

Business Studies

Exam Offered: AQA AS/A2 Business Studies (2130)

Teachers for 6th Form

Mr P. McGrory: Head of Business Studies

Specialist Areas of Interest: Human Resources, External Influences, Organisational Culture and Managing Change.

Pat_McGrory@fc.tchs.uk.net

Mr D. Baker: Teacher of Business Studies

Specialist areas of interest: Accounting and Finance, Marketing, The Competitive Environment, and Business Strategy.

Daniel_Baker@fc.tchs.uk.net

Department Learning and Teaching Policy and Practice

Business Studies can be defined as the study of how businesses/ institutions organise and prioritise what is necessary to meet their objectives. This includes organising resources, producing, selling, and managing people and finances.

It is the vision of this department that pupils of Trinity will be familiar with how different types of businesses / institutions use appropriate strategies to achieve their own visions and corporate / institutional objectives.

At Key Stage 5 the specification has been designed to:

- enable candidates to focus on the dynamic nature of the contemporary business world
- provide opportunities for research into topical business issues
- offer opportunities for the development and application of a full range of academic skills

At AS Level, we will introduce students to the challenges and issues of starting a business, including financial planning. The specification focuses on how established businesses might improve their effectiveness by making tactical decisions at a functional level.

At A2, the specification considers strategies for larger businesses and how managers might measure the performance of the business. Finally, it considers the effects that external factors can have on businesses and how a business can plan for and manage change, including leadership style and change in business culture.

- **The Professional Learner**

To reach professional level in Business Studies students will always be engaged, have a prolonged role in leading dialogue, and take risks confidently in their learning. They will peruse areas of interest energetically and these areas will often be brought in to illustrate their learning. All class work and home study will be of the highest possible standard. At this level students can see through complexity to the heart of a matter in all units. They are able to distinguish the important from the trivial in a serious discussion and open up the discussion even further. A professional business student's overall academic skills are first rate. This includes the ability to read with comprehension from written work prepared in class, intelligent use of resources (including those not provided by Mr. Baker or Mr. McGrory), logical and mathematical skills, efficient study habits, and the ability to communicate clearly and fluently in speaking and writing. The student will have a genuine desire to learn about the business world, and the willingness to understand industry on a higher level. To work at this level the student will have a high level of awareness of what's going on in the real business world, and the habit of intelligently relating it to their course in class. Overall, the professional student has a critical mind in business and is willing to dispassionately and rationally analyse business ideas, weighing them objectively against established knowledge and the facts at hand. To maintain a professional level of excellence in business, you must continue to look for meaning in your learning and continue to examine evidence on a strong critical level to support any task.

Master Learner Learning Journey (Business Studies)

Trainee: As a trainee in Business Studies, the student is currently lacking in commitment and general drive within all elements of the subject. His/Her level of knowledge varies significantly across the major unit areas. The student could be an able practitioner of business but he/she is distracted easily and needs a great deal of encouragement to complete a task. They are sometimes able to produce work of a good standard when focused, but in general their work lacks independence and is often of a poor standard. He /She converses with fellow students and teachers in a rudimentary way and needs to plan more and read further around the subject if they are to do well. In general their work is underdeveloped and judgment both written and oral is based on little evidence. His/Her ideas are communicated in a simplistic way, with limited use of technical terms and there are noticeable errors in accepted business theory in their work. The student is unlikely to be successful in their study without a massive improvement to study participation, attitude, and how they apply themselves.

Apprentice: A student working towards apprentice level needs to be able to demonstrate that they can work well under the direction of their teacher and with some degree of independence. Good work will sometimes be produced, although knowledge and understanding will vary significantly. The student could be assessed as attaining apprentice level in Business Studies, but these issues would need to be focused upon. To reach this level, the student needs to develop their knowledge on key business issues requiring additional reading and stronger analysis and evaluation in their work. The student must develop a more proactive approach to additional learning outside of the classroom and seeking resourceful solutions to business problems and issues. A student working towards this level needs to develop their simplistic and underdeveloped work, by addressing key concepts and improving the role of appropriate revision strategies in their study. They must become increasingly familiar with the accepted key terms of business, and show further commitment to achieving their target grade.

Semi-Skilled: To become a semi-skilled student you will be working exceptionally hard to improve your basic skills and will be developing noticeably in many aspects of business theory. You will be applying knowledge and understanding to problems and issues well and you will understand that you need to read around the subject further. You may be restricting your learning to the defined syllabus somewhat, but it is clear that you have a basic knowledge of the wider business world. The student needs to work on their ability to analyse and evaluate their work further to reach this semi-skilled level. The student will know that if he/she wishes to progress in the subject then he/she needs to think about the appropriateness of fact and opinion more clearly. A student working at this level will find it hard to look for relationships and connections between ideas, but does want to improve, and is actively looking for ways to do so. Sometimes it will be difficult to be involved in deeper dialogue, discussion, and debate, but in general you will have a good knowledge of the concepts, processes, and ideas of the curriculum.

