

Book review

Succession: Commentary and Materials

Certoma
Thomson Reuters

By John Alati (Catholic Education Office)

Succession is an enormously complex and diverse area. A thorough understanding of succession law is fundamental to so many areas of law, and one might observe that its importance is, on the whole, undervalued in many ways.

The sixth edition of this faithful standard is long overdue, particularly given that the previous edition (2000) pre dated the *Succession Act 2006* (NSW) and other key legislation in this area. It is designed to be cross referenced with Professor Certoma's related text, *The Law of Succession in New South Wales* (4th ed). As an analysis of NSW succession law, the book is outstanding and meticulous, as anyone familiar with Professor Certoma's previous works would expect.

The author provides a caution in the introduction regarding case extracts, but these will prove a great time saver for practitioners or students needing to quickly familiarise themselves with an aspect of succession law. Students and practitioners alike soon develop the skill of knowing when a complete judgment is required.

The author has skilfully extracted key cases and legislation, and provides succinct commentary on them. If I have any criticism of this model, it is that the commentary is at times a little too succinct. Having said that, I am aware of the space limitations which apply to such a work, and the further commentary provided in the companion text. My other minor criticism is that you soon realise you are reading a NSW based text, with some reference to other jurisdictions. The back cover confirms this. In my opinion this would be better noted on the front cover.

Topics covered include: distribution on intestacy, definition and nature of a will, formal requirements of a valid will, revocation, the jurisdiction of the probate division of the supreme court, family maintenance, administration and distribution, to name a few.

For anyone practising or studying in the area of succession, the text will be an invaluable companion.