

Syllabus

Cambridge O Level Business Studies 7115

For examination in June and November 2020, 2021 and 2022.



Why choose Cambridge?

Cambridge Assessment International Education prepares school students for life, helping them develop an informed curiosity and a lasting passion for learning. We are part of the University of Cambridge.

Our international qualifications are recognised by the world's best universities and employers, giving students a wide range of options in their education and career. As a not-for-profit organisation, we devote our resources to delivering high-quality educational programmes that can unlock learners' potential.

Our programmes and qualifications set the global standard for international education. They are created by subject experts, rooted in academic rigour and reflect the latest educational research. They provide a strong platform for learners to progress from one stage to the next, and are well supported by teaching and learning resources.

Our mission is to provide educational benefit through provision of international programmes and qualifications for school education and to be the world leader in this field. Together with schools, we develop Cambridge learners who are confident, responsible, reflective, innovative and engaged – equipped for success in the modern world.

Every year, nearly a million Cambridge students from 10 000 schools in 160 countries prepare for their future with an international education from Cambridge International.

'We think the Cambridge curriculum is superb preparation for university.'

Christoph Guttentag, Dean of Undergraduate Admissions, Duke University, USA

Quality management

Our systems for managing the provision of international qualifications and education programmes for students aged 5 to 19 are certified as meeting the internationally recognised standard for quality management, ISO 9001:2008. Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/ISO9001



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Changes to this syllabus



For information about changes to this syllabus for 2020, 2021 and 2022, go to page 27.

The latest syllabus is version 4, published March 2020. There are no significant changes which affect teaching. Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2015 are still suitable for use with this syllabus.

1 Why choose this syllabus?

Key benefits

Cambridge O Level syllabuses are created especially for international students. For over 25 years, we have worked with schools and teachers worldwide to develop syllabuses that are suitable for different countries, different types of schools and for learners with a wide range of abilities. These qualifications are designed for students whose first language may or may not be English and this is acknowledged throughout the examination process.

Cambridge O Level Business Studies is accepted by universities and employers as proof of an understanding of business concepts and techniques across a range of different types of businesses. Learners will be able to:

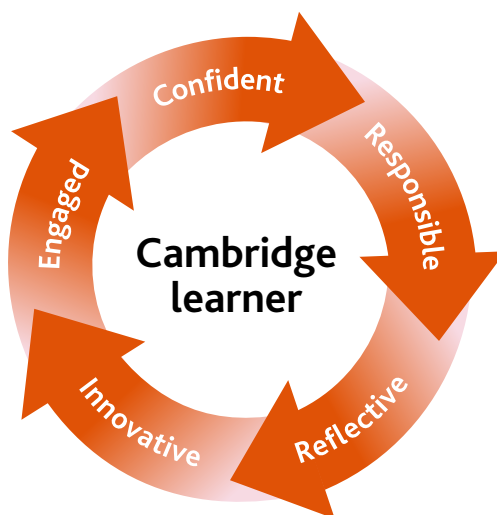
- understand different forms of business organisations, the environments in which businesses operate and business functions such as marketing, operations and finance
- appreciate the role of people in business success.

They will also gain lifelong skills, including:

- the ability to calculate and interpret business data
- communication skills needed to support arguments with reasons
- the ability to analyse business situations and reach decisions or judgements.

Our programmes balance a thorough knowledge and understanding of a subject and help to develop the skills learners need for their next steps in education or employment.

Our approach encourages learners to be:



'Cambridge O Level has helped me develop thinking and analytical skills which will go a long way in helping me with advanced studies.'

Kamal Khan Virk, former student at Beaconhouse Garden Town Secondary School, Pakistan, who went on to study Actuarial Science at the London School of Economics

Recognition and progression

The combination of knowledge and skills in Cambridge O Level Business Studies gives learners a solid foundation for further study. Candidates who achieve grades A* to C are well prepared to follow a wide range of courses including Cambridge International AS & A Level Business.