Skilled: To become a skilled student you will be confident in many areas of the course and will work with a higher degree of independence in addition to working well under teacher direction. A skilled student will recognise the differing demands of questions and work to a consistent level where analysis and evaluation is always of a high standard. A skilled student will be a strong communicator and regularly involve their selves in class discussion and in turn collaborate well with others. They will use their time effectively and all class work and home study will be of the highest possible standard. At this level students can see through complexity to the heart of a matter in all units and continue to read around the subject by reading the newspapers and watching the business news. They will take responsibility for developing their knowledge outside of class through their own reading and investigation.

Professional: To reach professional level in Business Studies students will always be engaged, have a prolonged role in leading dialogue, and take risks confidently in their learning. They will peruse areas of interest energetically and these areas will often be brought in to illustrate their learning. All class work and home study will be of the highest possible standard. At this level students can see through complexity to the heart of a matter in all units. They are able to distinguish the important from the trivial in a serious discussion and open up the discussion even further. A professional business student's overall academic skills are first rate. This includes the ability to read with comprehension from written work prepared in class, intelligent use of resources (including those not provided by Mr. Baker or Mr. McGrory), logical and mathematical skills, efficient study habits, and the ability to communicate clearly and fluently in speaking and writing. The student will have a genuine desire to learn about the business world, and the willingness to understand industry on a higher level. To work at this level the student will have a high level of awareness of what's going on in the real business world, and the habit of intelligently relating it to their course in class. Overall, the professional student has a critical mind in business and is willing to dispassionately and rationally analyse business ideas, weighing them objectively against established knowledge and the facts at hand. To maintain a professional level of excellence in business, you must continue to look for meaning in your learning and continue to examine evidence on a strong critical level to support any task.

- **Assessment Policy and Practice:**

You will be assessed on a day-to-day basis, periodically and transitionally

Day-to-Day:

Summative assessment is carried out at the end of a unit of work and throughout a unit to make judgements about a pupil's performance in relation to national standards. Summative assessments are based on national examination board criteria. All summative assessments are recorded as per the schools policy.

Students are assessed formatively through direct questioning based on learning objectives to ensure that students understand the assessment criteria. Effective, positive feedback is given to pupils, both oral and written. Pupils have the opportunity to make use of self-assessment. Pupils must feel comfortable asking the teacher for help and as such regular student-teacher meetings are held.

The Business Studies department consider self and peer assessment techniques as a vital part of our strategy in achieving exam success for our students. Such techniques will be used on regular occasion at AS and A2.

Homework will be set on a weekly basis and will consist of standardised tasks; research work for set tasks in class based on a particular Business or Industry; learning homeworks for set tests and exams. Pupils will be awarded an attainment grade/effort mark according to the school's homework policy. They will receive feedback by the member of staff on homework tasks online or written.

Regular group work is a corner stone of the business department. Students at this level are given the opportunity to assess each others work. They are given a real business scenario and strategic problems surrounding a case study i.e. constructing an appropriate marketing plan. The students work in small groups to solve the problems and create presentations using PowerPoint. The students then present their findings to each other. This allows students to gain different perspectives and see various solutions to problems posed.

Periodic:

Students will receive regular written exam papers. Students are well briefed as to the style and content of each unit and are then asked to write exam questions and papers. Students are then given examples of past papers and are asked to assess each others papers. This exercise allows students to familiarise themselves with the format of their exams. It also allows students to make concrete links between the case study and the issues it raises and the possible themes they will be questioned on.

Transitional:

You will sit 2 exams in year 12 (Unit 1 and 2) and 2 in year 13 (Unit 3 and 4). These will be:

Unit 1: Planning and Financing a Business

Written Paper: 1 hour 15 minutes
40% of total AS marks
20% of total A Level marks
60 marks

Short answer questions and extended responses based on a mini case study.

Unit 2: Managing a Business

Written Paper: 1 hour 30 minutes
60% of total AS marks
30% of the total A Level marks
80 marks

Compulsory, multi-part data response questions.

Unit 3: Strategies for Success

Written Paper: 1 hour 45 minutes
25% of total A Level marks
80 marks

Questions requiring extended answers drawing upon AS materials. The focus will be on measuring business performance and assessing appropriate functional strategies to achieve success. Unseen case study with a range of numerical data.

Unit 4: The Business Environment and Managing Change

Written Paper: 1 hour 45 minutes
25% of total A Level marks
80 marks

A two part paper – Section A will contain questions based upon prior research
Section B will be a choice of essay titles from which the candidate will select one.
This will be a synoptic paper and draw on all the specification.

