**Edexcel A Level Business Handbook**



**Table of Contents**

1. Overview of the Specification

2. Grade Boundaries

3. Formula List

4. Assessment Objectives

5. Useful Websites

6. Useful Podcasts

7. Useful Books

8. Recommended Films

9. Tips for Success at A Level Business

10. Expectations for Home Learning and Independent Learning

11. Independent Work and Expectations

12. Assessment Map

13. Subject folders

**1. Overview of the Specification**

Edexcel A Level Business is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of business concepts and practices. The specification is divided into four themes:

***Theme 1: Marketing and People***

- Meeting Customer Needs : Understanding customer requirements, market research, segmentation, and targeting.

- The Market : Market structures, competition, and demand and supply.

- Marketing Mix and Strategy : The 4 Ps (Product, Price, Place, Promotion) and marketing strategies.

- Managing People : Recruitment, selection, training, and motivation.

- Entrepreneurs and Leaders : Roles of entrepreneurs, leadership styles, and business planning.

***Theme 2: Managing Business Activities***

- Raising Finance : Sources of finance, financial institutions, and raising capital.

- Financial Planning : Budgeting, forecasting, and break-even analysis.

- Managing Finance : Financial statements, profitability, and liquidity.

- Resource Management : Operational efficiency, quality management, and inventory control.

- External Influences : Economic, legal, ethical, and environmental influences on business.

***Theme 3: Business Decisions and Strategy***

- Business Objectives and Strategy : Corporate objectives, strategic direction, and SWOT analysis.

- Business Growth : Methods of growth, economies of scale, and mergers and acquisitions.

- Decision-making Techniques : Decision trees, critical path analysis, and investment appraisal.

- Influences on Business Decisions : Internal and external factors, stakeholder impact, and corporate culture.

- Assessing Competitiveness : Financial ratios, competitive advantage, and market position.

- Managing Change : Change management, organizational culture, and leadership in change.

***Theme 4: Global Business***

- Globalisation : The impact of globalization on businesses and economies.

- Global Markets and Business Expansion : International trade, market entry strategies, and expansion.

- Global Marketing : Global marketing strategies, branding, and cultural considerations.

- Global Industries and Companies (Multinational Corporations) : Operations, strategies, and impacts of MNCs.

**2. Grade Boundaries**

Grade boundaries for A Level Business can vary each year based on the difficulty of the exam and overall student performance. Average boundaries are as follows:

- A\*: 80-90%

- A: 70-80%

- B: 60-70%

- C: 50-60%

- D: 40-50%

- E: 30-40%

**3. Formula List**

Here is a comprehensive list of formulas for all themes in Edexcel A Level Business:

***Theme 1: Marketing and People***

- Market Share (%) = (Sales of the business / Total market sales) x 100

- Market Growth (%) = ((New Market Size - Old Market Size) / Old Market Size) x 100

- Price Elasticity of Demand (PED) = % Change in Quantity Demanded / % Change in Price

- Income Elasticity of Demand (YED) = % Change in Quantity Demanded / % Change in Income

- Sales Revenue = Price x Quantity Sold

***Theme 2: Managing Business Activities***

- Total Costs = Fixed Costs + Variable Costs

- Profit = Total Revenue - Total Costs

- Break-even Point (units) = Fixed Costs / (Selling Price per Unit - Variable Cost per Unit)

- Margin of Safety (units) = Actual Output - Break-even Output

- Gross Profit = Sales Revenue - Cost of Sales

- Gross Profit Margin (%) = (Gross Profit / Sales Revenue) x 100

- Operating Profit = Gross Profit - Operating Expenses

- Operating Profit Margin (%) = (Operating Profit / Sales Revenue) x 100

- Net Profit = Operating Profit - Interest - Taxes

- Net Profit Margin (%) = (Net Profit / Sales Revenue) x 100

- Return on Capital Employed (ROCE) (%) = (Operating Profit / Capital Employed) x 100

- Current Ratio = Current Assets / Current Liabilities

- Acid-Test Ratio = (Current Assets - Inventory) / Current Liabilities

***Theme 3: Business Decisions and Strategy***

- Capacity Utilisation (%) = (Actual Output / Maximum Possible Output) x 100

- Labour Productivity = Output per Period / Number of Employees per Period

- Employee Retention Rate (%) = (Number of Employees at End of Period - Number of Leavers) / Number of Employees at End of Period x 100

- Labour Turnover Rate (%) = (Number of Leavers / Average Number of Employees) x 100

- Inventory Turnover = Cost of Goods Sold / Average Inventory

- Payback Period : Time taken to repay the initial investment (no formula, often calculated by cumulative cash flow analysis)

- Average Rate of Return (ARR) (%) = (Average Annual Profit / Initial Investment) x 100

- Net Present Value (NPV) = Σ (Net Cash Flow / (1 + Discount Rate)^n) - Initial Investment

***Theme 4: Global Business***

- Exchange Rate Impact on Imports : Cost in Foreign Currency x Exchange Rate

- Exchange Rate Impact on Exports : Revenue in Foreign Currency / Exchange Rate

**4. Assessment Objectives**

The assessment objectives for Edexcel A Level Business are:

- AO1: Knowledge and Understanding : Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of business concepts and issues.