Cambridge O Levels are accepted and valued by leading universities and employers around the world as evidence of academic achievement. Many universities require a combination of Cambridge International AS & A Levels and Cambridge O Levels or equivalent to meet their entry requirements.

Learn more at www.cambridgeinternational.org/recognition

Supporting teachers

We provide a wide range of practical resources, detailed guidance, and innovative training and professional development so that you can give your learners the best possible preparation for Cambridge O Level.



2 Syllabus overview

Aims

The aims describe the purposes of a course based on this syllabus.

The aims are to enable students to:

- apply their knowledge and critical understanding to current issues and problems in a wide range of business contexts
- make effective use of relevant terminology, concepts and methods, and recognise the strengths and limitations of the ideas used in business
- distinguish between facts and opinions, and evaluate qualitative and quantitative data in order to help build arguments and make informed judgements
- appreciate the perspectives of a range of stakeholders in relation to the business environment, individuals, society, government and enterprise
- develop knowledge and understanding of the major groups and organisations within and outside business, and consider ways in which they are able to influence objectives, decisions and activities
- develop knowledge and understanding of how the main types of businesses are organised, financed and operated, and how their relations with other organisations, consumers, employees, owners and society are regulated
- develop skills of numeracy, literacy, enquiry, selection and use of relevant sources of information, presentation and interpretation
- develop an awareness of the nature and significance of innovation and change within the context of business activities
- acquire a foundation for further study of business or other subjects.

Support for Cambridge O Level Business Studies



Our School Support Hub www.cambridgeinternational.org/support provides Cambridge schools with a secure site for downloading specimen and past question papers, mark schemes, grade thresholds and other curriculum resources specific to this syllabus. The School Support Hub community offers teachers the opportunity to connect with each other and to ask questions related to the syllabus.

Content overview

1 Understanding business activity

This section introduces the underlying ideas and concepts of business and includes the purpose and nature of business activity and how businesses can be classified. Enterprise and entrepreneurs, and why some businesses grow while others remain small are further important issues. How business size can be measured, types of business organisation, business objectives and stakeholder objectives are the concluding topics.

2 People in business

The focus is the functional area of human resources and includes the importance and methods of motivating a workforce. How businesses are organised and managed and the methods of recruitment, selection and training of employees are also considered. Finally, the section covers the importance and methods of effective internal and external communication.

3 Marketing

This section includes the role of marketing, the distinctions between niche and mass markets and the techniques of market segmentation. The methods and importance of market research are covered. The central role of the marketing mix, i.e. the four Ps, is made clear. Marketing strategies to influence consumer decisions at home and in new foreign markets are the final topics in this section.

4 Operations management

The focus is the functional area of production and includes the meaning and methods of production and how productivity can be increased. The different costs of production and break-even analysis are covered. The section concludes with the importance and methods of achieving quality in the production process and location decisions of businesses.

5 Financial information and decisions

This finance and accounting section covers the need for and sources of business finance, cash-flow forecasting and working capital. Simple income statements are covered as well as statements of financial position and the analysis of accounts including why and how accounts are used.

6 External influences on business activity

This section focuses on different external influences on business activity and how these impact on a business. It includes government influences on economic, environmental and ethical issues and how they impact on the functional areas of businesses. In addition, the international economy including globalisation and its effects on businesses and governments, multinational businesses and exchange rates are important issues. Legal constraints are an external influence to be considered but these influences are covered in the relevant functional areas above, as well as in this last section.

Assessment overview

All candidates take two papers.

All candidates take:

Paper 1 1 hour 30 minutes
 Short Answer and Data Response 50%
 80 marks
 Four questions requiring a mixture of short answers and structured data responses
 Candidates answer all questions
 Externally assessed

and:

Paper 2 1 hour 30 minutes
 Case Study 50%
 80 marks
 Four questions based on a case study, provided as an insert with the paper
 Candidates answer all questions
 Externally assessed

Assessment objectives

The assessment objectives (AOs) are:

AO1 Knowledge and understanding

- demonstrate knowledge and understanding of facts, terms, concepts, conventions, theories and techniques commonly applied to or used as part of business behaviour.

