

Business Studies Progression Guide

Moving from GCSE to GCE and beyond

Introduction and content

This guide has been designed for centres who are delivering Edexcel's GCSE course (Specification 2BS01) and progressing students to Edexcel's GCE 2008 qualification (Specification 8BS01/9BS01). It is organised into the following sections:

- 1. Practical considerations*
- 2. Content mapping*
- 3. Approaches to teaching and learning*
- 4. Assessment Objectives*
- 5. Skills and techniques*
- 6. Language and terminology*
- 7. Useful resources*
- 8. Beyond GCE*

The Progression Guide outlines the adjustment required to make the transition from GCSE to GCE a successful one. It outlines some of the linkages between GCE and GCSE and also some of the key differences that need to be considered by centres.

1. Practical considerations

GCE without GCSE?

The GCE specification was written with an awareness that in many centres a number of students request to study GCE Business Studies without having studied the subject at GCSE level. However, many candidates will have touched on many GCE topics at KS3 in Enterprise Education, Work Related Learning and other subjects like Geography at KS3 and KS4. In addition knowledge of financial and global issues from the media and other sources is often good. Many centres find non-GCSE candidates are successful at GCE level. Some centres require such candidates to have gained a grade C in Maths, English or both. Candidates requesting GCE without GCSE are often well motivated. Some centres have a 'trial-period' policy of 3 weeks at the start of the GCE course.

The most common barrier to success for such candidates is the 'language of business' or the 'number crunching of finance'. These issues might be addressed by the careful compilation of glossaries and / or students completing some GCSE exam questions at the beginning of their GCE course to provide a foundation.

Coursework

Coursework is essentially completed under the conditions of a Controlled Assessment at GCSE (Unit 2). This is an Edexcel-set task* which involves approximately three weeks (9 hours) of curriculum time in total for research and write up and is internally marked by teachers and moderated by Edexcel. For GCE there is no coursework, but extra research is encouraged around the pre-release case study for Unit 4 in Year 2. The pre-release material is made available to centres on-line in the summer of the year before the Unit 4 exam can be taken, which can be both in January and June of Year 2.

*students select one Edexcel-set task from a choice of five. Tasks are changed annually.

Centres should consider:

- That 2 days research and 1 day of write up work will need to be undertaken at GCSE, and a further 2-3 days equivalent at GCE A level.
- That Controlled Assessment titles can be chosen at GCSE from the list of five prescribed to provide variety and choice based on the 'What Students Need to Learn' in the Detailed Unit Content.
At GCE the pre-release material will be determined by the content of Unit 4, Making Business Decisions. The context is chosen by the Principal Examiner, e.g. Brompton's Bicycles for A level students in January/June 2010.
- Whether research work for GCE and GCSE should be undertaken at the same, or different, locations/business.
- The timing of coursework/research during the year.

2. Content mapping

Both the GCSE and GCE Business Studies courses contain only compulsory content*:

Figure 1: Units

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
GCSE (2BS01)	Introduction to Small Business	Investigating Small Business	Building a Business	
GCE AS (8BS01)	Developing New Business Ideas	Managing a Business		
GCE A Level (9BS01)			International Business	Making Business Decisions

*for GCSE, centres can offer alternative pathway qualifications by combining the core Units 1: Introduction to Small Business and 2: Investigating Small Business with Unit 4: Business Communications to gain a GCSE in Business or Communications or Unit 5: Introduction to Economic Understanding to gain a GCSE in Business Studies & Economics

This means that to gain a GCSE or GCE in Business Studies there is no flexibility in topic choice.

There are some key decisions to be made:

- GCSE content could be avoided at GCE i.e. to minimise repetition
- The GCE course could be designed to build on GCSE by revisiting some topics covered at GCSE, albeit in a different way and at greater depth.
- A mixed approach could be taken, reinforcing some GCSE topics whilst avoiding others to reduce repetition.

Each of the above approaches is equally acceptable. It would be advisable to have this discussion with all members of staff and possibly with students. Some students feel more secure when they are covering familiar ground; others may be happier with entirely new content. The tables below map the GCSE course against the GCE course to highlight areas where there is significant linkage.

