

A-level Business

A teacher's perspective

The value of studying our specification and how it prepares students.

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A-level Business teacher

Roger is Head of Business Studies at The College of Richard Collyer, a sixth form college in Horsham, West Sussex.

Roger spoke to us about his experience of teaching the new [AQA A-level Business](#) qualification.



Planning for the course

When I sat down to write my scheme of work for the new [specification](#), I certainly felt it was very full. I didn't think it was too much but I do sometimes find it tight to have enough time to build in skills development which is crucial to exam success.

However, at my college we share groups. The first year is quite easy to structure as each teacher can take three units each and these make a sensible divide. The second year units sound logical in title but in my mind the content within them doesn't flow in such a linear way so I took all the elements within the four second year units and divided them up in my own way.

Why learning the models is important

The process of applying the [models](#) is a crucial aspect and helps enhance students' skills of application, analysis and judgement. Having these skills well developed is what will aid them in their futures, whether in the workplace or at university. Students may well forget some of the models but the abilities they will have gained will be what helps them.

The models become more interesting to the students if you get them to apply them to specific businesses and contexts. This process allows you to help the students make links to other concepts within the specification so they can see business as an interconnected whole.

How the assessment works for my students

Overall, I do like the papers.

The [multiple-choice questions](#) are good at testing the whole specification. They allow numeracy and knowledge to be tested and if written well they can be really testing, while the [short answer questions](#) tend to be more specific to areas of the spec which helps to settle students before the essay questions.

“Having these skills well developed is what will aid students in their futures”

The [essays](#) are an area where students need to think holistically and the questions allow them to bring in a wide variety of knowledge and theory.

The Paper 2 questions are good at building up through the skills of knowledge and application to analysis and evaluation and there are areas on each paper where external knowledge can be brought in and that keeps things interesting.

The essays, data responses and case studies all bring in real-life context for students. These either require some real business knowledge or awareness to be applied, or actually provide a scenario which is based on real companies.

The fact that students face exams that can test any part of the specification gets them to think holistically about how businesses function. Many of the questions are discreet to specific concepts and it is in the longer answer questions where knowledgeable students with good technique get to shine.

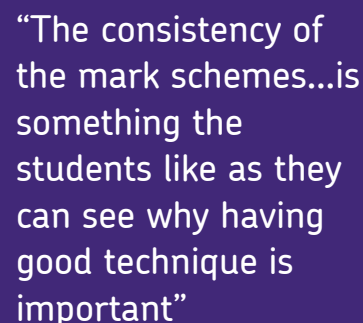
Making my students experts in technique

The consistency of the mark schemes in terms of the standard grid is something that the students like as it shows them why having good technique is important.

We don't have time to do three full 2-hour mocks, so we do a timed essay and later, a timed data response question and we try to get the students to act on any feedback given.

Each piece of work they complete asks them to say what skills they will be working on and the last question on any homework asks them to rate how well they feel they did on their objectives. This allows us to increase students' awareness of what is required in the exams and how well they are doing in getting prepared for them.

All assignments are based on exam questions wherever possible and all assignments are marked according to the proper mark schemes. We have examining experience within the department and we use it.



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