AO2 Application

- apply knowledge and understanding of facts, terms, concepts, conventions, theories and techniques.

AO3 Analysis

- distinguish between evidence and opinion in a business context
- order, analyse and interpret information in narrative, numerical and graphical forms, using appropriate techniques.

AO4 Evaluation

- present reasoned explanations, develop arguments, understand implications and draw inferences
- make judgements, recommendations and decisions.

Weighting for assessment objectives

The approximate weightings allocated to each of the assessment objectives (AOs) are summarised below.

Assessment objectives as a percentage of the qualification

Assessment objective	Weighting in O Level %
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	40
AO2 Application	20
AO3 Analysis	25
AO4 Evaluation	15

Assessment objectives as a percentage of each component

Assessment objective	Weighting in components %	
	Paper 1	Paper 2
AO1 Knowledge and understanding	50	30
AO2 Application	20	20
AO3 Analysis	20	30
AO4 Evaluation	10	20

3 Subject content

In all of the following, candidates are required to apply their understanding to a variety of simple business situations. Candidates should be able to make simple decisions based upon the analysis and evaluation of information provided.

1 Understanding business activity

1.1 Business activity

- 1.1.1 The purpose and nature of business activity:
- Concepts of needs, wants, scarcity and opportunity cost
 - Importance of specialisation
 - Purpose of business activity
 - The concept of adding value and how added value can be increased

1.2 Classification of businesses

- 1.2.1 Business activity in terms of primary, secondary and tertiary sectors:
- Basis of business classification, using examples to illustrate the classification
 - Reasons for the changing importance of business classification, e.g. in developed and developing economies
- 1.2.2 Classify business enterprises between private sector and public sector in a mixed economy

1.3 Enterprise, business growth and size

- 1.3.1 Enterprise and entrepreneurship:
- Characteristics of successful entrepreneurs
 - Contents of a business plan and how business plans assist entrepreneurs
 - Why and how governments support business start-ups, e.g. grants, training schemes
- 1.3.2 The methods and problems of measuring business size:
- Methods of measuring business size, e.g. number of people employed, value of output, capital employed (profit is not a method of measuring business size)
 - Limitations of methods of measuring business size

1.3.3 Why some businesses grow and others remain small:

- Why the owners of a business may want to expand the business
- Different ways in which businesses can grow
- Problems linked to business growth and how these might be overcome
- Why some businesses remain small

1.3.4 Why some (new or established) businesses fail:

- Causes of business failure, e.g. lack of management skills, changes in the business environment, liquidity problems
- Why new businesses are at a greater risk of failing

1.4 Types of business organisation

1.4.1 The main features of different forms of business organisation:

- Sole traders, partnerships, private and public limited companies, franchises and joint ventures
- Differences between unincorporated businesses and limited companies
- Concepts of risk, ownership and limited liability
- Recommend and justify a suitable form of business organisation to owners/management in a given situation
- Business organisations in the public sector, e.g. public corporations

1.5 Business objectives and stakeholder objectives

1.5.1 Businesses can have several objectives and the importance of them can change:

- Need for business objectives and the importance of them
- Different business objectives, e.g. survival, growth, profit and market share
- Objectives of social enterprises

1.5.2 The role of stakeholder groups involved in business activity:

- Main internal and external stakeholder groups
- Objectives of different stakeholder groups
- How these objectives might conflict with each other, use examples

1.5.3 Differences in the objectives of private sector and public sector enterprises

2 People in business

2.1 Motivating employees

- 2.1.1 The importance of a well-motivated workforce:
- Why people work and what motivation means
 - The benefits of a well-motivated workforce: labour productivity, reduced absenteeism and labour turnover
 - The concept of human needs, e.g. Maslow's hierarchy
 - Key motivational theories: Taylor and Herzberg
- 2.1.2 Methods of motivation:
- Financial rewards, e.g. wage, salary, bonus, commission and profit sharing
 - Non-financial methods, e.g. job enrichment, job rotation, teamworking, training, opportunities for promotion
 - Recommend and justify appropriate method(s) of motivation in given circumstances

