

Your guide to our
Edexcel

AS and A level **Business** first teaching 2015



Hello and welcome

We've listened to feedback from all parts of the Business subject community, including Higher Education, and used this opportunity of curriculum change to redesign qualifications that reflect the demands of a truly modern and evolving business environment – qualifications that enable your students to apply themselves and give them the skills to succeed in their chosen pathway.

This guide gives you an overview of our new qualifications and sets out the ways in which you can co-teach **AS and A level Business** from 2015 as we know from our conversations with you that this is important.

Take a look through this guide to find out more about:

- what **the new AS and A level Business specification looks like** – pages 3-5
- **approaches to teaching AS and A level Business** – pages 6-7
- why you may want to **continue teaching AS** – pages 6-7
- **the comprehensive resources and support we are planning** for you to make sure that you are in a position to provide your students with the very best opportunity to succeed and get the results they deserve – page 8.

We look forward to meeting you at our launch events and answering any questions you might have about our new specification.



Isla Billett
Business Product
Manager



Colin Leith
Business Subject
Advisor



Our new Edexcel AS and A level Business

- **Clear and coherent structure** – four engaging and up-to-date themes, assessed through three externally examined papers.
- **Continuous progression** – students are introduced to core business concepts and develop a broad understanding of how businesses work before they consider the decision-making tools that help business people move towards a more scientific approach to management.
- **Helps develop a holistic understanding of business** – students investigate, analyse and evaluate business opportunities and issues. Building on this, and by using both qualitative and quantitative methods, they are encouraged to take a more strategic view of their decisions and recommendations.
- **Provides a real business focus** – the new specification content encourages students to contextualise the theory and respond to real-life business case studies and evidence in the assessments.
- **Reflects today's global world** – in the second year of study, students develop an understanding of current global issues that impact on business, preparing them for their next steps in today's global world.
- **Develops transferable skills for progression to higher education** – students will develop a multitude of skills, including numeracy, communication and an understanding of research methodology in order to make a smooth transition to the next level of study.
- **Supports progression from KS4** – the content builds on the understanding developed at KS4, avoiding unnecessary repetition while also ensuring that learners new to the subject are appropriately supported.



Your at-a-glance guide to AS and A level Business

A Level

**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 4
Global business**
Globalisation
Global markets and business expansion
Global marketing
Global industries and companies
(multinational corporations)

**Theme 3
Business decisions and strategy**
Business objectives and strategy
Business growth
Decision-making techniques
Influences on business decisions
Assessing competitiveness
Managing change

**Paper 1
Marketing, people and global businesses**
Questions drawn from **Theme 1** and **Theme 4**
100 marks, 2 hours
35% of qualification
Section A: one data response question, including one extended open-response question
Section B: one data response question, including one extended open-response question

**Paper 2
Business activities, decisions and strategy**
Questions drawn from **Theme 2** and **Theme 3**
100 marks, 2 hours
35% of qualification
Section A: one data response question, including one extended open-response question
Section B: one data response question, including one extended open-response question

**Paper 3
Investigating business in a competitive environment**
Questions drawn from **all themes**
100 marks, 2 hours
30% of qualification
Two data response questions broken down into a number of parts, each including one extended open-response question
This paper has a pre-released context to enable students to investigate an industry or market in which businesses operate.

AS

**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

**Paper 1
Marketing and people**
Questions in Section A and B drawn from **Theme 1**
Question in Section C also drawn from **Theme 2**
80 marks, 1.5 hours
50% of qualification
Section A: one data response question
Section B: one data response question
Section C: one extended open-response question

**Paper 2
Managing business activities**
Questions in Section A and B drawn from **Theme 2**
Question in Section C also drawn from **Theme 1**
80 marks, 1.5 hours
50% of qualification
Section A: one data response question
Section B: one data response question
Section C: one extended open-response question

The content for Theme 1 and Theme 2 is the same for the AS and A level qualifications so even though they are separate qualifications you can co-teach them.

