

WEST COVENTRY ACADEMY SIXTH FORM



SUBJECT TRANSITION BOOK
Summer 2025

BUSINESS

STUDENT NAME:

This booklet has been prepared by business staff for you to read and the work contained in it will ensure that you get off to the best possible start in this subject area. It is very important that you read this booklet carefully over the summer and have a thorough attempt to complete the work and submit it at the start of the year to your subject teacher in the very first lesson. This will be the first impression you create and is a real indicator of how seriously you are prepared to be in your studies.

AS and A-Level Business

The key staff are:

Mrs L McCarron – Head of Business & Economics, West Coventry Academy <i>StaffLEA@westcoventryacademy.org</i>

Mr Griffin – Year 13 Learning Manager, West Coventry Academy <i>StaffJGG@westcoventryacademy.org</i>

Course Details

Course Title: AS and A-level Business

Exam board: AQA

Exam Code: AS –7131 A Level – 7132

Exam Board web site: www.aqa.org.uk

Assessment method: The Business Studies AS level is assessed by two 90 minute examinations and the A Level by three 2 hour examinations.

Minimum requirement: Standard entry requirements of five A*-C grades including English language and mathematics. It is not necessary to have studied Business Studies at GCSE level.

About the course

Business Studies is a popular academic course that is firmly grounded in the reality of the dynamic business environment. Students will study business in a variety of contexts from small, UK businesses to large global manufacturers and service industries. They will learn about the interrelated nature of business using business models, theories and techniques to support analysis of contemporary business issues and situations e.g. what made Google decide to withdraw Google Glass from sale? What effect has the merger of Heinz and Kraft had on the supermarkets and the food business in general? Students achieve good results in this subject and are taught in dedicated rooms with computers to use regularly. The subject explores the nature of businesses at all levels and how decision making helps improve competitiveness. This is studied through the arena of marketing, finance, operations and human resources where students are encouraged to think like managers and directors where millions of pounds may be at stake.

AS Business:

Paper 1 is 50% of the AS qualification and consists of 10 multiple choice questions, short answer questions and two data response stimuli with questions. It covers the whole of the specification content.

Paper 2 is 50% of the AS qualification and comprises a compulsory case study consisting of approximately seven questions. It covers the whole of the specification content.

A-Level Business:

Paper 1 which is 33.3% of the A-level qualification and consists of 15 multiple choice questions, short answer questions and two essay questions. It covers the whole of specification.

Paper 2 which is 33.3% of the A-level qualification and comprises 3 data response questions made up of three or four part questions. It covers the whole of specification.

Paper 3 which is 33.3% of the A-level qualification and contains one compulsory case study followed by approximately six questions. It covers the whole of specification.

Academic and Career Pathways

Business Studies provides you with the skills required to study at a higher level whilst also developing the background knowledge that will be useful in the work place. Students who have studied Business Studies in the past have followed a wide range of pathways including university, training schemes, employment and successfully starting their own entrepreneurial ventures. For university the course is particularly suitable preparation for Business Studies, Management, Accounting and Economics.

What equipment will be needed for the subject?

School issued iPad

Calculator

Pen

Activity 1 – An entrepreneur's story.

Read the case study below about an entrepreneur and their business start-up story. Then answer the questions below.

Entrepreneur : Jamie Murray Wells – Glasses Direct

Jamie Murray Wells is the founder and Executive Chairman of Glasses Direct, which he started at university. Studying for his final exams at university, Jamie discovered he needed to wear glasses. After visiting his local optician he was so staggered by the £150 price tag. "I got fleeced £150 for a pair of glasses. I looked at them and thought, it's just a bit of wire and glass, why does it need to cost so much?



