JOHN PORT SPENCER ACADEMY

Business

Curriculum Overview

Key Stage – KS5 - Y13

Our curriculum is carefully sequenced to ensure cumulative knowledge and progression. Each unit builds on the last, with clear concepts that students must grasp to progress. We define end points to illustrate what mastery looks like by year-end.

Location of resources:	**Shared Drive > Business Studies > Teaching Resources**
Curriculum intent and rationale:	Students in A Level Business Studies will be expected to learn the material outlined in the OCR specification. The 8 topics have been broken down into Core Content areas. In Year 12 the students will cover 5 main topics and continue into Year 13 to complete the other 3. Some topics will be revisited in Year 13 and extended. Finance has been planned in Year 13 for example as it requires more underpinning knowledge from previous topics. Exam technique will be covered throughout as this is crucial for success. Revision time throughout and will be allocated before Mock examinations and also at the end of Year 13 before the final three examinations.
National Curriculum Links:	By the end of the course, students should be able to: ● know and understand business concepts, business terminology, business objectives, the integrated nature of business activity and the impact of business on individuals and wider society ● apply knowledge and understanding to contemporary business issues and to different types and sizes of businesses in local, national and global contexts ● develop as enterprising individuals with the ability to think commercially and creatively to demonstrate business acumen, and draw on evidence to make informed business decisions and solve business problems ● develop as effective and independent students, and as critical and reflective thinkers with enquiring minds ● use an enquiring, critical approach to make informed judgements ● investigate and analyse real business opportunities and issues to construct well-argued, well-evidenced, balanced and structured arguments, demonstrating their depth and breadth of understanding of business ● develop and apply quantitative skills relevant to business, including using and interpreting data

What content needs to be covered? Key Knowledge and skills / misconceptions to address
By the end of the year students will know:

Half Term 1	Half Term 2	Half Term 3	Half Term 4	Half Term 5	Half Term 6
Finance Students will cover the key topics within the A Level unit on finance. They will develop the various exam structures and continue to practice exam technique. **Students will recap, retrieve and build on key knowledge and learn key knowledge and skills about:** Knowledge: ● Sources of finance ● Cost, revenue, profit ● Budgets and variances ● Accounting concepts ● Cash flow ● Break even ● Investment appraisal ● Financial accounts ● Ratio analysis Quantitative skills: ● Calculation ● Interpretation	**External Influences** Students will cover the key topics within the A Level unit on management of the impact of external influences. They will develop the various exam structures and continue to practice exam technique. **Students will recap, retrieve and build on key knowledge and learn key knowledge and skills about:** Knowledge: ● Supply & demand ● Political factors ● Economic factors ● Social factors ● Technological factors ● Legal factors ● Environmental & ethical factors ● Market forces ● Competition ● Market dominance ● Globalisation ● International & free trade & the EU	**Business Objectives & Strategy (continued from Y12)** Students will cover the key topics within the Y13 content of strategy. They will develop the various exam structures and continue to practice exam technique. **Students will recap, retrieve and build on key knowledge and learn key knowledge and skills about:** Knowledge: ● Forecasting ● Decision making ● Decision tress ● Models of strategic choice ● Ansoff's matrix ● Measures of financial & non-financial performance Quantitative skills: ● Calculation ● Interpretation ● Calculate and interpret the Net Present Value of an investment	**Change Management** Students will cover the key topics within the A Level unit on change management. They will develop the various exam structures and continue to practice exam technique. **Students will recap, retrieve and build on key knowledge and learn key knowledge and skills about:** Knowledge: ● Causes of change ● Effects of change ● Managing change Quantitative skills: ● Calculation ● Interpretation ● Compare profitability, costs, or revenue pre- and post-change. ● Used to assess how changes (like new equipment) affect the break-even point.	**Revision & Exams** Students will complete past papers in class and at home. Students will peer mark and have class discussion on the best strategy to answer questions. Practice planning essays using a quick structure (e.g. Point, Application, Analysis, Evaluation) to manage time. Focus on contextual analysis—what does the data tell you about how change is impacting the business? ALWAYS Apply – use names, numbers, trends from the case. Avoid generic answers – examiners want specificity. Use connectives: "this leads to…", "as a result…", "this means that…" Don't sit on the fence – give clear evaluation and judgment. Practice timing – especially for 15 and 20-mark questions.	

