

Switching to OCR from AQA

Introduction

We are really excited about our GCE Business qualification. Whether taking on the AS or the full A Level, this fantastic course is a great qualification for those with an interest in the subject. Why choose Business?

- The 'Big Ideas' of Business are covered,
- The topics are selected and structured to underpin the knowledge and understanding needed for the next generation of Business people,
- Business is enjoyable to teach and learn, giving students the essentials for related higher education courses as well as many transferable, marketable skills,
- There are many opportunities for 'hands-on' practical, linking to our flexible practical assessment model,
- The topics are presented in a clear and logical linear order.

Our offer

- Our A Level Business team, Deborah and Elisabeth, are passionate about business and education. With teaching and industry experience, they are fully committed to supporting centres' delivery of Business.
- We have produced a wide range of [support materials](#) from teacher guides to delivery guides, lesson elements, practical activities, candidate exemplars and more.
- Join our conversation on the [OCR Community](#) and [@OCR_BusEcon](#) to talk about and share good practice.

[#ALevelBusiness](#) [#H431](#)



Key differences

| OCR Business | AQA Business |
|---|---|
| Detailed specification to give teachers and learners clear information about the level of breadth required. For example, distribution (place) p36 (OCR A Level specification) | Brief specification with less detail. For example, distribution (place) specification page 16 (AQA A Level specification) |
| Command words such as analyse, evaluate are included in the content of the specification to give teachers and learners clear information about the level of depth required. | Command words are not included with the content. |
| 15 multiple choice questions at both AS Level and A Level to allow breadth of coverage and consistency of format. | 10 multiple choice questions at AS Level and 15 at A Level. |
| No essay questions. All extended response questions use case study material. The highest tariff question on each paper is typically 15 to 20 marks. | Essays required at A Level. The highest tariff question on each paper is typically 20 to 25 marks. |
| In addition to the specimen papers we have a set of A Level practice papers available via our secure site which can be used as tests or mock exams. We also have over 150 section A exam style questions and answers available for use. | One set of specimen papers. |



Content

The content within the OCR Business specification covers the 'Big Ideas' of business and will be very familiar. We've laid it out in a logical progression to support co-teaching the AS level and teaching the A level in a linear way. If you are planning to co-teach the AS during year 1 then you may also wish to refer to our [specification mapping guide](#).

| OCR Business | AQA Business |
|---|--|
| <p>Introduction to Business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enterprise • Business sectors • Types of business • Franchises and franchisees • Business functions • Business size and growth • External growth | <p>3.1.2 Understanding different business forms (1 of the 4 content points: reasons for choosing different forms of business)</p> <p>3.9.1 Assessing a change in scale (4 of the 5 content points: reasons why businesses grow or retrench, difference between organic and external growth, impact of growth or retrenchment, methods and types of growth)</p> |
| <p>Business objectives and strategy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stakeholders and business objectives • Mission statements • Corporate social responsibility • Strategy and implementation • Business plan • Risk and uncertainty • Opportunity cost • Contingency plans and crisis management • Models of strategic choice • Measures of performance: financial and non-financial • Forecasting • Decision making and conflicts in business decision making • Decision trees | <p>3.1.1 Understanding the nature and purpose of business (4 of the 5 content points: why businesses exist, relationship between mission and objectives, why businesses set objectives)</p> <p>3.1.2 Understanding different business forms (2 of the 4 content points: role of shareholders, effects of ownership on mission, objectives, decisions and performance)</p> <p>3.2.2 Understanding management decision making (all 3 content points)</p> <p>3.2.3 Understanding the role and importance of stakeholders (all 4 content points)</p> <p>3.5.2 Analysing financial performance (1 of the 8 content points: use of data for financial decision making and planning)</p> |



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ansoff's matrix | <p>3.7.1 Mission, corporate objectives and strategy (5 of the 6 content points: influences on the mission of a business, influences on corporate objectives and decisions, distinction between strategy and tactics, links between mission, objectives and strategy, impact of strategic decision making on functional decision making)</p> <p>3.7.3 Analysing the existing internal position of a business to assess strengths and weaknesses: overall performance (all 4 content points)</p> <p>3.7.7 Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: the competitive environment</p> <p>3.8.1 Strategic direction: choosing which markets to compete in and what products to offer (both content points)</p> <p>3.8.2 Strategic positioning: choosing how to compete (all 5 content points)</p> <p>3.10.4 Problems with strategy and why strategies fail (all 7 content points)</p> |
| <p>External influences & change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The market, size and growth Demand and supply Market forces Physical and non-physical markets Competition Market dominance Global context International trade and free trade The EU Emerging markets and the global environment | <p>3.7.4 Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: political and legal change</p> <p>3.7.5 Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: economic change (all 4 content points required)</p> <p>3.7.6 Analysing the external environment to assess opportunities and threats: social and technological (both content points)</p> <p>3.9.2 Assessing innovation (1 of the 5 content points: protect innovation and</p> |



