Business KS5

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Curriculum Intent

Business enables students to understand how organisations operate and make decisions, developing key skills in analysis, problem-solving and financial awareness. It prepares them for further study, employment and everyday life by building confidence, independence and an understanding of the wider economic world.

3.1 What is Business? Managing Marketing and Finance	**Core Knowledge**	**Procedural Knowledge**
Autumn Year 12	3.1.1. Business and Objectives	**State and explain** key concepts (entrepreneur motives and characteristics, business plans, competitiveness, objectives and SMART criteria). **Analyse** how factors such as risk, reward, resources, ethics and opportunity cost influence business decisions and entrepreneurial behaviour. **Evaluate** the challenges faced by entrepreneurs and businesses (e.g. start-up risks, ethical dilemmas, growth decisions) and how these affect success. **Assess and justify** appropriate business decisions by applying objectives (SMART) and recognising trade-offs between profit, ethics and long-term strategy.
	Entrepreneurs	
	Business Planning and Decision Making	
	Objectives	
3.1.2 Forms of Business and Stakeholders	Different Forms of Business	**State and explain** different forms of business (sole trader, Ltd, plc, co-operatives, social enterprises) and key concepts such as **limited vs unlimited liability** and share ownership. **Analyse** how forms of business differ in terms of control, finance, profit distribution and risk, and how these affect stakeholders and business performance. **Calculate, interpret and assess** financial measures related to shares (market capitalisation, dividends per share, dividend yield) to judge business performance and investor returns.
	Stakeholders	

		Evaluate the impact of business activity on **internal and external stakeholders** and assess how businesses balance stakeholder interests and ethical responsibilities.
3.1.3 Marketing Management	Identifying, anticipating and satisfying customer needs	
		State and explain key marketing concepts (market research, market types, segmentation, demand, marketing objectives and marketing mix). **Analyse** how market conditions, data and customer behaviour influence marketing decisions (e.g. pricing, targeting, product strategy, promotion). **Calculate, interpret and assess** marketing data (e.g. market share, growth, elasticity, sales data, return on marketing spend) to inform decisions. **Evaluate** marketing strategies (e.g. segmentation, positioning, marketing mix, digital marketing) by weighing effectiveness, costs and impact on competitiveness.
	Markets and Marketing Data	
	Demand	
	Target Market	
	Marketing Objectives and Planning	
	Product	
	Price	
	Place	
	Promotion	
	International Marketing	
	Ethical issues in marketing	
3.1.4 Financial Management		
Spring Year 12	Managing Finance	**State and explain** key financial concepts (e.g. objectives such as profit, cash flow and liquidity; sources of finance; costs, revenue, budgets and financial ratios).
	Internal and External Sources of Finance	
	Breakeven	

	Profit	**Analyse** how financial decisions (e.g. funding choices, budgeting, pricing, cash flow management) affect business performance, stakeholders and competitiveness. **Calculate, interpret and assess** financial data (e.g. break-even, profit margins, liquidity ratios, ROCE, gearing, budget variances) to inform and justify decisions. **Evaluate** financial strategies and performance by weighing profitability, risk and liquidity, while recognising the limitations of financial data (e.g. historic data and lack of non-financial factors)
	Budgets	
	Cash-flow and Liquidity	
	Financial Reporting	
	Assessing Financial Position and Performance	
	Ethics in Finance	
3.2 Managing people and operations	3.2.1 People Management	**State and explain** key human resource concepts (e.g. HR objectives such as engagement, retention and employee costs; organisational structures; leadership styles; motivation theories; reward systems). **Analyse** how HR decisions (e.g. recruitment, training, leadership style, motivation, organisational design) affect employee performance, business outcomes and competitiveness. **Calculate, interpret and assess** HR data (e.g. productivity, sales per employee, labour turnover, employee costs) to evaluate workforce performance and inform decisions **Evaluate** HR strategies and approaches (e.g. structures, leadership, motivation, reward systems, employee relations) by weighing their effectiveness, costs and impact on motivation, retention and organisational performance.
	HR objectives and Planning	
	HR Data	
	Organisational Design	
	Leadership	
	Developing People	
	Teamwork	
	Motivation	
	Methods of rewarding people	
	Employee Well-being	
	Employer and Employee Relations	
	Ethics in HR	
3.2.2 Operations Management		**State and explain** key operations concepts (e.g. objectives such as efficiency, quality, flexibility and environmental impact; supply chains; inventory management; economies of scale; innovation and technology). **Analyse** how operational decisions (e.g. location, production methods, supply chains, capacity, quality management) affect
Summer Year 12	Managing Operations	
	Operations Data (KPIs)	
	Efficiency	
	Quality	

