

# AS and A LEVEL

## *Delivery Guide*

H031/H431

Accredited

# ***BUSINESS***

Theme: Objectives and  
Strategy

August 2015



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# Introduction

Delivery guides are designed to represent a body of knowledge about teaching a particular topic and contain:

- Content: a clear outline of the content covered by the delivery guide;
- Thinking Conceptually: expert guidance on the key concepts involved, common difficulties students may have, approaches to teaching that can help students understand these concepts and how this topic links conceptually to other areas of the subject;
- Thinking Contextually: a range of suggested teaching activities using a variety of themes so that different activities can be selected that best suit particular classes, learning styles or teaching approaches.

If you have any feedback on this Delivery Guide or suggestions for other resources you would like OCR to develop, please email [resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk](mailto:resources.feedback@ocr.org.uk).

## KEY



Click to view associated resources within this document.



Click here

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**A Level**  
only

A Level content only

# Curriculum Content Business objectives

## **Business objectives**

- distinguish between organisational aims, corporate/business objectives, strategic objectives, tactical objectives and operational objectives
- explain the importance of setting SMART objectives
- explain what is meant by the hierarchy of objectives
- evaluate the impact and importance of setting aims and objectives
- explain how the sector in which a business operates affects its aims and objectives
- explain how objectives can be communicated
- evaluate the consequences of mis-communicating objectives to a business and its stakeholders
- evaluate ways in which the objectives of a business could be better communicated
- explain why the objectives of a business may need to change
- recommend and justify the aims and objectives for a business and how any changes may be implemented.



# Thinking Conceptually

## **Approaches to teaching the content**

Students need to understand the difference between aims (general goals which provide vision and direction) and objectives (specific, measurable, assignable, realistic, time-related targeted steps used to work towards the organisational aims). They need to understand the hierarchy of objectives from strategic (long-term owner/director led) through tactical objectives (medium-term management led) to operational objectives (short-term, day-to-day activities). Students need to understand the importance of setting aims and objectives and how these objectives are likely to differ depending on the nature of the organisation and the sector in which it operates. Students need to consider how objectives can best be communicated and the consequences of failing to communicate organisational objectives effectively. Students need to be taught how to analyse the current aims of a business and make recommendations for change.

## **Common misconceptions or difficulties students may have**

A common misconception held by many students is that there is a 'correct' set of objectives for each business. Furthermore, there also appears to be an almost inherent assumption that,

once set, the aims and objectives of a business should not be changed, or at least, if they are then the business has in some way failed. Nothing could be further from the truth; to survive a business must be flexible. It is important to emphasise to students that objectives may need to be changed for many reasons including (but not limited to) – success, reward, ethics, change of ownership/directorship, finance, opportunities, threats, the economy and other external influences.

## **Conceptual links to other areas of the specification**

The aims and objectives of a business should fundamentally influence the way in which that business behaves; consequently this area of study can be linked with every other aspect of the specification. As a starting point this topic should be explicitly linked with a consideration of types of business, business sectors, stakeholders, mission statements, risk and uncertainty, strategy and implementation, business planning and decision-making. There will be many other opportunities to revisit these themes throughout the programme of study and it is recommended that these opportunities are taken. Without the consideration of the aims and objectives of a business students can never, truly, make valid business recommendations or judgements.










# Thinking Contextually

Students need more than a theoretical knowledge and understanding of the specification content – they need to be able to apply their knowledge and understanding to a range of real business scenarios. Where possible theoretical teaching should be minimised with preference being given to visits to real businesses, guest speakers, case studies, problem-solving, practical or interactive activities. Such approaches reinforce to students the importance of applying the underpinning concepts to specific contexts. To achieve high marks in the examination it is imperative that students apply their knowledge and understanding to the specific circumstances of the business given in the unseen stimulus material. This skill of application is important and needs to be developed alongside the students' accumulation of knowledge. Appropriate contexts would include:

- a new business which is setting its business objectives
- a new business which is attempting to translate strategic objectives into tactical and operational objectives
- businesses operating in various sectors – primary, secondary, tertiary; private, public, third sector
- small local businesses, national businesses, international businesses
- an existing business with conflicting objectives
- an existing business attempting to better communicate its objectives
- a struggling business needing to change strategic direction
- a successful business wishing to change strategic direction.







# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<b>1. The Aims and Objectives of a Business (Biz/ed)</b> <a href="http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/level2/busactivity/activity/intro14.htm">http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/level2/busactivity/activity/intro14.htm</a> <p>Designed for Level 2 this drag-and-drop exercise provides an ideal introduction to the various types of business objectives. It could also be used as a plenary. Includes lesson plans and worksheets.</p>	
<b>2. Types of objectives interactive worksheet – Aims and Objectives (Curriculum Bits)</b> <a href="http://www.curriculumbits.com/prodimages/details/business/bus0001.html">http://www.curriculumbits.com/prodimages/details/business/bus0001.html</a> <p>A basic, but interactive, worksheet which considers different types of business objectives. Students need to click and drag appropriate examples to match the criteria.</p>	
<b>3. Entrepreneurs' aims and objectives</b> <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-31590947">http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-31590947</a> <p>This article can be used to stimulate class discussion around the aims which entrepreneurs initially have when setting up a business.</p>	
<b>4. Public sector objectives</b> <p>This set of resources encourages students to consider objectives in the public sector – including hospitals, schools and local councils. Lesson plans, a mind map and online links for enhanced learning are included.</p> <p>Business Objectives: Public and Private Sector – Activity (Biz/ed):  <a href="http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/16-19/business/strategy/activity/busobjectives2.htm">http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/16-19/business/strategy/activity/busobjectives2.htm</a></p> <p>In groups, students could review the website below showing the objectives for a hospital then brainstorm possible objectives for another public sector organisation such as a school.  <a href="http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/about/strategic-objectives.aspx">http://www.ouh.nhs.uk/about/strategic-objectives.aspx</a></p>	 
<b>5. Small business objectives</b> <p>in small groups, students could research a small business; this could be one local to them or one found on the Internet such as:  <a href="http://www.flowerfarm.co.uk/">http://www.flowerfarm.co.uk/</a>  <a href="http://www.lemon-aid.de/en/about-us/">http://www.lemon-aid.de/en/about-us/</a></p> <p>Discuss how clearly the business's objectives are communicated to its customers and how important it is to do so.</p>	 





# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>6. Tesco: Vision, values and business strategies (Business Case Studies)</b>  <a href="http://businesscasestudies.co.uk/tesco/vision-values-and-business-strategies/introduction.html#axzz3HKELzB1W">http://businesscasestudies.co.uk/tesco/vision-values-and-business-strategies/introduction.html#axzz3HKELzB1W</a></p> <p>A detailed case study which investigates the aims and objectives of Tesco. An extension exercise would be to compare media reports of Tesco's current performance with its aims as stated in this case study.</p>	<p> Click here</p>
<p><b>7. Strategy in action – healthy schools (Business Case Studies)</b>  <a href="http://businesscasestudies.co.uk/health-development-agency/strategy-in-action-healthy-schools/introduction.html#axzz3HKELzB1W">http://businesscasestudies.co.uk/health-development-agency/strategy-in-action-healthy-schools/introduction.html#axzz3HKELzB1W</a></p> <p>A detailed case study which investigates the aims and objectives of the government's Healthy Schools Initiative. This case study is particularly useful as it shows the importance of organisational goals in public sector and service industries.</p>	<p> Click here</p>
<p><b>8. Lesson Worksheet – Aims and Objectives of Business (tutor2u)</b>  <a href="http://www.tutor2u.net/business/worksheets/Aims-Objectives-Basics.pdf">http://www.tutor2u.net/business/worksheets/Aims-Objectives-Basics.pdf</a></p> <p>This worksheet encourages students to consider the differences between aims and objectives. Suggested answers are included. It would be particularly useful at the end of the topic to record findings.</p>	<p> Click here</p>
<p><b>9. Business Objectives quiz (Get Revising)</b>  <a href="http://getrevising.co.uk/revision-tests/business_objectives?game_type=quiz">http://getrevising.co.uk/revision-tests/business_objectives?game_type=quiz</a></p> <p>An interactive quiz on business objectives which could be used as a starter or plenary to a lesson. There is the facility for the teacher to set additional questions; as such the resource is fully customisable. The quiz can be timed to add challenge. There is also a class leader board to add competitive interest, if required.</p>	<p> Click here</p>



# Curriculum Content Stakeholders

## **Stakeholders**

- explain what is meant by the term 'stakeholder'
- identify the internal and external stakeholders of a business
- analyse the objectives of the stakeholders of a business
- explain the reasons for conflicts between different stakeholder groups
- explain why a business needs to manage the conflicting objectives of its stakeholders
- evaluate the impact on a business of different stakeholders having conflicting objectives
- recommend and justify how a business should deal with the conflicting objectives of stakeholders
- evaluate the influence different stakeholders have on a business including its aims and objectives, decision-making, behaviour and performance
- evaluate the impact of business decisions on different stakeholder groups.



