

Business Departmental Curriculum Statement

Curriculum Intent Statement

The aim of the Business department at Cowley is to develop enterprising and aspirational students with business acumen. The available courses offer an insight into the world of work, from a local, national and global perspective, broadening students' career horizons.

The applied nature of learning within the courses brings together knowledge and understanding of the business world with practical and technical skills. The setting of vocational tasks encourages the development of appropriate vocational behaviours and transferable employability skills which are vital as students' progress to a wide range of higher education courses or to employment. Students will be resilient and prepared for the rigours and challenges that the competitive employment and business world will be offer up.

The contents of the Level 2 and 3 courses provide a balance of breadth and depth of topics, while retaining a degree of choice for individual students to tailor content relevant to their own interests and progression choices. As the business sector and employment is dynamic, content will reflect current economic and market specific conditions.

The staff's commitment and enthusiasm for the subject ensures that high standards are set which fuel students' aspirations through their own conduct, support of the Cowleian values and the high expectations set for all students. Ultimately students will enter the employment market and therefore the final role of the department and the available courses is to provide students with a real understanding of the employment options available to them both now and in the future, as well as the importance of developing transferable, employability skills. Students who study business will be work-ready when they join the job market.

Curriculum Implementation Statement

Students can access the subject at Level 2 and Level 3. At Level 2 the Pearson Edexcel GCSE Business course is a two-year course where external examinations will be completed at the end of Y11. In Y10 students will cover Theme 1 and in Y11 students will then predominately focus on Theme 2. Both themes are equally weighted 90-minute examination papers. Exam question practice will be completed throughout the duration of the course in order to build examination skills and allow the application of theory. There is progression from this course in the Sixth Form on to the Level 3 BTEC Extended Certificate in Business.

In the Sixth Form there are two courses available. The Level 2 Foundation programme offers some flexibility with the opportunity to study the OCR Level 2 Cambridge Technical Certificate in Business (90 GLH) covering three units (one year) with the possibility of topping up the qualification to the Extended Certificate (180) covering five units across two years. Students have the opportunity to resubmit coursework once for each unit. This course is graded Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*.

As a Level 3 option students complete the Pearson Edexcel BTEC Extended Certificate in Business. This course incorporates four units: two units are externally set, a 2-hour examination and a 3-hour controlled task. They account for 58% of the course. The second two units are internally set coursework making up the remaining 42%. Students have the opportunity to retake all four units once. The course is accessible for all students as it is graded Pass, Merit, Distinction and Distinction*. There is also the opportunity for students to gain a Near Pass grade in external assessments which gains credit towards the final grade. The BTEC National course achieves the standard UCAS points.

A variety of teaching and learning strategies/activities are used in order to provide pace and challenge within the subject to engage students to achieve their potential whilst enjoying the subject and their experiences. There are clear teaching and assessment phases during the Level 2 and Level 3 courses. The courses provide students with the opportunity to develop high level literacy skills as research, analysis and evaluation tasks will be completed. Students will cultivate examination-style answers, report writing and business planning skills alongside a strong level of computer literacy. Numeracy skills are will be gained through consideration of personal and business finance topics at both key stages. Therefore, there are strong cross-curricular links with English, Maths and ICT. Creativity will be encouraged through the chance to develop student's own business enterprise or marketing campaign. Communication skills will be fostered as well as students will be involved in activities such as business pitching/presenting or recruitment and selection role plays. Time management will also be essential as students will have regular deadlines to meet as well-timed assessments. These transferable skills are ones which are highly valued within both the higher education section and the workplace. Students will also be encouraged to keep up to date with the latest business/economic news stories, sharing their knowledge in lesson and enhancing their work.

Students will be expected to complete work independently, through designated homework/coursework tasks in order to meet stringent deadlines. Accessing the school network using the remote log on system will be encouraged, not only to complete this work but to become confident with working remotely as this maybe be the future of work routines in some careers.

Curriculum Beyond the Classroom

Local, national and global businesses are incorporated into the Level 2 and Level 3 courses. The courses lend themselves to guest speakers, trips, work experience and support from businesses however, the pandemic has limited this prospect recently.

Links were established with Cadbury's and the NHS who were involved with the Level 3 course. Support has also been given to this course by school Governors. This cooperation will be explored further.

Regularly students are given the opportunity to become involved with work experience placements (e.g. HSBC) due to links fostered through the Work-Related Learning Mentor.

Subject Expertise

The department comprises of two full time, highly experienced, Business specialists. The members of the team have experience teaching the subject across several different types of courses such as GCSE, Applied BTEC, BTEC First, BTEC National, A Level and International Baccalaureate.

Subject expertise is strengthened through experience as an examiner for Pearson, a resource writer at GCSE, A Level and BTEC National level and a student workshop and CPD presenter. Social media engagement is also a useful tool for developing the courses.

Destinations

Progression routes for the subject are regularly referred to and discussed through the nature of course topics. At Level 2 students are made aware of the progression routes available in the subject at Level 3. As the department are experienced members of the Sixth Form pastoral team, the subject, as a higher education choice, is regularly promoted with students together with the alternative routes of apprenticeships and employment.

Understanding the world of work is the background to any career therefore it is a relevant choice for any student and this relevance is further supported as students acquire transferable employability skills. This will give students a competitive advantage in the initial job market. By developing appropriate business knowledge and understanding, it will help students to progress to employment, vocational training and higher apprenticeships, or higher education. Students who have chosen the employment route have taken up apprenticeships in business administration, digital marketing and recruitment. Other students have continued their interest in business, progressing to university to study a variety of degrees such as accountancy, marketing and international business.