



Economics

Department of Economics and Business Studies

The department offers a choice of two 'A' Levels: Economics and Business Studies. It is not possible for students to study both subjects. It also offers International Baccalaureate Economics.

Advanced Level Economics.

Economics is the study of how society tackles the age-old problem of infinite demands and limited resources. Every individual would like a better car and all governments would like to spend more on health and education. In reality this cannot happen. As a result, everyone in society has to choose how best to allocate their resources most efficiently.

Candidates are entered for the OCR modular syllabus with six modules being taken during the two year course.

In the first year, and therefore for AS Level, the main focus is on the basic theories that relate to individuals and firms. We also examine the problems faced by the government in managing the economy as a whole; this includes an in-depth study of topics such as unemployment, inflation and tax policy.

In the Upper Sixth, and therefore to complete the A Level, we analyse the current state of the UK economy and the very topical area of Transport Economics. This particular module examines developments in the UK's bus and rail sectors and the problems of congestion. The final synoptic module explores the European Union and the rapidly changing face of Eastern Europe.

Economics is a theoretical and academically challenging course. Candidates need a sound mathematical background and must have an interest in current affairs. Our record with capable academic students is good, but weaker candidates might struggle with some of the more rigorous theoretical concepts. Last year, 72% of candidates attained A and B grades at A Level.

Candidates wishing to study the subject at AS Level should expect to attain a grade B in both English and Mathematics at GCSE.

Economics A Level is not solely useful for students who wish to pursue the subject at University. It also helps students understand current issues, such as the impact of the Euro, and encourages them to think independently in a rational and methodical way.

Advanced Level Business Studies.

The key theme of the course is solving problems that are mainly, but not entirely, related to business organisations. Emphasis is placed on understanding the need for teamwork and co-operation in the working world. The course is practical and relates where possible to UK firms and other organisations. There is a heavy emphasis on numerate techniques and it is therefore essential that candidates are confident with basic statistical methods. Anyone taking Business Studies should have a genuine interest in how businesses operate. They must be able to work to deadlines and be prepared to undertake field visits.

The OCR course is modular and the syllabus covers a wide range of topics including marketing, accounting & finance, production management, motivating & organising people, the external influences on firms such as the government and the EU as well as business objectives and strategy.

In the first year, and therefore for AS Level, the main focus is on the basic concepts that are needed to understand business organisations. At A2, there are two specialist modules that are examined in the January and June of the Upper Sixth. The first examines the issues surrounding Human Resource Management. The second module is synoptic and is based around a pre-issued case study that requires students to propose and justify strategies to solve specific business problems. Perhaps the most demanding module at A2 is the 4000 word Research Assignment. The student must use business studies knowledge drawn from various elements of the course to solve a specific business problem. Preparation for this project involves the student spending time in an organisation of their choice. Boys who have access to a business organisation will, therefore, be at an advantage.

Candidates wishing to study the subject at AS should expect to attain a grade B in both English and Mathematics at GCSE.

The course is relevant to students who intend to study a business or management degree at University and to boys who wish to have a general understanding of how firms, ranging from partnerships to multinationals, operate.