

REVISED GCE AS & A LEVEL
Student Guide
Business Studies

For first teaching from September 2008

For first award of AS Level in Summer 2009

For first award of A Level in Summer 2010

business
studies

Student Guide: Business Studies

By studying GCE Business Studies you will gain a broader overview of the world of business, its functions, behaviour, and the problems and issues that face it. The AS course can be taken as a final qualification or as the first half of the A Level qualification. If you wish to obtain a full A Level qualification, you must complete the second half of the course referred to as A2.

Q. Why study Business Studies?

If you would like to understand more about how and why businesses operate in the way that they do, then this course will help you to achieve this.

You will be able to relate what you study to everyday activities such as purchasing goods, or the services you receive as well as business news reported in the media. This course will help develop skills that you can take forward into further education or your future career.

Q. What do I need to be able to take this course?

There are no specific requirements, but you would benefit from having a good standard of literacy and numeracy skills, an interest in problem-solving and decision making exercises and applying your knowledge to the different questions/scenarios presented within the areas of study.

Q. What will I study?

There are two units at AS and a further two at A2.

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AS 1	In this unit you will gain an understanding of the central purpose of business activity and the different forms of business organisations. You will also study markets, demand and supply, different types of quality management, investment and productivity.
AS 2	You will learn about organisational design, communication, motivation, management and leadership styles, and investing in people. This unit will also cover the role of accounting and financial information and how this aids decision-making and financial control for businesses. You will study break-even analysis, budgets, cash flow, variance analysis and final accounts including depreciation.
A2 1	In this unit, you will learn about potential conflict between the objectives of different stakeholder groups and investigate ways to resolve such conflict. You will also study: business strategy and planning; business plans; decision tree analysis; and analyse why a business may encounter a crisis and develop a contingency plan. This unit will also cover the role of accounting and financial information. As part of this unit, you will interpret company accounts, study ratio analysis, investment appraisal.
A2 2	In this unit, you will study the macroeconomic framework of businesses and how they are affected by globalisation. This unit will also help you increase your knowledge of business ethics and corporate social responsibility. The unit also covers the area of change – its causes and effects, resistance to change and how to manage it effectively. The examination for this unit will contain an unseen case study from which you will undertake a problem-solving/decision making exercise.

Q. How will I be assessed?

There are a total of four units in this course, two at AS and two at A2. The breakdown of the units is detailed in the table below.

Unit	Type of Assessment
AS 1: The Competitive Business Worth 50% of AS 25% of A Level	1 hour 30 minutes external examination paper and will include two structured data responses <i>Available in the January and Summer series</i>
AS 2: Managing Business Resources Worth 50% of AS 25% of A Level	1 hour 30 minutes external examination paper and will include two structured data responses <i>Available in the January and Summer series</i>
A2 1: Making Business Decisions Worth 25% of A Level	2 hour external examination paper and will include an one structured data response <i>Available in the January and Summer series</i>
A2 2: The Changing Business Environment Worth 25% of A Level	2 hour external examination paper and will include an unseen case study from which you will draw up a report <i>Available in January and Summer series</i>

Q. What can I do with a qualification in Business Studies?

Business Studies can open up a wide range of opportunities for further and higher education or on to a rewarding career. If you wish to continue the study of Business Studies at degree level, you will need to complete the full A Level course comprising the two units at AS together with the two at A2.

Through studying this course, you will develop your knowledge and understanding of the world of business. The course will also help you acquire a range of skills such as: decision making; problem solving; interpreting and managing information; challenging assumptions; and creating solutions to problems and issues. These are all skills which are highly sought after and that can be taken forward to any future employment.

This subject can open up career choices in a wide range of jobs, for example in the commercial field such as retail, marketing, buying; human resources; public sector; professional services such as accountancy or law; banking, city markets, systems/business analyst, insurance and the media. You may of course decide to use the knowledge and skills gained through studying this course to with a view to starting up your own business.

How can I find out more?

There are a number of ways that you can find out more about studying Business Studies.

These include:

- Teachers at your school or college
- Students who are already studying the subject
- www.ccea.org.uk/business_studies
- www.ebea.org.uk
- Careers advisor
- UCAS www.ucas.com or CAO www.cao.ie for details on entry requirements for university courses

To view the full specification and the full range of support material available for GCE Business Studies, please visit the for Business Studies microsite [/www.ccea.org.uk/business_studies](http://www.ccea.org.uk/business_studies)

