

**Course Start**

Course Start is independent learning you need to complete as a fundamental part of your introduction to the course. It should take you approximately 5 hours to complete.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Course Name | **A Level Business** |
| How this **Course Start** fits into the first term of the course | Our first unit of study is:  **Unit 1 What is Business?**  This unit contains key foundation content that underpins student learning and acts as an introduction to the concept of business. |
| How will my **Course Start** learning be used in lessons? | The tasks will introduce you to some key terminology and different types of business organisation.  It will feed directly into your first few lessons, where you research will be immediately relevant. |
| **Course Start** learning objectives | Begin to consider different types of business and their role in wider society  Practice researching relevant and precise information |
| Study Skills | **Research skills** - using online sources and identifying key information  **Communication skills** - using your findings, utilise and formulate effective writing skills  **Data processing** – finding and interpreting business data |

# Expectations for: A Level Business

Our specification is: [AQA Business (7132)](https://cdn.sanity.io/files/p28bar15/green/5c265ac92b9358f142c2b69483df78f811d52739.pdf)

|  |
| --- |
| **What this course involves:** |
| Completing Planned Study (independent learning) of 4 to 5 hours per week. |
| Writing tasks involving a range of practice exam questions (e.g., short answers of one paragraph up to essays of 2-3 sides. |
| Application of numerical skills including analysing graphs and data, calculating and using financial performance measures. |
| Demonstrating a keen interest in current affairs and its impact on business. Keeping up to date with current political and economic changes. |
| Engaging in class discussions to develop analytical and evaluative skills in order to put forward a balanced case in essay questions. |
| Developing independent learning skills (e.g., time management, preparing for each week’s lessons, completing learning tasks outside lessons). |
| Develop an awareness of a wide range of UK based and global businesses; their operations, objectives and social impact. |
| Developing a deeper understanding of employment opportunities and the aspects of business management that will impact personal growth and fulfilment in work. |

**Welcome to A Level Business**

Welcome to Varndean and to the Business Department! We hope you are looking forward to getting started with us in September and we will endeavour to help you achieve your ambitions through Business A Level.

On the next page you’ll find some of the questions that new students often ask when they first visit us – we hope you’ll find the answers helpful, but do get in touch if you have any other queries.

Studying Business will give you the analytical skills to properly examine why some businesses succeed and why some fail. What does it mean to be a successful business? Is it simply about making the owners a healthy profit or is there more to owning a business? How can managers make their employees work harder? Should a business improve its product or reduce its prices? What drives share prices up one day and down the next?

In order to help you with your transition to college and to get you ready for the challenges of studying A Level Business, we’ve put together some learning activities for you to do over the summer, to get you thinking about businesses in an analytical way.

The activities are divided into “must do” and “could do”, together with the suggested time you should spend on each activity. We encourage you to do as many of these activities as you can. Please bring your work with you to your first Business lesson or submit it in advance via email.

Do drop me an email if you have any questions. Have a great summer!

Nick Maloney, [nnm@varndean.ac.uk](mailto:nnm@varndean.ac.uk)

Programme Leader for A Level Business

**FAQs**

1. **Do I need to buy a textbook?**

No! The library has the key recommended textbooks available online so you can access them at home on a computer at any time. However, if you want a paper copy, browse the textbooks in the library and pick one that you like. But choose carefully, as new textbooks are expensive! The librarians can advise you – there is a librarian that specifically looks after the business resources. We will introduce her early on in the course so you know who to ask.

1. **What equipment will I need for Business lessons?**  
   The important thing is to be organised!  
   A very basic calculator and a pen is a must. Keeping your notes organised is a challenge and we will guide you, using Google Sites to help you systematise your class notes and work. Having an A4 ring binder with subject dividers at home is important to keep any written notes, class handouts and marked tests in. A portable folder to keep class notes safe is also very useful – save your notes getting scrunched in the bottom of your bag!
2. **How much homework will I get each week?**  
   You will be expected to complete between four and five hours of planned study each week outside of lessons. A proportion of this will be questions to complete. The rest of the time should be used to complete the guided reading and notetaking tasks, update your terminology glossary, and extension reading.
3. **How will I be assessed during the course?**  
   The final grade is assessed through three exams. In order to prepare you for that challenge, you will be tested regularly in class. These will be past exam questions and marked using A Level criterion. The test weeks are published as part of your scheme of work and we will advise you as to the content you should revise in advance.
4. **What trips are planned?**  
   We will visit a number of businesses during the year to help you bring the classroom theory to life. It is recommended that you take advantage of the trips as they really help you to understand the course content. Currently we are looking at Gatwick and Brighton & Hove Albion.

If you have any questions before lessons start, drop me an email.

**A Level Business Course Start Activities**

**Activity 1 (approx. 2 hours):**

You need to complete some research on two businesses.

The first should be one that people across the country would recognise.

The second needs to be one local to you, ideally a relatively small business known mostly to local people. This may involve you contacting the business in order to find out the information needed. Some of the information, a small business may be reluctant to divulge. If this is the case, using some online research, estimate the figures typically a business of that type might have.

Fill in the table below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Business 1**  Name: | **Business 2**  Name: |
| Description of what it sells/does: | Description of what it sells/does: |
| Who owns the business?   * Founder * Private investors * Shareholders   Notes: | Who owns the business?   * Founder * Private investors * Shareholders   Notes: |
| What is its annual revenue? | What is its annual revenue? |
| What is its annual profit? | What is its annual profit? |
| How many employees? | How many employees? |
| Does the business have a positive or negative impact on:   * its customers?   How?   * its employees?   How?   * the community?   How?   * the environment?   How? | Does the business have a positive or negative impact on:   * its customers?   How?   * its employees?   How?   * the community?   How?   * the environment?   How? |
| What competition for its customers does the business face? Who are its main competitors? | What competition for its customers does the business face? Who are its main competitors? |

**Activity 2 (approx. 1 hour):**

Using either online academic business sites or google, define the following terms with one sentence for each.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Profit |  |
| Revenue |  |
| Management |  |
| Leadership |  |
| Stakeholder |  |
| Efficiency |  |
| Added value |  |
| Unit costs |  |

**Activity 3 (optional – approx. 1 hour):**

Investigate a non-for-profit organisation of your choice – an organisation that operates for purposes other than profit, such as charitable, educational or social causes. It could be a charity you know, local to you, or an organisation that has played a role in your life, or you are interested in.

Produce a brief presentation (e.g. PowerPoint, Google slides or Prezi) that answers the following questions:

* What’s the organisation’s mission or goals?
* How does it generate revenue or finance itself?
* What are its main costs?
* What does it do?
* What other organisations do similar things?  
  Who does it compete with? What does it compete for?