So I looked into the costs and found that they could be made for around £15 a pair. I sent my prescription to the lab and then had two pairs that looked the same; the difference was that one cost £150 and the other £15. I realised there was an opportunity here to pass on these savings to customers, so I got together with some university friends, hired a web developer and used the last £1,000 of my student loan to get it started. "

After finding a laboratory to support his idea for providing better value prescription glasses, he set up shop in his parents' front room with friends and family helping out. Word began to spread and within two months of trading, the phone was ringing constantly, and the orders began pouring in. With thousands of enquiries by the end of his summer holidays, what had begun as a sideline had become a real business meeting a real need. **Glasses Direct, the first online prescription glasses retailer was born.**

The business grew in popularity and he raised £700,000 through various business angels (venture capitalists) as well as friends and family. They moved to new premises and hired a team of staff to help with the operations. In the first year they had turned over in excess of £1m and probably saved the UK public many times that amount on their prescription glasses.

Despite early threats of legal action, and pressure on his suppliers from high street brands, Jamie fought to fully establish Glasses Direct in the optical market place, and eight years later, the 29 year-old has seen the company grow to become the largest online retailer of prescription glasses in Europe. The company now ships a pair of glasses every few minutes round the clock, and has saved the UK public in excess of £40 million pounds on their glasses.

According to Jamie it was possible to start up with so little capital thanks to their suppliers – “they would hold the stock for us, send the completed glasses out to customers and invoice us 30 days later. As we were taking payments upfront from customers, this enabled us to get the business going.
















I watched cash flow like a hawk, and was also helped by the diminishing costs of technology and software at the time, after the dot com bubble. Other than this, I had all my friends working for me, and even kicked my sister out of her bedroom so I could use it as an office. I was the customer services, marketing, PR and accounts departments rolled into one.

TASK: Answer the questions below based on the examples above and your own knowledge:

1. What is an entrepreneur? (2 marks)
2. What characteristics did each of these entrepreneurs have that made them successful? (4 marks)
3. How important is market research in ensuring new business ideas are successful? (6 marks)
4. What methods can entrepreneurs use to raise the finance necessary to start up? (4 marks)
5. Both entrepreneurs spotted a gap in market:
 - a. What gap did they spot? (2 marks)
 - b. How important do you think it is to spot a gap in the market for a new small business? (6 marks)
6. What are the biggest obstacles to starting up a successful new business venture? (4 marks)
7. “Without the entrepreneurial skills demonstrated by those in the case studies, these businesses would not have succeeded.” To what extent do you agree with this statement? (10 marks)

Activity 2: Global Brands Quiz

Below are the top 15 most valuable global brands in 2011 according to Inter brand. However they are not in the correct order.

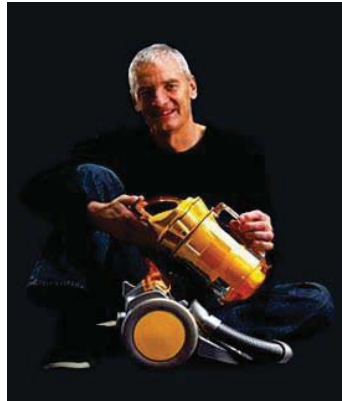
TASK: Put the brands in the correct order from most valuable to least in the table below.

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.
6.	7.	8.	9.	10.
11.	12.	13.	14.	15.

Activity 3: Who is enterprising?



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.

Additional Activities

Documentaries

If you have access to on demand programs, Netflix or Amazon prime, watch some of the documentaries and films listed below and make some notes about the topics that they cover, the questions that are asked, the issues that are raised.

Activity: Summarise the documentary/film on an A4 page using the 5 Ws: When? Who? Where? What? Why? If appropriate, add a 6th W: What next?

- The Nine to Five with Stacey Dooley - **BBC iPlayer**
- Tricky Business - <https://www.channel4.com/programmes/tricky-business> **Channel 4 On Demand**
- Beauty Laid Bare - **BBC iPlayer**
- The True Cost - **Netflix**
- Broken – Episode on IKEA - **Netflix**
- Flat pack empire – **BBC2 iPlayer**
- Inside Cadbury chocolate secrets unwrapped -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BB3IJuMNUEk>
- Food unwrapped - **Channel 4 on demand**
- Inside the supermarket - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qwucutFTsQ>
- Panorama Amazon: What they know about us – **BBC iPlayer**
- Panorama Amazon: The Truth Behind the Click – **BBC iPlayer** and/or
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JwrUYS9UTeU>
- Pepsi vs Coke – **Amazon prime video**
- Jobs Vs Gates: The Hippie and The Nerd – **Amazon prime video**
- Starbuck unfiltered – **Amazon prime video**
- Facebook – Cracking the code – **Amazon prime video**
- Data centre the true cost of the internet – **Amazon prime video**
- Learn from The Experts - Jeff Bezos, Amazon Founder – **Amazon prime video**
- Learn from The Experts - Elon Musk, Tesla and SpaceX – **Amazon prime video**
- The millennial dream – **Amazon prime video**
- Business mindset for success – **Amazon prime video**
- Steve jobs – Billion Dollar Hippie – **Netflix**
- American Factory – **Netflix**
- Inside Waitrose – **Channel 5 on My5**
- Inside the factory – **BBC2**
- Dragons Den – **BBC2**