Figure 2: GCE Specification in Brief

GCE AS and A2	
<p>Unit 1 Developing New Business Ideas (AS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Characteristics of successful entrepreneurs • Identifying a business opportunity • Evaluating a business opportunity • Economic considerations • Financing the new business idea • Measuring the potential success of the business idea • Putting a business idea into practice 	<p>Unit 2 Managing the Business (AS)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marketing plan • Managing the provision process • How does a company budget efficiently? • Managing other people
<p>Unit 3 International Business (A2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why does a business seek international markets? • Key players in the world economy • How does a company decide which companies to target? • Other considerations before trading internationally • Globalisation • Are multinationals a good force or should they be controlled? 	<p>Unit 4 Making Business Decisions (A2)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate objectives and strategy • Making strategic decisions • Assessing competitiveness • Company growth

The GCE specification is shown above for reference (Figure 2).

It is worth noting that the GCSE Specification was designed to feed into the GCE 2008 specification and provide a four year Business course for centres and candidates. Likewise, should centres pursue the alternative GCSE pathway qualification GCSE Economics & Business Studies this should also serve as a useful foundation to the GCE in Economics and Business (8EB01/9EB01) which is unique to Edexcel.

Figure 3: GCSE to GCE linkages

GCSE Spec	Linkages to GCE AS and A2
Unit 1 Introduction to Small Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spotting a business opportunity Showing enterprise 	Spotting a business opportunity supports all aspects of A Level Business Studies, particularly Unit 1 Developing New Business Ideas, element 1.3.2 Identifying a business opportunity. Market research will support primary and secondary investigation at AS level. Unit 1 Developing New Business Ideas, element 1.3.1 Characteristics of successful entrepreneurs.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Putting a business idea into practice 	Unit 1, element 1.3.3 Evaluating a business opportunity; element 1.3.5 Financing the new business; element 1.3.6 Measuring the potential success of a business idea and element 1.3.7 Putting a business idea into practice
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making the start-up effective 	Unit 2, element 2.3.1 Marketing plan; element 2.3.4 Managing other people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding the economic context 	Unit 1, element 1.3.2 Identifying a business opportunity (the aspects which look at microeconomic factors) and element 1.3.4 Economic considerations (which looks at the macroeconomic variables and environment)
Unit 2 Investigating Small Business	
This Unit has the same content as Unit 1. Assessment is, however, through Controlled Assessment. There is a focus on sources and methods of research, presentation and analysis of results and evaluation	See above
Unit 3 Building a Business	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marketing Meeting customer needs Effective financial management Effective people management 	Unit 2, element 2.3.1 Marketing plan Unit 1, aspects of element 1.3.3 Evaluating a business opportunity (researching demand) and Unit 2, aspects of element 2.3.1 Marketing plan (marketing strategy) Unit 1, element 1.3.6 Measuring the potential success of a business idea and Unit 2, element 2.3.3 How does a company budget efficiently? Unit 2, element 2.3.4 Managing other people
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The wider world affecting business 	Unit 1, element 1.3.4 Economic considerations The GCSE topics ethics in business and environmental issues do not feature in the GCE Business Studies Specification but they do feature in the GCE Economics & Business Specification under Unit 4, element 4.3.4 Should government intervene in society and what effects will it have?

3. Approaches to teaching and learning

Teaching

Given the nature of Business Studies, it is envisaged that teaching will include a variety of methods such as lecturing, class discussions, student presentations, use of classroom technology, role-play and making use of visits to businesses and visitors from industry and the community. The method used will depend very much on the nature of the topic. For example a visit to the local premises of a national company like Tesco to interview a range of employees may prove quite fruitful when studying motivation in the workplace; setting up of sole traders/small business owners (e.g. plumbers, mobile hairdressers, car mechanics) in a carousel in the school assembly hall during an afternoon, may help support the teaching of characteristics of entrepreneurs; using clips from the BBC News website may be useful starter activities to support the teaching of economic influences; class discussions would be very appropriate to help teach the effects of unemployment; role play to develop an understanding of stakeholder objectives.

