

GE1126: LAW FOR SMART CONSUMERS

Effective Term

Semester A 2023/24

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Law for Smart Consumers

Subject Code

GE - Gateway Education

Course Number

1126

Academic Unit

School of Law (FL)

College/School

School of Law (FL)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

B1, B2, B3, B4 - Bachelor's Degree

GE Area (Primary)

Area 1 - Arts and Humanities

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

Nil

Exclusive Courses

Nil

Part II Course Details

Abstract

As the course name suggests, this course aims at providing legal knowledge to students to help them become smart consumers. Through role-playing, discussion of current issues concerning consumer rights and real consumer disputes and video viewing, students will discover the legal issues and principles that govern everyday consumer transactions.

Discussion of current issues and real cases will encourage students to think about how "real" consumer disputes are dealt with and to help students consider whether the victims and their families can have any legal claim against the beauty service provider. The lecturer will also review with students common terms and conditions of different types of consumer agreements, e.g. for internet services or the usage of Facebook.

Hence, students will know the "dos" and "don'ts" whenever they enter into a consumer transaction. They will also become more aware of current issues involving consumer rights and trained to be more inquisitive.

This course aims to provide participants with:

- an insight into the basic legal principles governing consumer transactions and how such knowledge can help protect their interests as consumers;
- training in basic legal reasoning skills and approaches to resolving consumer disputes;
- an awareness of current issues involving consumers' rights and common consumer pitfalls in various types of consumer transactions;
- an insight into the current consumer protection framework and mechanism in Hong Kong; and
- training in research and presentation skills as well as oral and written arguments throughout.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if DEC-A1 DEC-A2 DEC-A3 app.)			
1	Demonstrate a thorough understanding of the basic legal principles governing daily consumer transactions.		x	x	
2	Create and present solutions to problems associated with transactions entered into between a consumer and a more resourceful party.		x	x	
3	Describe real agreements or terms and conditions in a consumer transaction.				x
4	Explain the rights of consumers as well the remedies that are available when the other party is in breach.				x
5	Critically evaluate and apply the basic principles learnt in real-life situations individually and in groups.		x	x	

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Teaching and Learning Activities (TLAs)

TLAs	Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)	
1	Lectures and video viewing	Students will be guided to apply the concepts and theories to the issues addressed in the particular class. They will gain knowledge through lectures and the lecturer's illustration of how to apply various legal principles to analyse and resolve real consumer disputes from the news.	1, 4	2 hours
2	Interactive tutorials scenarios and group discussions	Scenarios will give students an opportunity to discover and understand "real-life" issues and group discussions activities will stimulate ideas and thus generate more ideas for discussion with a view to finding solutions for these daily problems.	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	1 hour

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs	CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)	
1	Participation and Presentation	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	20	- Team and individual contributions to discussion and debate addresses capacity for self-directed learning, critical thinking, interpreting of information and other GE PILOS - The use of Generative AI tools is not allowed.
2	Writing task	1, 2, 4, 5	40	- Addresses the student's skills in producing a structured well organised and fluent text plus other GE PILOS - The use of Generative AI tools is not allowed.

3	Group research and presentation task	1, 2, 3, 4, 5	40	- The use of Generative AI tools is not allowed.
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Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Examination (%)

0

Additional Information for ATs

To pass the course students must achieve an overall total mark of 40% or above.

Participation and Presentation – students will need to engage in discussions/debates on issues and principles learnt and they will need to present their findings during tutorials. The lecturer will facilitate the discussions and students' presentations will be assessed by the tutors.

A writing task which requires students to draft a letter advising a consumer of his/her legal rights and a draft complaint letter to the Consumer Council in relation to the consumer disputes. The advice and complaint letter will be marked by the lecturer with feedback.

A group research and presentation task: Students are required to do research and give a presentation on common consumer pitfalls and current regulations and agencies in Hong Kong which provide protection and assistance for consumers in one of the following areas: (i) beauty services; (ii) travel services; (iii) insurance services; (iv) banking and financial services; (v) money lending services; (vi) health club services; (vii) Chinese medicine practice; or (viii) product safety.

Students are also required to produce an "end-product" relating to their research topic (e.g. a poster or documentary) to go with their presentation.

The lecturer will have conferences with individual groups to provide guidance on doing this project and some background materials on the research topics. The task will be assessed by the tutors.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

1. Participation and Presentation (20%)

Criterion

1.1 Active participation in class

1.2. Ability to demonstrate understanding of relevant issues and materials

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Very active and constructive participation in class and group discussions/debates/presentations. The level of understanding shown is deeper than what was taught in classes or texts. Very concrete and clear explanations.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Active and constructive participation in class and group discussions/debates/presentations. Descriptions and explanations are systematic, clear and concrete.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

The level of participation and understanding of issues is average and explanations may either be incorrect or not really applied to the given issue.