Books/Audiobooks

Books for wider reading

If you have access to Google Books, Amazon e-books, audio books or any other such online facility, read one of the suggestions below.

Activity: Write a book review. If you're stuck on what to say, imagine you're talking to someone who is asking you whether they should read the book.

1. Start with a couple of sentences describing what the book is about: write a synopsis.
2. Discuss what you particularly liked about the book: why should students read this book?
3. Mention anything you disliked about the book
4. Give some key facts
5. Try and list some of the A level concepts mentioned in the topics list.
6. Round up your review: Summarise some of your thoughts on the book by suggesting the type of reader you'd recommend the book to. For example: younger readers, older readers, fans of relationship drama/mystery stories/comedy. Are there any books or series you would compare it to?
7. Give the book a rating, for example a mark out of five or ten, if you like!

- Anyone can do it – Duncan Bannatyne
- The Rise And Fall Of Marks & Spencer - and How It Rose Again – Judi Bevan
- What You See Is What You Get: My Autobiography - Alan Sugar
- Management in ten words - Terry Leahy
- Screw it lets do it – Richard Branson
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h9FkeyvdA2M>
- The Virgin Way – Richard Branson
Audio Book (free) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5wz40rdz7i4>
- The New One Minute Manager – Blanchard & Johnson
Audio Book (free) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ar4lrwXM4ao>
- Wake Up and Change Your Life by Duncan Bannatyne
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zqLVkMeJwE4&list=PLosYlqgowJvECmirOpdII_Ynw5Lb4M-Tf&index=10&t=0s

Topical business news articles and videos

Get the BBC and the Guardian news apps and check the Business headlines every day, read 2-3 good articles a week.

Activity: Pick an article of your choice and summarise your findings on an A4 page using the 5 Ws: When? Who? Where? What? Why? If appropriate, add a 6th W: What next?

Below are some ideas to get you started:

- Impact of Coronavirus: <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/business-impact-and-response-to-the-coronavirus-crisis>

- Impact of Coronavirus on cash flow and liquidity: <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-health-coronavirus-easyjet/big-uk-airlines-ground-most-of-their-fleets-to-survive-coronavirus-idUSKBN2130S9> and https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52027342?intlink_from_url=https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/topics/c77jz3mdmy3t/iag&link_location=live-reporting-story
- Non-price factors affecting demand: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/amp/business-52066454>
- Corporate Social Responsibility: <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/corporate-social-responsibility-during-the-coronavirus-pandemic>
- Food supply: <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-52020648>
- Agriculture, food supply and migration: <https://uk.reuters.com/video/watch/the-race-to-save-americas-harvest-idOVC7O0TEN>
- Oil industry retrenchment: <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2020/apr/01/bp-to-cut-spending-amid-most-brutal-oil-price-rout-in-decades>
- On Twitter, search for posts with the handles #Theme1 #alevelbusiness and follow the authors
- On Twitter, follows @revisionstation, @tutor2business, @twoteachers.

Quantitative skills

Activity: Listen to the video below and practice some calculations

- Index numbers: <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/quantitative-skills-in-a-level-business-index-numbers>
- Percentage change : <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/business-maths-calculating-percentage-changes>
- Exchange rates <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/reference/business-maths-exchange-rates>
- All other quantitative skills for the whole course are referenced here: <https://www.tutor2u.net/business/collections/business-maths>