Edexcel A-level Business | 9BS0

Summer Preparation Booklet

Year 11 → Year 12 | Theme 1 & Theme 2

Course	Year 12 covers	Estimated time
Edexcel A-level Business	Theme 1 & Theme 2	8–10 hours total

Name: ___________________________________

Welcome to A-level Business

At A-level, you are expected to connect business theory to real companies and current events. This booklet will help you build those foundations before September so you hit the ground running.

Completing this work is not optional — it forms the basis of your first lessons and will be collected in when you arrive. Spread the tasks across the summer rather than rushing at the end.

If you have any questions, contact your teacher by email over summer.

What you will study in Year 12

Theme 1 — Marketing & People	Theme 2 — Managing Business Activities
• 1.1 Meeting customer needs • 1.2 The market • 1.3 Marketing mix & strategy • 1.4 Managing people • 1.5 Entrepreneurs & leaders	• 2.1 Raising finance • 2.2 Financial planning (cash flow, break-even, budgets) • 2.3 Managing finance • 2.4 Resource management & operations • 2.5 External influences on business
• Mass vs niche markets • Market segmentation & research • The 7Ps of marketing • Motivation theories (Maslow, Herzberg) • Leadership styles & organisational structures	• Sources of finance (internal & external) • Cash flow forecasting • Profit & loss accounts • Production methods & inventory management • Economic environment, legislation & ethics

How the course is assessed

Your A-level is assessed through three papers sat at the end of Year 13:

Paper	Title	Themes	Weighting
Paper 1	Marketing, People & Global Business	Themes 1 & 4	35%
Paper 2	Business Activities, Decisions & Strategy	Themes 2 & 3	35%
Paper 3	Investigating Business in a Competitive World	All 4 themes	30%

Task 1 — Background reading

At A-level, you must connect theory to real businesses. The best preparation is reading widely about how companies actually operate.

Task 1 Read and annotate a business article **Reading**

Choose ONE article from a quality business source (BBC Business, The Guardian Business, the Financial Times, or Management Today). The article must be about a real UK or international company and must have been published in 2024 or 2025.

Write your structured response on a separate piece of A4 paper or in a typed document. Bring a printed or digital copy of the article to your first lesson.

What to do:

1. Write the article title, source and date at the top of your response.
2. Summarise what the article is about in 3–4 sentences.
3. Identify one business problem or challenge described in the article. Explain why it is a problem for the business.
4. Suggest one possible solution the business could take. Justify your suggestion with a reason.

Suggested length: 300–400 words | *Bring: a printed or digital copy of your article to your first lesson*

Task 2 — Key vocabulary

A strong command of terminology is worth marks at every level of A-level questions. Write definitions in your own words — do not copy from a dictionary.

Task 2 Define these essential business terms — **Written**

Write a clear definition for each term below in your own words. Where possible, add a brief real-world example. These terms appear directly in the Theme 1 and Theme 2 specification.

Useful resource: tutor2u.net has a free A-level Business glossary you can use to check your definitions.

Theme 1 terms

Entrepreneur **Definition:** **Example:**	**Market share** **Definition:** **Example:**
Niche market **Definition:** **Example:**	**Mass market** **Definition:** **Example:**
Market segmentation **Definition:** **Example:**	**Unique selling point (USP)** **Definition:** **Example:**
The marketing mix (7Ps) **Definition:** **Example:**	**Market research** **Definition:** **Example:**
Motivation **Definition:** **Example:**	**Organisational structure** **Definition:** **Example:**

Theme 2 terms

Revenue **Definition:**	**Fixed costs** **Definition:**

Example:	**Example:**
Variable costs **Definition:** **Example:**	**Break-even point** **Definition:** **Example:**
Cash flow **Definition:** **Example:**	**Profit margin** **Definition:** **Example:**
Stakeholder **Definition:** **Example:**	**Working capital** **Definition:** **Example:**
Economies of scale **Definition:** **Example:**	**Labour productivity** **Definition:** **Example:**

Task 3 — Business numeracy

Quantitative skills are worth approximately 12–15% of your final A-level mark. These formulas appear in Theme 2 and are tested in every exam paper.

