



BUSINESS DEPARTMENT CURRICULUM AND VISION STATEMENT

English Martyrs' Catholic School

Business Curriculum Statement

Intent

In line with the School Mission Statement, we are committed to the development of each child and to serving the Common Good. We offer a total learning experience embedded in the School's intention that promotes students' academic, religious, spiritual, social, cultural and emotional development. Diversity is celebrated; ethics is woven into our curriculum. Business students are encouraged to be themselves, whilst respecting others' opinions.

The curriculum is planned for the cumulative development of knowledge and skills leading to future learning and employment. Our students will be entrepreneurial, independent learners, confident presenters and strong team players. Students will achieve an understanding of business in the real world; they will be able to assess their ambitions, and wisely choose their life's pathways as tomorrow's citizens.

Business students are encouraged to enjoy learning. There is a strong focus throughout on literacy, numeracy, and technology; this will help students to cope with the modern practices that they will encounter in a rapidly changing and often challenging world.

Progress is made from Year 9 to Year 11/13. Following the 3-year AQA scheme of work, augmented with enrichment activities and relevant Business experiences, students gain knowledge and skills consistently and progressively through activities in a range of contexts.

Implementation: Effective Teaching

Lessons are based on clear objectives; topics are communicated, presented, summarised, and reviewed to ensure previous learning is embedded. Subject matter is connected, enabling students to view businesses holistically, where functions (marketing, finance, human resources, and operations) interconnect. A variety of methods is used, such as dual coding to reiterate important messages and appeal to different students' abilities and learning proclivities. We echo the practice of large corporations in their use of the power of TV advertisements to connect brands with their audiences; verbal and visual components are teamed, to deliver an effective message that brings results. Cognitive load theory is also used as students are given chunks of knowledge which are then reiterated to ensure that initial learning is embedded. We take pride in producing engaging, effective resources which students enjoy using. Students are challenged by frequent questioning: ranging from low order knowledge recall to high order evaluation.

Elaboration is used both by teachers and in student activities where they are encouraged to question themselves and others, explaining their answers and giving empathetic, positive feedback to each other. Students work as individuals, in pairs, and in groups. Tasks are effective and focused. Peer assessment is used so that students learn how examiners think. All students are encouraged to contribute and every student has a chance to air their views.

From year 9 to year 13, we cover all aspects of business, from the main internal functions (marketing, human resources, operations and finance) to external influences, considering the effects of business activity on the wider world and learning how these can be judged and managed. We also include life skills such as how money works, business planning, and creating business ideas. Working towards students' ultimate prize, a useful qualification, we start Business in Year 9 enabling us to build learners' confidence, knowledge, and examination technique from an early stage. This leads into Year 10, where students will continue to cover the specification and will build on their knowledge,



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further practising examination technique. In Year 11 students cover the final two, and most challenging, topics: finance and external influences. The latter further widens the experience of the students in terms of the wider world and builds on examples used throughout the course; finance is highly numeracy-based and builds upon the activities completed in Year 9 and Year 10 enabling students to pass their GCSE as well as the confidence and ability to handle financial information throughout their lives. Post 16 Business builds upon the GCSE curriculum but is also suitable for those with no prior experience.

Recognising the need for students to retain their knowledge long term, we use spaced or distributed practice, repeating tasks but set differently to avoid tedium and ensure that students are sufficiently challenged. We use retrieval practice by revising in different ways, avoiding rote learning and regurgitation; and stretch activities, enabling all students to reach their full potential. Topics are taught in small chunks, so that students assimilate (and this is checked) before moving on.

Implementation: Assessment

Students are regularly assessed throughout. Essential examination technique is taught from Year 9, and build upon in Years 10 and 11. Opportunities are created for retrieval practice and embedding. Different assessment methods are used, testing students' understanding, embedding knowledge, learning and informing future activities. Accordingly, teaching is developed to enable students to benefit personally. Trial exams are held for years 9, 10, 11, 12, and 13; and homework is set weekly from year 9 onwards. This is relevant and meaningful, aimed at consolidating, reinforcing, building, and extending students' confidence, understanding, and knowledge.

Students receive quick, accurate, and positive feedback to enable them to gain strength from their achievements and improve in areas where this is required. Exemplars and model answers of student work are provided to enable students to improve their own work.

Support is given to students ongoing throughout their studies, according to their needs and abilities. Extra-curricular support and drop in sessions after school are offered. The Department has set up a Business club from September 2021 which will be held each week after School. Topics include: Confidence in Business Maths, Exam Technique, Tricky Topics and Revision Strategies.

Impact

Business is a vibrant, changing subject. Students are strongly encouraged to think laterally and to read around the subject. The Business curriculum is a pathway to the wider world, which will help students to make future choices and achieve their full potential and economic wellbeing with confidence, satisfied with their educational experience. Our curriculum contextualises learning through the use of real life situations and problem-solving scenarios. Our students develop personal qualities such as confidence and the ability to work effectively in teams. We teach not just business, but life skills.

The Business curriculum works because its study rewards all students, of all abilities, and teaches them to have confidence in their ability to succeed, no matter what their ambitions might be. Every student can thrive in Business. NO student is disadvantaged no matter what their ability, background, and personality. We learn and share. Let them all be one.

Our learners are informed, knowledgeable, and enthusiastic participants in Business courses, emerging at the end of Year 11 or Year 13 poised to succeed in life.



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Focus for change

Developmental teaching and interleaved learning. Reduce any attainment gaps by making effective use of data to inform teaching and learning; use evidence and data to chart progress and identify areas of focus. Amend curriculum ongoing and adapt materials as required.

Year 9 Business

Students start their study of Business in Year 9. This has so far produced excellent results as by the commencement of Year 10 students are well versed in the knowledge required to achieve optimal results in GCSE Business. Firm foundations are built for Business students going all the way through to Year 13 with clear milestones for them to achieve.

These include study skills as well as GCSE specific techniques such as knowledge of the main areas of the business specification (key terms and definitions, advantages and disadvantages of business decisions); application, relating to specific business situations; analysis, consideration of “what if” and “this means that...” questions; and evaluation, judgement of what businesses should do to achieve certain objectives.

Using a variety of techniques students participate in activities designed to interest them in Business. These include individual, paired, and group activities. These are specially focused on Year 9 students.

Students become familiar with the basic aspects of business – the different types of businesses; their departments and functions and how they inter-relate; and the effect that their internal aims and objectives, plus, external events have on business decisions.

They will develop an enthusiasm for business which together with their gained skills, will help to achieve optimal results in Year 11.

Year 10 and 11 Business

In Year 10 we cover Business in the Real World, plus, the Marketing, Operations, and Human Resources functions of businesses. Students are encouraged to take an interest in real business events, e.g. tracking the changing share prices of FTSE 100 and 250 businesses and business failures, and the reasons for these. The context of these topics is also considered, e.g. the effect of “Brexit” on UK businesses and consumers.

Examination technique is focused on throughout and students are taught and practise the key necessary skills of knowledge, application, analysis, and evaluation.

In Year 11 we further develop students’ skills and add to their knowledge, studying Finance and External Influences on Business. Students continue to practise examination technique but now focus more on actual questions and work through past papers, gaining practical experience and confidence.

The course leads on to the A level in Business, although GCSE Business is not necessary at English Martyrs’ School in order to be accepted on to the A level course. This is because we teach A level as a stand-alone course, where the basics of Business are covered.