar, must meet specific requirements outlined in section 10 of the Insolvency Act. Write a short paragraph setting out the requirements that must be met. (5)

[Axit Finance must prove the following in terms of section 10:

- That they are qualified creditor (i.e. would need to prove v
- the balance of the personal loan is at least R100); v
- That Mr Solar is factually insolvent v
- or has committed one of the eight acts of insolvency; and v
- That there is a reason to believe that the sequestration of Mr Solar could be of benefit to the creditors. v
-

In respect of the second point, even if Axit Finance could not prove that Mr Solar is factually insolvent, they could prove that Mr Solar committed one of the following acts of insolvency that are applicable in this instance: • √

- Made a disposition of a property which had the effect of prejudicing his creditors or preferred one creditor above another (as is the case with Mr Hasty);

- Made an arrangement with another creditor to release him from his debt obligation] 5

Question 2.3

With regards to the inheritance that Mr Solar receives from his father after the sequestration order, explain whether the R500,000.00 inheritance will vest in the insolvent estate. In your answer refer to relevant case law. (3)

[Since Mr Solar's right to an inheritance accrued prior to his rehabilitation, therefore the R500,000 inheritance vested in his insolvent estate. This was determined in the *Brown v Oosthuizen* case.

In this case Mr Solar also accepted the inheritance. √ If he did not accept it, this could not be set aside as a voidable disposition as was concluded by the Supreme Court of Appeal in *Wessels NO vs De Jager* √NO where it directed that prior to acceptance of an inheritance benefit the beneficiary did not actually have rights to the benefit.] √ 3

Question 2.4

For the purpose of this question, assume that Mr and Mrs Solar are married **in community of property** and their joint estate was sequestrated. Explain whether the pension pay-out of R600,000 that Mrs Solar receives will vest in the joint insolvent estate. In your answer refer to the applicable section of the Insolvency Act that applies. (2)

[So long as the pension benefit is from a registered fund and is for services rendered, Mrs Solar (as the insolvent) may recover pension proceeds for her own benefit and this will not form part of the joint insolvent estate since it was received after the joint sequestration. This is covered under section 23(7) of the Insolvency Act, section 3 of the General Pensions Act 1979 and section 37B of the Pension Funds Act 1965.] 2

Question 2.5

With reference to the motor vehicle driven by Mrs Solar, briefly explain whether ownership of the vehicle vests in the insolvent estate at the date of sequestration. Additionally, discuss whether Mr Green would have a claim against the estate in respect to the vehicle and, if so, specify the type of claim he would have. (4)

[Although the Hyundai i20 is driven by Mrs Solar it belonged to Mr Solar (prior to sequestration) since Mr Solar is the one who entered into a credit sale agreement with Mr Green, and ownership of the vehicle transferred to Mr Solar on delivery to him. On Mr Green's sequestration the vehicle vested in his insolvent estate. √

In this instance the uncompleted contract is a credit sale √of moveable property since the purchaser (Mr Solar) was sequestrated when there was still R60,000 due to Mr Green √(the agreed price was R20,000 deposit + R80,000 payable in instalments). Mr Green therefore

has a concurrent claim against the insolvent estate of R60,000 which is the balance of the purchase price.]√ **4**

Question 2.6

Who must convene the first meeting of creditors and how is this meeting is convened? **(2)**

[The Master of the High Court convenes the first meeting of creditors on receipt of the final sequestration order. At the latest, 10 days before the first meeting date, a notice of this meeting should appear in the Government Gazette. The trustee is appointed at the first meeting.] **2**

Question 2.7

Ms Abel urgently needs to sell the movable assets of the insolvent estate, claiming that the sale cannot wait until she receives instructions from the creditors at the second meeting. What steps would Ms Abel need to take in order to sell the assets prior to the second meeting of creditors? Support your answer by referring to the necessary statutory provisions. **(4)**

[The trustee should wait until the second meeting (which she can convene as soon as possible after her appointment) to get authorisation to sell any assets of the insolvent estate and as directed by the creditors as per section 82 of the Insolvency Act. The trustee can only sell the assets prior to the second meeting if the Master has authorised the sale, in which case section 82(1) is not applicable, therefore Ms Abel needs to obtain this authorisation.

