A Level Business Studies Transition Work

CWheeler

TARPORLEY HIGH SCHOOL

Welcome to A Level Business

Congratulations on choosing A Level Business!

Business is one of the most relevant subjects you can study because it is all around you. Every day you interact with businesses through social media, streaming services, online shopping, food retailers, transport providers and technology companies.

The most successful A Level Business students are those who:
- Follow business news regularly
- Understand how businesses respond to change
- Use real company examples in their answers
- Develop strong analytical and evaluation skills
- Show curiosity about the world around them

This transition booklet is designed to help bridge the gap between GCSE and A Level and prepare you for September. At Tarporley, we follow the Pearson Edexcel specification which contains four key themes across the two years.

Useful websites:
Tutor2u Business - Studying Edexcel A-Level Business | tutor2u

BBC Business News - Business | Latest News & Updates | BBC News

Financial Times - Home - Financial Times

Reuters Business - Business News | Today's International Headlines | Reuters

Part 1: Essential Business Knowledge

Create a glossary of the following terms.

For each term include:
- A definition
- A formula (where required)
- A real business example

Foundation Knowledge:
Revenue, Profit, Costs (Fixed and Variable), Break-even, Contribution, Cash Flow, Market Share, Productivity, Stakeholder, Economy of Scale.

A Level Challenge Terms:
Inflation, Interest Rates, Exchange Rates, Supply Chain, Porter's Five Forces, Ansoff Matrix, Boston Matrix, Capacity Utilisation, Labour Turnover, ROCE, Current Ratio, Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), ESG and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

Part 2: Companies You Should Know

Summer Challenge 1: Research each company's ownership type.
Summer Challenge 2: Identify one major opportunity and one major threat facing each business.

Technology & Digital:
Apple, Microsoft, Google (Alphabet), Nvidia, Meta, Amazon
Retail:
Tesco, Aldi, Lidl, Marks & Spencer, JD Sports, Shein
Automotive & Manufacturing:
Tesla, BYD, Toyota, Rolls-Royce Holdings, Airbus
Consumer Brands:
Nike, Coca-Cola, Starbucks, Unilever, Lego
UK Businesses:
Greggs, John Lewis Partnership, Barclays, BBC, EasyJet
Sustainability & Energy:
Shell, Octopus Energy, National Grid, Orsted

Part 3: Keeping Up With Business News

A Level Business students should aim to spend 10–15 minutes several times a week reading business news. Most of these have Instagram and TikTok too, so it's even easier to keep up to date with them!

Recommended Websites:
BBC Business, Reuters, Financial Times (Tarporley students have a free subscription for this), The Economist, Guardian Business, Sky News Business.

Recommended Podcasts:
The Rest is Money, BBC Wake Up To Money, FT News Briefing, The Diary of a CEO.

Recommended YouTube Channels:

TLDR's New Channel: TLDR Business

Business Short Topic Videos - YouTube

Two Teachers - YouTube

Economics Explained - YouTube

Part 4: Suggested Summer Reading

Choose ONE of the following books and write a summary of what you learned.

- The Everything Store – Brad Stone
- Shoe Dog – Phil Knight
- How I Built This – Guy Raz
- Atomic Habits – James Clear
- The Squiggly Career – Sarah Ellis and Helen Tupper

Part 5: Developing A Level Answers

At A Level, simply stating a fact is not enough.

You must demonstrate:
• Knowledge
• Application
• Analysis
• Evaluation

Example Question:
Tesla is considering lowering the price of its electric vehicles in order to increase sales. Assess whether this would be a good strategy.

Basic Response:
"If Tesla lowers prices, customers may buy more cars. This could increase sales revenue."

Stronger Response:
"If Tesla lowers prices, demand may increase because its vehicles become more affordable compared with rival brands such as BYD and Volkswagen. Higher sales volumes could help Tesla spread fixed costs across more units, potentially reducing average costs. However, lower prices may reduce profit margins and customers may begin to perceive the brand as less premium. Therefore, the success of this strategy depends upon whether the increase in sales outweighs the reduction in profit per vehicle."

Reflection:
Identify where context, analysis and evaluation have been used.

The Summer Project

Task 1: Business Glossary
Create definitions and formulas for all terms in Part 1.

Task 2: Company Fact Files
Choose THREE businesses from the company list.
Create a fact file (maximum 2 sides of A4 or 10 slides per company).
Include:

- Who they are and what they sell
- Countries they operate in
- Revenue, profit and employee numbers
- Ownership type
- Two recent news stories from the past 12 months
- Future plans
- Two major competitors

Task 3: Follow Business News
Keep a log of FIVE business stories over the summer.
For each story include:

- Date
- Company involved
- Summary (50 words)
- Why it matters

Task 4: Book or Podcast Review
Choose either one business book or three podcast episodes.
Write:

- A summary
- Three things learned
- One question it made you think about

Task 5: Explore the Edexcel Specification
Download and read the specification.
Highlight familiar topics, identify new topics and write five questions you would like answered during Year 12.

Final Challenge
In no more than 500 words answer:
"What do you think will be the biggest challenge facing businesses over the next 10 years?"

Consider:
Artificial Intelligence, Climate Change, Global Competition, Skills Shortages, Inflation, Changing Consumer Behaviour and Cyber Security.
Support your answer with real business examples.

Good luck and enjoy your summer.