2.2 Organisation and management

- 2.2.1 Draw, interpret and understand simple organisational charts:
- Simple hierarchical structures: span of control, levels of hierarchy, chain of command
 - Roles and responsibilities of directors, managers, supervisors, other employees in an organisation and inter-relationships between them
- 2.2.2 The role of management:
- Functions of management, e.g. planning, organising, coordinating, commanding and controlling
 - Importance of delegation; trust versus control
- 2.2.3 Leadership styles:
- Features of the main leadership styles, e.g. autocratic, democratic and laissez-faire
 - Recommend and justify an appropriate leadership style in given circumstances
- 2.2.4 Trade unions:
- What a trade union is and the effects of employees being union members

2.3 Recruitment, selection and training of employees

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| 2.3.1 Recruitment and selecting employees: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recruitment and selection methods • Difference between internal recruitment and external recruitment • Main stages in recruitment and selection of employees • Recommend and justify who to employ in given circumstances • Benefits and limitations of part-time employees and full-time employees |
| 2.3.2 The importance of training and the methods of training: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of training to a business and to employees • Benefits and limitations of induction training, on-the-job training and off-the-job training |
| 2.3.3 Why reducing the size of the workforce might be necessary: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference between dismissal and redundancy with examples • Understand situations in which downsizing the workforce might be necessary, e.g. automation or reduced demand for products • Recommend and justify which employees to make redundant in given circumstances |
| 2.3.4 Legal controls over employment issues and their impact on employers and employees: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal controls over employment contracts, unfair dismissal, discrimination, health and safety, legal minimum wage |

2.4 Internal and external communication

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| 2.4.1 Why effective communication is important and the methods used to achieve it: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effective communication and its importance to business • Benefits and limitations of different communication methods including those based on information technology (IT) • Recommend and justify which communication method to use in given circumstances |
| 2.4.2 Demonstrate an awareness of communication barriers: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How communication barriers arise and problems of ineffective communication; how communication barriers can be reduced or removed |

3 Marketing

3.1 Marketing, competition and the customer

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| 3.1.1 The role of marketing: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying customer needs • Satisfying customer needs • Maintaining customer loyalty • Building customer relationships |
| 3.1.2 Market changes: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why customer/consumer spending patterns may change • The importance of changing customer needs • Why some markets have become more competitive • How businesses can respond to changing spending patterns and increased competition |
| 3.1.3 Concepts of niche marketing and mass marketing: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benefits and limitations of both approaches to marketing |
| 3.1.4 How and why market segmentation is undertaken: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How markets can be segmented, e.g. according to age, socio-economic grouping, location, gender • Potential benefits of segmentation to business • Recommend and justify an appropriate method of segmentation in given circumstances |

3.2 Market research

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| 3.2.1 The role of market research and methods used: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market-orientated businesses (uses of market research information to a business) • Primary research and secondary research (benefits and limitations of each) • Methods of primary research, e.g. postal questionnaire, online survey, interviews, focus groups • The need for sampling • Methods of secondary research, e.g. online, accessing government sources, paying for commercial market research reports • Factors influencing the accuracy of market research data |
| 3.2.2 Presentation and use of market research results: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Analyse market research data shown in the form of graphs, charts and diagrams; draw simple conclusions from such data |

3.3 Marketing mix

3.3.1 Product:

- The costs and benefits of developing new products
- Brand image; impact on sales and customer loyalty
- The role of packaging
- The product life cycle: main stages and extension strategies; draw and interpret a product life cycle diagram
- How stages of the product life cycle can influence marketing decisions, e.g. promotion and pricing decisions

3.3.2 Price:

- Pricing methods (benefits and limitations of different methods), e.g. cost plus, competitive, penetration, skimming, and promotional
- Recommend and justify an appropriate pricing method in given circumstances
- Understand the significance of price elasticity: difference between price elastic demand and price inelastic demand; importance of the concept in pricing decisions (*knowledge of the formula and calculations of PED will **not** be assessed*)