	Environmental Impact of Operations	costs, efficiency, sustainability and overall business competitiveness. **Calculate, interpret and assess** operations data (e.g. productivity, unit costs, capacity utilisation, inventory turnover, project network analysis) to inform decisions and evaluate performance. **Evaluate** operational strategies (e.g. lean production, JIT vs JIC, quality methods, supply chain management, innovation) by weighing their impact on efficiency, cost, risk, sustainability and long-term competitiveness.
	Matching Output to demand	
	Supply Chain Management	
	Inventory Management	
	Innovation	
	Project Management	
	Scale of Operations	
	Impact of technology on operations	
	Ethics in Operations	
	Business Values and Culture	
3.3.1 Business and Society and the external environment	3.3.1 Business and Society	
Autumn year 13	British Values and Culture	**State and explain** key concepts (sustainability, CSR, ESG, Triple Bottom Line). **Apply and analyse** how these influence business decisions and stakeholder outcomes (costs, reputation, long-term profit). **Evaluate** the usefulness of frameworks (e.g. TBL, CSR pyramid) in guiding strategy and performance. **Assess and interpret** business behaviour (e.g. ESG performance, stakeholder vs shareholder approach, greenwashing).
	Sustainability	
	CSR	
	ESG	
3.3.2		

	Competitive Environment Political and Legal Environment Economic Environment Social Environment Technological Change	**State and explain** Porter's Five Forces and key external factors (political/legal and economic), including how they create opportunities and threats. **Analyse** how changes in these forces and environments affect business operations and functional areas (e.g. costs, demand, pricing, competitiveness). **Evaluate** how a business can respond to or influence these pressures (e.g. reducing rivalry, adapting to government policy, reacting to economic changes). **Calculate, interpret and assess** the impact of economic changes—especially **exchange rate movements**—on import costs, export prices and overall business performance.
3.3.3 Strategy		
Spring Year 13	Strategy and Planning Influences on Strategy Selecting a Strategy Implementation of Strategic Decisions Strategic Investment Decisions Business Growth Global Strategy Digital Strategy	**State and explain** key strategic tools and concepts (mission/vision, SWOT, stakeholder mapping, Ansoff Matrix, positioning, investment appraisal). **Analyse** how data (quantitative and qualitative) and stakeholders influence strategic decisions and business performance across functions. **Evaluate** strategic options and decisions (e.g. growth strategies, positioning, investment projects) by weighing risks, benefits and long-term competitiveness. **Calculate, interpret and assess** investment appraisal results (payback, ARR, NPV) to support decision-making and judge financial viability.
3.3.4 Change		
	Change Risk and Uncertainty	**State and explain** reasons for change (internal and external), types of risk, and key models (e.g. Lewin's Force Field, Kotter & Schlesinger). **Analyse** the impact of change and risk on stakeholders and business performance, including why resistance occurs and how forces drive or restrict change.

		Evaluate different strategies for managing change, risk and uncertainty (e.g. contingency planning, diversification, agile structures), weighing advantages and disadvantages. **Assess and justify** appropriate responses to risk and uncertainty by applying methods such as scenario planning and risk management strategies to business contexts.

Homework is set on a regular basis and will take a variety of forms, including research tasks, case study analyses, examination-style questions drawn from past papers, and structured revision activities.

Assessment

The AQA A Level Business (from June 2027) is assessed through **three equally weighted exams**, each worth **33.3% of the course (90 marks, 2 hours each)**.

Each paper is based on **two case studies**, with **five compulsory questions per case (45 marks each)**.

- **Paper 1** focuses on **Unit 3.1**
- **Paper 2** focuses on **Unit 3.2**, with links to Unit 3.1
- **Paper 3** focuses on **Unit 3.3**, with synoptic links across all units

Overall, assessment is **fully linear, case-study based**, and increasingly **synoptic**, especially in Paper 3, requiring students to apply knowledge across all areas of the course

Links to Personal Development

A Level Business supports personal development by building important **life skills as well as academic knowledge**. It helps students develop **critical thinking, problem-solving and decision-making skills**, which are useful both in education and everyday life.

It also improves **communication, teamwork and leadership skills**, helping students work effectively with others and understand different perspectives.

Overall, the subject encourages students to become more **independent, analytical and confident**, enabling them to make informed financial, career and personal decisions in the future.

How is my knowledge further developed in Year X? (next academic year)
Not applicable

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& SIXTH FORM