

Business

Edexcel A-level Business (9BS0)

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Introduction

Business is an A-level option that encompasses a strong blend of theoretical knowledge with real-world application. Every one of us is affected by the activities of government and the external business environment, and the course reflects this through its analysis and evaluation of topics as diverse as inflation, interest rates and exchange rates, through to more in-depth assessment of globalisation, emerging economies and financial management.

The course provides an insight into the extremes of an entrepreneur just starting up a business to the giant transnational corporations that dominate the modern world. It investigates what motivates employees, assesses business leadership and forms of business, and teaches sound accountancy and numerical decision-making skills.

Subject Requirements

A sound level of numeracy is a prerequisite as the course includes a substantial level of financial and business-related calculations and formulas. A good level of reading comprehension is also essential, and students must also be able to analyse and interpret a wide variety of information and be able to write evaluative responses fluently and to a high level of sophistication. It is advised that students therefore have a minimum average GCSE score in advance of 6.0 in English and maths to succeed in this subject.

Course Outline

The course is structured into four themes and consists of three externally examined papers.

Students are introduced to business in Themes 1 and 2 through building knowledge of core business concepts and applying them to business contexts to develop a broad understanding of how businesses work.

Breadth and depth of knowledge and understanding, with applications to a wider range of contexts and more complex business information, are developed in Themes 3 and 4, requiring students to take a more strategic view of business opportunities and issues.

Students are encouraged to use an enquiring, critical and thoughtful approach to the study of business, to understand that business behaviour can be studied from a range of perspectives and to challenge assumptions.

Theme 1 - Marketing and people

- Meeting customer needs
- The market
- Marketing mix and strategy
- Managing people
- Entrepreneurs and leaders

Theme 2 - Managing business activities

- Raising finance
- Financial planning
- Managing finance
- Resource management
- External influences

Theme 3 – Business decisions and strategy

- Business objectives and strategy
- Business growth
- Decision-making techniques
- Influences on business decisions
- Assessing competitiveness
- Managing change

Theme 4 – Global business

- Globalisation
- Global markets and business expansion
- Global marketing
- Global industries and companies (multinational corporations)

Higher Education and Careers

Business-related degrees are consistently among the most popular course choices for Epsom leavers and the department has an excellent record of helping students gain entry to these courses at top institutions. Many of our business A-level students go on to pursue related degrees before enjoying careers in fields such as accountancy, marketing, management and law.

What should I study alongside business?

The course complements most other options and provides students with a well-rounded academic profile. It is not advisable to take both A-level business and A-level economics however, as there are clear overlaps in terms of content.

Is there anything else I should consider?

A-level business is not the “soft option” that elements of the media have at times suggested. Students need to approach the subject fully aware of the need to write lengthy essay-based responses and be confident in their numerical abilities.

The course is focused on theoretical application of business theory, with the more practical aspects of business considered instead in the BTEC programme.