Learning

It is well documented that the nature of learning will vary between individuals. As teachers it is often the case that we teach in a way which suits (or suited) our learning. Business Studies is a subject which enables students to learn in a variety of ways. Lessons should be organised to appeal to the range of learning styles in order for students to be able to meet their potential, i.e. making use of visual stimuli (images, video, presentations), auditory stimuli (class discussions, talks, seminars), kinaesthetic activities (drag and drop exercises, running a mini-enterprise, educational visits) and tactile stimuli (e.g. sandwich-making and tasting to learn product differentiation)

4. Assessment Objectives

Figure 4 shows the assessment objectives for GCSE and GCE side by side for comparison purposes. At GCSE there is more emphasis on knowledge and application through AO1 and AO2 (70% of the total weighting) whilst at GCE although there is more stress on AO1 and AO2 at AS (60%) this is balanced at A2 with more stress being placed on analysis and evaluation - AO3 and AO4, respectively (60%). It is worth noting that AO3 is mostly assessed via the controlled assessment at GCSE.

Figure 4: Assessment objectives and weightings

GCSE	GCE	AS Weighting	A2 Weighting
AO1: Recall, select and communicate their knowledge and understanding of concepts, issues and terminology. (35%)	AO1: Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the specified content. (25%)	30%	20%
AO2: Apply skills, knowledge and understanding in a variety of contexts and in planning and carrying out investigations and tasks. (35%)	AO2: Apply knowledge and understanding of the specified content to problems and issues arising from both familiar and unfamiliar situations (25%)	30%	20%
AO3: Analyse and evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present appropriate conclusions (30%)	AO3: Analyse problems, issues and situations. (25%)	20%	30%
	AO4: Evaluate, distinguish between and assess appropriateness of fact and opinion, and judge information from a variety of sources. (25%)	20%	30%

The A* and Stretch and Challenge

The A* for GCE will be awarded first in summer 2010. To achieve an A* a candidate is required to:

- *achieve a grade A overall for the A level. This means achieving 80% of the total uniform marks, i.e. 360 out of 400 AND*
- *achieve 90% of the combined uniform mark total for the A2 units, i.e. 180 out of 200 marks total for Units 3 and 4.*

In order to achieve 90% of the combined uniform marks for A2, candidates will need to achieve the top level of the mark scheme in Unit 3 and Unit 4. This means directly addressing the specific command word in the question (e.g. 'assess', 'evaluate') and ensuring their answers meet requirements in terms of range, balance, use of examples and quality of written communication. An example of a mark band Level 4 answer for a question from Unit 3, International Business is shown in Figure 5:

Figure 5: An example of A2 Level 4 band

Level	Marks	Descriptor	Example
4	9-10	Clearly demonstrates knowledge and understanding of appropriate concepts. Analytical and evaluative comments should be evident and clearly contextualised. Evidence of informed conclusions. Uses business terminology precisely and effectively; organises their answer to provide a coherent and fluent response; good to excellent spelling, punctuation and grammar.	e.g. Nokia may be rightly accused of 'caravan capitalism' given that in 2008 the company relocated its factory from Bochum in Germany to Jucu in Romania, to take advantage of lower labour compensation rates, i.e. average salaries fell from €2 000 pcm to €200 pcm. However, the company's Vice President Anssi Vanjoki has suggested that the severance and set up costs would take over ten years for Nokia to fully recover.

Notice the demands on the candidate in terms of:

- Structure i.e. a logically organised, coherent answer.
- Evaluation i.e. the ability to weigh up different arguments and form a supported view
- Balance i.e. not a one sided view
- Exemplification i.e. detailed use of relevant examples
- QWC accuracy

Wider reading is essential for the candidate aiming for an A*.

Research skills

Perhaps the most significant step up from GCSE to GCE is the expectation that students will undertake more of their own research and engage in independent learning. This approach is a key to success at A2 given the nature of Unit 3 International Business and Unit 4 Making Business Decisions. In some centres students might be studying their own choice of topic for certain elements and then sharing them with others in class through presentations, e.g. for element 3.3.6 Are multinationals a force for good or should they be controlled? One student may look at Nestle, whilst another students may focus their research on McDonalds. In such cases the teacher(s), while having some teaching input, will have more of a facilitating role.