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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PEST factors • Digital revolution • Ethical, legal and environmental factors • External factors and influences • Causes, effect and managing change | <p>intellectual property)</p> <p>3.9.3 Assessing internationalisation (all 7 content points)</p> <p>3.9.4 Assessing greater use of digital technology (all 3 content points)</p> <p>3.10.1 Managing change (all 6 content points)</p> |
| <p>Accounting & finance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Sources of finance • Concepts • Costs, revenue and profit • Break-even analysis • Investment appraisal • Budgets and variances • Cash-flow • Working capital • Income statements • Statement of financial position • Ratio analysis • External influences and strategy | <p>3.1.1 Understanding the nature and purpose of business (1 or the 5 content points: measurement and importance of profit)</p> <p>3.5.1 Setting financial objectives (all 8 content points)</p> <p>3.5.2 Analysing financial performance (7 out of 8 content points: construct and analyse budgets and cash flow forecasts, the value of budgeting, construct and interpret break-even charts, calculate and illustrate on a break-even chart the effects of changes in price, output and cost, value of break-even analysis, analyse profitability, analyse timings of cash inflows and outflows)</p> <p>3.5.3 Making financial decisions: sources of finance (both content points)</p> <p>3.5.4 Making financial decisions: improving cash flow and profits (all 3 content points)</p> <p>3.7.2 Analysing the existing internal position of a business to assess strengths and weaknesses: financial ratio analysis (both content points)</p> <p>3.7.8 Analysing strategic options: investment appraisal (all 3 content points)</p> |



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|---|---|
| <p>HRM, workforce & management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Organisation • Communication • Workforce planning • Recruitment & selection • Training • Appraisal and workforce performance • Redundancy and dismissal • Functions of management • Leadership • Motivation • Employer/employee relations • External influences and strategy | <p>3.2.1 Understanding management, leadership and decision making (all 3 content points: what managers do, types of management and leadership styles and influences on these, effectiveness of different styles of management and leadership)</p> <p>3.4.3 Making operational decisions to improve performance: increasing efficiency and productivity (labour productivity only)</p> <p>3.4.5 Making operational decisions to improve performance: managing inventory and supply chains (use of temporary and part time employees only)</p> <p>3.6.1 Setting human resource objectives (both content points)</p> <p>3.6.2 Analysing human resource performance (both content points)</p> <p>3.6.3 Making human resource decisions: improving organisational design and managing the human resource flow (all 5 content points)</p> <p>3.6.4 Making human resource decisions: improving motivation and engagement (all 6 content points)</p> <p>3.6.5 Making human resource decisions: improving employer-employee relations (all 3 content points)</p> <p>3.10.3 Managing strategic implementation (4 of the 5 content points: implement strategy effectively, value of leadership in strategic implementation, value of communication in strategic implementation, importance of organisational structure in strategic implementation)</p> |



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|--|---|
| <p>Marketing & customer needs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Resources • Identifying customer needs • Anticipating consumer needs • Customers and consumers • The product life cycle • The marketing mix (product, price, place, promotion) • Service marketing • External influences and strategy | <p>3.3.1 Setting marketing objectives (both content points)</p> <p>3.3.2 Understanding markets and customers (all 7 content points)</p> <p>3.3.3 Making marketing decisions: segmentation, targeting, positioning (both content points)</p> <p>3.3.4 Making marketing decisions: using the marketing mix (all 8 content points)</p> <p>3.7.1 Mission, corporate objectives and strategy (1 of the 6 content points: value of SWOT analysis)</p> |
| <p>Operations management and production</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectives • Added value • Innovation, research and development • Methods of production • Services • Project management • Productivity • Economies and diseconomies of scale • Capacity utilisation and management • Stock control • Lean production • Technology • Internal and external quality standards • Services • Location and logistics • External influences and strategy | <p>3.4.1 Setting operational objectives (both content points)</p> <p>3.4.2 Analysing operational performance (all 3 content points)</p> <p>3.4.3 Making operational decisions to improve performance: increasing efficiency and productivity (all 8 content points)</p> <p>3.4.4 Making operational decisions to improve performance: improving quality (all 4 content points)</p> <p>3.4.5 Making operational decisions to improve performance: managing inventory and supply chains (all 6 content points)</p> <p>3.9.1 Assessing a change in scale (1 of the 5 content points: manage and overcome the problems of growth or retrenchment)</p> <p>3.9.2 Assessing innovation (4 of the 5 content points: pressures for innovation, value of innovation, ways of becoming an innovative organisation, impact of innovation strategy)</p> <p>3.10.3 Managing strategic implementation</p> |



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| | (1 of the 5 content points: value of network analysis) |
| <p>Appendix 5d: Quantitative skills annex</p> <p>These are identical across all awarding organisations</p> | <p>6 Annex: quantitative skills in business</p> <p>These are identical across all awarding organisations</p> |

Note: The main topics are similar; however there are some differences between the content required for OCR and for AQA. For example, the OCR specification includes opportunity cost and business sector while AQA includes corporate culture. Leadership and motivation theories also vary. There are some differences in calculations and the accounting formula for OCR are all included in our [guide to the financial accounting area of study](#).

