KS4 Curriculum Overview: GCSE Business

Year 10 – Theme 1: Investigating small business

Rationale: Our students follow the Edexcel GCSE Business course, which is split into two key themes. In Year 10, Theme 1 concentrates on the key business concepts, issues and skills involved in starting and running a small business. It provides a framework for students to explore core concepts through the lens of an entrepreneur setting up a business and links closely with topics covered in the Year 9 foundation course. In this theme, students will be introduced to local and national business contexts and will develop an understanding of how these contexts impact business behaviour and decisions. Students will develop an understanding of the interdependent nature of business activity through interactions between business operations, finance, marketing and human resources, as well as the relationship between the business and the environment in which it operates. The ordering of the units follows a logical, chronological path to setting up a small business, introducing knowledge and skills required for success in this subject. We will practice analytical and evaluative skills throughout, so students have time to develop and refine their ability to answer higher-level questions. Towards the end of Year 10, students will begin the Year 11 content with Theme 2, ensuring we have time to embed knowledge and practice exam skills in revision during their final year. All units are assessed with final, written exams in the summer of Year 11.

Term / topic length	Outline	Assessment	Home learning	Resources	Knowledge/ skills end points	Literacy
Autumn 1 Topic 1.1 – 4 weeks Topic 1.2 – 4 weeks	**Topic 1.1. Enterprise and entrepreneurship** • The dynamic nature of business • How new business ideas come about • The impact of risk and reward on business • The purpose of business activity • The role of entrepreneurship **Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity** • Understanding customer needs • Purpose and methods of market research • Targeting customers through segmentation	• End of Topic 1.1 test in class • One assessed exam practice home learning	HL tasks throughout the year will be focused on the current topic, or PPE revision, and will follow this 3-week rotation: • Research & report task • Marked exam question • Seneca Learning online revision	Scheme of learning. Varied resources available in the department staff area: • Lesson PowerPoints • Worksheets • HL sheets • Youtube videos	Knowledge and understanding end points are as per the course outline. Skills end points include: • Development of analysis and evaluation skills • Analysis of market research data to inform decisions • Market segmentation and market mapping • SWOT analysis completion and interpretation • Break-even formula and chart creation and analysis • Calculating gross/ net profit/ margin of safety	**Key terms:** • Consumer • Risk • Reward • Profit • Entrepreneur • Added value • Unique selling point • Convenience • Market research • Target market • Sample • Analysis • Segmentation • Demographics • Market share • Objectives • Break-even • Overheads • Solvency • Sources of capital • Investment • Shareholders • Assets
Autumn 2 Topic 1.2 – 2 weeks Topic 1.3 – 5 weeks	**Topic 1.2 Spotting a business opportunity** • Strengths and weaknesses of competitors • Impact of competition on business **Topic 1.3 Putting business ideas into practice** • Business aims and objectives • Revenues, costs and profits • Cash flow and financial forecasting • Sources of business finance	• End of Topic 1.2 test in class • End of Topic 1.3 test in class				

Spring 1 Topic 1.4 – 6 weeks	**Topic 1.4 Making the business effective** • Start-up options for small businesses • Factors affecting business location • The marketing mix • Business plans	• End of Topic 1.4 test in class • One assessed exam practice home learning	HL tasks throughout the year will be focused on the current topic, or PPE revision, and will follow this 3-week rotation: • Research & report task • Marked exam question • Seneca Learning online revision	Scheme of learning. Varied resources available in the department staff area: • Lesson PowerPoints • Worksheets • HL sheets • Past papers • Youtube videos	Knowledge and understanding end points are as per the course outline. Skills end points include: • Ability to create SMART objectives • Awareness of how to create a business plan • Analysis of marketing mix choices • Calculating exchange rates, import/export costs	**Key terms:** • Limited liability • Unlimited liability • Incorporated • Unincorporated • Sole trader • Ltd / PLC • Partnership • Franchise • Business plan • Promotional mix • Stakeholders • Interest rates • Exchange rates • Suppliers • Economic climate • Globalisation • Taxation • Legislation
Spring 2 Topic 1.5 – 4 weeks Revision – 1 week	**Topic 1.5 Understanding external influences** • Business stakeholders • How technology influences business • The impact of legislation • The impact of the economic climate • Internal and external influences **Theme 1 revision for PPEs**	• End of Topic 1.5 test in class • One assessed exam practice home learning				
Summer 1 Topic 2.1 – 4 weeks	**Topic 2.1 Growing the business** • Business growth and innovation • Changes in business aims and objectives • The impact of globalisation on business	• PPE as per school exam timetable – Paper 1			Knowledge and understanding end points are as per the course outline. Skills end points include: • Ability to justify changes in the marketing mix • Analysis of trades offs with ethics and profit • Calculation of mark-up on prices to cover costs • Exam technique for PPEs	**Key terms:** • R&D • Innovation • Portfolio • Protectionism • Merger / takeover • Trading bloc • Multinational • Import / export • Retrenchment • Organisation • Marketing mix • Economies of scale • Mass/ niche market • Promotion • Retail / e-tail • Mark-up
Summer 2 Topic 2.1 – 1 week Topic 2.2 – 5 weeks	**Topic 2.1 Growing the business** • Ethical and environmental considerations **Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions** • Product features • Pricing strategies • Promotion activities • Methods of distribution • Using the marketing mix in business	• End of Topic 2.1 test in class • End of Topic 2.2 test in class				