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• calculate, use and understand percentages and percentage changes • calculate, use and understand ratios, averages and fractions • construct and interpret a range of standard graphical forms •interpret index numbers • calculate cost, revenue, profit and break-even • calculate investment appraisal outcomes and interpret results* •interpret values of price and income elasticity of demand • use and interpret quantitative and non-quantitative information in order to make decisions •interpret, apply and analyse information in written, graphical and numerical forms. • Students should be able to calculate actual variance and percentage variance, comment on the likely causes of such variance and, where appropriate, make recommendations to address the issues revealed. When carrying out variance analysis students need to refer to variances as 'adverse' or 'favourable	Quantitative skills: • Calculation • Interpretation • Calculate % change in sales due to interest rate shifts • Use inflation rate to adjust revenue/cost forecasts • Compare exchange rate effects on import/export prices • Impact of corporation tax rate changes on net profit Estimate cost of complying with new legislation • Use market research/statistics to identify changes in demand • Calculate market size and growth rates due to demographic shifts • Use market research/statistics to identify changes in demand • Calculate market size and growth rates due to demographic shifts • Forecast cost savings from energy efficiency measures • Estimate environmental taxes or carbon pricing impact • Use market share data to assess competitive position • Conduct break-even and margin analysis vs competitors	using the data provided." • Using decision tree analysis, recommend a strategy and justify your decision. • Evaluate the importance of setting SMART objectives for a growing business. • Analyse the impact of a fall in market share on a firm's corporate objectives.	• Used when planning change to identify the shortest time to implement change and dependencies • Used when assessing risky decisions, like whether to implement a new strategy. • Helps decide whether to invest in a change (e.g. tech upgrade, relocation).	Synoptic questions require you to: • Link together content from across different themes (Marketing, Finance, HR, Operations, External Environment, Strategy, etc.). • Apply knowledge to unseen case studies. • Evaluate real-world business decisions from multiple perspectives. Key Synoptic Themes to Master Decision-Making Models ○ Tannenbaum Schmidt Continuum ○ Blake Mouton Grid ○ Scientific vs. intuitive decision-making ○ Stakeholder mapping ○ Ansoff's Matrix ○ SWOT & PESTLE ○ Boston Matrix Functional Interdependence ○ How marketing, operations, finance, and HR work together. ○ E.g., launching a product = requires marketing insight + production	

				planning + financial backing + trained staff. ◦ ◦ Strategic vs. Tactical Decisions ◦ Can you evaluate the long-term impact of short-term decisions? ◦ Consider objectives, opportunity cost, risks, and external factors. Quantitative vs. Qualitative Data ◦ Interpreting financial ratios, break-even, ARR, etc. ◦ But also weighing non-numerical insights like employee morale, brand reputation, etc.	
What content needs to be covered? Key Knowledge and skills / misconceptions to address By the end of the year students will know:					
Key Vocabulary: • Sources of finance • Generally Accepted Accounting Practice (GAAP) • Accounting conventions • Interest • Shareholder • Asset • Revenue • Costs • Cash flow • Net cash flow • Full, absorption & marginal costing • Cost & profit centres • Contribution	**Key Vocabulary:** • Market • Competition • Monopoly, oligopoly, perfect competition • Supply • Demand • Equilibrium • Excess & shortage • Market forces • Barriers to entry • Market dominance • Regulation • Multinational • International trade	**Key Vocabulary:** • Porter's five forces • Porter's generic strategies • Competitive advantage • Resource utilisation • Qualitative forecasting • Quantitative forecasting • Decision making • Volatility • Economic outcomes • Decision tree • Ansoff's matrix	**Key Vocabulary:** • Change management • Lewin's Change Management • McKinsey 7-S • Kotter's 8 Step Change • Reluctance **Challenge:** All students are challenged with high level questions and scenarios about New leadership Mergers/takeovers Restructuring Introduction of new technology Responding to external pressures (PESTLE)		

