

Curriculum Intent

Curriculum Vision : Business Studies

The world of business is one of constant challenge and change.

Students of A Level Business are perhaps more likely than most to have a vocational interest in the subject. It is therefore fundamental that the curriculum provides every student with the ability to able to explore the business world through the perspective of their potential future in it. We use a rich range of local, national and international examples to contextualise our curriculum and provide students with considerable flexibility so that they can explore a myriad of potential personal interests as part of a structured and enriched journey through the taught curriculum.

In addition to content knowledge gained through study of Business we equip our students with skills which enhance their employability, to take advantage of business opportunities when they arise and to identify, understand and solve business problems using their disciplinary knowledge.

The following core features underpin our approach in the Business & Economics Department.

- **A challenging and relevant** curriculum
- The **active promotion of agency**
- The **creative use of assessment** to squeeze the process of learning for cognitive and measurable development
- **Expert and relentlessly positive teaching**, which is sufficiently strident to inspire, question and motivate

Although A Level Business is only assessed in written examinations, learning in the subject requires students to think, listen, read, speak and write as a businessperson, albeit one in development. Our curriculum covers the requirements of the AQA (7132) specification, which we have selected as it enables us to provide a rich contextual understanding of Business at A Level, with the AS providing a clear understanding of the fundamentals and functional areas of a business, which is then extended at A2 into strategic considerations – this supports the revisiting of curricular content at regular and controllable intervals. The structure of the specification and its assessment are also better to suited to shared teaching and co-responsibility, than current alternative specifications. We extend this further in ways which are distinctive to provide a high level of challenge and rich individual and shared experiences for our students, which prepare them for further study or employment in business-related areas or to navigate their future lives with critical and informed viewpoints.

The study of Business involves range of skills which we organise as Strategic, Social and Speculative thinking. The curriculum is geared towards the development of these core skills, as well as by the assessment objectives of the specification.

Strategic thinking	Independent Interested Knowledgeable Expert Reflective Literate	Precise Analytical Evaluative Reasoning Commentator Critical
Social thinking	Interdependent Intuitive Empathetic Collaborative Vocal	Responsive Active Self-aware Articulate Confident
Speculative thinking	Inventive Curious Risk-taking Experimental	Inquisitive Observant Questioning Creative

For example, in order to work efficiently in the exam, students need to be able think quickly and fluently – to be able to recall and use knowledge quickly and accurately (strategic), to understand and interpret a question (speculative), to interact with the content using analysis and evaluation skills (strategic) and to be able to construct a response (speculative and strategic) to be interpreted and understood by an audience (social) with full control of their style (strategic).

Curriculum Intent

Curriculum Vision 2

Authentic learning

Key to successful engagement and achievement are authentic learning experiences. Business is both a real world and an academic subject and the cross over between the two is perhaps the most important feature of any business curriculum. Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to provide students to encounter learning situations from three directions of theories and models, the real world and from the examination.

We present students with a wide variety of sources to deepen their understanding but also to demonstrate the relevance and imperative for their learning. For example, we make great use of current journalistic sources and a wide range of visual sources – documentaries, clips and other material to enable students to learn to watch and consume business media with a critical understanding directly derived from their learning.

Guided reading is a focus in Year 12, where we set weekly reading tasks over terms 1-3, which progressively enable students to engage with academic and other sources. Starting with class-based reading and modelling these tasks will increasingly be expected to be completed by student in their supervised private study periods or in their own time. Through this we engage them with the voices of authority in the subject and as this process is actively mediated it involves all three S's, but particularly the development of social and speculative thinking.

The importance of agency Agency is the capacity to speculate, to make positive choices and to take risks with learning and to make active choices to seize opportunities and for students to have faith in their ability to handle a wide range of tasks and situations. The endpoint of any piece of analysis in economics is a critically-informed judgement. The capacity to arrive at this destination in a challenging subject is hard-won. A sense of agency is vital in Business so that students see the subject an opportunity to explore their potential future whilst developing their reach and resilience, to cope with the challenges of a new subject (for most) and to see and appreciate the value and return to and from their hard work.

We actively promote agency in our curriculum because it is relevant and up-to-date, problem-based and supported by resources which our students can readily appreciate have been created specifically to stretch, challenge and motivate them.

Academic Language and Literacy

As a social science, Business is awash with terminology. Our curriculum is language rich – there are hundreds words with specific meanings and purposes in the A Level curriculum. Formal English increasingly looks and sounds like a second language for most students, even those in a selective school environment, so the role of language in knowledge acquisition and transfer is fundamental. Precision in the use of language, conceptual and mechanical understanding and in enabling students to develop these skills for themselves is a prominent feature of our curriculum and in classroom practice. This should be evident on a word, concept, sentence, argument and text level throughout the course.

Business



EXAM
FINAL EXAM

Exam preparation

Economic policy

Managing change

Implementing strategies

PPE 3

Strategic direction

PPE 2

Year 13

Students will build on their understanding of how a business works, by analysing large and multinational business, from an internal perspective relating to their systems and from the external perspective considering their environment. By the end of this part of the course, students should be able to choose any PLC and complete a detailed report on its position and prospects.

We move on to analysing business strategy, using theories and models from around the field of corporate strategy. Finally we look at organisational culture and change management

YEAR 13

International business

Strategic position - internal

Strategic position - external

PPE 1a

Human resources

PPE 1

Finance

Operations

Marketing

Leadership and management

What is business?

YEAR 12

Year 12

We begin with the foundations of business, why they exist, what forms they can take and the key decisions entrepreneurs must take when starting a business. We then look at how to manage and lead an organisation – different styles and their potential effect and impact, including those of notable leaders, past and present.

Students will then develop critical understanding of the management of marketing, operations, finance and human resources and how each of these functions works.