For many candidates research skills and independent learning skills need to be taught. A number of centres have successfully used the time in June and July at the end of the AS year to focus on research skills, prior to starting the A2 content. Areas that might be focused on include:

- Exploring departmental and resource centre / library resources, to recognise that books, journals, magazines, videos, DVDS etc could all be used as part of research. Recognising the limitations of some resources in terms of their age, relevance and accuracy.
- Getting the best out of the internet; finding useful sites, recognising sites which are of little value or are heavily biased
- Note taking; especially condensing material into a digestible form for essay writing or revision purposes
- Reading for meaning; recognising bias
- Developing interview techniques

Examination demands

Moving from GCSE to GCE involves a change to the length of exams and the style of exam questions. These changes are summarised in Figure 6:

Figure 6: GCE and GCSE assessments compared

	Unit 1	Unit 2	Unit 3	Unit 4
GCSE	45 minutes Multiple-choice and objective test questions	Controlled Assessment Research and investigation (6 hours) Analysis and evaluation (3 hours) QWC assessed within analysis and evaluation	1 ½ hours Combination of multiple-choice, short and extended-answer, data response and scenario-based questions. QWC assessed within analysis and evaluation in Section C	
GCE	1 ¼ hours Section A eight supported multiple-choice questions Section B case study with five 'data' response/short answer questions QWC assessed within an evaluation question in Section B indicated with an *	1 ¼ hours Section A six supported multiple-choice questions Section B case study with seven 'data' response/short answer questions QWC assessed within an evaluation question in Section B indicated with an *	1 ½ hours Section A questions based on 'data' Section B Case Study and extended writing questions. QWC assessed within an evaluation question in both Section A and Section B indicated with an *	1 ½ hours Section A six questions based on 'data' and pre-release material. Section B decision-making report and questions based on pre-release material. QWC assessed within evaluation questions 7a and 7b indicated with an *

'data' represents passages of text which may include graphs, table(s) of information and/or diagrams

The longer exam papers and greater use of extended writing means candidates must develop their writing skills as they move from GCSE to GCE. Students will find the format of questions in GCE Unit 1, Section A similar to what they were used to at GCSE in Unit 1 but they will also need to support their multiple-choice answers, which can sometimes require analysis and evaluation. The style of questions in Section B of Units 1 and 2 and both Sections A and B of Unit 2 for GCE will be similar to those of Section 3 Unit 3. The GCE Unit 4 Section B decision-making report will significantly test a student's ability to write in continuous prose.

Extensive practice, using past papers and their mark schemes, will help students understand the demands of GCE. Some of this practice should be under timed conditions. Peer marking and use of GCE examiners reports (which contain examples of 'real' students responses) are both very useful.

GCE examiners reports can be found here:

<http://www.edexcel.com/quals/gce/gce08/bus-stud/Pages/default.aspx>

5. Skills and techniques

Interpretive skills

Data stimulus and data response resources form part of most GCE and GCSE exams.

Candidates at both levels will be faced with a wide variety of business data which they must interpret. This will be in the form of:

- Tables
- Graphs
- Diagrams
- Charts
- Text

The types of business data used at GCE and GCSE are actually very similar but, inevitably, the complexity of the data is greater at AS level and A2 level. Rapid, precise interpretation of business data is a skill that should be integrated into teaching as much as possible as it will help students at exam time.

Coursework skills

Coursework skills development is essential at GCSE as part of the controlled assessment. At GCE research skills are 'freed' from the constraints of coursework although centres may consider using the Extended Project to provide students with a research project linked to the specification which can receive separate accreditation and UCAS points [equivalent to an extra AS Level]. At GCE, ideally, students should be given the role of choosing specific businesses for data collection and of designing data collection methods. This can build on their experience from GCSE. Different ways of collecting data and information are to be encouraged at GCE, as long as students can justify their choice of methods and are prepared to provide a critical reflection of the outcome.

