



Cardinal Langley

RC Sixth Form



Preparing for A Level Business
– student guide

Introduction

I would like to thank you for taking the time to seriously consider choosing Business as one of your A Level options. The Business department has a very proud record of producing consistently high academic results. This is only achieved through the dedication and hard work of both teaching staff and students. As part of your preparation for studying A Level Business you are strongly advised to read the following course information and complete the recommended online Open Learning units. This will enable you to get a good feel for the course and the style of assessment used by the exam board.

Mr Gillespie – Teacher of Business

Course Aims and Objectives

A Level Business introduces students to the dynamic business environment and the importance of entrepreneurial activity in creating business opportunities and sustaining business growth. Students will have the opportunity to develop a wide range of essential skills required for higher education and employment.

The focus of the specification is to nurture an enthusiasm for studying business using contemporary contexts, allowing students to develop an appreciation of the strategic, complex and inter-related nature of business issues from a local to global perspective.

Overview - Component 1

Business Opportunities and Functions

Business Opportunities focuses on new business start-ups and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The content in this section is based around the concept of starting a new business and the issues that surround the process of planning a new business. In addition to covering the main concepts of setting up a new business, students should be aware of other types of business organisations, the markets in which they operate and their various stakeholders.

Business Functions broadens the context for students and includes all types of business organisation, ranging from recently formed small businesses to well established multinational companies. Students need to understand that, in order to succeed in a competitive market, all businesses have to consider the core functions of business.

Overview - Component 2

Business Analysis and Strategy

Component 2 builds on the theory introduced in Component 1. As the title suggests, the emphasis in this component is on understanding and using analytical techniques and developing appropriate business strategies.

Students need to understand, construct and analyse a range of decision-making models and investment appraisal methods used by businesses to decide on their strategy.

Students need to develop analytical skills to investigate business opportunities and problems in a number of different contexts and evaluate a range of quantitative and qualitative data to suggest possible strategic responses from businesses.

Overview - Component 3

Business in a Changing World

Component 3 focuses on how businesses adapt to succeed in a dynamic external environment. Students need to understand that the business world never stands still and there are continuous opportunities and threats to businesses of all sizes.

Students need to understand that regardless of size, businesses now operate in a global marketplace and they need to consider a wide range of external factors that affect their day-to-day activities, decision-making and strategy.

Students are required to integrate the knowledge, understanding and skills developed in all three components to display a holistic understanding of business activity and the environment in which they operate.

Summary Of Assessment

Component 1 – Business Opportunities & Functions

2 ¼ Hour Written Examination

33.3% of A Level Qualification

Total = 80 Marks

PAPER 1 - Paper 1 combines short-answer questions (Section A) and data response questions (Section B).

The paper assesses the content in Component 1 only.

Component 2 – Business Analysis and Strategy

2 ¼ Hour Written Examination

33.3 % of A Level Qualification

Total = 80 Marks

PAPER 2 - Paper 2 includes a number of data response questions, some short and some requiring extended answers to assess business analysis and strategy.

The content from Component 1 will be called upon to underpin the responses in this paper. This paper will naturally call upon Students' quantitative skills in order to answer the questions.

Summary Of Assessment

Component 3 – Business In A Changing World

1 Hour Written Examination

33.3% of A Level Qualification

Total = 80 Marks

PAPER 3 - Paper 3 has two distinct sections.

Section A will include a number of questions, mostly requiring extended answers, based on a case study. These questions will call on the content from all three components and will also include synoptic assessment.

Section B requires Students to write one synoptic essay from a choice of three. Each essay is split into two parts. Part (a) focuses on knowledge and understanding and part (b) focuses on analysis and evaluation.

AO1 – Knowledge & Understanding

Learner Ability / Action	Command Words	Typical Example Questions
Demonstrate <u>KNOWLEDGE</u> of terms, concepts, theories, methods and models to show an <u>UNDERSTANDING</u> of how individuals and organisations are affected by and respond to business issues.	State Define Identify Name Label Suggest Describe Outline Categorise Summarise What is meant	Identify two of the main components of a business plan. [2] Describe the financial incentives that a large retail store might use to motivate its employees. [6] State the difference between fixed and variable costs. [2] What is meant by the term added value? [1]

A02 – Application (Apply)