Section 82(1) instructs the trustee to sell the assets in two ways if the second meeting has not been convened and/or creditors have not given directions in a second meeting: (i) by public auction; or (ii) by public tender. This should be after a notice has appeared in the Government Gazette and after any other notices and conditions that the Master may require.] **s 80 bis?**

Ms Abel cannot sell the assets without the prior permission of the Master (1) – an application to sell the assets must be made to the Master in terms of section 80bis of the Insolvency Act (1) – if the property is subject to the rights of a secured creditor, permission by such creditor to sell the property must accompany the application (1) – if the Master grants permission to sell the property, he may lay down conditions in connection with the sale and determine the manner in which the sale must take place. (1)

Question 2.8

Question 2.8.1

In relation to the foreign assets, indicate whether the immovable property in Italy automatically vests in the insolvent estate of Mr Solar and explain whether Ms Abel will be able to exercise control over the property. **(4)**

Answer:

[The apartment in Italy (being an immovable asset) does not vest in the insolvent estate ✓(but remains vested with Mr Solar (the insolvent)) and therefore Ms Abel will not be able to exercise control over this asset. ✓Ms Abel can only gain control of this property if her appointment as a trustee of the insolvent estate is recognised by the applicable Italian court.] ✓ **3**

Question 2.8.2

Would your answer to the above question be different if the property located in a foreign country is movable property? **(2)**

[Yes - ✓the movable property located in a foreign country vests in the insolvent estate given the sequestration of the estate by the KwaZulu-Natal High Court Division, Durban where Mr Solar resides.] **1**

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Question 2.9

Question 2.9.1

Assuming that Mr Solar traded Sum-It-Up Accounting as a partnership, briefly explain how the partnership and the partners are treated in terms of the Insolvency Act when a provisional sequestration order is granted. **(2)**

[The estate of a partnership has not been sequestrated here, only Mr Solar's estate (one of the partners) has been sequestrated which has the result that the partnership relationship will dissolve. If the estate of the partnership was sequestrated, this would have resulted in the sequestration of the partners' private estates and the partnership enterprise would therefore be liquidated which would mean the partnership relationship dissolves.] **2**

Question 2.9.2

What effect would Mr Solar's sequestration have on the partnership? **(1)**

[Since Mr Solar's estate has been sequestrated, this means that the partnership dissolves.] **1**

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**** END OF QUESTION 2 ****

QUESTION 3 FOLLOWS ON NEXT PAGE / ...

PART 3 - LIQUIDATION (40 MARKS)

QUESTION 3

Questions 3.1 - 3.10 are based on the set of facts provided below. Please answer ALL the questions.

RNH Plastics (Pty) Ltd (RNH) is a private company duly incorporated and registered under the applicable company laws of South Africa. RNH has been operating a profitable injection moulding operation for the past 13 years, manufacturing plastics chairs from a large industrial property in Willowton, Pietermaritzburg.

The Board of Directors consists of Mr Ronald, Mr Naseer and Ms Hlope. RNH occupies the industrial property under a lease agreement with The Willow Family Trust, which is set to expire in 2026.

RNH employs a significant number of staff members, including management, production, sales, maintenance, machine operators and administrative personnel. Most of RNH's employees are represented by MAWU (Moulding and Allied Workers Union), a registered trade union focusing on the interests of employees in the injection and moulding industry.

South Africa is currently facing a severe energy crisis, impacting RNH's manufacturing operations heavily. RNH relies on power to operate its large injection moulding machines, making generator usage economically unfeasible. As a result, RNH is struggling to meet customer demands and has faced contract terminations, further impacting their revenue. Cash shortfalls have hindered RNH's ability to repay creditors and suppliers, resulting in legal actions and judgments against the company, increasing the possibility of liquidation.

In December 2022, amidst the ongoing energy crisis, RNH urgently requires raw material to meet demand. They approach Rand First Bank for a loan, which is granted subject to them registering a general notarial bond over certain of the movable assets as security. The injection moulding plant is already subject to a special notarial bond. Additionally, RNH has a shipment of raw materials at the Durban harbour, but they need funds to pay customs and excise duty before it can be released.

RNH has recorded substantial losses in the 2021 and 2022 financial years, worsened by increasing repo rates and additional cash flow required for monthly repayments on vehicle and truck instalment sale agreements with SABA Bank.

Recognising the dire situation they are in, the Board decide to commence business rescue proceedings on 12 February 2023, and lodge the required documents with CIPC on 14 February 2023. The Board is not aware that an aggrieved creditor, who is owed a substantial sum of money for raw materials supplied, has already initiated a liquidation application against the company which was filed and served by the Sheriff of the High Court on an employee of the company on 11 February 2023. The employee unfortunately placed the documents in his desk drawer and failed to bring the application to the attention of management.

