



**Chesterfield College  
Group**

# **AS/A-Level Business Studies**



**NAME:** .....

## **Contents**

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## 1. Introduction to the spec and layout of exams

### **Year 12 course**

Students will be covering the AQA A-level course. In Year 12, students study the key functional areas in business: management and leadership, marketing, operations, finance and human resources. The focus here is on the day-to-day challenges that businesses face to improve business performance:

- 1 – What is business?
- 2 – Managers, leadership and decision making
- 3 – Decision making to improve marketing performance
- 4 – Decision making to improve operational performance
- 5 – Decision making to improve financial performance
- 6 – Decision making to improve human resource performance

### **Year 13 course**

In Year 13, students study the 'Boardroom' strategic decisions that all businesses have to make and with a view to developing and maintaining a competitive advantage over the long term:

- 7 – Analysing the strategic position of a business
- 8 – Choosing the strategic direction
- 9 – Strategic methods: how to pursue strategies
- 10 – Managing strategic change

### **A-level assessment**

Three two-hour written exams to be taken in June 2022.

Paper 1: Business 1	+	Paper 2: Business 2	+	Paper 3: Business 3
<b>What's assessed</b> All content above		<b>What's assessed</b> All content above		<b>What's assessed</b> All content above
<b>Assessed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• written exam: 2 hours</li><li>• 100 marks in total</li><li>• 33.3% of A-level</li></ul>		<b>Assessed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• written exam: 2 hours</li><li>• 100 marks in total</li><li>• 33.3% of A-level</li></ul>		<b>Assessed</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• written exam: 2 hours</li><li>• 100 marks in total</li><li>• 33.3% of A-level</li></ul>
<b>Questions</b> Three compulsory sections: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Section A has 15 multiple choice questions (MCQs) worth 15 marks.</li><li>• Section B has short answer questions worth 35 marks.</li><li>• Sections C and D have two essay questions (choice of one from two and one from two) worth 25 marks each.</li></ul>		<b>Questions</b> Three data response compulsory questions worth approximately 33 marks each and made up of three or four part questions.		<b>Questions</b> One compulsory case study followed by approximately six questions.

## **2. Why study A-level Business and pathways for careers**

This A-level Business course provides a good understanding of how businesses function, from small start-up businesses to major, multinational corporations. You will gain solid grounding about business decision making, both for the day-to-day operational aspects of running a business and for planning and implementing strategic changes. You will better understand the managerial skills needed to work in business and the techniques used to help you become an analytical problem solver. These skills are all highly sought after and valued in a wide range of careers. At the same time, you will be building a broader and deeper understanding of actual business markets and real businesses. Such commercial awareness is regarded by employers as a key employability skill.

### ***Further study and career opportunities***

If you'd like to study business, finance or management at university, A-level Business provides an excellent foundation. The skills you learn are also transferable across a broad range of subjects and careers.

Whatever you choose to do in the future, you'll find that the things you learn in this course will help. For example, you'll probably work with lots of different people, so knowledge of motivational theory will help you to work well with others and help them achieve their potential.

You might have ambitious plans to start your own business. If that's the case, you'll find the marketing and finance topics particularly useful.

### **3. Required knowledge and skills**

No prior knowledge of business is required for entry to the A-level Business course.

#### ***Literacy skills***

A good command of English is key for excelling in A-level Business. Given that all three examination papers involve written answers to questions, students need to be prepared to work with great commitment throughout the course developing their literacy skills. In this regard, the following skills are especially important to develop:

- ability to state points with precision using subject terminology
- present good chains of reasoning to develop one's points
- use case study evidence to support chains of reasoning
- draw on one's wider knowledge of businesses to add extra weight
- make well-informed, balanced judgements ending with clear conclusions.

#### ***Numeracy skills***

The A-level syllabus contains a large number of quantitative topics, thus there are many formulas to master for calculating and interpreting data. Students with a good grade in GCSE Mathematics should be able to access these parts of the course. All students interested in embarking on the A- level course must appreciate that a thorough understanding of the finance sections of the syllabus is a prerequisite for achieving a high A-level grade.