# Thinking Conceptually

## **Approaches to teaching the content**

Students need to understand that a business has many stakeholders: some internal, some external. Each stakeholder group is likely to have differing, and potentially conflicting, objectives. The objectives of stakeholders have an effect on the aims and objectives, decision-making, behaviour and performance of a business. Some stakeholder groups hold more power over a business than others. A business needs to manage its stakeholders in a way which maximises the success of the business. Students need to understand the impact stakeholder conflict can have on a business and strategies which can be used to minimise this conflict. The unique circumstances of a particular business need to be weighed up when answering contextually-based questions, especially when answering questions that are testing evaluative skills. Without suitable contextualisation any consideration would be purely theoretical and of little value to the business.

## **Common misconceptions or difficulties students may have**

A common misconception held by many students is that stakeholders are only those involved within the business. It is important to emphasise that external stakeholders can have an equally strong impact on the business – consider financiers (such as a bank), HMRC or the media. A spider diagram

showing as many stakeholders of a particular business as possible (together with the major objectives of such stakeholder groups) could help here. Furthermore, students often misguidedly believe that a good business can resolve all stakeholder conflicts. This shows a poor understanding of the topic as, even at the most fundamental level, total negation is not possible. It may help students to consider the objectives of workers versus the objectives of customers. Whereas workers will always want decent/good wages customers will always prefer paying as little as possible for the finished goods. This conflict can be managed by compromise but it can never be negated.

## **Conceptual links to other areas of the specification**

One of the most common mistakes made by students is to keep their knowledge of stakeholder conflict compartmentalised – referring to it only when asked a specific question about stakeholders. Due to the interconnected nature of business the nature of stakeholder objectives impacts on all business decisions whether concerned with strategy, finance, marketing, human resources, production and logistics or the management of change. It is good practice to consider the objectives of stakeholders and how a business can deal with these, often conflicting, objectives when evaluating any business scenario or making recommendations for change.






# Thinking Contextually

Students need to be able to apply their knowledge and understanding to a range of real business scenarios. Where possible theoretical teaching should be minimised with preference being given to visits to real businesses, guest speakers, case studies, problem-solving, practical or interactive activities. Such approaches reinforce to students the importance of applying the underpinning concepts to specific contexts. To achieve high marks in the examination it is imperative that students apply their knowledge and understanding to the specific circumstances of the business given in the unseen stimulus material. This skill of application is important and needs to be developed alongside the students' accumulation of knowledge. Appropriate contexts would include:

- an existing business which has been successful in managing stakeholder conflict
- an existing business which is currently experiencing stakeholder conflict
- a struggling business considering a change in strategic direction
- a successful business considering a change in strategic direction
- a consideration of how business decisions impact on different stakeholder groups.



# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<b>1. Understanding Stakeholder Groups (Curriculum Bits)</b> <a href="http://www.curriculumbits.com/prodimages/details/business/bus0003.html">http://www.curriculumbits.com/prodimages/details/business/bus0003.html</a> <p>An interactive spider diagram which covers the eight major stakeholder groups. Further information is provided on the likely objectives of each group. Particularly useful to introduce the topic, or alternatively use as a plenary to reinforce learning.</p>	
<b>2. Stakeholders (BBC)</b> <a href="http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/z9gcd2p/video">http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/guides/z9gcd2p/video</a> <p>A 4-minute video clip which includes comments from Lord Sugar, Saira Khan (The Apprentice), Deborah Meaden (Dragon's Den), Hugh Pym (BBC's Chief Economics Correspondent), Ben Wallace (Google), Nicola Vane (The Funky Fone Sox Company) and Paul Thomas (Dragon's Den). Students should listen to the clip and decide which entrepreneur's opinion best accords with their own. Is there truth in all of them?</p>	
<b>3. Conflicts between stakeholders (Biz/ed)</b> <a href="http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/level2/busactivity/activity/knowning13.htm">http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/level2/busactivity/activity/knowning13.htm</a> <p>A card sorting activity which could be used as a plenary to a lesson about stakeholder conflict.</p>	
<b>4. Stakeholder debate</b> <p>Students could be asked to consider a contentious issue of national or local interest e.g. the closing of a library or the development of a new superstore in the area.</p> <p>Students should be split into several groups, each representing a specific stakeholder interest. Having had adequate time for preparation and research, the students should take part in a formal business debate (or meeting) expressing their views as clearly and assertively as possible. Realism could be encouraged by filming the debate for a local (fictitious) TV channel. The footage could then be used for debriefing afterwards.</p>	




# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>5. Lloyds Bank's support of Yatterbox Ltd</b>  <a href="http://resources.lloydsbank.com/case-studies/yatterbox-ltd/">http://resources.lloydsbank.com/case-studies/yatterbox-ltd/</a></p> <p>This short case study could be used to stimulate group discussion using questions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why would Lloyds Bank support Yatterbox Ltd?</li> <li>• Are Lloyds and Matt Freckelton likely to have the same aims for the business and why?</li> <li>• What conflict in objectives might a small business owner and its bank have?</li> </ul>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>6. Shell: Balancing stakeholder need (Business Case Studies)</b>  <a href="http://businesscasestudies.co.uk/shell/balancing-stakeholder-needs/introduction.html#axzz3HKELzB1W">http://businesscasestudies.co.uk/shell/balancing-stakeholder-needs/introduction.html#axzz3HKELzB1W</a></p> <p>A detailed case study is available in PDF or audio MP3 format which encourages students to investigate how Shell balances the various needs of its stakeholders. This resource is particularly useful for illustrating the common misconception that stakeholder conflict can be completely resolved; instead it needs to be managed by compromise.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>7. How do businesses manage their stakeholders? A comparison</b></p> <p>The following three case studies (available in PDF or audio MP3 format) investigate how three different businesses – Kellogg's, BT and Primark – manage their stakeholders. Students should be encouraged to compare and evaluate these business approaches. Students, working in groups, could be assigned to produce a PowerPoint presentation for one of these businesses to explain to the rest of the class the way stakeholders are managed in that particular business. After all three groups have presented, a discussion could take place highlighting the differences of approach. Alternatively, the whole class could study all three businesses, producing wall charts to compare their findings.</p> <p>Kellogg's:  <a href="http://crr.kelloggcompany.com/en_US/corporate-responsibility/overview/stakeholder-engagement.html">http://crr.kelloggcompany.com/en_US/corporate-responsibility/overview/stakeholder-engagement.html</a></p> <p>BT:  <a href="https://www.btplc.com/Betterfuture/ConnectedSociety/LearningandskillsFreeresources/Majorprogrammes/TheTimes100/BTandTheTimes100.pdf">https://www.btplc.com/Betterfuture/ConnectedSociety/LearningandskillsFreeresources/Majorprogrammes/TheTimes100/BTandTheTimes100.pdf</a></p> <p>Primark:  <a href="https://www.primark.com/~media/ourethics/unpacked/primark-edition-16-full.ashx">https://www.primark.com/~media/ourethics/unpacked/primark-edition-16-full.ashx</a></p>	<p>▶ Click here</p> <p>▶ Click here</p> <p>▶ Click here</p>



# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>8. Stakeholder research task (TES Connect)</b></p> <p><a href="http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Stakeholder-research-task-6168108/">http://www.tes.co.uk/teaching-resource/Stakeholder-research-task-6168108/</a></p> <p>This resource encourages students to investigate London transport infrastructure by considering HS2 and Heathrow airport. The worksheet begins by requiring students to do online research using the BBC and The Guardian. It ends with an evaluative question for students to answer regarding the prioritisation of stakeholder needs. This is useful practice for similar questions which might appear in the exam.</p>	<p> Click here</p>
<p><b>9. Exam questions</b></p> <p>Questions from the OCR A Level Business H430:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• F291 – June 2013 (q2)</li><li>• F291 – June 2013 (q5)</li></ul>	



# Curriculum Content The business plan

## **The business plan**

- explain the purpose of a business plan
- describe the main contents of a business plan and explain why these are included in the plan
- evaluate the advantages and disadvantages to a business of having a business plan
- evaluate the impact and importance of a business plan for the stakeholders of a business
- explain what is meant by the Plan-Do-Review cycle
- analyse how the Plan-Do-Review cycle can improve a business's performance
- evaluate the impact and importance of a strategic review to a business and its stakeholders.





