

What are the aims and intentions of this curriculum?

The following document offers a guide for the A-level Business course, covering all the sections and sub-sections in a logical order, including opportunities to develop the necessary set of skills required for interacting with the business world. Guidance is given about any prior knowledge which is helpful or required. The order is by no means prescriptive and there are many alternative ways in which the content could be organised. Time has been built in for assessment activities and revision but all timings are approximate.

Term	Topics	Knowledge and key terms	Skills developed	Assessment
Autumn 1	<p>Mission, corporate objectives and strategy</p> <p>Analysing the existing internal position of a business to assess strengths and weaknesses: financial ratio analysis</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn about influences on the mission of a business. To learn about internal and external influences on corporate objectives and decisions. To understand the distinction between strategy and tactics. To learn about the links between mission, corporate objectives and strategy. To learn about the impact of strategic decision making on functional decision making. To understand the value of SWOT analysis. To learn about how to assess the financial performance of a business using balance sheets, income statements and financial ratios. To understand the value of financial ratios when assessing performance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-class discussion of known organisations & compile list of organisation Complete case study on Sainsbury. Take it further research activity on development of well-known business Group discussion on purposes of businesses, mission and objectives Activity – Morrison’s strategy, aims, objectives and growth Practice essay writing Business Review magazine – Volume 17 – Number 3 ‘Manchester United’s gearing crisis’ 	<p>Formative</p> <p>Weekly research Worksheets Homework Peer assessment Student presentations Self-marking exercises</p> <p>Summative</p> <p>Daily exam style questions and essays. End of term test.</p>
Autumn 2	<p>Analysing the existing internal position of a business to assess strengths and weaknesses: overall performance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To learn about how to analyse data other than financial statements to assess the strengths and weaknesses of a business. To understand the importance of core competences. To learn about assessing short and long-term performance. The value of different measures of assessing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Whole-class discussion of data other than financial statements should include operations, human resource and marketing data. Data will be analysed over time or in comparison with other businesses. Methods of assessing overall business performance to include: 	<p>Formative</p> <p>Weekly research Worksheets Homework Peer assessment Student presentations Self-marking exercises</p>

Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: political and legal change

Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: economic change

business performance.

- To learn about the impact of changes in the political and legal environment on strategic and functional decision making.
- To learn about the impact of changes in the UK and the global economic environment on strategic and functional decision making.
- To understand reasons for greater globalisation of business.
- To learn about the importance of globalisation for business.
- To learn about the importance of emerging economies for business.

- Kaplan and Norton's Balanced Scorecard model
- Elkington's Triple Bottom line (Profit, People, Planet).
- Introductory discussion and group activity on PESTLE factors
- The political and legal environment should include a broad understanding of the scope and effects of UK and EU law related to competition, the labour market and environmental legislation.
- The impact of UK and EU Government policy related to enterprise, the role of regulators, infrastructure, the environment and international trade.
- Economic factors to include:
 - GDP
 - Taxation
 - Exchange rates
 - Inflation
 - Fiscal and monetary policy
 - More open trade vs protectionism.

You should be able to understand economic data, interpret changes in economic data for the UK, the European Union and globally, and consider the implications of such changes for business.

Summative
Daily exam style questions
Post 16 trial exam.

Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: social and technological

- To learn about the impact of the social and technological environment on strategic and functional decision making.
- To learn about the pressures for socially responsible behaviour.

- Social changes to include demographic changes and population movements such as:
- Urbanisation and migration
- Changes in consumer lifestyle and buying behaviour
- The growth of online businesses. The social environment to include Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and:
- The reasons for and against CSR
- The difference between the stakeholder v shareholder concept
- Carroll's Corporate Social Responsibility pyramid.
- Technological change should include
- The impact of technological change on functional areas and strategy

Formative
 Weekly research
 Worksheets
 Homework
 Peer assessment
 Student presentations
 Self-marking exercises

Summative
 Daily exam style questions and essays.
 End of term test.

Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: the competitive environment

- To learn about Porter's five forces, how and why these might change, and the implications of these forces for strategic and functional decision making and profits.

- An understanding of the five forces to include: • entry threat (barriers to entry) • buyer power • supplier power • rivalry • substitute threat.
- You should consider how the five forces shape competitive strategy.
- Investment appraisal to include the calculation and interpretation of payback, average rate of return and net present value.

Analysing strategic options: investment appraisal

- To understand financial methods of assessing an investment.
- To learn about the factors influencing investment decisions.
- To learn about the value of sensitivity analysis.
- To understand factors influencing which markets to compete in and which products to offer.
- To understand the reasons for choosing and value of different options for strategic direction.
- To learn about how to compete in terms of benefits and price.
- To learn about influences on the choice of a positioning strategy.

Strategic direction to include the Ansoff's Matrix and value of: • market penetration • market development • new product development • diversification.

- Strategic positioning to include:
- Porter's low cost, differentiation and focus strategies • Bowman's strategic clock.

Strategic direction: choosing which markets to compete in and what products to offer

Strategic positioning: choosing how to compete

Spring 2

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about the value of different strategic positioning strategies. • To understand the benefits of having a competitive advantage. • To understand the difficulties of maintaining a competitive advantage. 		
Assessing a change in scale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To understand the reasons why businesses grow or retrench. • To understand the difference between organic and external growth. • To learn about how to manage and overcome the problems of growth or retrenchment. • To learn about the impact of growth or retrenchment on the functional areas of the business. • To assess methods and types of growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of growth to include organic and external. • Issues with growth should include: • Economies of scale (including technical, purchasing and managerial) • Economies of scope • diseconomies of scale • the experience curve • synergy • Overtrading. Issues with managing growth should include Greiner’s model of growth. • Methods of growth to include mergers, takeovers, ventures, franchising. Types of growth to include vertical (backward and forward), horizontal and conglomerate integration. 	<p>Formative Weekly research Worksheets Homework Peer assessment Student presentations Self-marking exercises</p> <p>Summative Daily exam style questions Post 16 trial exam.</p>
Assessing innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about the pressures of innovation. • To understand the value of innovation. • To learn about ways of becoming an innovative organisation. • To learn about how to protect innovation and intellectual property. • To learn about the impact of an innovation strategy on the functional areas of the business. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Types of innovation should include product and process innovation. • Ways of becoming innovative include: • kaizen • research and development • intrapreneurship • benchmarking. • Ways of protecting intellectual property include patents and copyrights. 	
Assessing internationalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To learn about reasons for targeting, operating in and trading with international markets. • To understand factors influencing the attractiveness of international markets. • To learn about reasons for producing more and sourcing more resources abroad. • To learn about ways of entering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Methods of entering international markets include: • export • licensing • alliances • direct investment. Decisions regarding producing overseas include off-shoring and re-shoring. • Targeting overseas markets may include being a multinational. Managing international business includes Bartlett and Ghoshal’s international, multi-domestic, 	