Learner Ability / Action	Command Words	Typical Example Questions
<p><u>APPLY</u> knowledge and understanding to various business contexts to show how individuals and organisations are affected by and respond to issues.</p>	<p>Apply/Use Demonstrate Calculate Illustrate Select Show Adapt With reference to</p>	<p>Adapt the diagram to show what will happen to the price of sports clothing as the general level of income rises in the UK. [2] With reference to the cash-flow forecast identify the problem facing Darnton's Shoes. [2] Calculate the average rate of return for both machines. [4] Illustrate how the production process can add value, using the example of a furniture business that makes wooden tables. [2]</p>

A03 - Analyse

Learner Ability / Action	Command Words	Typical Example Questions
<p><u>ANALYSE</u> issues within business, showing an understanding of the impact on individuals and organisations of external and internal influences.</p>	<p>Analyse Compare/Contrast Explain Develop Distinguish</p>	<p>Explain the possible benefits and drawbacks of each chosen source of finance. [4]</p> <p>Analyse how Aldi and Lidl can take advantage of economies of scale as their businesses continue to grow. [8]</p> <p>With reference to the data, analyse United Biscuits' strengths and weaknesses. [10]</p>

A04 - Evaluate

Learner Ability / Action	Command Words	Example Questions
<p><u>EVALUATE</u> quantitative and qualitative information to make informed judgements and propose evidence-based solutions to business issues.</p>	<p>Assess Discuss Decide Recommend Conclude Evaluate Argue Justify Consider To what extent Do you agree Advise</p>	<p>To what extent do you agree with the view that a business plan will guarantee the success of a business venture? [8]</p> <p>To what extent do you agree with the view that having a varied product portfolio and an extensive distribution network (place) will guarantee long-term success for Sarah Bunton's Luxury Chocolates? [12]</p> <p>Evaluate the view that the most successful supermarket in the UK is always going to be the one with the cheapest prices. [10]</p>

Yr13 - Typical Exam Timetable

Component 1 – Business Opportunities & Functions

Friday 22nd May 2020 (am)

2 ¼ Hours

Component 2 – Business Analysis and Strategy

Monday 1st June 2020 (pm)

2 ¼ Hours

Component 3 – Business In A Changing World

Friday 5th June 2020 (am)

2 ¼ Hours

Exam Board Links

- A Level Business Homepage

<https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/business/as-a-level/#qualSearch>

- A Level Exam Question Command Word Glossary

http://resource.download.wjec.co.uk.s3.amazonaws.com/vtc/2016-17/16-17_3-18/eng/command-word-glossary.html

- A Level Specifications (Yr12 only)

<https://www.eduqas.co.uk/qualifications/business/as-a-level/eduqas-as-business-spec-from-2015.pdf>

Open Learning Tasks

Click on the links below to access free accredited Business units – you are strongly recommended to complete all of these online units:

1. Different types of business

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/money-business/business-strategy-studies/different-types-business/content-section-0?active-tab=content-tab>

2. Entrepreneurial Behaviour

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/money-business/business-strategy-studies/entrepreneurial-behaviour/content-section-0?active-tab=content-tab>

3. Innovation (Operations)

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/money-business/leadership-management/the-concept-innovation/content-section-0?active-tab=content-tab>

4. Marketing

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/money-business/business-strategy-studies/retail-marketing/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>

5. Human Resources (People)

<https://www.open.edu/openlearn/money-business/human-resources/human-resources-recruitment-and-selection/content-section-0?active-tab=description-tab>

Wider Reading

Regularly accessing these resources will help develop your wider knowledge and understanding of the key principles of business that affect us all on a local, national and worldwide basis:

- BBC News - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business>
- Manchester Evening News - <https://www.manchestereveningnews.co.uk/business/>
- Daily Mail - <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/money/index.html>
- Sky News - <https://news.sky.com/business>
- The Bottom Line (BBC Radio 4) - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006sz6t>
- In Business (BBC Radio 4) - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006s609>
- Wake Up To Money (BBC Radio 5) - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b0070lr5>

Farewell

I hope that you enjoyed working through these tasks and gaining an insight into A Level Business. Although there are some similarities the course is very different to GCSE study and requires dedication towards lesson attendance and independent completion of class notes / homework / wider reading / research tasks / revision etc... However, I have no doubt you will find A Level Business an interesting and rewarding course. I look forward to seeing you in September.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require any further assistance with any of the online Open Learning tasks or you have any questions related to the A Level Business course.

Mr Gillespie – Teacher of Business

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