Business A Level
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Year 1 A-Level Business: Summer Transition Work

Purpose

The purpose of this summer transition work is to provide a brief glimpse into your first year of A-Level Business. We have selected **two foundational topics** for you to complete before your first lesson so that you can develop a basic structural understanding of key business concepts.

Submission Guidelines & Conditions

Please ensure the following professional standards are met before handing in your work:

- **Deadline:** Complete all tasks prior to your first formal lesson and present them to your teacher.
- **Completion:** Answer every question thoroughly; do not leave any sections blank.
- **Formatting: Handwrite all answers** unless using a computer is your registered, everyday way of working (e.g., if you were allocated a laptop for your GCSE exams, typing is permitted).
- **Academic Integrity:** All answers must be your own independent work. Do not collaborate with others or use generative AI to write your responses.

Activity 1: Enterprise & Entrepreneurs

Core Characteristics of an Entrepreneur

- Risk-taker
- Taking the initiative and being proactive
- Being organised
- Spotting a gap in the market
- Having creativity and being innovative
- Hard-working
- Perseverance
- Motivated
- Dedicated
- Passionate

Task Questions

Question 1

Select **three** characteristics from the list above. Define each characteristic formally and provide a brief real-world business example for each.

Q2 Using **3** points from the list above write about an entrepreneur from the articles making sure you back up your answer with evidence to prove your point, the better the evidence the better the answer. You may

use the same points you have used in Question 1. Each answer should be **hand-written** (unless you used a laptop in your exams) and a minimum of **1/3 of a page per point**.

Article 1: Ben Francis (Gymshark)

Spotting Gaps, Dedication, and Passion in Action

In 2012, 19-year-old university student Ben Francis was working as a Pizza Hut delivery driver. In his spare time, he was obsessed with fitness but deeply frustrated by the gym clothing available on the market. Everything was either baggy and loose or incredibly expensive. He spotted a clear gap in the market for affordable, well-fitted, and stylish sportswear aimed specifically at a younger generation of gym-goers.

[Pizza Hut Driver] —(Spotted Market Gap)—> [Global Brand Owner]

Ben took the initiative by learning how to sew from his grandmother. He bought a screen printer and sewing machine, and began hand-manufacturing fitness gear in his parents' garage.

His journey required immense dedication and hard work. For the first two years, Ben balanced a full-time university degree, his evening delivery job, and manufacturing Gymshark apparel into the early hours of the morning.

What truly set Gymshark apart, however, was Ben's creativity in marketing. Before "influencer marketing" was an established business strategy, Ben used his passion for social media and fitness to send free Gymshark clothing to popular YouTube bodybuilders. He didn't ask for reviews; he just wanted to build a community.

This creative gamble paid off spectacularly. When Gymshark took their inventory to the BodyPower expo in 2013, their entire stock sold out within 80 minutes. The website was flooded with orders, forcing Ben to drop out of university to run a brand that would eventually become a British "unicorn"—a private startup valued at over £1 billion.

Article 2: Whitney Wolfe Herd (Bumble)

Calculated Risk-Taking, Innovation, and Resilience

Whitney Wolfe Herd's entrepreneurial journey is a masterclass in risk-taking and creativity. After leaving her role as a co-founder at Tinder under highly challenging and public personal circumstances, Whitney faced severe online harassment. She needed incredible resilience to bounce back, but she also saw an structural issue in how modern society approached digital connections.

She spotted a major gap in the online dating market: existing platforms were heavily saturated with aggressive or toxic male-initiated behavior, leaving many female users feeling unsafe or overwhelmed. Her

creative and disruptive solution was Bumble: a dating app based entirely on a new rule where *only women could initiate the conversation*.

Market Failure: Toxic digital environments for women

Wolfe Herd's Innovation: "Women make the first move" logic

Launching a brand-new tech platform in an already crowded market dominated by giants was a massive financial and professional risk. Whitney had to use her initiative to secure early-stage seed funding and completely rethink app safety features.

