AS and A Level

Business

course planner

AS and A level thematic approach

AS and A level Business 2015: course planner

Introduction

This document provides a sample course planner for co-teaching AS and A level Business that can be adapted by centres to fit their timetabling and staffing arrangements. It is meant as an example approach only and it not intended to be prescriptive.

In this course planner the approach is thematic and broadly follows the order in which the content is set out in the specification.
A separate course planner is provided that integrates the themes across the specification and is a suggested approach for those intending not to co-teach the AS level qualification.

In Theme 3 and Theme 4, connections should be made to the content in Theme 1 and Theme 2 to ensure students build on and develop their knowledge and understanding of core concepts and theories from Theme 1 and Theme 2. This approach supports continuous progression.

For the purposes of this course planner, it has been assumed that the centre is teaching Theme 1 at the start of the course, then Theme 2 followed by Theme 3 and then Theme 4. The planner assumes 28 teaching weeks in each year to allow for time taken by other events. There is a separate scheme of work document that provides a range of examples for suggested activities and resources which follows the approach of this course planner.

Theme 1: Year 12 Spring Term

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| Week | Topic | Content |
| 1 | 1.1 Meeting customer needs | Introduction – what is a market?**1.1.1 The market**Mass markets and niche marketsDynamic markets |
| 2 | **1.1.2 Market research**Product and market orientationMethods of market researchUses and limitations of these methodsMarket segmentation from market research results**1.1.3 Market positioning**How businesses use market research information |
| 3 | 1.2 The market | **1.2.1 Demand**Introduction to the demand curveDiscuss movement along and of the demand curve, and factors influencing this |
| 4 | **1.2.2 Supply**Introduction to the supply curveDiscuss movement along and of the supply curve, and factors influencing this**1.2.3 Markets**Combine work in demand and supply to illustrate price determination in a market |
| 5 | **1.2.4 Price elasticity of demand (PED)**Calculation of PEDInterpretation of PED and its importance to businesses**1.2.5 Income elasticity of demand (YED)**Calculation of YEDComparison contrast to PEDInterpretation of YED and its importance to businesses |
| 6 | 1.3 Marketing mix and strategy | **1.3.1 Product/service design**Design mix and how this might change**1.3.2 Branding and promotion**Types of brandingBuilding a brand and changes in brandingGeneric versus branded products |
| 7 | **1.3.2 Branding and promotion** Types of promotion |
| 8 | **1.3.3 Pricing strategies**Different strategiesChanges in, and factors determining, these strategies |
| 9 | **1.3.4 Distribution**MethodsChanges in channels used**1.3.5 Marketing strategy**The product life cycle and extension strategiesBoston MatrixConsumer behaviourHow the marketing mix changes in response |
| 10 | 1.4 Managing people | **1.4.1 Approaches to staffing**Individual and collective methods and approaches**1.4.2 Recruitment, selection and training**MethodsCosts and benefits |
| 11 | **1.4.3 Organisation design**Key features and terminologyStrengths and weaknesses of different models |
| 12 | **1.4.4 Motivation in theory and practice**Importance of motivationMotivation theoriesFinancial and non-financial incentives**1.4.5 Leadership**Management and leadershipTypes/methodsLinks between leadership and motivation |
| 13 | 1.5 Entrepreneurs and leaders | **1.5.1 Role of an entrepreneur**What entrepreneurs doProblems and barriers they face**1.5.2 Entrepreneurial motives and characteristics**Characteristics and skillsMotivations for becoming an entrepreneur**1.5.6 Moving from entrepreneur to leader**Challenges |
| 14 | **1.5.3 Business objectives**Outline and examples of objectives**1.5.4 Forms of business**Legal organisation and featuresThe factors that lead to these forms**1.5.5 Business choices**Opportunity costs, choices and trade offs |

Theme 2: Year 12 Autumn Term

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| Week | Topic | Content |
| 1 | 2.1 Raising finance | **2.1.1 Internal finance****2.1.2 External finance**Sources and methods of financeThe distinction between the two**2.1.3 Liability**Legal implicationsFinance implications |
| 2 | **2.1.4 Planning**Business planningCash flow forecasts (as stand-alone and part of the business plan)Use and limitations of cash flow forecasts |
| 3 | 2.2 Financial planning and 2.3 Managing finance | **2.2.1 Sales forecasting**Sales forecasting purpose and factors influencing sales forecastsDifficulties with forecasting**2.2.2 Sales, revenue and costs**Calculation of sales revenue and volume, and link to sales forecasting data |
| 4 | **2.2.2 Sales, revenue and costs**Calculation of fixed and variable costs**2.2.3 Break-even**Numerical calculationGraphical presentation and interpretationUses and limitations of break-even analysis |
| 5 |  | **2.2.4 Budgets**Purpose and types of budgetsVariance analysisDifficulties of budgeting**2.3.1 Profit**Distinction between profit and cash |
| 6 | 2.3 Managing finance | **2.3.1 Profit**Calculation (and link to break-even)Statement of comprehensive income (profit and loss account) – introduction and key features |
| 7 | **2.3.2 Liquidity**Statement of financial position (balance sheet) – introduction and key featuresWorking capital (link to cash) |
| 8 | **2.3.3 Business failure**Financial: link to cash, profit and liquidityNon-financial: link to the market and people |
| 9 | 2.4 Resource management | **2.4.1 Production, productivity and efficiency**Methods of productionProductivity and efficiency**2.4.2 Capacity utilisation**Calculation, implications and ways of improving capacity utilisation |
| 10 | **2.4.3 Stock control**Diagrams and key featuresDifferent methods and advantages gained from each**2.4.4 Quality management**Methods, costs and benefitsLinks between stock control and quality management |
| 11 | 2.5 External influences | **2.5.1 Economic influences**Macroeconomic variables: inflation, exchange ratesEconomic policy: interest rates, taxation and government spending |
| 12 |
| 13 | **2.5.2 Legislation**Different areas of businesses affected by legislation |
| 14 | Revision and AS level exam preparation | Revision and exam practice for AS level examinations and/or mock examinations for Theme 1 and Theme 2.Introduction to the broad pre-released context (available from June) for A level Paper 3. Set summer research project for A level students. Link to Extended Project Qualification if applicable. |