Key formulas to learn

Formula name	Formula
Revenue	Price × Quantity sold
Total costs	Fixed costs + Variable costs
Profit / Loss	Revenue − Total costs
Break-even output	Fixed costs ÷ (Price − Variable cost per unit)
Gross profit margin (%)	(Gross profit ÷ Revenue) × 100
Net profit margin (%)	(Net profit ÷ Revenue) × 100
Market share (%)	(Sales ÷ Total market size) × 100
Labour productivity	Output ÷ Number of workers

Practice questions

Show all working. If your answer is wrong but your method is correct, you can still earn marks — always show the formula you used.

Task 3 Calculations practice — **Practical**

What to do:

A. A bakery sells cakes for £4.00 each. It sells 500 cakes a week. Fixed costs are £600 per week and variable costs are £1.50 per cake. Calculate: (i) weekly revenue, (ii) total weekly costs, (iii) weekly profit, (iv) the break-even output. Show all your working.

B. A company has annual sales of £250,000 and the total market size is £2 million. Calculate its market share. Show your working.

C. A factory employs 20 workers and produces 3,000 units per week. If the factory introduces automation and productivity rises by 25%, how many units will be produced per worker per week?

Use the space below for your working. Bring your completed answers to your first lesson.

Working space:

Task 4 — Investigate a real business

The best A-level Business students are genuinely curious about how companies operate. Choose a business you are interested in and investigate it properly.

Choose one company to investigate

Option A	**Gymshark** A fast-growing UK sportswear brand that started as a small online business	**Option B**	**Greggs** A UK bakery chain known for value pricing and ambitious expansion
Option C	**Airbnb** A platform business that disrupted the traditional hospitality industry	**Option D**	**Your choice** A business you are genuinely interested in — agree with your teacher first

Task 4 Write a business profile

Research

Research your chosen company and write a one-page profile answering all five questions below. This will form the basis of discussion in your first lesson, so come prepared to talk about it.

What to do:

1. What does the business do, and who are its main customers?
2. What is its unique selling point (USP)? What makes it different from competitors?
3. Describe one challenge the business has faced in the last two years. How did it respond?
4. Find one piece of financial information about the business (e.g. annual revenue, profit, or number of employees). State your source clearly.
5. What do you think is the biggest risk facing this business over the next five years? Justify your view with a reason.

Suggested length: 400–500 words | Useful sources: tutor2u.net, BBC Business, company investor relations pages

Task 5 — Extended writing

Evaluation — weighing up both sides of an argument and reaching a justified conclusion — is the most important skill at A-level Business. This task introduces that skill.

The question

"To what extent is social media the most effective way for a small business to market its products to customers?"

Task 5 Structured analytical response — **Written**

Write your response in full paragraphs using the four-part structure below. This mirrors the style of a 20-mark essay question on Papers 1 and 2.

What to do:

1. **Define** the key terms in the question (e.g. social media marketing, small business).
2. **Argue for** — give two reasons why social media is an effective marketing method for small businesses. Use evidence or real examples.
3. **Argue against** — give two reasons why other marketing methods (e.g. word of mouth, local advertising, email marketing) may be more effective for some small businesses.
4. **Conclude** — make a final judgement. Does your answer depend on the type of business or market? Say so and explain why.

Suggested length: 400–600 words | *This mirrors an A-level 20-mark question*

Your summer schedule

Spread the work across the summer rather than completing everything at the end. There is no set deadline, but all tasks must be completed before or on your first lesson in September.

Week 1–2	**July** Task 1 — Find and read your business article. Write your structured response (300–400 words).
Week 2–3	**Mid July** Task 2 — Work through the vocabulary list. Spend time checking definitions using tutor2u.net.
Week 3–4	**Late July** Task 3 — Learn the key formulas and attempt all three calculation questions. Show all working.
Week 5–6	**August** Task 4 — Research your chosen company and write the 400–500 word business profile.
Week 7–8	**Late August** Task 5 — Write the extended analytical response (400–600 words). Re-read and check your argument flows logically before submitting.

Submission checklist

Tick each box when you have completed the task. Bring this checklist to your first lesson.

- ☐ Task 1 — Article response (300–400 words) and a copy of the article
- ☐ Task 2 — All 20 vocabulary definitions with real-world examples
- ☐ Task 3 — Three calculation questions with full working shown
- ☐ Task 4 — Business profile (400–500 words) with sources listed
- ☐ Task 5 — Extended analytical response (400–600 words) with a clear conclusion

We look forward to meeting you in September. A-level Business is a challenging and rewarding course — students who engage with the real business world from day one consistently achieve the highest grades.