3.3.3 Place – distribution channels:

- Advantages and disadvantages of different channels, e.g. use of wholesalers, retailers or direct to consumers
- Recommend and justify an appropriate distribution channel in given circumstances

3.3.4 Promotion:

- The aims of promotion
- Different forms of promotion and how they influence sales, e.g. advertising, sales promotion
- The need for cost-effectiveness in spending the marketing budget on promotion

3.3.5 Technology and the marketing mix:

- Define and explain the concept of e-commerce
- The opportunities and threats of e-commerce to business and consumers
- Use of the internet and social media networks for promotion

3.4 Marketing strategy

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| 3.4.1 Justify marketing strategies appropriate to a given situation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Importance of different elements of the marketing mix in influencing consumer decisions in given circumstances • Recommend and justify an appropriate marketing strategy in given circumstances |
| 3.4.2 The nature and impact of legal controls related to marketing: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact of legal controls on marketing strategy, e.g. misleading promotion, faulty and dangerous goods |
| 3.4.3 The opportunities and problems of entering new foreign markets: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Growth potential of new markets in other countries • Problems of entering foreign markets, e.g. cultural differences and lack of knowledge • Benefits and limitations of methods to overcome such problems, e.g. joint ventures, licensing |

4 Operations management

4.1 Production of goods and services

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| 4.1.1 The meaning of production: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Managing resources effectively to produce goods and services • Difference between production and productivity • Benefits of increasing efficiency and how to increase it, e.g. increasing productivity by automation and technology, improved labour skills • Why businesses hold inventories • The concept of lean production: how to achieve it, e.g. just-in-time inventory control and Kaizen; benefits of lean production |
| 4.1.2 The main methods of production: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Features, benefits and limitations of job, batch and flow production • Recommend and justify an appropriate production method for a given situation |
| 4.1.3 How technology has changed production methods, e.g. using computers in design and manufacturing | |

4.2 Costs, scale of production and break-even analysis

4.2.1 Identify and classify costs:

- Classifying costs using examples, e.g. fixed, variable, average, total
- Use cost data to help make simple cost-based decisions, e.g. to stop production or continue

4.2.2 Economics and diseconomies of scale:

- The concept of economies of scale with examples, e.g. purchasing, marketing, financial, managerial, technical
- The concept of diseconomies of scale with examples, e.g. poor communication, lack of commitment from employees, weak coordination

4.2.3 Break-even analysis:

- The concept of break-even
- Construct, complete or amend a simple break-even chart
- Interpret a given chart and use it to analyse a situation
- Calculate break-even output from given data
- Define, calculate and interpret the margin of safety
- Use break-even analysis to help make simple decisions, e.g. impact of higher price
- Understand the limitations of break-even analysis

4.3 Achieving quality production

4.3.1 Why quality is important and how quality production might be achieved:

- What quality means and why it is important for all businesses
- The concept of quality control and how businesses implement quality control
- The concept of quality assurance and how this can be implemented

4.4 Location decisions

4.4.1 The main factors influencing the location and relocation decisions of a business:

- Factors relevant to the location decision of manufacturing businesses and service businesses
- Factors that a business could consider when deciding which country to locate operations in
- The role of legal controls on location decisions
- Recommend and justify an appropriate location for a business in given circumstances

5 Financial information and decisions

5.1 Business finance: needs and sources

- 5.1.1 The need for business finance:
- The main reasons why businesses need finance, e.g. start-up capital, capital for expansion and additional working capital
 - Understand the difference between short-term and long-term finance needs
- 5.1.2 The main sources of finance:
- Internal sources and external sources with examples
 - Short-term and long-term sources with examples, e.g. overdraft for short-term finance and debt or equity for long-term finance
 - Importance of alternative sources of capital, e.g. micro-finance, crowd-funding
 - The main factors considered in making the financial choice, e.g. size and legal form of business, amount required, length of time, existing loans
 - Recommend and justify appropriate source(s) of finance in given circumstances