AS and A level: key points

- **AS and A level have been 'decoupled'**, which means that AS marks or grades do not count towards the full A level.
- **Students can still take AS exams at the end of Year 12** – but if they go on to do a full A level course, they will be assessed on the full content of that A level at the end of their study. This means that students will need to sit all three A level papers.
- **A level assessments will be set at a higher level of demand than AS assessments.** This means that while students will be assessed on some of the same content at A level that they were at AS, the questions they encounter will look different.

Approaches to teaching AS and A level Business

Separate AS and A level classes

The benefits of a separate, linear A level course include:

- more flexibility in structuring the course – for example, teaching all marketing topics (from Theme 1 and Theme 4) together or following the specification sequentially and using AS papers for a mock exam at the end of year 12
- greater opportunity for students to make links between different elements of the course as they progress – for example, across business functions (how businesses work) and business strategy (how businesses make decisions and respond strategically)
- more time for teaching and learning in the first year.

Running separate classes requires students to decide at the start whether to follow AS or A level, and potentially limits their options for switching later on.

	September 2015	January 2016	June 2016	September 2016	January 2017	June 2017
Separate AS class	Theme 1	Theme 2	Enter for AS level qualification			
Separate A level class	Theme 1, 2, 3 and 4 (integrated approach)					Enter for A level qualification

Co-teaching AS and A level

Co-teaching AS and A level provides flexibility for you and your students. Centres co-teaching the AS will deliver Theme 1 and Theme 2 in the first year. The themes could be run in parallel or taught sequentially, depending on what is most appropriate for staffing and timetabling within each centre.

	September 2015	January 2016	June 2016	September 2016	January 2017	June 2017
AS	Theme 1	Theme 2	Enter for AS level qualification			
A level option 1	Theme 1	Theme 2	Mock for Themes 1 and 2	Theme 3	Theme 4	Enter for A level qualification
A level option 2	Theme 1	Theme 2	Enter for AS level qualification	Theme 3	Theme 4	Enter for A level qualification

Why offer AS?

We know that many of you will want to continue to offer AS Business alongside the full A level, despite the fact that it no longer contributes to the full A level grade. You have told us that:

Breadth is important to students

– some students may wish to supplement a three-A level programme of study with an additional AS in Business due to their interest in the subject, even though they might not want to take it further. They may well know this at the outset of their course.

Some students will make the decision later

– some students may wish to start on four A level courses knowing they are likely to ‘drop down’ to three full A levels in their second year. They may wish to postpone making this decision until they have taken one or more AS qualifications and seen the results.

AS gives focus to Year 12 and would allow you to track student progress

– some students may decide from the beginning of the course that they want to take the full A level, but entering them for the AS could provide a useful way of tracking their progress at the end of the first year of the course.

It also gives universities visibility of a student’s progress in a subject



Supporting you

Plan and implement the new specification with your free package of support.



Planning

Your **Getting Started** guide will provide an overview of the new AS and A level specifications to help you get to grips with the changes to content and assessment, and to help you understand what these changes mean for you and your students. You will also receive a **course planner** and **scheme of work** that you can adapt to suit your department, and **mapping documents** to highlight key differences between the new and 2008 specifications.

Teaching and learning

There will be lots of **free teaching and learning support** to help you deliver the new specifications: suggested **resource lists, case studies** and **activities**, a **student guide** and **materials for your options evenings**.

Understanding the standard

Exemplar student work with examiner commentaries for the **sample assessment materials** will help your students to understand the standard for the grade they are targeting.

Tracking student progress

ResultsPlus provides the most detailed analysis available of your students' exam performance. It can help you identify topics and skills where students could benefit from further learning. **Additional assessment materials** for A level will also be available to support formative assessments.

Support

Our **subject advisor service**, led by Colin Leith, and online community will ensure you receive help and guidance from us as well as sharing ideas and information with each other. You can sign up to receive e-newsletters from Colin Leith to keep up-to-date with qualification updates, and product and service news.

Learn more at:

www.edexcel.com/alevelbusiness2015