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 markets  Dynamic markets |
| 2 | **1.1.2 Market research**  Product and market orientation  Methods of market research  Uses and limitations of these methods  Market 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 curve  Discuss movement along and of the demand curve, and factors influencing this |
| 4 | **1.2.2 Supply**  Introduction to the supply curve  Discuss 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 PED  Interpretation of PED and its importance to businesses  **1.2.5 Income elasticity of demand (YED)**  Calculation of YED  Comparison contrast to PED  Interpretation 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 branding  Building a brand and changes in branding  Generic versus branded products |
| 7 | **1.3.2 Branding and promotion**  Types of promotion |
| 8 | **1.3.3 Pricing strategies**  Different strategies  Changes in, and factors determining, these strategies |
| 9 | **1.3.4 Distribution**  Methods  Changes in channels used  **1.3.5 Marketing strategy**  The product life cycle and extension strategies  Boston Matrix  Consumer behaviour  How 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**  Methods  Costs and benefits |
| 11 | **1.4.3 Organisation design**  Key features and terminology  Strengths and weaknesses of different models |
| 12 | **1.4.4 Motivation in theory and practice**  Importance of motivation  Motivation theories  Financial and non-financial incentives  **1.4.5 Leadership**  Management and leadership  Types/methods  Links between leadership and motivation |
| 13 | 1.5 Entrepreneurs and leaders | **1.5.1 Role of an entrepreneur**  What entrepreneurs do  Problems and barriers they face  **1.5.2 Entrepreneurial motives and characteristics**  Characteristics and skills  Motivations 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 features  The 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 finance  The distinction between the two  **2.1.3 Liability**  Legal implications  Finance implications |
| 2 | **2.1.4 Planning**  Business planning  Cash 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 forecasts  Difficulties 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 calculation  Graphical presentation and interpretation  Uses and limitations of break-even analysis |
| 5 |  | **2.2.4 Budgets**  Purpose and types of budgets  Variance analysis  Difficulties 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 features  Working capital (link to cash) |
| 8 | **2.3.3 Business failure**  Financial: link to cash, profit and liquidity  Non-financial: link to the market and people |
| 9 | 2.4 Resource management | **2.4.1 Production, productivity and efficiency**  Methods of production  Productivity and efficiency  **2.4.2 Capacity utilisation**  Calculation, implications and ways of improving capacity utilisation |
| 10 | **2.4.3 Stock control**  Diagrams and key features  Different methods and advantages gained from each  **2.4.4 Quality management**  Methods, costs and benefits  Links between stock control and quality management |
| 11 | 2.5 External influences | **2.5.1 Economic influences**  Macroeconomic variables: inflation, exchange rates  Economic 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 levels  Critical appraisal of these and their presentation  **3.4.1 Corporate influences**  The timescales on which businesses work  Influences 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 objectives  Influences on business objectives  Conflicts 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 Matrix  Strategic 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 grow  Problems of growth  **3.2.2 Mergers and takeovers**  Reasons  Different 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 markets  Avoidance of diseconomies of scale |
| 7 | 3.3 Decision-making techniques | **3.3.1 Quantitative sales forecasting**  Times series analysis calculations  Uses and limitations of quantitative sales forecasting |
| 8 | **3.3.2 Investment appraisal**  Methods, calculation and interpretation  Uses and limitations |
| 9 | **3.3.3 Decision trees**  Construction and interpretation  Uses and limitations |
| 10 | **3.3.4 Critical Path Analysis**  Completion and interpretation  Uses 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 interpretation  Uses 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 performance  Business opportunities |
| 2 | **4.1.2 International trade and business growth**  Specialisation of economies and business  Business 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 countries  Opportunities 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 scale  Strategic 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 4  Exam preparation |