- AO2: Application : Apply knowledge and understanding to various business contexts.

- AO3: Analysis : Analyse business information and issues to distinguish between facts and opinions.

- AO4: Evaluation : Evaluate evidence to make reasoned judgments and conclusions.

**5. Useful Websites**

Here are some useful websites for A Level Business students:

- [Tutor2u Business](https://www.tutor2u.net/business): Offers resources, revision notes, and quizzes.

- [BBC Bitesize Business](https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zpsvr82): Provides educational content and revision materials.

- [BusinessEd](https://www.businessed.co.uk/): Contains presentations, worksheets, and revision guides.

- [Seneca Learning](https://www.senecalearning.com/): Offers free revision courses for A Level Business.

- [Edexcel](https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/business-2015.html): Official website with specification, past papers, and examiner reports.

- [Investopedia](https://www.investopedia.com/): Comprehensive resource for financial and business terms and concepts.

- [The Economist](https://www.economist.com/): Current affairs and analysis relevant to business studies.

- [BBC News Business](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business): Up-to-date business news and analysis.

- [Financial Times](https://www.ft.com/): In-depth business news and articles (subscription required for some content).

- [Biz/ed](http://www.bized.co.uk/): Educational resources and case studies for business students.

- [Business Case Studies](https://businesscasestudies.co.uk/): Real-life case studies from various industries.

- Theme 1 [(1958) Theme 1 - Edexcel A level Business - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcWPAWkNIoiDtvFP_OT-j3DmdxOcrAv1C)

- Theme 2 [(1958) Theme 2 - Edexcel A level Business - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcWPAWkNIoiDBHSVNzH5YWj36TDawlRE3)

- Theme 3 [(1958) Theme 3 - Edexcel A level Business - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcWPAWkNIoiCxBfndEIOfC6C284CmyyiS)

- Theme 4 [(1958) Theme 4 - Edexcel A level Business - YouTube](https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLcWPAWkNIoiBkc4tE177DZPtjru5uVTpx)

**6. Useful Podcasts**

Here are some podcasts that can help with A Level Business studies:

- "The Bottom Line" : A BBC podcast that discusses business topics and current affairs.

- "Business Wars" : Explores the stories and strategies behind some of the biggest corporate rivalries.

- "The Edexcel Business Podcast" : Specifically tailored for Edexcel Business students, covering key topics and exam techniques.

- "How I Built This" : NPR podcast featuring interviews with entrepreneurs and innovators about how they built their businesses.

- "Freakonomics Radio" : Explores the hidden side of business, economics, and everyday life.

**7. Useful Books**

Here are some books that are recommended for A Level Business:

- "Edexcel A Level Business" by Ian Marcouse : A comprehensive textbook covering the entire specification.

- "Business Review Magazine" : Provides articles and case studies relevant to the A Level Business syllabus.

- "The Everything Store: Jeff Bezos and the Age of Amazon" by Brad Stone : Offers insights into the growth of Amazon and entrepreneurial strategy.

- "Good to Great: Why Some Companies Make the Leap...And Others Don’t" by Jim Collins : Discusses what makes companies successful over the long term.

- "Thinking, Fast and Slow" by Daniel Kahneman : Explores the psychology of decision-making, relevant to understanding consumer behavior.

- "Lean In: Women, Work, and the Will to Lead" by Sheryl Sandberg : Discusses leadership and gender in the workplace.

**8. Recommended Films**

Here are some films that can provide valuable insights and inspiration for business students:

- "The Social Network" (2010) : Chronicles the founding of Facebook and the legal battles that followed.

- "The Founder" (2016): provides insights into business strategies, franchising, and the challenges of scaling a business, making it a valuable film for business students.

- "Deepwater Horizon" (2016): The Deepwater Horizon disaster is often examined through the lens of ethical conflict, focusing on the interplay between corporate decisions, safety practices, and the catastrophic consequences that followed.

- "Dark Waters" (2019):

**Corporate Ethics**: The film highlights ethical dilemmas within DuPont regarding their knowledge of the health risks associated with PFOA and their decision to suppress this information.

**Environmental Justice**: It explores the broader implications of corporate pollution and its impact on public health and the environment.

**Legal and Moral Responsibility**: "Dark Waters" examines the ethical and legal responsibilities of corporations and regulatory bodies in protecting public health and the environment.

**9. Tips for Success at A Level Business**

* Attend all lessons. Poor attendance equals a poor grade. If you have to miss a lesson, ensure you get notes / activities and homework
* Whilst your notes are really important, at AS, you need more! You need to **listen** in class, **participate** in tasks and **discuss** topics in small groups and with your / myself, complete your **homework** and **read** **about / research** the topics by yourself to complement your learning and understanding
* You also need to be aware of what is going on in the business and financial world so... read relevant online magazines and watch business television programmes!
* Before a lesson, refresh your knowledge about what you did in the previous lesson. That way, you’ll hit the ground running and impress everyone too!