#### ***Communication and group working skills***

Communication and group working skills are also very important qualities to develop. This is because many real-life issues in business are complex and multi-variable in nature in a world where circumstances are constantly changing. Sharing views and discussion are therefore key activities that all students are expected to participate in during lesson time.

#### ***Investigative skills***

The best way to master A-level Business is by researching real life businesses - both those that grow to become world class businesses and ones that under-perform and often fail. A genuine interest in wanting to explore businesses beyond the textbook is therefore viewed as an important quality to nurture.

All students will be expected to develop their own case study portfolios of businesses through independent study, with guidance provided by teachers. They will use this material to broaden and deepen their understanding of concepts and methods covered in lessons.

#### 4. Book, Newspaper & Magazine Recommendations

##### **Newspapers:**

All quality newspapers have useful articles on current issues in

business: The Guardian - <http://www.guardian.co.uk/business>

The Times - <http://business.timesonline.co.uk/>

The Daily Telegraph - <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/money>

The Financial Times - <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/money>

The Sunday Times - <https://www.thetimes.co.uk>

The Observer - <https://www.theguardian.com/observer>

##### **Magazines:**

The Economist - <http://www.economist.com/>

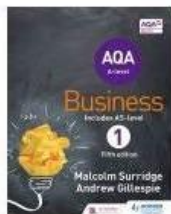
Business Review - <https://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/businessreviewextras>

Business Week - <https://www.bloomberg.com/businessweek>

##### **Course textbooks:**

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#### **AQA Business for A Level 1 (Surridge & Gillespie)**



Authors: Malcolm Surridge and Andrew Gillespie

Publisher: Hodder Education

ISBN-13: 978-1-4718-3613-8

Price: £25.99

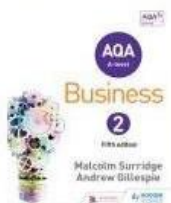
Publication date: March 2015 - out now

Digital version - out now

 Look inside 

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#### **AQA A-level Business 2 (Surridge & Gillespie)**



Authors: Malcolm Surridge and Andrew Gillespie

Publisher: Hodder Education

ISBN-13: 978-1-4718-3578-0

Price: £25.99

Publication date: September 2015 - out now

Digital version - out now

## 5. Film/video clip recommendations

### **Films:**

The Big Short (2015)

Margin Call (2011)

The Insider (1999)

Wall Street (1987)

The Founder (2016)

### **Documentaries:**

Too Big to Fail (2011)

Steve Job: One last thing (2011)

Inside Job (2010)

Freakonomics (2010)

The Social Network (2010)

Enron: The Smartest Guys in the Room (2005)

McLibel (2005)

The Corporation (2003)

Start.com (2001)

Wal-Mart: The High Cost of Low Price (2005)

## 6. Independent learning (online resources and TV programmes to watch)

### **Online resources**

<b>Area</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Weblink</b>
<b>Bank of England</b>	A good site that explains: what the Bank of England does and what is meant by monetary policy and the links between interest rates and inflation.	<a href="http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/">http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/</a>
<b>BBC News</b>	A superb resource and one of the best starting points to find resources.	<a href="http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/">http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/business/</a>
<b>British Franchise</b>	"The British Franchise Association is the	<a href="http://www.thebfa.org/">http://www.thebfa.org/</a>