Marginal (D)

Minimal level of participation and insufficient understanding of issues. It is shown by either no description of the social or legal issues involved or disorganised presentation of ideas.

Failure (F)

Demonstrates nothing meaningful or involves academic dishonesty.

Assessment Task

2. Writing Task (40%)

Criterion

2.1 Ability to demonstrate understanding of relevant issues and principles

2.2 Ability to write coherently on legal issues

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

Demonstrates an excellent understanding of the issues involved and exceptional writing and structuring skills.

Good (B+, B, B-)

Demonstrates good understanding of the issues involved and good writing and structuring skills.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

Demonstrates sufficient understanding of the issues involved and average writing and structuring skills.

Marginal (D)

Demonstrates minimal understanding of the issues involved and relatively bad writing and structuring skills.

Failure (F)

Fails to address the issues involved and inability to write and structure in a meaningful way.

Assessment Task

3. Group Research and Presentation task (40%)

Criterion

3.1 Ability to undertake research as part of a group, and provide evidence of individual role

3.2 Sharing of research outcomes with audience

Excellent (A+, A, A-)

The group shows excellent research skills as well as comprehensive and creative findings and insights into the assigned research topic and effective communication of such ideas to their target audience.

Good (B+, B, B-)

The group shows some good research skills and new findings and ideas on the assigned research topic.

Fair (C+, C, C-)

The group shows some attempts in generating ideas on the assigned research topic but such ideas may be too general and/or abstract.

Marginal (D)

The group shows poor effort in completing the task and the content does not focus on the proper issue and/or presentation is disorganised.

Failure (F)

The group shows very poor effort and nothing meaningful can be derived from it or academic dishonesty is involved in completing the task.

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Agreement, consumer protection, dispute resolution, compensation, monopolies, smart consumer, case studies looking at legal issues and other issues including ethical issues.

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Nil

Additional Readings

Title	
1	DK Srivastava, Business Law in Hong Kong (Sweet & Maxwell,) - chapters on "Legal System of Hong Kong", "Contract Law", "Tort Law", "Sale of Goods" and "E-commerce Law"
2	The Choice (Publication of the Consumer Council) (in Chinese)
3	The Standard
4	South China Morning Post
5	Consumer complaint section of Next Magazine
6	Hong Kong Consumer Council: https://www.consumer.org.hk/ws_en/
7	Government Hong Kong: http://www.gov.hk/en/residents/
8	Hong Kong Legal Information Institute: http://www.hklii.hk/eng/ (database of HK legislation and case law)
9	Consumers International: http://www.consumersinternational.org/
10	Econsumer: http://www.econsumer.gov/english/
11	Consumer reports: http://www.consumerreports.org/cro/index.htm
12	Investor Education Centre: http://www.hkiec.hk
13	Financial Dispute Resolution Centre Limited: http://www.fdrc.org.hk
14	Hong Kong Monetary Authority: http://www.hkma.gov.hk
15	Securities and Futures Commission: http://www.sfc.hk
16	Office of the Commissioner of Insurance: http://www.oci.gov.hk
17	Insurance Claims Complaints Bureau: http://www.iccb.org.hk
18	Competition Commission: http://www.compcomm.hk/

Annex (for GE courses only)

A. Please specify the Gateway Education Programme Intended Learning Outcomes (PILOs) that the course is aligned to and relate them to the CILOs stated in Part II, Section 2 of this form:

Please indicate which CILO(s) is/are related to this PILO, if any (can be more than one CILOs in each PILO)

PILO 2: Explain the basic methodologies and techniques of inquiry of the arts and humanities, social sciences, business, and science and technology

1

PILO 3: Demonstrate critical thinking skills

2, 5

PILO 4: Interpret information and numerical data

1

PILO 5: Produce structured, well-organised and fluent text

5

PILO 7: Demonstrate an ability to work effectively in a team

5

PILO 9: Value ethical and socially responsible actions

2, 3

PILO 10: Demonstrate the attitude and/or ability to accomplish discovery and/or innovation

2, 5

B. Please select an assessment task for collecting evidence of student achievement for quality assurance purposes. Please retain at least one sample of student achievement across a period of three years.

Selected Assessment Task

A writing task which requires students to draft an advice letter and a draft complaint letter to the Consumer Council.

Related CILOs: 1-6

Related GE PILOs: 1-5, 10