# Thinking Conceptually

## **Approaches to teaching the content**

Students need a firm grasp of the purpose and content of a business plan. This is probably best done by giving students some real business plans to look through. Business plans for potential small business start-ups are probably best, not only because the main purposes of producing a plan will be more apparent, but because the contents are likely to be relatively simple in comparison with larger, more complex business scenarios. Students need to understand the advantages and disadvantages of having a business plan, the importance of following the business plan and the benefits of using a plan-do-review cycle for updating the plan.

## **Common misconceptions or difficulties students may have**

One common misconception is that the only real function of a business plan is to obtain finance. Whilst securing finance may be a major reason to produce a business plan, other more fundamental reasons are frequently overlooked by students. Students need to understand that producing a business plan requires a detailed review of the proposal including practical operational matters, marketing and finance – areas that may well be overlooked by an inexperienced entrepreneur. The

business plan can also show that the business idea is too high risk, non-viable or unlikely to succeed. Furthermore, students tend to see the business plan as a one-off document to be shelved after start-up. They need to be shown the importance of referring to and following the plan, updating it where necessary in the light of changes which need to be made. Emphasising the importance and benefits of updating a business plan is best done using a business plan produced by an established successful business; this not only shows that business plans are used for good times as well as bad but also emphasises that business plans are not merely documents for new business start-ups.

## **Conceptual links to other areas of the specification**

The topic of business plans (and the plan-do-review cycle) links naturally with enterprise, business growth, stakeholder objectives, strategic decision-making, opportunity cost and risk and uncertainty. External influences such as economic, legal, social, ethical, environmental and technological factors all have a direct impact on business plans and the plan-do-review cycle. Some teachers like to produce mind maps to show these links.








# Thinking Contextually

Students need more than a theoretical knowledge and understanding of business plans and the plan-review-do cycle – they need to be able to evaluate their importance to a particular business in its own specific situation. Where possible theoretical teaching should be minimised with preference being given to visits to real businesses, guest speakers, case studies, problem-solving, practical or interactive activities. Such approaches reinforce to students the importance of applying the underpinning concepts to specific contexts. To achieve high marks in the examination it is imperative that students apply their knowledge and understanding to the specific circumstances of the business given in the unseen stimulus material. This skill of application is important and needs to be developed alongside the students' accumulation of knowledge. Appropriate contexts would include:

- a business plan submitted to a bank or business start-up trust
- an actual or fictitious business start-up
- an existing business needing to update its business plan
- a small local business, national business, international business considering producing a business plan
- an existing business undertaking a strategic review.




# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<b>1. Business plans (The Guardian)</b> <a href="http://teachers.theguardian.com/teacher-resources/2740/Business-plans">http://teachers.theguardian.com/teacher-resources/2740/Business-plans</a> <p>A fully interactive resource with learning notes and activities at each stage taking students through the production of a business plan, including data and financials. The activities are specifically designed to help students understand the importance of producing a business plan. Please note free registration is required to access the resource</p>	
<b>2. Small business advisor simulation</b> <p>Working in pairs students could be given a small business start-up business plan. There are plenty of basic ones available on the web or students can look at the example link from Lloyds Bank. Together the students would discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the business proposal under consideration and, if there is a borrowing requirement, whether the bank would lend the money. This discussion could be fed back to the group as a whole. Alternatively, an interview could be simulated where one of the students takes the role of the entrepreneur and the other the business advisor who then asks questions of the entrepreneur and feeds back the findings.</p> <p>Lloyds Bank example business plan:  <a href="http://businesshelp.lloydsbankbusiness.com/assets/pdf/Example-Business-Plan.pdf">http://businesshelp.lloydsbankbusiness.com/assets/pdf/Example-Business-Plan.pdf</a></p>	
<b>3. Stages in Planning for a New Business Venture (Biz/ed)</b> <a href="http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/16-19/business/strategy/lesson/newventure.htm">http://www.bized.co.uk/educators/16-19/business/strategy/lesson/newventure.htm</a> <p>This set of resources takes students through the discipline of writing a basic business plan. Working in groups or individually, students could be asked to select a business idea and produce a business plan.</p>	
<b>4. Start Up Toolkit – Business planning (Start Up Loans)</b> <a href="http://www.startuploans.startupdonut.co.uk/startup/business-planning">http://www.startuploans.startupdonut.co.uk/startup/business-planning</a> <p>This set of resources includes information on what needs to be included in a business plan and the need for it to be updated.</p>	
<b>5. Celebrating the Great British High Street – Plan-do-review</b> <a href="http://thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk/pdf/GBHS-Celebrating-The-GB-High-Street.pdf">http://thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk/pdf/GBHS-Celebrating-The-GB-High-Street.pdf</a> <p>The Mary Portas Pilots can be used as examples of how the plan-do-review cycle can be used effectively to help support retailers on the High Street. Page nine of the linked document shows a clear plan-do-review diagram which can be shared with the class followed on page 10 by two case studies which students can read illustrating how the cycle can be used effectively.</p>	



# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>6. Specimen exam questions</b></p> <p>Questions from the OCR specimen AS Level Business H031:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• H031/01 – q8 (multiple-choice)</li><li>• H031/02 – q5</li></ul> <p><a href="http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-business-h031-h431-from-2015/">http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/as-a-level-gce-business-h031-h431-from-2015/</a></p>	<p> Click here</p>



# Curriculum Content Risk, reward and uncertainty

## **Risk, reward and uncertainty**

- explain what is meant by risk and reward
- explain the relationship between risk and reward
- evaluate the relationship between risk and reward in a business
- distinguish between quantifiable and unquantifiable risk
- evaluate quantifiable and unquantifiable risks on a business
- evaluate ways in which a business can reduce its level of risk
- evaluate the consequences to a business and its stakeholders of poor risk management
- evaluate the specific risks faced by an entrepreneur
- explain what is meant by uncertainty
- distinguish between internal and external causes of uncertainty
- evaluate the impact of internal and external causes of uncertainty on a business and its stakeholders
- explain how uncertainty can affect a business, including effects on aims and objectives, planning, decision-making, business analysis and forecasting.



# Thinking Conceptually

## **Approaches to teaching the content**

Students need to understand the relationship between risk and reward in a business. They need to be able to differentiate between quantifiable and unquantifiable risk and evaluate possible methods of reducing business risk without reducing reward e.g. market research, situational analysis, portfolio building, diversification etc. Students need to understand the consequences of poor risk management to a business and its stakeholders. Special consideration should be given to the specific risks faced by an entrepreneur. Students need to be able to distinguish between internal and external causes of uncertainty and understand that uncertainty increases business risk. It is important that students can assess how risk, reward and uncertainty might impact on a specific business and its stakeholders.

## **Common misconceptions or difficulties students may have**

Whilst students seem to readily understand that business owners take risks to gain rewards, many students leap to the incorrect conclusion that the greater the risk the greater the potential reward. Whilst big risks can lead to big rewards it is not in a business's interests to maximise its risk levels. A

business should always aim to minimise risk as far as it is possible to do so as long as it does not reduce the potential for reward. Students also frequently overlook a particular stakeholder group's attitude to risk. If the stakeholder group in question holds significant power over the organisation then ignoring the stakeholder group's attitude to risk is a serious omission in the consideration of any business scenario.

## **Conceptual links to other areas of the specification**

This is another topic where students tend to compartmentalise their knowledge – only referring to risk and uncertainty when asked a specific question about this topic. Due to the interconnected nature of business, the degree of uncertainty and attitude to risk impacts on all business decisions whether concerned with enterprise, strategy, finance, marketing, human resources, production and logistics or the management of change. It is good practice to consider risk, reward and uncertainty and how a business can deal with these, whenever an evaluative judgement is required. As a starting point this topic should be explicitly linked with a consideration of enterprise and entrepreneurship, stakeholder objectives, mission statements, strategy and implementation, business planning and decision-making.



