HOLYPORT COLLEGE

BUSINESS TRANSITION WORK 2026

Key Information

● This is a 2-year A Level course (AQA specification 7138)
● You will need confidence with numerical and data skills, alongside an analytical mindset to interpret business performance.

Most of the assessment will be through data response questions and structured essay writing, so strong written English and critical evaluation are essential.

Why This Transition Work Matters

Business may be a new subject for students starting Year 12. If you have not taken GCSE Business, this transition work is vital for getting off to a strong start. It will introduce you to core concepts, functional areas (Marketing, Finance, Operations, and Human Resources), and the foundational language that will help you to participate fully in lessons from the very first week.

The A Level Business course is content-heavy and moves quickly. On top of this, as a student at Holyport College you are expected to engage with wider learning opportunities.

Please treat this transition work as your first piece of A Level study. The effort you put in now will pay dividends throughout the course.

How to Prepare Over the Summer

1. Core Concepts – Research & Notes

Visit trusted business education platforms like Tutor2U or Revisionstation to research the new AQA 7138 specification topics, and complete ONE page of notes (in any format you prefer) for each of the following foundational areas:

● Entrepreneurs and Business Planning
● Forms of Business and Stakeholders
● The Marketing Mix (The 4 Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion)
● Sources of Finance and Break-Even Analysis
● Leadership Styles and Employee Motivation
● Sustainability and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)
● Risk vs. Uncertainty in Business Markets

2. Stay Updated – Follow the News

Business is deeply rooted in the real world. You need to be aware of current corporate events, economic trends, and how they shape organizational choices.

● Read news from:
○ BBC News – Business Section Business | Latest News & Updates | BBC News
○ Financial Times – Companies & Markets Companies | Financial Times
○ The Economist – Business & Finance Business | Latest news and analysis from The Economist
● Listen to relevant podcasts such as The Diary of a CEO, BBC Business Daily, or Thinking Business.
● Add a news app to your phone, check it regularly, and keep a log of major business mergers, product launches, or brand crises over the summer.

3. Research Task – Business Structures, Finance & Strategy

This research task focuses on how organizational structure, internal finances, and external pressures influence business decision-making and performance.

Part A: Understanding Business Types and Finance

Complete the missing letters for key business terms and structures:

- S O _ E T _ A _ E R
- P A _ T _ E _ S _ I P
- P _ I _ A T E L _ M _ T E D C _ M _ A N Y
- P _ B _ L I C L _ M _ T E D C _ M _ A N Y
- B _ E A _ - E _ E N A _ A _ Y _ I S
- S _ A K _ H _ L _ E R
- C O _ P _ R A _ E S O C _ A L R E S _ O N S I B I L I T Y

Now research and answer the following questions:

1. How do different forms of business ownership (e.g., Sole Trader vs. Public Limited Company) affect an owner's liability, risk, and access to finance?

2. What is the difference between a shareholder and a stakeholder? Explain why a decision to maximise short-term profits might cause a conflict between them.

3. What is the operational and financial impact of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and environmental sustainability on a modern business? (Think: costs vs. brand reputation)

4. How does digital technology and e-commerce affect a company's marketing strategy and physical distribution methods?

5. How does calculating a ‘break-even point’ help an entrepreneur or lender judge the viability of a new business venture?

Part B: Operational Control and Strategic Choices

Explore how functional areas manage resources and respond to external factors:

1. Choose a real-world example of a major business that has recently failed, restructured, or faced a serious crisis (e.g., Wilko, Body Shop, or a major tech restructuring). Explain how external PESTLE factors (Political, Economic, Social, Technological, Legal, Environmental) or internal mismanagement caused this outcome.

2. Why is operational efficiency (e.g., managing capacity utilization, lean production, or quality control) critical for a business seeking to stay competitive against global rivals?

3. What is a buffer stock? Explain how recent global supply chain disruptions have forced businesses to re-evaluate just-in-time (JIT) inventory management.

4. Research a prominent UK or global brand (e.g., Marks & Spencer, Unilever, or Patagonia). Explain how their approach to modern workplace practices or ethical sourcing impacts their customer loyalty.

5. How might macroeconomic shifts—such as sustained inflation or an increase in central bank interest rates—directly affect a firm's fixed costs, variable costs, and consumer Demand?

Suggested Sources

- AQA Business (7138) Specification at A-level Business 7138 | Specification | AQA
- Tutor2U Business Reference Library
Studying AQA A-Level Business | tutor2u
- Thinka AI Business Revision Guides Business 7138 (New) - AQA A Level

Recommended Books and Viewing

If you would like to explore the world of business further over the break:

- Shoe Dog – Phil Knight (The story of Nike)
- The Lean Startup – Eric Ries
- Screw It, Let's Do It – Richard Branson
- Film: The Founder (2016) – The story of McDonald's
- Film: Steve Jobs (2015) or The Social Network (2010)

If you have any queries about the A Level Business course or this summer work, feel free to email us:

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We look forward to welcoming you in September. Enjoy your summer, and take this opportunity to get a head start on material ready to begin!