QUESTION 3.1

In the context of the liquidation of RNH, distinguish between commercial insolvency and factual insolvency and provide an example of each. In your answer state whether RNH is commercially or factually insolvent. **(max 5)**

[Commercial insolvency refers to a company's inability to pay its debts as they fall due √- given that RNH is experiencing cash shortfalls which have impacted on their ability to pay their creditors and suppliers (assuming they have credit terms with some suppliers) indicates that the company is commercially insolvent. √

Factually insolvent √refers to balance sheet insolvency where liabilities fairly estimated exceed assets fairly valued (i.e. negative equity position) - although RNH posted significant losses for FY21 and FY22, there is nothing in the facts presented that suggests the company is factually insolvent, it has been profitable for 13 years prior to FY21. √

Given that RNH is commercially insolvent (even if is factually solvent) it is liable to be wound up. This is supported by the ruling in *Absa Bank Ltd v Rhebokskloof (Pty) Ltd [1993 (4) SA 436]* √ **5**

QUESTION 3.2

Under whose custody and control will the assets of RNH (the company) be once the provisional liquidation order is granted? **(1)**

[The company will remain the owner of its assets, but the custody and control of the assets will vest with the Master until a provisional liquidator has been appointed and has assumed office, after which the custody and control will vest with the provisional liquidator; this is as per section 361 of Companies Act 1973.] **1**

QUESTION 3.3

Briefly discuss the general effect the provisional order of liquidation of RNH will have on the employees' contracts of employment. **(3)**

[The contracts of employment will not be terminated but will rather be suspended √from the date that the provisional order of liquidation is granted (as per ruling *Ngwato v Van der Merwe (2014/28470) [2016]*). This means that the employees still have a contract of employment but do not have to go to work (“no work, no pay” applies) and will be entitled to UIF during the period of suspension. √

However the period of suspension is not indefinite, the contracts terminate 45 days after appointment of liquidator unless terminated earlier by liquidator or agreed otherwise.] √ **3**

QUESTION 3.4

Explain what effect the liquidation order of RNH will have on the lease agreement with The Willow Family Trust which will expire in 2026. In your answer discuss what statutory provisions will apply and discuss whether The Willow Family Trust will have any preference in respect of a claim against the liquidated estate for the arrear rental only. **(6)**

[Where the lessee (RNH) is sequestrated section 37 of the Insolvency Act applies. It is noted that the lease will not automatically terminate, √, and the liquidator may elect to: (i) cancel the contract with a written notice to The Willow Family Trust (lessor) - this is subject to the Master should he elect to do this before a general meeting is convened (section 386(2) √ of the Companies Act 1973); (ii) not terminate the contract in which case it will automatically terminate three months after the appointment of the liquidator, √unless he notifies the lessor of his intention to continue (*Ibid, section 37(2)*); or (iii) continues with the lease in which case the liquidator will be bound to all the terms and conditions of the lease. √

In the case where the liquidator cancels the contract based on the instructions of the creditors (*Ibid, section 81(1)(h)*), unless obtains consent from Master as mentioned above), the lessor will have an unliquidated concurrent claim for damages from breach of contract (section 37(1) of Insolvency Act). √

The lessor also has a tacit hypothec over moveables in the premises that arises from any arrear rentals that were due prior to liquidation - this is therefore a secured claim (section 85(1) and (2) of the Insolvency Act). The tacit hypothec excludes: √(i) the injection moulding plant (which had a special notarial bond registered over it prior to the hypothec, √ having been perfected); and (ii) would also exclude assets that were purchased under instalment sale contracts in terms of the National Credit Act (NCA) of 2005 (based on section 2 Security by Means of Moveable Property Act 1993); the NCA also applies to certain juristic persons! including companies, therefore the vehicles and trucks purchased under instalment sale agreements with SABA Bank will be excluded. √

Rent that becomes due after liquidation and is not paid becomes a preferred claim and forms part of sequestration costs (*Ibid section 37(3)*).] **6**

QUESTION 3.5

Briefly discuss the overall effect that the liquidation order of RNH will have on civil proceedings that have commenced against the company prior to the provisional order being granted. (2)

[The liquidation order suspends all the civil proceedings that commenced prior to the provisional order being granted until a liquidator has been appointed. This is per section 359(1)(a) of the Companies Act 1973.] 2

QUESTION 3.6

Section 402 of the Companies Act 1973 lists the matters that a liquidator must report on at the second meeting of creditors. Discuss any six aspects that Mr Hue should include in his report to creditors. (max 6)

[The second meeting is for the liquidator to present his report which must include the following amongst others (as per section 402 of the Companies Act 1973):

- (a) the company's share capital, and estimated amount of its assets and liabilities; ✓
- (b) the causes of failure of the company; ✓
- (c) whether any director/s and/or former director/s and/or officers and/or former officer/s of the company can be held personally liable for damages or compensation to the company or for any liabilities of the company; ✓
- (d) any legal proceedings pending against the company; ✓
- (e) if there is a reason to hold an enquiry relating to the failure of the company or its conduct; and ✓
- (f) the progress and prospects of the winding-up / liquidation.] ✓ 6