• Stepped fixed cost • Investment appraisal • Budget • Variance • Ratios **Challenge:** All students are challenged with high level questions and Case Studies: Use real or fictional business scenarios requiring calculation and interpretation (e.g., impact of poor liquidity on a growing business). What-if Analysis: Pose questions like, *"What happens to ROCE if profits increase but capital employed also rises?"* Ratio Interpretation: Ask students to evaluate ratios in context — e.g., *"A business has a current ratio of 3:1. Why might this be a problem?"* **Misconceptions:** • What the accounting conventions are. • Overdrafts are just like loans. • Businesses can always get more money for investment.	• Trade bloc • Eurozone • Emerging markets • GPD Business cycle • sustainability **Challenge:** All students are challenged with high level questions and Case studies: Use recent business news (e.g. Brexit impact, COVID-19 recovery, minimum wage changes) How might changing interest rates affect different types of firms (e.g., start-ups vs. multinationals)? How might inflation affect a business's decision to expand internationally? **Misconceptions:** • That we are in the EU. • The meaning of a trade block linked to being blocked.	**Challenge:** All students are challenged with questions and scenarios to propose alternative strategies or objectives based on changing market conditions. Set up a debate on whether businesses should prioritize profit maximization over ethical objectives. **Misconceptions:** • Difference between porter's two models. • Difference between Porter and Ansoff's matrices. • The calculation within decision trees.	Understanding the perspectives of different stakeholders (employees, shareholders, customers) and predicting their reactions can be complex. Practice linking change to long-term objectives, e.g. how changing to a lean production model affects competitiveness. **Misconceptions:** • Difference between each model. • That staff are accepting of change. • Difference between causes and effects of change		

Previous learning that is particularly relevant:

These half terms will rely heavily on learning from last year. Students will need to link to prior topics of ownership,marketing, HR and operations, due to the synoptic focus at A Level.	These half terms will rely heavily on learning from last year. Students will need to link to prior topics of ownership,marketing, HR and operations, due to the synoptic focus at A Level.	

Future Learning - How content prepares students for future units or Key Stage 5:

These half terms prepare students for the upcoming topic of change management, due to the synoptic focus at A Level and prepare students for their external examinations.	These half terms will prepare students for their external examinations.	

Outcomes:
By the end of the year pupils will be able to solve/create/produce/write:

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By the end of Y13, students should be developing their exam technique, ensuring that the OCR assessment objectives are stable:

Knowledge AO1:
- Definition at the start of long answer questions.
- Use of key terms throughout the answer.

Application AO2:
- Referencing information from the Items.
- Using the context to further points made, not just adding them into answers.

Analysis AO3:
- Chains of reasoning - usually at least 3 connectives for long answer questions.

Evaluation AO4:
- Conclusions show a student’s decision and their reasons why - they should add new points that further the main body.

Assessment Strategy How we know our students are knowing and remembering more –
Data from hunting, not fishing, formative and summative assessment/s is used to adapt teaching and provide targeted challenge and intervention, supporting SEND and disadvantaged pupils.

Formative:
- Recall knowledge tests - basic content
- Questioning - whole class/ groups/ individual
- Homework - knowledge based
- Development tasks - additional gold stars
- DO NOWs - prior learning and prerequisite

Summative (& cumulative):
- **Half term 1** - knowledge checks and end of unit assessments on finance
- **Half term 2** - knowledge checks and end of unit assessments on external influences
- **Half term 3** - knowledge checks and end of unit assessments on business strategy
- **Half term 4** - knowledge checks and end of unit assessments on change management
- **Half term 5** - A Level External Examinations X3

SEND students will be offered more scaffolding for exam technique to begin with and may be removed at a slower pace to others in the class, when ready.