Through relentless hard work and a clear passion for women's empowerment, she built Bumble from a simple concept into a multi-billion dollar public company. When Bumble went public on the stock exchange, Whitney became the world's youngest self-made female billionaire. Her story perfectly illustrates how a business can succeed by re-engineering user mechanics to protect and empower an underserved segment of a market.

Article 3: Steven Bartlett (Flight Story & Thirdweb)

The Modern Serial Entrepreneur: Initiative, Adaptability, and Passion

Before becoming the youngest-ever investor on BBC's *Dragon's Dragon*, Steven Bartlett was a university dropout who found himself shoplifting food just to survive in Manchester. Driven by a deep financial motive and a desire for independence, Steven showed immediate initiative by founding Social Chain from his bedroom at age 21.

Steven spotted a gap in the market early: traditional corporate brands completely failed to understand how the "social media generation" communicated. He realized that modern consumers didn't want to be explicitly sold to; they wanted to belong to a community.

His creativity manifested in building an interconnected web of massive social media community pages, rather than standard advertising formats. This allowed him to offer corporate clients direct access to millions of young people.

Building Social Chain required enormous dedication. Steven frequently discusses the isolation and extreme hard work of his early twenties, working up to 100 hours a week to scale the business globally.

Location

Activity 2: Read the articles provided on location

Some factors that effect location are as follows:

Size	Footfall	Cost (Rent)	Availability of workers
Security	Appeal	Cost (Purchase)	Type of business
Infrastructure	Proximity to customers	Cost (Bills, business rates)	Flexible working
Parking	Proximity to competitors	Maintenance costs	Grants/tax incentives
Transport	Access	Proximity to Suppliers	Type of product
Ability to grow	Reputation	Population Density	Proximity to complementary businesses

Q3 Based on the articles provided pick **3** factors that effect the decision to locate a business. Write about each one using evidence from the articles. Each answer should be **hand-written** (unless you used a laptop in your exams) and a minimum of **1/3 of a page per point**.

Article 1: Nissan (Sunderland, UK)

Proximity to Markets, Infrastructure, and Government Incentives

In 1984, Japanese automotive giant Nissan made a historic decision to build its massive European manufacturing plant in Sunderland, North East England. Decades later, it remains one of the most productive car plants in Europe. Why did they choose this exact spot?

[Sunderland Plant] —(High-Speed Rail & Deepwater Port)—> [Global Export Markets]

Key Location Factors in Action:

- **Proximity to Market (Transport Links):** Cars are heavy, expensive items to transport. Nissan needed a location with direct, high-speed access to its primary market: continental Europe. Sunderland offered close proximity to deepwater ports (like the Port of Tyne) and excellent rail networks, making it easy to export finished vehicles efficiently.

- **Government Incentives (Grants):** This is a massive qualitative and quantitative factor. In the 1980s, the UK government was desperate to bring jobs back to the North East after the decline of the coal mining industry. They offered Nissan significant financial grants, cheap land, and tax breaks to sweeten the deal.
- **Availability of Labor:** Because traditional heavy industries in the region had recently closed, there was a large pool of unemployed, skilled, and semi-skilled industrial workers ready to be retrained.

Article 2: Greggs (The High Street vs. Travel Hubs)

Footfall, Demographics, and Competitor Proximity

If you walk down almost any major British high street, you are likely to spot a Greggs. As a retail and food business, Greggs operates on a completely different set of location rules than a manufacturing plant like Nissan. They don't care about deepwater ports; they care about **footfall** (the number of people walking past the shop front).

In recent years, Greggs has executed a major strategic shift in its location decisions, moving away from struggling traditional high streets and targeting **travel hubs** like train stations, airports, and roadside petrol stations.

Key Location Factors in Action:

- **Footfall and Target Market Demographics:** Greggs relies on high-volume, low-cost convenience sales. By locating inside busy commuter hubs, they place themselves directly in front of their primary demographic: busy, time-poor workers looking for a quick, affordable breakfast or snack.
- **Clustering and Competitor Proximity:** In business, "clustering" means locating near your competitors. Greggs often looks for locations near rival coffee shops or fast-food chains. Why? Because those competitors have already done the market research to prove that hungry consumers gather in that specific area.
- **Quantitative Costs (Rent vs. Revenue):** Prime locations inside train stations or airport terminals command incredibly high rents. However, Greggs uses a quantitative calculation: the massive volume of daily customers in these hubs easily offsets the expensive overheads, leading to higher overall profitability.