5.2 Cash-flow forecasting and working capital

- 5.2.1 The importance of cash and of cash-flow forecasting:
- Why cash is important to a business
 - What a cash-flow forecast is, how a simple one is constructed and the importance of it
 - Amend or complete a simple cash-flow forecast
 - How to interpret a simple cash-flow forecast
 - How a short-term cash-flow problem might be overcome, e.g. increasing loans, delaying payments, asking debtors to pay more quickly
- 5.2.2 Working capital:
- The concept and importance of working capital

5.3 Income statements

- 5.3.1 What profit is and why it is important:
- How a profit is made
 - Importance of profit to private sector businesses, e.g. reward for risk-taking/enterprise, source of finance
 - Difference between profit and cash

5.3.2 Income statements:

- Main features of an income statement, e.g. revenue, cost of sales, gross profit, profit and retained profit
- Use simple income statements in decision-making based on profit calculations (*constructing income statements will **not** be assessed*)

5.4 Statement of financial position

5.4.1 The main elements of a statement of financial position:

- The main classifications of assets and liabilities, using examples

5.4.2 Interpret a simple statement of financial position and make deductions from it, e.g. how a business is financing its activities and what assets it owns, sale of inventories to raise finance (*constructing statements of financial position will **not** be assessed*)

5.5 Analysis of accounts

5.5.1 Profitability:

- The concept and importance of profitability

5.5.2 Liquidity:

- The concept and importance of liquidity

5.5.3 How to interpret the financial performance of a business by calculating and analysing profitability ratios and liquidity ratios:

- Gross profit margin
- Profit margin
- Return on Capital Employed
- Current ratio
- Acid test ratio

5.5.4 Why and how accounts are used:

- Needs of different users of accounts and ratio analysis
- How users of accounts and ratio results might use information to help make decisions, e.g. whether to lend to or invest in the business

6 External influences on business activity

6.1 Economic issues

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| 6.1.1 Business cycle: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Main stages of the business cycle, e.g. growth, boom, recession, slump • Impact on businesses of changes in employment levels, inflation and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) |
| 6.1.2 How government control over the economy affects business activity and how businesses may respond: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify government economic objectives, e.g. increasing Gross Domestic Product (GDP) • Impact of changes in taxes and government spending • Impact of changes in interest rates • How businesses might respond to these changes |

6.2 Environmental and ethical issues

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| 6.2.1 Environmental concerns and ethical issues as both opportunities and constraints for businesses: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How business activity can impact on the environment, e.g. global warming • The concept of externalities: possible external costs and external benefits of business decisions • Sustainable development; how business activity can contribute to this • How and why business might respond to environmental pressures and opportunities, e.g. pressure groups • The role of legal controls over business activity affecting the environment, e.g. pollution controls • Ethical issues a business might face: conflicts between profits and ethics • How business might react and respond to ethical issues, e.g. child labour |
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6.3 Business and the international economy

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| 6.3.1 The importance of globalisation: | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The concept of globalisation and the reasons for it • Opportunities and threats of globalisation for businesses • Why governments might introduce import tariffs and import quotas |
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6.3.2 Reasons for the importance and growth of multinational companies (MNCs):

- Benefits to a business of becoming a multinational and the impact on its stakeholders
- Potential benefits to a country and/or economy where a MNC is located, e.g. jobs, exports, increased choice, investment
- Potential drawbacks to a country and/or economy where a MNC is located, e.g. reduced sales of local businesses, repatriation of profits

6.3.3 The impact of exchange rate changes:

- Depreciation and appreciation of an exchange rate
- How exchange rate changes can affect businesses as importers and exporters of products, e.g. prices, competitiveness, profitability (*exchange rate calculations will **not** be assessed*)

4 Details of the assessment

Paper 1 – Short Answer and Data Response

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 80 marks

The question paper comprises four questions requiring a mixture of short answers and structured data responses.

The paper assesses content drawn from the entire syllabus.

Each question is introduced by stimulus material. For some questions candidates will need to refer to the stimulus material in their answers. The stimulus material may include tables, graphs and images.

Candidates answer all questions.

