

**TRANSITION
PACK
for
A LEVEL
BUSINESS**

Exam board AQA

<http://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/business-subjects/as-and-a-level/business-7131-7132/subject-content>

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to A level Business!

Welcome to A level Business!

This A-level Business course introduces you to all you need to know about working in business, providing a solid foundation for further study.

With a focus on helping you to become a good decision maker, you'll learn essential managerial skills, alongside techniques to help you become an analytical problem solver. These skills are all highly sought after and valued in a wide range of careers.

COURSE CONTENT

A-level Business content Year 12 (first year)

A-level Business content Year 12 (first year)

An introduction to key business areas: marketing, operations, finance and human resource management. This includes a special focus on decision making – particularly how decisions made in one area can affect the rest of the business.

Topic 1 – What is business?

Topic 2 – Managers, leadership and decision making

Topic 3 – Decision making to improve marketing performance

Topic 4 – Decision making to improve operational performance

Topic 5 – Decision making to improve financial performance

Topic 6 – Decision making to improve human resource performance

Year 13 (second year)

Year 13 (second year)

An investigation of the strategic decisions that all businesses have to make.

Topic 7 – Analysing the strategic position of a business

Topic 8 – Choosing the strategic direction

Topic 9 – Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies

Topic 10 – Managing strategic change

A-LEVEL ASSESSMENT

A-level assessment consists of **three two hour written exams** taken at the end of the two year course. Each exam will be worth a third of the A-level. All three papers will draw on material from the whole course, and will feature **a range of question styles** including multiple choice questions, short answer questions, essay questions, data response questions and case studies.

EXPECTATIONS

Our aim is to deliver a challenging and engaging course and to support you in achieving your highest possible grade in this subject. In order for this to be possible, we have the following expectations:

- You must attend all lessons. Poor attendance equals poor grade. At A level missing 2 or 3 hours of lessons can be a lot of work to catch up. If you have to miss a lesson, ensure you get notes from your teacher or other students.
- Keep your notes, classwork and homework organised in an A4 ring binder, using dividers to help organise different topics. This will help you when it comes to revision and enable you to find work ready for assessment.
- Whilst your notes are really important, at A level, you need more! You need to listen to your teacher in class, participate in tasks and discuss topics in small groups and with your teacher, complete your homework and read about/research the topics by yourself to complement your learning and understanding.
- You also need to be aware of what is going on in the business and financial world so, read relevant online magazines, watch business television programmes, and keep up to date with current affairs. (See recommended resources)
- Before a lesson, refresh your knowledge about what you did in the previous lesson. Make sure you have any work ready to hand in

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES

Reading is an essential part of the course and you will be required to read at home and during independent study. Extra reading is necessary for the development of critical thinking and for the extension of knowledge and understanding of what is happening in the world today.

There are Business textbooks kept in the classroom and LRC, together with copies of Business Review. It is not necessary that you purchase any additional texts as there is so much valuable material online. We recommend the Tutor2U website, <http://www.tutor2u.net/business> and suggest you access this resource at least once a week.

Basic Reading

AQA A-level Business Year 1/AS Third Edition (Wolinski & Coates)

Authors: John Wolinski and Gwen Coates

Publisher: [Hodder Education](#)

ISBN-13: 978-1-4718-3609-1

Business Review magazine (Philip Allan Updates, www.philipallan.co.uk)

NB: Other reading will be recommended throughout the course and there will be other books in the classroom that are available upon request.

Useful Websites

Tutor2u: <http://www.tutor2u.net/>

BBC News: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business>

YouTube Tutor2u revision videos

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCe83jLdZ3PugVwAHe6B3U2A>

Competition Commission — www.competition-commission.org.uk

The Guardian: www.guardian.co.uk/business

The Times: <http://business.timesonline.co.uk>

Business Week: <http://www.businessweek.com/>

Bloomberg: www.bloomberg.com

Business Link: www.businesslink.gov.uk

Statistics: <http://statistics.gov.uk>

Television

There are plenty of business related TV programmes that will help to develop your understanding of topics covered e.g. Dragon's Den, Newsnight, Panorama, Undercover Boss, etc.