Opportunities to revisit past learning:
Retrieval tasks are presented to students each lesson in the form of a DO NOW task and during lessons. Homework tasks require previous knowledge and many of the informal exam questions in lessons will cover multiple topics from previous lessons.

Opportunities for homework (including apps):
- BBC Bitesize
- KS5 knowledge organisers
- Two Teachers videos
- Tutor2U blogs, posts, revision materials and videos
- Seneca
- Engaging with news articles
- Taking the Biz
- Completing Past paper questions

How is the curriculum adapted to meet the needs of SEND and disadvantaged pupils, while maintaining high expectations?

Repetition and retrieval tasks are embedded into learning and woven through synoptic tasks on current content to reinforce key ideas. Students are encouraged to bring in real world examples from their own experiences to support their understanding and these are often shared with the class, so that students can gather multiple perspectives and examples. This helps to embed the content and learning of business key vocabulary and ensures that every learner gets involved, making it more inclusive for SEND and disadvantaged students. Scaffolding is given to all to learn new exam techniques, but may be removed more slowly for some to build their confidence.

We have inclusive discussions throughout and look at different types of Businesses and economic topics. We know our students and use seating plans to support learning for all. Teachers also adapt lessons and scaffold where needed, especially for exam technique for SEND students.

Wider Curriculum and Enrichment – cultural capital and real world application -

Enriching experiences:
By the end of Y12, students will have experienced:
- Discussions and tasks around many different businesses from small sole traders through to multinational companies.

Literacy, Oracy and disciplinary language:
Literacy:

Cross-Curricular opportunities / Opportunities to develop ‘character’:
Many opportunities for cross curricular learning. Students are encouraged to discuss what they know from other lessons. Links to maths for finance topics, links to PRE for ethics topics, links to geography for globalisation and environmental topics.

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- Discussions and tasks around many different entrepreneurs, looking at their skills and backgrounds (not every millionaire came from wealth).

Our curriculum supports the school value of:

Joy	*Foster enthusiasm and engagement by exploring different businesses that pique students' individual interests. Students are able to use these businesses as examples in their work to further their understanding.*
Progress	*We monitor and support progress through regular formative feedback, scaffolded writing tasks, and clear success criteria. Students are guided to develop analytical skills step-by-step, with targeted interventions and personalised support to ensure every learner moves forward - regardless of starting point.*
Success	*We celebrate success by giving verbal praise, phone calls home, reward points, postcards and showing student work to the class.*
Act with care, kindness, respect, and integrity	*We build meaningful connections with our students by allowing them to make decisions about their learning that interest them (through exploration of different businesses and entrepreneurs). We aim to create a supportive, inclusive classroom and work hard to develop relationships with the students.*

Literacy skills are developed through reading of texts within exam questions - these are usually several paragraphs of information that need to be read thoroughly and interpreted/ analysed.

Reading and Interpreting Case Studies

A Level Business exams use **case studies** and real-world contexts. You must:

- Extract key information quickly
- Understand what a business does and its current position
- Identify internal and external influences

Oracy:
Students are encouraged to verbalise their thought process and reasoning behind this, strengthening their oracy skills. They also give presentations to the class through group projects to practice their oracy skills for both formal and informal settings.

Engage in Class Discussions – Practice using business vocabulary confidently.

Role-play Business Scenarios – Simulate meetings or sales pitches.

Practice Explaining Key Terms Aloud – Teach others or record yourself.

Debate Business Issues – Take different sides on ethical or strategic decisions.

Work on Voice, Clarity, and Confidence – Especially for formal presentations.

Disciplinary Language:
Exam command words are practiced regularly with students and subject terminology is revisited frequently in lessons and through homework tasks.