Candidates should be aware of the marks for each part question. These are printed on the question paper. Candidates should use them as a guide to the amount of detail and length of response expected and to help them manage their time effectively.

Candidates write their answers on the question paper.

The paper assesses the following assessment objectives:

AO1: Knowledge and understanding

AO2: Application

AO3: Analysis

AO4: Evaluation

Paper 2 – Case Study

Written paper, 1 hour 30 minutes, 80 marks

The question paper comprises four questions based on a case study, provided as an insert with the paper. The case study includes appendices with data presented in a variety of forms, such as tables, graphs, newspaper extracts and advertisements.

The paper assesses content drawn from the entire syllabus.

Candidates answer all questions.

Candidates should be aware of the marks for each part question. These are printed on the question paper. Candidates should use them as a guide to the amount of detail and length of response expected and to help them manage their time effectively.

Candidates write their answers on the question paper.

The paper assesses the following assessment objectives:

AO1: Knowledge and understanding

AO2: Application

AO3: Analysis

AO4: Evaluation

Command words

The table below includes command words used in the assessment for this syllabus. The use of the command word will relate to the subject context.

Command word	What it means
Calculate	work out from given facts, figures or information
Consider	review and respond to given information
Define	give precise meaning
Explain	set out purposes or reasons / make the relationships between things evident / provide why and/or how and support with relevant evidence
Identify	name/select/recognise
Justify	support a case with evidence/argument
Outline	set out main points
State	express in clear terms

5 What else you need to know

This section is an overview of other information you need to know about this syllabus. It will help to share the administrative information with your exams officer so they know when you will need their support. Find more information about our administrative processes at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Before you start

Previous study

We do not expect learners starting this course to have previously studied business studies.

Guided learning hours

We design Cambridge O Level syllabuses based on learners having about 130 guided learning hours for each subject during the course but this is for guidance only. The number of hours a learner needs to achieve the qualification may vary according to local practice and their previous experience of the subject.

Availability and timetables

You can enter candidates in the June and November exam series. You can view the timetable for your administrative zone at www.cambridgeinternational.org/timetables

Cambridge O Levels are available to centres in Administrative Zones 3, 4 and 5. Centres in Administrative Zones 1, 2 or 6 wishing to enter candidates for Cambridge O Level examinations should contact Cambridge International Customer Services.

Private candidates can enter for this syllabus.

Combining with other syllabuses

Candidates can take this syllabus alongside other Cambridge International syllabuses in a single exam series. The only exceptions are:

- Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) Business Studies (0986)
- Cambridge IGCSE Business Studies (0450)
- syllabuses with the same title at the same level.

Cambridge O Level, Cambridge IGCSE and Cambridge IGCSE (9–1) syllabuses are at the same level.

Making entries

Exams officers are responsible for submitting entries to Cambridge International. We encourage them to work closely with you to make sure they enter the right number of candidates for the right combination of syllabus components. Entry option codes and instructions for submitting entries are in the *Cambridge Guide to Making Entries*. Your exams officer has a copy of this guide.

Exam administration

To keep our exams secure, we produce question papers for different areas of the world, known as 'administrative zones'. We allocate all Cambridge schools to one administrative zone determined by their location. Each zone has a specific timetable. Some of our syllabuses offer candidates different assessment options. An entry option code is used to identify the components the candidate will take relevant to the administrative zone and the available assessment options.

Support for exams officers

We know how important exams officers are to the successful running of exams. We provide them with the support they need to make your entries on time. Your exams officer will find this support, and guidance for all other phases of the Cambridge Exams Cycle, at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Retakes

Candidates can retake the whole qualification as many times as they want to. This is a linear qualification so candidates cannot re-sit individual components.

Equality and inclusion

We have taken great care to avoid bias of any kind in the preparation of this syllabus and related assessment materials. In compliance with the UK Equality Act (2010) we have designed this qualification to avoid any direct and indirect discrimination.

The standard assessment arrangements may present unnecessary barriers for candidates with disabilities or learning difficulties. We can put arrangements in place for these candidates to enable them to access the assessments and receive recognition of their attainment. We do not agree access arrangements if they give candidates an unfair advantage over others or if they compromise the standards being assessed.