The basics: Business is all around you every day, it isn't hard to see how it has affected you and will affect your future. Take Brexit for example, do you view that as a positive or a negative?

There will be some key terms you should know from your GCSE course, however, if you are new to Business or have enjoyed a busy summer, these are the terms you should be familiar with. Spend some time to find them out and create a document with them prepared.

Use: www.tutor2u.com to help

Easy Key Term	Challenging Terms
Revenue (define, formula)	Inflation
Profit (define, formula)	Interest rates
Variable costs (define, formula)	Porters Five Forces
Contribution per unit (formula)	Boston Matrix
Break even (define, formula)	Ansoff Matrix
LTD	Labour turnover (define, formula)
PLC	Capacity utilisation (define, formula)
Unlimited liability	ROCE (define, formula)
Limited liability	Current Ratio (define, formula)
Exchange rate	Trading Bloc
Profit margin	

That should have given you plenty to think about. These terms will be integral in your understanding of business.

ii. The companies you really should know!

It is impossible to know what companies will be examined in your assessments. However, some of the big multinationals will provide you with enough evidence to cover all the aspects of business in your course. Become familiar with these companies, they will help you contextualise your answers.





THE SUMMER PROJECT

- 1) Complete the **key terms list**
- 2) Choose 2 companies for the list provided. Create a **fact file** on each of the companies. The fact file should not be longer than 2 pages of A4 or 2 slides. You can do a mixture of both.
 - a. Who they are and what they do
 - b. Key financial information on them
 - c. Their ownership type
 - d. Recent news articles on the company over the past 12 – 18 months
 - e. Their plans for the future
 - f. Their 2 major competitors and why
- 3) **Download** the 3 recommended Apps. If you don't have a Twitter account, get one! On Twitter you can follow the recommended news companies.
- 4) Download the **exam board specification** (see link on front page)
- 5) Look through the specification, it can be a real help in understanding your forthcoming course

6) RESEARCH ACTIVITY

e-commerce

The nature of competitive rivalry has been transformed by e-commerce in many markets and industries in recent years. For example...

- Music and book retailing (Amazon)
- Grocery retailing (Ocado, Amazon, Tesco)
- Holidays (Expedia, Trip Advisor)
- File storage and sharing (Dropbox)
- Music streaming (Spotify & iMusic)
- Sharing economy (Uber, AirBnB) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FpTnHkyh60>
- Media consumption (Netflix, YouTube)
- Media sharing (Snapchat, Facebook)
- News publishing (Twitter, Huffington Post)

Many New Entrants Using E-commerce are "Pure Plays". In e-commerce terms, a pure play is a business that originated and **does business purely through the Internet**; they have no physical store ("bricks and mortar") where customers can shop.

Potential competitive advantages of being a “pure-play”

- **Lower operating costs** – no requirement to have a physical store portfolio
- **Organisational culture** – aligned to operating and developing solely as an e-commerce business
- **Access to finance** – significant venture capital finance available for pure-plays with significant disruptive potential
- **Not burdened by legacy issues** – as a result, pure-plays are often said to be more flexible and agile

Some possible reasons why traditional model (non pure-play) firms may still succeed: • **Brand**

loyalty- Brand loyalty is built over many years, particularly in service businesses (e.g. John Lewis, Nike, Dominos, Hyatt).

• **Physical store network**- The major high street retailers (e.g. Argos) have extensive store networks that can be used to support options such as “click & collect”. • **The option of omni-channel**-Traditional model businesses have the option of adapting their models to also offer e-commerce as part of an integrated approach. Successful omnichannel retailing is a great example of this.

Task 1

Carry out your own research into the following businesses. Why do you think they have become so successful? Do you think businesses that do not embrace e-commerce will inevitably fail?



asos
discover fashion online



Task 2

<https://www.brandwatch.com/2014/03/10-powerful-ecommerce-marketing-trends-that-will-dominate-2014/>

<https://www.ometria.com/blog/ecommerce-trends-2015>

Look at the links above. These describe some of the top trends in e-commerce.

What impacts do you think these will have on existing businesses?

What other innovations do you think will be on the horizon?