

**AN ROINN OIDEACHAIS**

**THE LEAVING CERTIFICATE**

**BUSINESS SYLLABUS**

**(HIGHER LEVEL and ORDINARY LEVEL)**

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**PREAMBLE**

'Business' is a business studies option within the established Leaving Certificate programme. It is concerned with the understanding of the environment in which business operates in Ireland and in the wider world. It also involves equipping the students with a positive view of enterprise and its applications in the business environment, in both the public and private sectors.

The principles on which this syllabus has been prepared are as follows:

A common syllabus at higher and ordinary levels to fulfil the aims and objectives of the course.

A course structured to provide continuation from, and development of, Business Studies at Junior Certificate; however, it can also be studied 'ab initio'.

A flexibility of design that caters for present-day Irish business education and yet is capable of adaptation to future developments in a structured and efficient way.

The capability of being taught within approximately 180 hours.

The preparation of students for further education and for adult and working life, including the creation of positive attitudes towards self-employment.

## **Business syllabus**

### **Introduction**

#### **Aims**

To contribute to a balanced and appropriate general education, leading to the personal and social development of students through a study of business and enterprise.

To encourage initiative and self-reliance in each student.

To develop a clear understanding of the role of enterprise, to encourage the development of appropriate enterprise learning skills, and to generate in students a positive and ethical attitude to enterprise in personal, business and public life.

To develop a critical understanding of the overall environment in which business functions.

To help prepare students for participation in a changing business environment for adult and working life and also as a basis for further education.

#### **Objectives**

To develop students' literacy, numeracy, problem-solving and communication skills and to develop an attention to detail in the presentation of information.

To develop an understanding of the structures, institutions, processes and management of business.

To enable students to make informed business decisions.

To enable students to use established commercial principles and knowledge, to critically evaluate commercial information, and to offer solutions to given commercial problems.

To promote a positive awareness of cultural and social diversity in international business.

To enable students to understand and appreciate ethics in business.

#### **Note**

A general objective is given at the beginning of each section to provide an overview of the area. The learning outcomes provide the specific context on which each section is based.

#### **Assessment**

The syllabus will be assessed in relation to the syllabus objectives, initially through a written terminal examination.

A variety of questioning techniques will be used, and a flexible and varied approach will be taken to the style of questioning in the written examination.

This syllabus contains outcomes common to Ordinary and Higher levels and some that are designated Higher level only (**HL**).

At Ordinary level, candidates will be required to:

- recall and demonstrate a knowledge and understanding of the syllabus content.

In addition, Higher level candidates will be required to:

- demonstrate a greater depth of knowledge and understanding of the concepts and issues than Ordinary level candidates, as well as a greater proficiency in applications and analysis;
- apply the business terms, concepts and theories to address problems and issues;
- select, organise, interpret and use information supplied;
- evaluate evidence, make reasoned judgements and present conclusions accurately and appropriately.

A list of the legislation to be examined at both levels will be set out in the Teacher Guidelines. The emphasis will be on the application of the legislation, as opposed to a knowledge of it.

### Structure of syllabus

The syllabus is broken down into three sections: A, B, and C.

#### Section A People in Business

##### (Unit 1) Introduction to people in business

People and their relationships in business  
Conflicting interests and how they are resolved

#### Section B Enterprise

##### (Unit 2) Enterprise

Introduction and definition of enterprise  
Entrepreneurs and enterprise skills

##### (Unit 3) Managing 1

Introduction and definition of management  
Managers and management skills  
Management activities

**(Unit 4) Managing 2**

Household and business manager  
Human resource management  
Changing role of management  
Monitoring the business

**(Unit 5) Business in action**

Identifying opportunities  
Marketing  
Getting started  
Expansion

**Section C Environment**

**(Unit 6) Domestic environment**

Categories of industry  
Types of business organisation  
Community development  
Business and the economy  
Government and business  
Social responsibilities of business

**(Unit 7) International environment**

Introduction to the international trading environment  
European Union  
International business

**Unit 1. INTRODUCTION TO PEOPLE IN BUSINESS**

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Objective:

To enable students to understand the relationship between the principal parties in business and their dynamic nature.