Candidates who cannot access the assessment of any component may be able to receive an award based on the parts of the assessment they have completed.

Information on access arrangements is in the *Cambridge Handbook* at www.cambridgeinternational.org/examsofficers

Language

This syllabus and the related assessment materials are available in English only.

After the exam

Grading and reporting

Grades A*, A, B, C, D or E indicate the standard a candidate achieved at Cambridge O Level.

A* is the highest and E is the lowest. 'Ungraded' means that the candidate's performance did not meet the standard required for grade E. 'Ungraded' is reported on the statement of results but not on the certificate. In specific circumstances your candidates may see one of the following letters on their statement of results:

- Q (result pending)
- X (no result)
- Y (to be issued)

These letters do not appear on the certificate.

How students and teachers can use the grades

Assessment at Cambridge O Level has two purposes.

- To measure learning and achievement.

The assessment:

- confirms achievement and performance in relation to the knowledge, understanding and skills specified in the syllabus, to the levels described in the grade descriptions.

- To show likely future success.

The outcomes:

- help predict which students are well prepared for a particular course or career and/or which students are more likely to be successful
- help students choose the most suitable course or career.

Grade descriptions

Grade descriptions are provided to give an indication of the standards of achievement candidates awarded particular grades are likely to show. Weakness in one aspect of the examination may be balanced by a better performance in some other aspect.

Grade descriptions for Cambridge O Level Business Studies will be published after the first assessment of the O Level in 2020. Find more information at www.cambridgeinternational.org/olevel

Changes to this syllabus for 2020, 2021 and 2022

This syllabus has been updated. The latest syllabus is version 4, published March 2020.

The syllabus has been reviewed and revised for first examination in 2020.

Changes to assessment (including changes to specimen papers)

Changes to version 4 of the syllabus

- We have updated the 7115/01 specimen mark scheme for examination from 2020. We have changed 'Project' to 'Protect' in question 1(e) in bullet points one and two. We have removed 'which means' from the beginning of the justification bullet point in question 2(e)

Changes to version 3 of the syllabus, published December 2019

- We have updated the 7115/01 specimen mark scheme for examination from 2020. We have improved clarity of answers and included possible justifications candidates may give in their responses to questions 1(e) and question 2(e)

Changes to version 1 of the syllabus, published September 2017

- The assessment objective (AO) weightings have been reviewed and updated in response to feedback from teachers.
 - The AO descriptors have not changed.
 - Specimen Paper 1 has been updated to include 'define' as a command word.
 - The specimen mark scheme for the part (b) questions in Paper 2 has been updated so the AO2 application marks are integrated into the levels of response marking grid.
 - Question paper titles have been updated.
Paper 1: Short Answer and Data Response
Paper 2: Case Study
-

Changes to syllabus content

Changes to version 2 of the syllabus, published October 2017

- The information on page 19, Section 5.5 Analysis of accounts has been updated. The heading in 5.5.1 now reads 'Profitability'.

Changes to version 1 of the syllabus, published September 2017

- The syllabus content has been reworded for clarity and to provide further guidance to teachers.
 - The syllabus content has been represented in a two-column format to make it clearer.
 - The international accounting terminology has been updated. Balance sheet has been replaced with statement of financial position.
 - A list of command words has been added to the syllabus.
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Significant changes to the syllabus are indicated by black vertical lines either side of the text.

In addition to reading the syllabus, teachers should refer to the updated specimen assessment materials.

The syllabus and specimen papers use our new name, Cambridge Assessment International Education.

You are strongly advised to read the whole syllabus before planning your teaching programme.

Any textbooks endorsed to support the syllabus for examination from 2015 or 2020 are suitable for use with this syllabus.



Cambridge Assessment International Education
The Triangle Building, Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge, CB2 8EA, United Kingdom
Tel: +44 (0)1223 553554 Fax: +44 (0)1223 553558
Email: info@cambridgeinternational.org www.cambridgeinternational.org

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