# Thinking Contextually

Students need to understand the theoretical concepts of risk, reward and uncertainty and be able to apply these to real business situations. Where possible theoretical teaching should be minimised with preference being given to visits to real businesses, guest speakers, case studies, problem-solving, practical or interactive activities. Such approaches reinforce to students the importance of applying the underpinning concepts to specific contexts. To achieve high marks in the examination it is imperative that students apply their knowledge and understanding to the specific circumstances of the business given in the unseen stimulus material. This skill of application is important and needs to be developed alongside the students' accumulation of knowledge. Appropriate contexts would include:

- an entrepreneur grappling with the issues of risk, reward and uncertainty
- a small local business, national business, international business seeking to evaluate risk/uncertainty levels
- a struggling business with poor risk management
- a successful business which carefully manages its risk level
- a business whose stakeholders have varying attitudes to risk
- an existing business that is risk averse
- an existing business dealing with internal and external causes of uncertainty
- a struggling business dealing with uncertainty
- a successful business dealing with uncertainty.



# Thinking Contextually

Activities	Resources
<p><b>1. Case studies of local businesses</b>  <a href="http://startups.co.uk/startups-100/2014/8-coco-di-mama/">http://startups.co.uk/startups-100/2014/8-coco-di-mama/</a></p> <p>This business start-ups website offers a number of good up-to-date case studies of small businesses setting up and growing, such as Coco di Mama which positions itself as a 'quick service Italian restaurant chain'.</p> <p>For more information on Coco Di Mama visit: <a href="http://cocodimama.co.uk/">http://cocodimama.co.uk/</a></p>	<p>▶ Click here</p> <p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>2. RES Short: Decision Making in an Uncertain World (tutor2u)</b>  <a href="http://www.tutor2u.net/blog/index.php/economics/comments/res-short-decision-making-in-an-uncertain-world">http://www.tutor2u.net/blog/index.php/economics/comments/res-short-decision-making-in-an-uncertain-world</a></p> <p>This 5-minute video clip would make a good starter to a lesson on uncertainty. The clip emphasises the effect uncertainty has on decision-making.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>3. Revision Presentation – Risks and Rewards to Enterprise (tutor2u)</b>  <a href="http://www.tutor2u.net/blog/index.php/business-studies/comments/revision-presentation-risks-and-rewards-to-enterprise">http://www.tutor2u.net/blog/index.php/business-studies/comments/revision-presentation-risks-and-rewards-to-enterprise</a></p> <p>This PowerPoint presentation begins by considering risk (including quantifiable risk); it then considers reward before considering the balancing of the two. This would make a good basis for revision as it provides a good summary of the topic.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>4. Business risk (The Guardian)</b>  <a href="http://teachers.theguardian.com/teacher-resources/2744/Business-risk">http://teachers.theguardian.com/teacher-resources/2744/Business-risk</a></p> <p>A fully interactive resource with learning notes and activities at each stage taking students through examples of a business risks, including insurable and uninsurable. Please note free registration is required to access the resource.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>5. Entrepreneur stories: the risks and rewards of starting a business (The Guardian)</b>  <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/ng-interactive/2015/jan/21/entrepreneur-stories-risks-rewards-starting-business-interactive">http://www.theguardian.com/small-business-network/ng-interactive/2015/jan/21/entrepreneur-stories-risks-rewards-starting-business-interactive</a></p> <p>This interactive resource offers three real case studies of the highs and lows of being an entrepreneur. Students could be asked to summarise the key risks and rewards of each one.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>





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<p><b>6. The impact of business failure – City Link (The Guardian)</b> <a href="http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jan/01/city-link-army-self-employed-count-cost-failure">http://www.theguardian.com/business/2015/jan/01/city-link-army-self-employed-count-cost-failure</a></p> <p>This article uses the failure of City Link to consider the impact on self-employed drivers and provides an insight into the negative potential consequences of business risks.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>7. Richard Branson: Advice for Entrepreneurs (YouTube)</b> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mo0JkT0xuOk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mo0JkT0xuOk</a></p> <p>This is one of a number of relevant interviews with Richard Branson which are available via YouTube. This brief 4-minute YouTube clip is of Richard Branson offering an insight into the uncertainty associated with business.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>
<p><b>8. Peter Jones: How we made our millions (YouTube)</b> <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foWMmY3xSuk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=foWMmY3xSuk</a></p> <p>This one-hour film shows Peter Jones meeting two successful entrepreneurs and discussing their businesses. Topics covered include risk reward, entrepreneurial traits and business strategy.</p>	<p>▶ Click here</p>





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