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**1.1 People and their relationships in business**

Consumers, entrepreneurs and investors  
Producers, suppliers and services  
Employer, employee and trade union relationships  
Interest groups

Co-operative and competitive relationships

Elements of contract law

**1.2 Conflicting interests and how they are resolved**

Identifying areas of conflict in business

Dealing with methods of resolving conflicts in relationships  
(both non-legislative and legislative)

Consumer and industrial relations legislation

**1.3 Outcomes**

On completion, the student should be able to:

- 1.3.1 list the main parties and people involved in business;
- 1.3.2 describe the relationships between people as workers, as trade union members, as managers, as entrepreneurs, as investors, and as customers;
- 1.3.3 outline non-legislative ways of solving conflict;
- 1.3.4 outline how a major piece of legislation and the elements of contract law help deal with conflict;
- 1.3.5 analyse the relationships between people in business (**HL**);
- 1.3.6 illustrate how legislation affects these business relationships (**HL**);
- 1.3.7 describe a possible business conflict and show how the law would be used to solve it (**HL**).

**Unit 2. ENTERPRISE**

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Objective:

To enable students to understand the importance of enterprise in business and the community.

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**2.1 Introduction and definition of enterprise**

A broad definition of enterprise, ensuring its relevance to a wide range of activities in personal, business and public life as well as business start-up.

**2.2 Entrepreneurs and enterprise skills**

Characteristics of entrepreneurs

Enterprise skills-innate and learned

Application of enterprise skills to different situations

**2.3 Outcomes**

On completion, the student should be able to:

2.3.1 define enterprise;

2.3.2 identify the importance of enterprise skills in areas such as home, school, local community, Government departments, and business start-up;

2.3.3 explain the basic enterprise skills;

2.3.4 identify the characteristics of enterprising people;

2.3.5 analyse the importance of enterprise in business and the community (**HL**);

2.3.6 identify enterprise skills, opportunities, risks and rewards from given data (**HL**).

**Unit 3.      MANAGING 1**

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Objective:

To enable students to understand the importance of management in business and in the community.

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**3.1      Introduction and definition of management**

A broad definition of management, ensuring its relevance to a wide range of activities in personal, business and public life. This section views management as the ability to achieve results through people.

**3.2      Managers and management skills**

Characteristics of managers

Difference between enterprise and management

Management skills:

- Leading                      -                      direction, delegation
- Motivating                      -                      classic motivation theories
- Communication                      -                      importance of communicating in management; communication skills and methods and their application

**3.3      Management activities**

Management activities:

- Planning                      -                      theory, principles and types
- Organising                      -                      structure of organisation; formal and informal; staffing, span of control, and project teams
- Controlling                      -                      theory, principles and types.

**3.4      Outcomes**

On completion, the student should be able to:

- 3.4.1              define management;
- 3.4.2              identify the importance of management skills in areas such as home, school, local community, Government departments and business start-up;
- 3.4.3              list the characteristics of managers;

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- 3.4.4 explain the basic management skills;
- 3.4.5 explain the central role of communications in business and management;
- 3.4.6 identify and explain the main barriers to effective communications;
- 3.4.7 demonstrate business data in the following written forms: memos, reports, and business letters; draft a visual presentation from given, data;
- 3.4.8 identify the duties of a chairperson and secretary and draft an agenda and minutes of a meeting;
- 3.4.9 distinguish between the methods of communication;
- 3.4.10 discuss the importance of general communication skills (**HL**);
- 3.4.11 differentiate between enterprise and management (**HL**);
- 3.4.12 explain the contribution of both managers and entrepreneurs to business (**HL**);
- 3.4.13 discuss the nature of management activities and their linkages (**HL**).

**Unit 4.      MANAGING 2**

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Objective:

To enable students to understand management as it applies to the household and the business.

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**4.1      Household and business manager**

A comparison of their roles in the context of certain aspects of finance, insurance and taxation.

- Aspects of finance include: basic cash flow, main sources of finance, cost of finance, current account, and applying for a loan
- Aspects of insurance include: principles, risks and costs, and types of insurance
- Aspects of taxation include: an outline of the main types, basic tax computations and principal tax forms

**4.2      Human resource management**

Functions of human resource management:

- recruitment and selection
- Employer and employee relationships

Teamwork

- people development, performance appraisal and reward

**4.3      Changing role of management**

Managing new relationships:

- the empowerment of workers and total quality management

Managing new technologies:

- the impact of technology on personnel, business costs, and business opportunities

#### 4.4 Monitoring the business

Use, understanding and interpretation of accountancy and business data. Basic final accounts and balance sheets. Main profitability and liquidity ratios. Debt equity ratio.

