

BUSINESS STUDIES



Course information

The study of Business at A Level involves looking at the key functional areas of a business. The course has been designed to provide students with a critical understanding of the internal functions of contemporary organisations of all types and the dynamic external environment within which businesses operate. The principles of management and decision-making are examined and applied to case studies, demonstrating how organisations face a number of interrelated problems.

Business at A Level is about assessing a business' current situation, where it wants to go and analysing and evaluating the strategies it could follow in order to achieve its aims and objectives.

Course content

The examination consists of three written papers, each two hours long. Questions range from multiple choice questions, short answer questions, data response questions to questions based on case study scenarios.

We follow the AQA Business specification. The core topic areas are:

1. What is Business?
2. Managers, leadership and decision making
3. Decision making to improve marketing performance
4. Decision making to improve operational performance
5. Decision making to improve financial performance
6. Decision making to improve human resource performance
7. Analysing the strategic position of a business
8. Choosing strategic direction
9. Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
10. Managing strategic change

Assessment

Students should have an enquiring and analytical mind. They should be able to write fluently and have a good level of numeracy ability. Students should also have a keen interest in what is happening and why in the world of business.

The course develops skills such as interpreting data, developing an analytical argument and making judgements based on available evidence, which will help them in other A Level subjects and at university. By the end of the course, students should have a good understanding of the skills needed for successful business management and will be familiar with problem solving techniques.

Complementary Subjects

Geography, Mathematics, Politics, History and Economics.

The A Level Business specification requires no previous knowledge of GCSE Business and encourages students to follow business developments and think critically about contemporary business issues.

Much of the assessment material is based on real business situations, examining and thinking critically about them to give students a thorough grounding in what really matters in modern businesses. Students are introduced to the challenges and issues involved in a business such as research and planning, as well as the factors that determine success.

What next?

Many of our students have gone on to study Business Management at degree level or have studied areas of business such as marketing, accounting or operations management related degrees. A qualification in a business-related subject signals to employers that the student has both analytical and evaluative skills and is able to provide a balanced approach to problem solving.

Suggested reading

The Power of Broke by Daymond John

Shark Tank star and Fubu founder Daymond John explains that starting a business with limited resources is a competitive advantage, not a liability.

Disrupted by Dan Lyons

This is a messy, tell-all account of what happens when a seasoned journalist from an established news magazine takes a job at a software marketing start up. He chronicles his time at Hubspot where he encountered “devilish angel investors, fad-chasing venture capitalists, entrepreneurs and ‘wantrapreneurs.’”

Hustle by Neil Patel, Patrick Vlaskovits, and Jonas Koffler

This New York Times bestseller guides readers through the process of “breaking free from the drudgery” in their daily lives and turning potential into opportunity.

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All information correct June 2022