

Subject: Business Studies

Exam Board: AQA



Welcome to A-level Business Studies. We are delighted that you are considering this A-level as an option in Year 12 and 13. To demonstrate your commitment to the course and to prepare you for September, you must complete the following tasks to the best of your ability. These tasks are compulsory and must be completed prior to your first lesson in Year 12.

We expect you spend at least 3-4 hours completing the tasks outlined in this pack. The activities have been designed to help you begin to develop some of the key skills you will need for A-level

Learning Objectives:

On this course you will study:

- business in a variety of contexts (eg large/small, UK focused/ global, service/manufacturing)
- the importance of the context of business in relation to decision making
- the interrelated nature of business activities and how they affect competitiveness
- the competitive environment and the markets in which businesses operate
- the influences on functional decisions and plans including ethical and environmental issues
- the factors that might determine whether a decision is successful eg the quality of data and the degree of uncertainty
- how technology is changing the way decisions are made and how businesses operate and compete
- the impact on stakeholders of functional decisions and their response to such decisions
- use of non-quantitative and quantitative data in decision making (including the interpretation of index numbers and calculations such as ratios and percentages).

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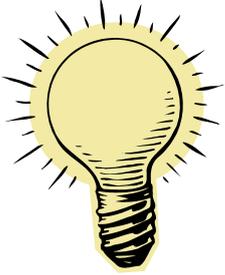
What is Business Studies?



The world in which we live is dominated by businesses big and small. A Level Business is an exciting and interesting subject which can help you to understand the world in which we live. Businesses are dynamic organisations which reflect the values of society and the people working within them. A study of business will help you to gain an insight into both.

The 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.

Careers you can consider with Business:



Business is a subject that will open doors to varied pathways post-18. This could be apprenticeships, setting up your own business, university and careers in the workplace e.g. marketing, human resources, accounting, the travel industry, franchise owner, business adviser and many more.

Skills you will have learnt upon completion of Business:

An economic understanding, become financially literate, organisation skills, decision making skills, communication skills, problem solving, building confidence, presentation skills being able to work independently and as part of a team, the ability to make a reasoned judgement, critical thinking skills, literacy development.

Overview of lessons:

Lesson 1: Intro to the course, Market share, competitive market and costs.

- *Be able to listen, research a topic, record findings and practice your quantitative skills.*

Lesson 2: Business tactics, strategy, stakeholders, motivation, ethics and branding.

- *Be able to build on your quantitative skills with percentages and percentage change.*

Lesson 3: Business ownership, market segmentation, demand, advertising and sponsorship

- *Be able to build your quantitative skills by interpreting and analysing graphical diagrams*

Lesson 4: Aims and objectives, growth, SWOT, Ecommerce and Social Responsibility

Homework Tasks to be completed:

We expect you to spend at least 10 hours completing the 4 tasks outlined in this pack over the summer. The tasks have been designed to help you develop some of the key skills you will need for A-Level Business. The 4 tasks are detailed below and are to be brought to your first Business lesson in September.

Task 1: Choose a Company / Brand and research it!

Find out the following about a company or brand of your choice:

- Basic business facts: What does the business do? How large is it? Where is it based? What are its key objectives? (Hint: look in the Chairman's statement in the annual report) What is it's Ownership type (Sole trader, Partnership, Ltd, PLC, Franchise)
- How successful is the business? Find evidence to support your view: eg.
 - Sales revenue
 - Profit
 - Market share
 - Brand recognition
 - Stock market valuation
- Has it become more or less successful over the last few years?

Compare data trends over a few years

- What do you think are the key factors that affect its success and why?

Think about: Customer trends, Competitors, Government regulation, the Economy, the company's financial situation etc.

Task 2: "A week in Business"

Research the internet and select 7 pictures, one for each day, to represent a different business news story.

For each story, write a commentary / explanation to include the following:

- *What is happening?*
- *What has it got to do with business?*
- *Why is it important?*

Homework Tasks to be completed:

Task 3: Enterprise and the Entrepreneur - Pembo Case Study

Read the case study about an entrepreneur called Pembo and answer the following questions:

1. What sort of ownership type is Pembo's business. Explain why? (2)
2. Explain 1 advantage and 1 disadvantage of this sort of ownership type for Pembo. (2)
3. State two possible motives for Pembo's business start-up. (2)
4. Businesses can be classified as primary sector, secondary sector or third sector.
5. Explain which sector(s) Pembo's business is an example of. (2)
6. Outline two examples from the case which suggest that Pembo might prove a really successful businessman in the longer term. (4)
6. Identify 3 different stakeholders of Pembo's business and explain what their interest in the business is. (6)
7. Comment on whether you think this business idea for out-of-season tomato-growing will continue to succeed. (4)
8. Explain how Pembo has demonstrated two entrepreneurial characteristics (4)
9. Carry out a SWOT and PESTLE analysis for Pembo's business. (10)
11. Use each element of the two models as sub headings to set out your work. For each element you should be writing at least a paragraph, not a bullet point list.
12. Useful links; <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/swot-analysis> ,
<https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/what-is-pest-analysis>

Task 4: Write a plan for a business idea you would like to explore.