Analytical and Evaluation Language

Examiners expect structured arguments. Use connectives and evaluative phrases to show depth of thinking.

Analytical Phrases:

- "This leads to…"
- "As a result…"
- "Which means that…"

Character developed by group work and presentations, money management discussions during finance topics and entrepreneurial skills topics.

Our curriculum supports personal development by:
Personal development is supported through money management, ethical discussions, communication and explorations of gender and religion in relation to marketing.

Careers / Employability skills:
Listening – class and group discussions, presentations for others to make notes on all encourage students to listen to others and see their view.

Speaking – class and group discussions, and presentations encourage students to develop their speaking skills (both formal and informal).

Problem solving – students have to analyse and evaluate business situations, encouraging them to problem solve for a business.

Aiming high – regularly practice exam technique, and encouraged to always improve and their verbal responses may be challenged in order to think more deeply.

Critical thinking – students have to think critically in order to effectively make recommendations for businesses and are encouraged to practice this skill over time.

Staying positive – students discuss topics of motivation, which explores ways to stay positive and research entrepreneurs from different backgrounds which helps to see mindset over circumstances.

Leadership – leading group activities or on projects/ presentations. Students will support one another and lead on exam feedback or self/ peer assessments.

Teamwork – collaborative tasks through group work, projects/ presentations encourage teamwork.

Creativity – creativity in coming up with options to recommend to businesses is encouraged and students' creativity is enhanced during marketing topics.

Employment Sectors discussed include:
We explore many sectors as part of the curriculum and students are encouraged through research tasks and projects to find out about others.

University Pathways

A Level Business Studies is excellent preparation for degrees such as:

- "This affects the business by…"

Evaluative Phrases:

- "However, this depends on…"
- "In the short term… whereas in the long term…"
- "A limitation of this is…"
- "This is significant because…"
- "The impact will vary depending on…"

Command Word Awareness

Understanding the disciplinary meaning of **command words** is essential:

- **Describe** – Give a detailed account.
- **Explain** – Provide reasons for something.
- **Analyse** – Break down an issue and show cause-effect relationships.
- **Evaluate** – Make a judgement supported by evidence.

- Business Management
- Marketing
- Accounting & Finance
- Economics
- Human Resource Management
- Entrepreneurship
- Law (with business modules)
- International Business

Career Options (Straight After A Levels or After Uni)

Business and Management Roles

- Business Analyst
  Management Consultant
- Operations Manager
  Project Coordinator

Marketing and Advertising

- Marketing Executive
- Social Media Manager
- Market Research Analyst
- Brand Manager

Finance and Accounting

- Accountant (with further qualifications like AAT, ACCA, or university)
- Finance Assistant
- Banking Advisor

- Credit Analyst

Human Resources (HR)

- HR Assistant
- Recruitment Consultant
- Training & Development Coordinator

Sales and Retail

- Sales Executive
- Retail Manager
- Customer Service Manager
- E-commerce Specialist

Entrepreneurship

- Start your own business or freelance venture—especially with knowledge in marketing, finance, and operations.

Apprenticeship Opportunities

A Level Business Studies is also useful for:

- Higher or Degree Apprenticeships in Business Administration, Finance, Digital Marketing, etc.
- Opportunities with major companies like PwC, KPMG, Google, Barclays, and others offering business apprenticeships.

Curriculum impact is evaluated through pupil study, work scrutiny, and progress data. Findings inform regular curriculum review to ensure continuous improvement.

When was this curriculum last reviewed? Include date	What changes were made and why?	How is ongoing improvement ensured?
Summer 2025	Schemes of Learning edited to accommodate additional teachers in split classes and changes to teaching hours of current teachers. A Level Business content and exam technique have been updated to accommodate updates from training and marking courses and changes to the specification.	QA monitoring, faculty meetings, Climate walks, Observations, Book Audits, CPD, Moderations, recalling exam scripts, Examiners reports, Faculty meetings.