Article 3: ARM Holdings (Cambridge, UK)

External Economies of Scale and the "Knowledge Hub"

ARM Holdings is one of the world's most important technology companies; its microchip architectures power virtually every smartphone on earth. Unlike Nissan or Greggs, ARM doesn't ship heavy physical goods, nor does it rely on passing footfall. Yet, its headquarters have remained firmly rooted in Cambridge, England, for decades.

[University Talent Pipeline] —> [Silicon Fen Cluster] —> [ARM Global Headquarters]

Key Location Factors in Action:

- **External Economies of Scale:** Cambridge is famously known as "Silicon Fen"—a massive cluster of high-tech software and biotechnology companies. By locating here, ARM benefits from shared local benefits, such as specialized local legal firms, tech-focused suppliers, and a highly supportive local business ecosystem.
- **Access to Highly Skilled Labor:** For a tech giant, the ultimate location factor is brainpower. Being located next door to the University of Cambridge provides ARM with a direct, world-class talent pipeline of computer science and engineering graduates.
- **Qualitative Factor (Reputation and Prestige):** Operating out of a globally recognized hub of academic and technological excellence boosts ARM's corporate image. This makes it significantly easier to attract top-tier global talent who want to live and work in a vibrant, innovation-rich city.

Q4 Below are two different businesses in the table below bullet point at least 3 location factors (from the table above) which are the same and 3 which are different.

- Mobile hairdresser
- Tesco

Similar	Different

Q5 Research your favourite business/entrepreneur/business concept and write ½ page explaining why that business is interesting to you. This is to demonstrate your interest and passion for business. Focus on what makes it interesting to you and try not to write a business Wikipedia page.

For students who have completed GCSE Business ONLY:

Please complete the following:

Quantitative Skills

These items require you to calculate, construct diagrams, interpret numerical data, or analyze financial/mathematical charts.

Markets & Market Research

Specification Point	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Analyse and interpret market data, including market size, market share and market trends	☐	☐	☐
Distinguish between qualitative and quantitative data	☐	☐	☐
Interpret and evaluate quantitative and qualitative research	☐	☐	☐
Construct and interpret demand and supply diagrams	☐	☐	☐
Understand the factors that cause the demand and supply curves to shift and the effect this has on equilibrium price and quantity	☐	☐	☐

Business Revenue, Costs & Break-Even

Specification Point	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Calculate revenue, costs and profit	☐	☐	☐
Interpret revenue, costs and profit calculations	☐	☐	☐
Calculate contribution and understand its application to the calculation of break-even	☐	☐	☐
Construct and interpret break-even charts, including the margin of safety	☐	☐	☐
Illustrate on a break-even chart the effects of changes in costs and revenue	☐	☐	☐
Analyse how changes in costs and/or revenue can affect break-even ('what-if' analysis)	☐	☐	☐

Product Life Cycle

Specification Point	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Construct and interpret a product life cycle diagram including extension strategies	☐	☐	☐

Functions: Finance & Accounts

Specification Point	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Construct, calculate and interpret cash flow forecasts	☐	☐	☐
Calculate gross profit and net profit	☐	☐	☐
Calculate and interpret gross and net profit margins	☐	☐	☐

Functions: Human Resources

Specification Point	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Calculate and interpret labour productivity and labour turnover	☐	☐	☐

Functions: Operations Management

Specification Point	Not Confident	Confident	Very Confident
Calculate added value	☐	☐	☐
Understand ways of measuring productivity	☐	☐	☐
Calculate and interpret capacity utilisation	☐	☐	☐
Interpret stock control diagrams and explain the main components including re-order level, lead time, buffer stock and minimum stock level	☐	☐	☐