Write a plan for a business idea you would like to explore. This can involve either making and selling a product or providing a service.

The sections you will need to include:

1. What is your product/service?
2. What are your aims?
3. How is the business owned? (by yourself or with others?)
4. Where will the finance come from to start this business?
5. What employees will you need and what will be their job roles? (Show in an organisation chart)
6. Who is your target audience?
7. How will you advertise your business?
8. What costs will you have? How will your business make money?

A-Level Business at a glance

Content Overview:

Year 12: 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.

1. Topic 1 – What is business?
2. Topic 2 – Managers, leadership and decision making
3. Topic 3 – Decision making to improve marketing performance
4. Topic 4 – Decision making to improve operational performance
5. Topic 5 – Decision making to improve financial performance
6. Topic 6 – Decision making to improve human resource performance

Year 13: An investigation of the strategic decisions that all businesses have to make.

1. Topic 7 – Analysing the strategic position of a business
2. Topic 8 – Choosing the strategic direction
3. Topic 9 – Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
4. Topic 10 – Managing strategic change

A-level assessment:

A-level assessment consists of three x 2 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.

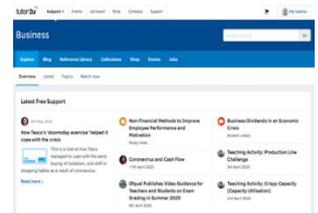
For students who are just starting on their A Level Business course, these notes are designed to provide brief background information and advice on how best to reach your potential in this subject and to get the best from the opportunity to study a live subject that changes every day!

The emphasis is upon you contributing to your own learning by your involvement in lessons and your further reading of the subject in your own time. There are many things that you can do to enhance and deepen your understanding of Business, perhaps as preparation for studying the subject to a higher level at university or to complement your work in other subjects.

However, the first and best piece of advice that can be given to any Business Studies student is to enjoy the subject and see its relevance, and to do this you need to keep your eyes open and be listened all around you as the business world is changing every day and everywhere. Therefore, you should be watching and listening to the news regularly.

Resources and Reading:

- The specification for the course is genuinely important reading
[AQA | AS and A-level | Business | Specification at a glance](#)
- The exam board website also has example past papers that are worth looking at to see how you will be assessed;
[AQA | AS and A-level | Business | Assessment resources](#)
- It is recommended that all students follow the business news to gain an awareness of topical issues affecting national and multinational businesses. We recommend all students read the following websites at *least* on a weekly basis:
 - <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/blog> - Free online resources, theory and articles on Business Studies. Have a go at the weekly bizquiz, we will be doing this each week during term time. You are welcome to let me know your scores for any upcoming quizzes you do.
 - <https://blog.businesscasestudies.co.uk/> - Real life case studies. It includes business activities and theory notes.
 - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business> - current business news stories and articles. You should be regularly watching the news to keep you up to date with what is happening in business. You will be really surprised how many of the news bulletins relate to what you are studying in lessons.
 - www.youtube.com/channel/UCIJ4pk3uzyWoeoBkGs0hxQ/featured - TakingTheBiz is a YouTube channel dedicated to the provision of revision resources for students studying A Level (and GCSE) Business. The aim of TakingTheBiz is to provide students with a more visual, engaging and memorable revision aide to help them prepare for their exams. Each tutorial focuses on one of the key topics for the Business specifications.
 - www.youtube.com/c/twoteachers - Another YouTube channel dedicated to the provision of resources for students studying A Level Business. More emphasis on application of theory to different case studies in their videos.
 - Other recommended reads - Quality newspapers / magazines such as: the Times, Guardian, Telegraph, Independent, journals such as The Economist (NB. there are reduced rates for students on some of these, for example, students were able to buy The Economist for 6p per copy instead of the standard £2!), and the Business Review magazine (can subscribe for your own student copy)



Opportunity Progress Individuality

- I would also recommend watching business documentaries. Some good ones are listed below:

- [1. Inside the Factory](#) - BBC (many different businesses) Good for capital/ labour intensive, business sectors, added value
- [2. Inside Programmes on Channel 5](#) - (Covers Hamleys, Harrods, Nando's & Rolls Royce amongst others)
3. Inside the Supermarket – an excellent series about Sainsbury's. Lots of useful content.
4. Dragon's Den – BBC
5. [My5](#) – excellent choice of documentaries including:- Aldi vs Lidl: Supermarket Wars, Aldi: Secrets of the Billion Dollar Discounter, British Airways: 100 years in the sky, Chocolate Dreams – Inside Hotel Chocolat (this company was used in a previous exam paper), Henry Ford.
6. [Undercover Boss](#) - High-flying executives take extraordinary steps to ensure their companies are fighting fit by going undercover in their own businesses. Excellent resource for HR Management, business organisation and communication

- Get watching

Why not take some time out to watch a few films that will help develop your business knowledge and understanding such as:



The Founder (2016)

The true story of how Ray Kroc (Michael Keaton), a struggling salesman from Illinois, met Mac (John Carroll Lynch) and Dick McDonald (Nick Offerman), who were running a burger operation in 1950s Southern California. Kroc was impressed by the brothers' speedy system of making the food and saw franchise potential. Kroc soon manoeuvres himself into a position to be able to pull the company from the brothers and create a multi-billion dollar empire.