Year 11 – Theme 2: Building a business

Rationale: Theme 2 examines how a business develops beyond the start-up phase. It focuses on the key business concepts, issues and decisions used to grow a business, with emphasis on aspects of marketing, operations, finance and human resources. Theme 2 also considers the impact of the wider world on the decisions a business makes as it grows. Students will build on learning about national business contexts from Theme 1 and be introduced to global business contexts, developing an understanding of how these contexts impact business behaviour and decisions. Students will build on their understanding of the interdependent nature of business activity through interactions between business operations, finance, marketing and human resources, as well as the relationship between the business and the environment in which it operates. The exam skills introduced in Year 10 will be further developed and practised throughout this final year, allowing students to develop a more mature, analytical and evaluative approach to business case studies. The qualification is examined in May with two written exam papers; one paper focused on each of the two Themes.

Term / topic length	Outline	Assessment	Home learning	Resources	Knowledge/ skills end points	Literacy
Autumn 1 Topic 2.1 – 4 weeks Topic 2.2 – 2 weeks Revision – 2 weeks	**Topic 2.1 Growing the business** • Business growth and innovation • Changes in business aims and objectives • The impact of globalisation on business **Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions** • Product features • Pricing strategies **Revision for PPEs**	• End of Topic 2.1 test in class • One assessed exam practice home learning	HL tasks throughout the year will be focused on the current topic, or PPE revision, and will follow this 3-week rotation: • Research & report task • Marked exam question • Seneca Learning online revision	Scheme of learning. Varied resources available in the department staff area: • Lesson PowerPoints • Worksheets • HL sheets • Past papers • Youtube videos	Knowledge and understanding end points are as per the course outline. Skills end points include: • Ability to justify changes in the marketing mix • Analysis of trades offs with ethics and profit • Calculation of mark-up on prices to cover costs • Exam technique for PPEs	**Key terms:** • R&D • Innovation • Portfolio • Protectionism • Merger / takeover • Trading bloc • Multinational • Import / export • Retrenchment • Organisation • Marketing mix • Economies of scale • Mass/ niche market • Promotion • Retail / e-tail • Mark-up • Procurement • Productivity • Efficiency • Automation • Logistics • Lead time • Quality assurance
Autumn 2 Topic 2.2 – 3 weeks Topic 2.3 – 2 weeks	**Topic 2.2 Making marketing decisions** • Product features • Methods of distribution • Using the marketing mix in business **Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions** • Exploring business operations • Functional areas of businesses • Working with suppliers	• End of Topic 2.2 test in class • One assessed exam practice home learning				

Spring 1
Topic 2.3
– 1 week
 	
Topic 2.4
– 3 weeks
 	
Revision
– 2 weeks
	Topic 2.3 Making operational decisions
	• Quality control
	• The sales process
	Topic 2.4 Making financial decisions
	• Accounting & business calculations
	• Measuring business performance
		• End of Topic 2.3 test in class
		
		• End of Topic 2.4 test in class
					Knowledge and understanding end points are as per the course outline.
					
					Skills end points include:
					• Bar gate stock graph
					• Customer service skills
					• Calculating profit/ costs
					• Calculating and interpreting:
					  ○ average rate of return
					  ○ Gross profit margin
					  ○ Net profit margin
					• Interpreting quantitative data
					• Creating good CVs
					• Exam technique
						Key terms:
						• Profit margin
						• Gross profit
						• Net profit
						• Correlation
						• Qualitative
						• Quantitative
						• Demographic
						• Interpretation
						• Objectives
						• ARR
						• Communication
						• Responsibilities
						• Recruitment
						• Training
						• Development
						• Motivation
						• Retention
						• Employees

Spring 2 Topic 2.5 – 2 weeks Revision – 3 weeks	**Topic 2.5 Making human resource decisions** • Organisational structures • Effective recruitment • Training and development of employees • Workplace motivation **Revision for final exams**	• PPE as per school exam timetable – Paper 1 and Paper 2 • End of Topic 2.5 test in class	HL tasks throughout the year will be focused on the current topic, or PPE revision, and will follow this 3-week rotation: • Research & report task • Marked exam question • Seneca Learning online revision	Scheme of learning. Varied resources available in the department staff area: • Lesson PowerPoints • Worksheets • HL sheets • Past papers • Youtube videos		
Summer 1 Revision – 1 week	**Revision for final exams**	• Paper 1 Exam – Monday May 11th 2026 • Paper 2 – Thursday May 21st 2026			All knowledge and skills will be revised.	All key terms, knowledge and understanding of them will be revised.