<b>Association</b>	voluntary self-regulating governing body for franchising." Useful case study material.	
<b>Business in the Community</b>	This website has useful case studies and statistics about businesses supporting communities across the UK.	<a href="http://www.bitc.org.uk">www.bitc.org.uk</a>
<b>Competition and Markets Authority</b>	The CMA is a UK government agency responsible for promoting competition in the UK. It aims is to make markets work well for consumers, businesses and the economy.	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority">https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/competition-and-markets-authority</a>
<b>Economist</b>	The website for The Economist weekly magazine. Excellent business news coverage.	<a href="http://www.economist.com">http://www.economist.com</a>
<b>European Union</b>	The official site for information on economic issues in the European Union.	<a href="http://europa.eu/">http://europa.eu/</a>
<b>Fast Track</b>	Fast Track is an Oxford-based research company that produces tables ranking for example, the fastest growing private companies in terms of sales and companies with the fastest growing profits. Site includes brief descriptions of the companies and links to their sites.	<a href="http://www.fasttrack.co.uk/">http://www.fasttrack.co.uk/</a>
<b>Financial Times</b>	Top website for news on businesses, financial markets and the economy.	<a href="https://www.ft.com/?edition=uk&amp;mhq5j=e2">https://www.ft.com/?edition=uk&amp;mhq5j=e2</a>
<b>Fortune</b>	Website of the famous magazine that includes the top 500 companies in the world, the most powerful business people and the 100 best companies to work for.	<a href="http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/">http://money.cnn.com/magazines/fortune/</a>
<b>HM Treasury</b>	One of the best sources on data on the UK economy.	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/weekly-economic-indicators">https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/weekly-economic-indicators</a>
<b>Marketing</b>	Basic material on a number of topics including some resources such as graphs and PowerPoint slides.	<a href="http://www.learnmarketing.net/">http://www.learnmarketing.net/</a>
<b>Statistics</b>	Free access to data produced by the	<a href="http://www.statistics.gov.uk/">http://www.statistics.gov.uk/</a>



	Office for National Statistics and government departments.	
<b>Tim Harford</b>	A very accessible economists with interesting thoughts on a wide range of current, real world issues in business economics.	<a href="http://timharford.com">http://timharford.com</a>
<b>Tom Peters</b>	Access the website of this expert on business management practices.	<a href="http://www.tompeters.com/">http://www.tompeters.com/</a>
<b>Tutor2u</b>	Excellent website. Offers free student resources including revision webinars, notes on topics and quizzes.	<a href="http://www.tutor2u.net/">http://www.tutor2u.net/</a>

## Television

<b>Programme</b>	<b>Channel</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Website</b>
<b>Aljazeera Business &amp; Economy</b>	Aljazeera	An international perspective on business and issues affecting the economies of many different countries.	<a href="http://www.aljazeera.com">http://www.aljazeera.com</a>
<b>BBC News</b>	BBC 1	Business and economics news from the UK and around the world.	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer">bbc.co.uk/iplayer</a>
<b>Dragons Den</b>	BBC 2	Excellent series for understanding real life enterprise.	<a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/dragonsden/">http://www.bbc.co.uk/dragonsden/</a>
<b>Panorama</b>	BBC 1	Current affairs journalism	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer">bbc.co.uk/iplayer</a>
<b>Sky News</b>	Sky	Business and economics news from the UK and around the world	<a href="http://news.sky.com/business">http://news.sky.com/business</a>
<b>The Apprentice</b>	BBC 1	Another entertaining series about entrepreneurship.	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer">bbc.co.uk/iplayer</a>
<b>The Money Programme</b>	BBC Radio 4	30 minute programme on current business issues	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer">bbc.co.uk/iplayer</a>
<b>World Business News</b>	BBC World Service	International business news.	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer">bbc.co.uk/iplayer</a>
<b>World Business Reports</b>	BBC News	Latest business news, with reports from Singapore, Frankfurt, London and New York.	<a href="http://bbc.co.uk/iplayer">bbc.co.uk/iplayer</a>

## 7. Summer Activity Tasks

### Learning Objectives:

To develop a basic understanding of the kinds of areas that Business investigates and to give you a basis for discussion in your first lesson in September

To use the internet and other sources of information to help complete a range of tasks. To start to develop evaluation skills which will be vital in A Level Business

### Contacts for Support:

Trudie Kelly – Business Lecturer – [kellyt@chesterfield.ac.uk](mailto:kellyt@chesterfield.ac.uk)

Lisa France – Sixth Form Manager – [francel@chesterfield.ac.uk](mailto:francel@chesterfield.ac.uk)

Laura Thompson – Sixth Form Manager –  
[thompsonl@chesterfield.ac.uk](mailto:thompsonl@chesterfield.ac.uk)

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Subject: **A-Level Business**

Exam Board: **AQA**

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Welcome to A-level Business. We are delighted that you are considering A-level Business as an option in Year 12. To demonstrate your commitment to the course and to prepare you for September, you must complete the following tasks to the best of your ability. These tasks are compulsory and must be completed prior to your first Business lesson in Year 12. You will then hand them in to your Business teacher.