6. Language and terminology

Command words

A key difference between GCSE and GCE is the use of examination command words. This reflects the higher level skills which are assessed at AS and A2 level compared to GCSE. Figure 7, which is illustrative only, shows how command words progress from GCSE, to AS then A2. Many good GCE students struggle with the difference between 'describe' and 'explain', so it is well worth spending time in class on command word interpretation. Past papers, sample assessment materials and examiners reports are all sources of examples of command word use. All are available at www.edexcel.com.

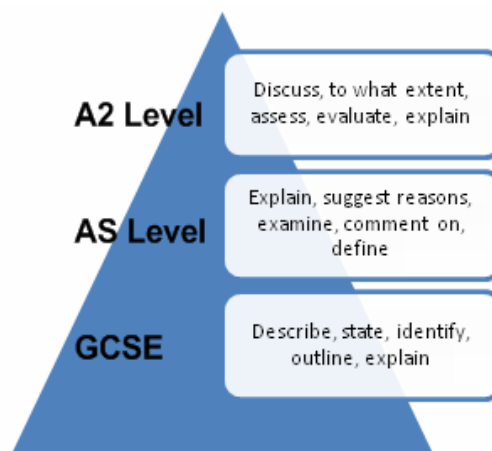


Figure 7: Command word hierarchy

Key Words

A common barrier to success at GCE level is a failure to address certain key words in questions. Often these are very commonly used words but they have a specific meaning in a business context. Examples are:

- Aims and objectives
- Causes
- Consequences
- Conflict
- Procedures
- Strategies
- Factors

As well as focussing on command words, it is worth spending time to build student understanding of these key words.

Country classification - for GCE Unit 3 International Business

Different country classification systems are used at GCSE and GCE levels in geography. Students studying GCE Business Studies may therefore use terms interchangeably. For example there is the World Bank Income Classification shown in column one (see Figure 8) as well as the more usual terminology, i.e. the terms 'developed' and 'developing' country and within this MEDC/ NIC /LEDC. The Specification uses the term 'emerging economies' to describe the more advanced 'developing economies'. What is important here is that students express their understanding in a way which can be recognised by the examiner.

Figure 8: Classifying countries

World Bank	Usual Terminology		Alternative Classifications	North-South divide
High Income Country (HIC)	Developed	More Economically Developed Country (MEDC)	G8 Countries	"North"
			OECD Countries	
Middle Income Country (MIC)	Developing	Newly Industrialised Country (NIC)	Emerging Economies	"South"
Low Income Country (LIC)		Less Economically Developed Country (LEDC)		

7. Useful resources

Below are a range of resources that are available to support both GCSE and GCE. They include textbooks, student unit guides, teacher's guides and digital resources. At GCSE endorsed textbooks and other resources are published by Pearson for Edexcel.

Textbooks for GCSE

Unit 1

- Edexcel GCSE Business: Introduction to Small Business by Alain Anderton & Ian Gunn ISBN:978-1-8469-0496-7 Pearson £15.50
- Edexcel GCSE Business: Introduction to Small Business Teacher Guide Price £75.00 + £1.31 UK VAT ISBN 9781846906053
- Introduction to Small Business by Ian Marcouse ISBN:978-0-340-98346-1 Hodder £11.99

Unit 2

- Edexcel GCSE Business Studies: Controlled Assessment Workbook by Andrew Ashwin Price £3.99 ISBN 9781846906923

Unit 3

- Edexcel GCSE Business: Building a Business Price£14.99 ISBN9781846904974
- Edexcel GCSE Business: Building a Business Teacher Guide Price £75.00 + £1.31 UK VAT ISBN 9781846906060
- Building A Business by Ian Marcouse ISBN: 978-0-340-98582-3Hodder £11.99