Course Outline:

- **Year 12**

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting a Business – the challenges and issues of starting a business; enterprise; entrepreneurs • Financial Planning – essential financial concepts needed to start a business including: calculating costs, revenues, profits; using break-even analysis and cash-flow forecasting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance – budgets, improving cash flow and profits • People in Business – organizational structures, recruitment, training, motivation • Operations Management - operational decisions, quality, customer service, suppliers, technology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing and Competition – designing and using an effective marketing mix, market conditions and competitiveness • Exam success strategies
<p>Suggested reading/resources</p> <p>AQA Business Studies for AS: Ian Marcouse, Malcon Surridge and Andrew Gillespie</p>		
<p>Key pieces of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision Questions • Data Response Questions • Case Studies • Interactive assessments • Presentations • Unit Reviews • Text Notation • Board Room Debates • Critical Thinking based on Industrial News and Economy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock Exam: Supporting Notes and Examiner Commentary • Mock Exam: Theory Papers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past Papers • Drivers for Exam Success.

- **Year 13**

Autumn Term	Spring Term	Summer Term
<p>Functional Objective and Strategies – examining their appropriateness in the context of corporate objectives</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial Strategies and Accounts – making investment information, measuring performance, financial decisions • Marketing Strategies – analysing markets and selecting successful marketing strategies, developing marketing plans • Operations Strategies – operational issues, location, innovation, improving operational efficiency • Human Resource Strategies – workforce planning, adapting organisational structures, successful employee relations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporates Aims and Objectives – purpose and nature of corporate strategies, stakeholder perspectives • Assessing Changes in the Business Environment – the effects of changes in the economic, political, social, ethical and technological environment and responses of organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing Change – planning for change, leadership and corporate culture, making strategic decisions, decision making • Exam success strategies
<p>Suggested reading/resources AQA Business Studies for A2: Ian Marcouse, Malcon Surridge and Andrew Gillespie</p>		
<p>Major pieces of work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revision Questions • Data Response Questions • Past Papers • Case Studies • Interactive assessments • Presentations • Unit Reviews • Text Notation • Board Room Debates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mock Exam: Supporting Notes and Examiner Commentary • Mock Exam: Theory Papers • Tackling the pre-issued research task. Effective Research tasks. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Past Papers • Drivers for Exam Success.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critical Thinking based on Industrial News and Economy 		
--	--	--

Wider Learning Opportunities

Extra-Curricular

Students are invited each year to attend an intensive revision conference in central London presented by Ian Marcouse. The day is intended to be accessible and encouraging, but also to foster student's appreciation of the general demands of AS level and A2. The focus is often on the requirements of the new exams, and provides helpful advice on revision. Guest Speakers and industry professionals also give greater insight into real business.

Gifted and Talented

In line with school and departmental policy, gifted and talented students will be identified by using assessment data such as: regular achievement of high grades, target grades, target setting data and the subject specific identification checklist for Business Studies. Teaching staff will also use their own professional judgement in recognising gifted and talented students. Gifted and talented students will be presented with challenging work throughout their G.C.E course.

Study Support

In the department we have a number of specialist materials. This includes a Dynamic Learning Network resource that includes vast amounts of multi-media video, exam style questions and mock exam model answers and essay structures. Many of these are automated and are broken down by the examiner through the use of audio and visual techniques. This is a fantastic tool for the students as it allows for students to self assess and peer assess as dictated by a real examiner.

Darius Sessions

The department is committed to improving the learning opportunities for students and as such we will offer extra after school sessions to cover key topics of difficulty as and when required.

Wider Reading and Study:

Books:

Lines D, Martin B, Marcouse I Complete A-Z Business Studies Handbook (5th rev Ed) Hodder Arnold (9780340915165)

Crainer S Key Management Ideas: Thinkers that Changed the Management World (3rd Ed) Financial Times / Prentice Hall (9780273638087)

Kotler P, Armstrong G Principles of Marketing (12th Ed) Prentice Hall (9780132390026)

Micklethwait J, Wooldridge A The Witch Doctors: What Management Gurus Are Saying, Why It Matters and How to Make Sense of It. Mandarin (9780749326456)

Websites:

www.aqa.org.uk

www.economist.com

www.tutor2u.com

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

www.nelsonthornes.com/aqagce/business_studies.htm

<http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/>

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/>

<http://www.thebfa.org/casestudies.asp>

www.bitc.org.uk

<http://www.bized.co.uk/>

<http://www.csr.gov.uk/>

<http://www.cipd.co.uk/subjects/>

<http://www.learnmarketing.net/>

Journals:

Master Class: Masterclass is a magazine produced by Ernst and Young and has some useful material for A2. Masterclass gets inside the heads of exceptional business leaders; it explores their unconventional approaches to business and provides insight into how they have made their businesses grow.

To access the archive and sign up for a subscription

<http://www.ey.com/>

Newspapers:

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business>

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

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/money>

Radio:

www.bbc.co.uk/radio/podcasts/worldbiz/

www.bbc.co.uk/fivelive/programmes/weekendbusiness.shtml