Theme 3: Year 13 Autumn Term

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| Week | Topic | Content |
| 1 | 3.1 Business objectives and strategy and 3.4 Influences on business decisions  | **3.1.1 Corporate objectives**Development and levelsCritical appraisal of these and their presentation**3.4.1 Corporate influences**The timescales on which businesses workInfluences on decision-making**3.4.4 Business ethics**Trade-offs between profit and ethics and how this relates to objectives |
| 2 | 3.4 Influences on business decisions | **3.4.3 Shareholders versus stakeholders**Examples of stakeholders and their objectivesInfluences on business objectivesConflicts between stakeholders and stakeholders and the business |
| 3 | **3.4.2 Corporate culture**How culture is formed in relation to objectives, ethics, etc.Categorising culture and assessing its strength |
| 4 | 3.1 Business objectives and strategy | **3.1.2 Theories of corporate strategy**Ansoff, Porter, Boston MatrixStrategic and tactical decisions |
| 5 | **3.1.3 SWOT analysis****3.1.4 Impact of external influences**PESTLE analysis |
| 6 | 3.2 Business growth | **3.2.1 Growth**How and why businesses growProblems of growth**3.2.2 Mergers and takeovers**ReasonsDifferent categories/directions**3.2.3 Organic growth**Compare and contrast with mergers and takeovers, and reasons for staying small**3.2.4 Reasons for staying small**Links to new, highly competitive marketsAvoidance of diseconomies of scale |
| 7 | 3.3 Decision-making techniques | **3.3.1 Quantitative sales forecasting**Times series analysis calculationsUses and limitations of quantitative sales forecasting |
| 8 | **3.3.2 Investment appraisal**Methods, calculation and interpretationUses and limitations |
| 9 | **3.3.3 Decision trees**Construction and interpretationUses and limitations |
| 10 | **3.3.4 Critical Path Analysis**Completion and interpretationUses and limitations |
| 11 | 3.5 Assessing competitiveness | **3.5.1 Interpretation of financial statements**Statement of comprehensive income (profit and loss account) and statement of financial position (balance sheet)Stakeholder interest**3.5.2 Ratio analysis**Calculation and interpretationUses and limitations |
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| 13 | **3.5.3 Human resources**Quantitative measures of HR performance |
| 14 | 3.6 Managing change | **3.6.1 Causes and effects of change****3.6.2 Key factors in change**Link to topics covered within this theme**3.6.3 Scenario planning**Planning to reduce risk |

Theme 4: Year 13 Spring/Summer term

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| Week | Topic | Content |
| 1 | 4.1 Globalisation | **4.1.1 Growing economies**Measurements of different economies and economic performanceBusiness opportunities |
| 2 | **4.1.2 International trade and business growth**Specialisation of economies and businessBusiness growth via trade |
| 3 | **4.1.3 Factors contributing to increased globalisation**External factors (link to PESTLE) |
| 4 | **4.1.4 Protectionism**Threats posed to economies and businesses and reactions to these |
| 5 | **4.1.5 Trading blocs**As a reaction to protectionism between countriesOpportunities and threats to businesses |
| 6 | 4.2 Global markets and business expansion | **4.2.1 Conditions that prompt trade**Push and pull factors for businesses |
| 7 | **4.2.2 Assessment of a country as a market****4.2.3 Assessment of a country as a production location**Contrast the two, and compare and contrast factors |
| 8 | **4.2.4 Reasons for global mergers or joint ventures****4.2.5 Global competitiveness**How this is achieved and can be enhanced through working with other businesses |
| 9 | 4.3 Global marketing | **4.3.1 Marketing**On a global scaleStrategic choices for different markets |
| 10 | **4.3.3 Cultural and social issues**Influences on marketing strategy**4.3.4 Niche markets**Features and how these interact with cultural and social issues |
| 11 | 4.4 Global industries and companies | **4.4.1 The impact of MNCs**Local impacts versus national impacts |
| 12 | **4.4.2 Ethics**Ethical discussions raised by the activities of MNCs |
| 13 | **4.4.3 Controlling MNCs**Possibilities and practicalities |
| 14 | Revision and A level exam preparation | Revision of Themes 1, 2, 3 and 4Exam preparation |