Units 1-3

- Edexcel GCSE Business Active Teach Price £300.00 + £52.50 UK VAT ISBN 9781846904950
- Edexcel Business Studies for GCSE by Ian Marcouse, Michelle Billington, Louise Stubbs Paperback £18.99 ISBN: 9780340985830
- GCSE Business Studies: Edexcel Version (Paperback) by Alain Anderton and Rob Jones £13.99 ISBN 978 1 4058 7661 2
- Edexcel Business for GCSE: Building a Business Dynamic Learning Network Edition Ian Marcouse, Naomi Birchall, Michelle Billington, Louise Stubbs CD-ROM £200.00 + VAT ISBN: 9781444101270
- The Economics Business and Enterprise Association (EBEA) Various resources http://www.ebea.org.uk/learning_resources/gcse_business_studies/resource_reviews

At GCE level endorsed textbooks and other resources are published by Edexcel, OUP, Philip Allan and Hodder, e.g. see: <http://www.philipallan.co.uk/>

Textbooks for GCE

Unit 1

- **Student Unit Guide: Unit 1 Developing New Business Ideas**, Brian Ellis, Paperback £7.99 ISBN:978-0-340-97108-6 Hodder

Unit 1-2

- **Worksheets for 2008 Edexcel Business Studies AS Level (Units 1 and 2)** Authors: Ian and Claire Marcousé A-Z Price: £109.25 (including VAT) with CD and site licence Anforme

Unit 3

- **Student Unit Guide: Unit 3 International Business**, Brian Ellis, Paperback £7.99 ISBN: 9780340991794 Hodder /

Unit 3-4

- **Worksheets for Edexcel Business Studies A Level (Units 3 and 4a)**
Edited by: Ian Marcousé Price: £95+ VAT with CD and site licence A-Z Business Training

Units 1-4

- **Business Studies for A-Level 3rd edition**, Ian Marcouse, Paperback £29.99 ISBN : 9780340966907 Hodder

Other GCE Resources

- **Edexcel Resource Bank** - teacher donated classroom resources
http://community.edexcel.com/files/folders/business_gcsege/default.aspx
- **A-Z Economics and Business Handbook Digital Edition (4th Edition)**
<http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/Title/9780340991107>
- **A2 Business Studies Flash Revise Pocketbook**
Andrew Gillespie, Paperback £4.99 ISBN: 9781444115437
- **Business Review - Philip Allan Updates (Subscription £11.50 for students, £200 on-line archive)**
<http://www.philipallan.co.uk/businessreview/index.htm>
- **The Times 100**
Free resource - <http://www.thetimes100.co.uk>

8. Beyond GCE

Many students consider Business Studies, or related courses, beyond A-level when they apply to Higher Education. The number and variety of different courses which relate to Business Studies/Management is very extensive. Below is a brief (i.e. not comprehensive, please see www.ucas.ac.uk) guide to areas of Higher Education students interested in Business Studies may wish to consider.

<p><u>Business Studies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Business Administration • Business and Marketing • Marketing 	<p>There is a very large number of general business studies courses in Higher Education. Alternatively Business could be part of a Joint Honours or Combined Honours course.</p>
<p><u>Management</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Resource Management • Operations Management • Financial Management • Production Management • Distribution/Logistics 	<p>Many HE courses allow for specialisation in an area of management, often one that was studied at GCE level. Such courses allow students to study areas which particularly interest them. Some may have more specific entry requirements than more general business courses.</p>
<p><u>Economics</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economics • Development Economics • Econometrics 	<p>Inevitably business studies and economics are inextricably linked. So for those who enjoyed the economics components of the GCE in Business Studies these HE courses may be suitable</p>
<p><u>Business Environment</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Science • Pollution Control • Conservation 	<p>There is a large range of courses relating to environmental issues and conservation for those who enjoyed studying the effects of business on the external environment.</p>
<p><u>Planning</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town and Country Planning • Rural / Countryside Planning • Transport Planning 	<p>Making business location decisions is key to planning, and there are a large number of planning courses some of which specialise in different types of enterprise</p>
<p><u>Development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Development • Development Studies • Sustainable Development 	<p>Development is about improving peoples lives, and is an area of business studies that appeals to many students who have studied aspects of it at GCE. A wide range of courses are offered at HE level, some of which focus on the developing world.</p>