

Is this subject right for me?

Do you want a greater understanding of how businesses operate?

Do you want the challenge of solving business problems and making business decisions?

Do you want to learn skills that will be relevant to any career?

Business Studies is an inter-disciplinary course which includes elements of Accountancy, Management science and Economics as well as Social Psychology and law. It is not necessary to have studied Business Studies or related courses previously. Staff teaching the course will assume that students have no prior knowledge or experience in the subject. Reasonable standards of written English and Numeracy are important. A willingness to take a real interest is essential.

The approach is primarily academic: hence learning is based on enquiry and evidence, argument and criticism. Problem solving and decision making within business organisations and the political, economic, social and technological environment in which they function are central to the course.

What is the course content?

AS Level (Year 1)

Unit 1 Planning and Financing a Business:

- Starting a Business - The challenges and issues of starting a business; enterprise; entrepreneurs
- Financial Planning - Key financial concepts needed to start a business including: sources of start of finance, planning cashflow, contribution and break even.

Unit 2 Managing a Business:

- People - Communication; motivation; recruitment; HR planning
- Operations Management - adding value; quality; customer service
- Finance - improving cash flow, measuring profit, improving profitability
- Marketing and Competition - planning; 4P's; analysing the competitive environment.

A Level (Year 2)

Unit 3 Strategies for Success

- Financial Strategies and Accounts - financial information, measuring performance and financial decisions
- Marketing Strategies - analysing markets and devising marketing strategies
- Operations Strategies - location, R & D and improving operational efficiency
- Human Resource Strategies - workforce planning, measuring performance, adapting organisational structures and employee relations.

Unit 4 The Business Environment and Change

- External Influences - the effects of changes in the economic, political, legal, social and ethical; corporate culture; risk strategy; change management and responses of organisations
- Leadership, Corporate culture, Ethics - leadership styles, role of leaders in responding to change and corporate culture
- Managing Change - planning for change, corporate strategies, managing change and decision making.

How will your work be assessed?

AS Examination

Unit 1 - All Modules are tested by examination of 1 hour and minute using short answers questions and extended responses based on a mini case study. The examination is worth 40% of the AS grade or 20% of the A level grade.

Unit 2 - All Modules are tested by examination of 1 hour and 30 minutes with two compulsory questions plus multi-part data response questions. The examination is worth 60% of the AS grade or 30% of the A level grade.

A Level Examination

Unit 3 - All Modules are tested by examination of 1 hour and 30 minutes with five questions focusing on measuring business performance and assessing appropriate functional strategies to achieve success plus also an unseen case study with a range of numerical data. The examination is worth 25% of the A level grade.

Unit 4 - All Modules are tested by examination of 1 hour and 30 minutes with a two part paper: Section A contains questions based on prior research. Section B in-

Business Studies

AS and A Level

volves choosing one essay question from a selection of three essay titles. The examination is worth 25% of the A level grade.

What are the entry requirements?

The general entry requirements for studying at Advanced level apply, and a minimum of grade D in Maths and English GCSE is preferred.

What can you combine with Business Studies?

The course can be combined with any other A/AS level, GCSE or vocational subject. The combination of A Level Economics with A Level Business Studies should be considered carefully. Students who choose this combination would be specialising and committing themselves at a relatively early stage to employment or applications to Higher Education courses in Business, Economics or Finance based and related areas.

The course is not designed to be vocational, but it is clearly helpful to those with career interests in Management, Marketing, Finance, Accounting, Banking, Retailing, Manufacturing and Local Government.