We expect you spend at least 5 hours completing the tasks outlined in this pack. The activities have been designed to help you begin to develop some of the key skills you will need for A-level Business.

### What is Business?



Everything in life involves Business. Think about that new item of clothing you bought last week and then think of what businesses have made it possible for you to be wearing it right now? The obvious ones are the **SHOP** you bought it from or the **FACTORY** that made it, but what about the cotton grower, the label maker, the delivery company, the bank that loaned them the finances, etc. Thinking about all the processes involved and the people helps you to understand what studying Business is all about. Business is a major part of everyone's life and impacts us daily:

- The education and health care we receive
- The food that we consume the clothes that we wear
- How and where we spend our leisure time
- The transport we use
- The technology we have to communicate

## Task 1: What is Business?

Read the following ten statements and write down your own answers to them. Try to explain why you have given the answer you have. You can use your own knowledge, personal opinions or experiences to help support your answers.

**1. What is the difference between the private sector and the public sector? Explain.**

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**2. What is the difference between cash and profit, and why is cash so important to a business? Explain.**

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**3. Why is important for businesses to set themselves objectives? Explain.**

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**4. Where do businesses get their finance from to set up and operate? Explain.**

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**5. Why are more businesses operating online (e-commerce)?**

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**6. What qualities and skills make a good leader and why?**

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**7. How does technology make a business's operations more efficient? Explain your point.**

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**8. Why are staff so important to a business?**

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Every business needs to understand what is going on around it and identify the factors that can affect how it operates, and whether it succeeds or fails. They will conduct a **'PESTLE'** analysis as this helps them to develop strategies to react to these external factors. **PESTLE** stands for:

POLITICAL	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL
<i>E.g. Changing political party</i>	<i>E.g. Interest rate changes</i>	<i>E.g. The UK has an ageing population</i>

POLITICAL	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL
<i>E.g. Changing political party</i>	<i>E.g. Interest rate changes</i>	<i>E.g. The UK has an ageing population</i>





3. What products/services do they sell?

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4. Do they operate locally, nationally or internationally? Explain your point.

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5. Using the points you highlighted in your **PESTLE** analysis, how will your business and the way it operates be affected?

<b>Political</b>	
<b>Economic</b>	
<b>Social</b>	
<b>Technological</b>	
<b>Legal</b>	
<b>Environmental</b>	

## Task 3: Preparing to Evaluate...

A key skill that you need to develop as a successful Business student is the ability to **EVALUATE**.

You will need to weigh up the strengths and weaknesses of something and be able to make judgements and decisions about what should or shouldn't be done to achieve a business's objectives in the short and long term.

Follow the below link and watch the video clip to help with these questions:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFcCqkT4ATQ>

You can also research the answers on the internet.

### 1. What does the term 'entrepreneur' mean and who founded Innocent?

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### 2. What evidence is there from the video that makes Innocent a great company to work for?

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### 3. How long is Innocent's induction training and what does it involve?

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#### 4. Why are 'freedom' and 'communication' so important to Innocent's success?

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#### 5. What do you think are the main reasons for Innocent's success? Explain your answer.

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## Getting creative

Innovation is an essential part of a business's success. New product development will enable a business like Innocent to meet changing customers' needs and tastes, so now it's time to get your thinking cap on. Use the space below to design a potential **NEW** idea for Innocent. It could be a new smoothie or meal, or something completely different. Be sure to label your design/ingredients!



This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There is no handwriting or other markings on the paper.

**You are to create a 5-minute presentation on a chosen business. This can be ANY business. Make it look nice, include pictures, facts etc. In your presentation, you need to include:**

- Good luck! If you need any help, please email any of the teachers listed on the first page. This bridging project is due in the first week back in September. Please hand this to your teacher. Once you know who your teachers are, you will need to email them your presentation.**