**10. Homework**

* Independent notes – these will be completed each week after you have covered the topic to help consolidate your learning. Use the resource in this handbook to help guide you with what you should be including for each topic. Lesson PPTs, textbooks, other business books or information on the recommended websites can be used.
* Exam questions – these will be completed to the best of your ability and you may be asked to re-draft them if necessary.
* Activities – general activities to build on the lessons.

All homework should be completed in full and submitted on time. The feedback that is provided on your exam questions is an essential part of the learning process at this level, so you must review your work to complete the feedback in “green pen”. Remember that we will be writing references for you and reporting to UCAS on our estimate of your academic progress - the quantity and the quality of classwork and homework, as well as your assessments and test results, is the basis of our estimate of your academic progress.

**11. Independent Work**

Research shows that the most successful students (i.e. those that make the most progress and get the highest grades) are doing between 20 and 25 hours of independent study per week by the end of Year 13. That may seem a lot, but it’s something that you would build up to over the course of your A-Levels. In Year 12, we’re talking something more like 15 hours per week. This equates to roughly **5 hours** of independent study per A-Level per subject.

Independent study is divided into three types – Consolidation, Reactive and Proactive.

**Consolidation**

The evening following a Business lesson, you should spend 12-15 minutes (24-30 minutes for a double) rereading your notes, writing the summary section at the bottom of your Cornell notes and making relevant flashcards e.g. for equations, definitions, facts you need to recall etc.

**Reactive**

This is your ’homework’. Each of your Business teachers should give you at least 1 hours’ worth of homework each week. If they don’t – ask them for some! If you find this takes more than 1 hour, that’s fine, you can take this from the proactive phase (not from the consolidation phase though). Equally, if you find you finish your reactive work quickly, spend more time on your proactive work.

**Proactive**

This is the section that will broaden and deepen your overall understanding of the subject you are studying. It will not necessarily involve work that has been set by your teacher, but instead it is about you doing the extra practice questions, reading articles, watching videos, TED talks etc. In Business, this might contain some of the following:

* Complete a set of practice past paper questions – available on 365 or on the Edexcel website **(1 hour)**
* Use websites to complete and add to class notes **(30 minutes)**
* Use the specification checklist to evaluate your understanding **(10 mins)**
* Practice exam questions from your Business textbook or knowledge book **(30 mins)**
* “Read, Cover, Write and Check” sections of Knowledge organisers **(30 mins)**
* Make notes from your Study guide (**30mins)**
* Business review articles from LRC **(20 mins)**
* Watch a TED talk on a Business topic **(20 mins)**
* Watch some videos and complete some quizzes on Seneca **(30 mins)**

**12. Assessment Map**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Half Term 1** | **Half Term 2** | **Half Term 3** | **Half Term 4** | **Half Term 5** | **Half Term 6** |
| **Year 12** | 1.1 meeting customer needs | 1.2 the market  **end of unit assessment to include knowledge from HT1**  1.3 Branding and promotion | 1.4 - Managing People  **end of unit assessment including 1.3 knowledge** | **End of Theme 1 Assessment (Full AS Paper) /80**  **All knowledge, from Theme 1**  2.1 Raising Finance | 2.2 Forecasting and breakeven  2.3 Profit and liquidity  **assessment including 2.1 knowledge** | 2.4 Business Operations  **End of Theme 2 (Full AS Paper 2) /80** |
| **Shadow Curriculum** | n/a | 1.1 & 1.2 | 1.3 | **1.4** | 1.5 & 2.1 | 2.2 & 2.3 |
| **Year 13** | 3.1 business strategy | 3.2 growth,  3.3 financial decision making  3.4 Influences on business decisions  **assessment to include knowledge from HT1** | 3.5 Assessing competitiveness  3.6 Managing Change  and mock revision  **A Level Paper 2 (Full paper/100)** | 4.1 Globalisation  4.1 &4.2, Global markets  **assessment to include knowledge from HT3** | 4.3, Global marketing  4.4 MNC’s  Paper 3 pre release and all theme revision in context | Paper 3 pre release and all theme revision in context |
| **Shadow Curriculum** | 2.4 & 2.5 | 3.1 | 3.2 & 3.3 | 3.4 – 3.6 | 4.1 & 4.2 | 4.3 & 4.4 |

**13. Subject Folders**

There is an expectation that 6th Form students will have a subject folder for each Theme that they study. The organisation of the folder will be checked by subject staff and support will be given to ensure students can use it to maximise their learning experience. Polly pockets and dividers will be provided, but students will need to buy 4 lever arch files over the 2 years.

1. Specification
2. Current Work
3. Knowledge Organisers
4. Knowledge Checks
5. Practice Exam Questions/Green Pen
6. Knowledge Book
7. Calculation Book
8. Study Guide
9. Worksheets
10. Mind Maps
11. Flashcards
12. Previous Assessments
13. ILB 5 hours sheet
14. ILB

All recourses will be provided.