Further details which are in the AQA specification but are not required for OCR include:

- 3.6.3 Hackman and Oldham's model of job design
- 3.7.3 Kaplan and Norton's Balanced Scorecard model and Elkington's Triple Bottom Line (Profit, People, Planet)
- 3.8.2 Bowman's strategic clock
- 3.9.4 Big data, data mining and enterprise resource planning (ERP)
- 3.10.4 Planned v emergent strategy and strategic drift are not directly referred to.



Assessment

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|--|---|
| <p>AS Paper 1: The local business environment 50% of AS 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 60 marks</p> <p>Section A multiple choice questions, 15 marks. Section B short, medium and extended answer questions (typically 1 to 20 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet, 45 marks.</p> | <p>AS Paper 1: Business 1 50% of AS 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 80 marks</p> <p>Section A multiple choice questions, 10 marks. Section B has medium answer questions (typically 4 to 6 marks), approx. 20 marks. Section C has two data response stimuli with questions (typically 9 to 16 marks), worth approx. 25 marks.</p> |
| <p>AS Paper 2: The wider business environment 50% of AS 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 60 marks</p> <p>Section A short answer questions (typically 2 to 4 marks), 20 marks. Section B short, medium and extended answer questions (typically 1 to 20 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet, 40 marks.</p> | <p>AS Paper 2: Business 2 50% of AS 1 hour 30 minutes written paper 80 marks</p> <p>Short, medium and extended answer questions (typically 3 to 20 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet.</p> |
| <p>A Level Paper 1: Operating in a local business environment 33.3% of A Level 2 hour written paper 80 marks</p> | <p>A Level Paper 1: Business 1 33.3% of A Level 2 hour written paper 100 marks</p> |



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| <p>Section A multiple choice questions, 15 marks.</p> <p>Section B short, medium and extended answer questions (typically 3 to 15 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet, 65 marks.</p> | <p>Section A multiple choice questions, 15 marks.</p> <p>Section B short and medium answer questions (typically 4 to 9 marks), 35 marks.</p> <p>Sections C and D two essay questions, 25 marks each.</p> |
| <p>A Level Paper 2: The UK business environment</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>2 hour written paper</p> <p>80 marks</p> <p>Section A short answer questions, 20 marks.</p> <p>Section B short, medium and extended answer questions (typically 4 to 15 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet, 60 marks.</p> | <p>A Level Paper 2: Business 2</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>2 hour written paper</p> <p>100 marks</p> <p>Short, medium and extended answer questions (typically between 3 and 20 marks) based data response stimulus material.</p> |
| <p>A Level Paper 3: The global business environment</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>2 hour written paper</p> <p>80 marks</p> <p>Short, medium and extended answer questions (typically 2 to 20 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet.</p> | <p>A Level Paper 3: Business 3</p> <p>33.3% of A Level</p> <p>2 hour written paper</p> <p>100 marks</p> <p>One compulsory case study followed by extended answer questions (typically 12 to 24 marks) based on information provided in a resource booklet.</p> |



Want to switch to OCR?

If you're an OCR-approved centre, all you need to do is download the specification and start teaching.

Your exams officer can complete an [intention to teach form](#) which enables us to provide appropriate support to them. When you're ready to enter your students, you just need to speak to your exams officer to:

1. Make estimated entries by 10 October so we can send you any early release materials, prepare the question papers and ensure we've got enough examiners.
2. Make final entries by 21 February

If you are not already an OCR-approved centre please refer your exams officer to the [centre approval section](#) of our admin guide.

Next steps

1. Familiarise yourself with the specification, sample assessment materials and teaching resources on the [GCE Business](#) qualification page of the OCR website.
2. Browse the delivery guides and other teaching and learning resources for teaching ideas and use the [Scheme of Work builder](#) to create your personal scheme of work.
3. [Get a login](#) for our secure extranet, [Interchange](#) – allows you to access the latest past/practice papers and use our results analysis service, [Active Results](#).
4. Sign up to receive [subject updates](#) by email.
5. Sign up to attend a [training event](#) or take part in webinars on specific topics running throughout the year and or our Q&A webinar sessions every half term.