The Social Network (2010)

In 2003, Harvard undergrad and computer genius Mark Zuckerberg (Jesse Eisenberg) begins work on a new concept that eventually turns into the global social network known as Facebook. Six years later, he is one of the youngest billionaires ever, but Zuckerberg finds that his unprecedented success leads to both personal and legal complications when he ends up on the receiving end of two lawsuits, one involving his former friend (Andrew Garfield). Based on the book "The Accidental Billionaires."



Steve Jobs (2015)

With public anticipation running high, Apple Inc. co-founders Steve Jobs (Michael Fassbender) and Steve "Woz" Wozniak get ready to unveil the first Macintosh in 1984. Jobs must also deal with personal issues related to ex-girlfriend Chrisann Brennan and their young daughter Lisa. Eventually fired, Jobs launches NeXT Inc. and prepares to release a new computer model in 1988. Ten years later, Jobs is back at Apple Inc. and about to revolutionize the industry once again with the iMac.



Moneyball (2011)

Billy Beane (Brad Pitt), general manager of the Oakland A's, one day has an epiphany: Baseball's conventional wisdom is all wrong. Faced with a tight budget, Beane must reinvent his team by outsmarting the richer ball clubs. Joining forces with Ivy League graduate Peter Brand (Jonah Hill), Beane prepares to challenge old-school traditions. He recruits bargain-bin players whom the scouts have labelled as flawed, but have game-winning potential. Based on the book by Michael Lewis.

Business Books that you might enjoy reading include:

- **Grinding it out** – by **Ray Kroc**, the businessman behind McDonald's
- **The long tail / The longer long tail** - by **Chris Anderson**, the first book to really explain how the new world of internet-based companies worked and the reason why their new business models were not only going to be successful but were better than the existing models and approaches being used
- **How I made it** – by **Rachel Bridge**, an essential read for anyone that is thinking about starting their own business. Successful Entrepreneurs are interviewed about how they spotted a gap in a market, and developed a USP.
- **Drive: The surprising truth about what motivates** – by **Daniel Pink**, A BOOK THAT WILL CHANGE HOW YOU THINK AND TRANSFORM HOW YOU LIVE Forget everything you thought you knew about how to motivate people - at work, at school, at home
- **How They Started: How 30 Good Ideas Became Great Businesses** – by **Daniel Lester**, How They Started us about 30 people who all had an idea, and went on to start a business. Those businesses are all extremely successful, and most are household names.
- **The Google story** – by **David Vise**, here is the story behind one of the most remarkable Internet successes of our time. Based on scrupulous research and extraordinary access to Google, the book takes you inside the creation and growth of a company whose name is a favourite brand and a standard verb recognised around the world.

- **The Art of War -by Sun Tzu**, Sun Tzu's ideas on survival and success have been read across the world for centuries. Today they can still be applied to business, politics and life. The Art of War demonstrates how to win without conflict. It shows that with enough intelligence and planning, it is possible to conquer with a minimum of force and little destruction.

Enterprise and the Entrepreneur

By the edge of Lake Victoria, Tanzania, is a village with 2,000 people. It is poor, but has its own fishing boats, boat builder, vegetable field and (tiny) street market. The villagers work together, but individuals can keep any money they make. One villager, Pembo, noticed that – year after year – the villagers planted tomatoes in the ideal growing conditions of the rainy season.



But when the tomatoes were ripe the price in the local market town was too low to make a profit. Fewer people wanted to buy them (they grew their own) and far more growers brought tomatoes to the marketplace.

In August 2008 Pembo marked out a large patch of sandy earth by the side of the lake, and sowed tomato seeds. As the rainy season was over, he had to water by hand. Every day he spent hours collecting water in a bucket from the lake and watering each plant. He marked his patch out carefully and re-planted each seedling to give it the space to grow. He tied them, tended them and eventually was able to harvest them and take them to the market. Whereas the villagers' tomatoes usually fetched \$2 per bushel, Pembo's made \$5. As he had done all the work himself, the villagers accepted that he kept all the money: this proved to be just over \$100 for two months' work (about 6 times the average income). He used the \$100 to buy a second hand motorbike with a trailer.

Others in the village soon copied the method for growing tomatoes, though Pembo was already onto his next idea. He paid two 12-year-olds to look after his own patch, while he talked to a hotel in the Serengeti National Park about delivering all their fruit and vegetables.