QUESTION 3.7

MAWU ask Mr Hue to explain the statutory preferent right of the employees to claim for arrear salaries, and other amounts) owing to them. Write a short paragraph advising MAWU of the position. (5)

[Employees have the following statutory preferent claims:

- (a) Salaries, ✓ and bonuses due prior to liquidation capped at R12000, ✓ per employee (as per section 98A(1)(a)(i) of the Insolvency Act). ✓
- (b) Leave days due to employees that accrued prior to liquidation capped at R4,000 (as per *Ibid*, section 98A(1)(a)(i) read with Government Gazette No 21519 dated 1 September 2000: Government Notice No R.865).
- (c) Any other form of absence for a period not exceeding three months prior to liquidation capped at R4,000 per employee (as per *Ibid*, section 98A(1)(a)(iii) and read with Government Gazette No 21519 as per above (b)). ✓
- (d) Severance or retrenchment pay capped at R12,000 per employee (as per *Ibid*, section 98A(1)(a)(iii) and read with Government Gazette No 21519 as per above (b)). ✓
- (e) Severance benefits (as per section 41 of the Basic Conditions of Employment Act 1997).

(f) Given that the contracts of employment are suspended on liquidation (and eventually terminated 45 days after appointment of liquidator or earlier), no pay is due for work not done. ✓

There can also be unliquidated concurrent claims for damages but MAWU requested the position with respect to preferent rights only.] ✓ **5**

QUESTION 3.8

In order for a bondholder of a special notarial bond to confer a right of preference to the proceeds of the movable property covered by such bond, the Security by Means of Movable Property Act sets out three basic requirements to be met for such preference to be recognised. List these requirements. **(3)**

[(i) the special notarial bond needs to have been registered in terms fo the Deeds Registries Act; ✓

(ii) the moveable assets that it covers must be tangible (i.e. *corporeal*); and ✓

(iii) the moveable assets that it covers must be unique, clearly recognisable by any third party and conform to what is specified in the bond document (e.g. matches serial number etc).] ✓ **3**

QUESTION 3.9

With regards to the raw material that is located at the Durban harbour, discuss the position of SARS in the hierarchy of creditors when enforcing a customs and excise lien over the assets under their control. **(4)**

[SARS has a special security right (has vested a "lien") over the imported property that belongs to the customs debtor (in this case RNH) to which the import tax and customs duty ✓relates that it has detained until the debt is paid (as per *section 114 of the Customs and Excise Act 1964*). ✓ To note SARS detained and vested a lien over the imported property prior to the liquidation of RNH and thus becomes a secured creditor against the detained assets. ✓

If the assets do not cover SARS's full claim, SARS will be paid as statutory preferent creditor from free residue for the balance the claim.] ✓ **4**

QUESTION 3.10

Explain whether the Board of Directors will succeed in placing RNH into business rescue. In your answer discuss the concept of "initiation" of liquidation proceedings. Make reference to case law in your answer. **(5)**

[The Board of Directors made a decision to commence business rescue proceedings on 12 February 2023 having passed a company resolution which was filed with CIPC on 14

February 2023. This would have been a voluntary commencement on the date of filing with CIPC (on 14 February 2023) - however, a creditor had already initiated liquidation proceedings prior to this date therefore the resolution could not be adopted and the company cannot enter business rescue (Ibid, section 129(2)(a)), even if this was unknown to the board on 12 February 2023 when they tried to pass a resolution. ✓ In this case it does not appear that the board wanted to prevent a liquidation application by adoption resolutions to commence business rescue in bad faith, but the board could be accused of having traded recklessly for some time before deciding to commence with business rescue, as they have had cash shortfalls with legal actions and judgments against the company, therefore the possibility of liquidation was not remote. ✓

Liquidation by court order (brought about by a creditor) commences on the date of issuing a liquidation application (as per section 348 of the Companies Act 1973) which happened prior to 14 February 2023, therefore the company cannot enter business rescue. ✓

The grounds for winding-up by the court that the creditor would have relied on is the company being unable to pay its debts, i.e. commercially insolvent, ✓ as per section 345 of the Companies Act 1973 if: (i) cannot pay the debt after a creditor issued a demand for payment; or (ii) the sheriff or messenger of the court failed to find sufficient disposable property to satisfy a judgement; or (iii) the court was satisfied that the company cannot pay its debts.] ✓ **5**

40/40

***** END OF ASSESSMENT *****

TOTAL MARKS: [100]