#### 4.5 Outcomes

On completion, the student should be able to:

- 4.5.1 outline the differences between managing a household and managing a business;
- 4.5.2 explain the importance of finance, insurance and tax implications for business;
- 4.5.3 identify activities common to managing a business and a household, including completion of relevant forms;
- 4.5.4 understand the similarities and differences between these activities in a household context and in a business context;
- 4.5.5 calculate and interpret the main profitability and liquidity ratios and debt/equity;
- 4.5.6 explain the key functions of human resource management;
- 4.5.7 explain the changing role of a manager from controller to facilitator;
- 4.5.8 understand the importance of employee participation;
- 4.5.9 understand how technology changes the role of management;
- 4.5.10 understand the relationship between employers and employees and the role of trade unions;
- 4.5.11 understand the central role of human resources in management (**HL**);
- 4.5.12 identify the strategies for managing change (**HL**);
- 4.5.13 discuss the importance of total quality management (**HL**);
- 4.5.14 understand the importance of accountancy and business data in the monitoring of the business enterprise (**HL**).

## **Unit 5. BUSINESS IN ACTION**

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Objective:

To enable students to understand the stages involved in setting up a business enterprise.

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### **5.1 Identifying opportunities**

Sources of opportunities:

- internal and external

New product and service development process

### **5.2 Marketing**

The marketing concept (consumer orientation)

The marketing strategy

Developing the marketing mix - product, price, promotion and place

### **5.3 Getting started**

Finance, ownership and production options

Developing a business plan

### **5.4 Expansion**

Reasons and finance for expansion

Implications and methods of expansion

### **5.5 Outcomes**

On completion, the student should be able to:

5.5.1 explain the importance of researching business ideas;

5.5.2 identify techniques for developing business ideas and researching them;

5.5.3 contrast the main sources of new product ideas;

- 5.5.4 identify and explain the elements involved in a new business startup;
- 5.5.5 explain the stages involved in setting up a new business;
- 5.5.6 identify the main elements of a marketing strategy;
- 5.5.7 explain the elements of the marketing mix;
- 5.5.8 list the main sources of finance available for business start-up;
- 5.5.9 identify the elements of production processes;
- 5.5.10 illustrate the central role of the business plan;
- 5.5.11 identify the reasons for and methods of expansion;
- 5.5.12 identify three main sources of finance for expansion;
- 5.5.13 analyse the importance of Irish business expansion in the domestic and foreign markets (**HL**);
- 5.5.14 compare and contrast equity and loan capital as sources of finance for expansion (**HL**);
- 5.5.15 evaluate the elements of the marketing mix (**HL**);
- 5.5.16 apply the main sources of finance available for business start-up (**HL**);

**Unit 6. DOMESTIC ENVIRONMENT**

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Objective:

To enable students to understand the interaction between business firms, the local community, the Government and the economy.

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**6.1 Categories of industry**

Agriculture, manufacturing, services and natural resources

Changing trends in business

**6.2 Types of business organisation**

Choosing between alternatives:

- Sole trader, partnership, alliances, franchising, private limited companies, transnationals, public limited companies, co-operatives, state-owned enterprises and indigenous firms

Changing trends in ownership and structure

**6.3 Community development**

Local community and business

Community development, incorporating local community initiatives

**6.4 Business and the economy**

The impact of the economy on business, taking into account the general state of the economy, inflation, interest rates, tax and grants

The impact of business on the economy at local and national level, taking into account employment, tax revenues and environmental issues

The interaction between business and the wider economy

**6.5 Government and business**

An introduction to the Government's role in encouraging and regulating business.

Role of the Government as employer

**6.6 Social responsibilities of business.**

Ethical business practice

Socially responsible business at local and national level

**6.7 Outcomes**

On completion, the student should be able to:

- 6.7.1 recognise and illustrate the categories of industries and their contribution to the domestic economy;
- 6.7.2 recognise the types of business organisation;
- 6.7.3 compare and contrast the different types of business organisations;
- 6.7.4 explain why businesses change their organisational structure over time;
- 6.7.5 identify the importance of community initiatives in the development of the local economy;
- 6.7.6 explain the impact of the economy on business;
- 6.7.7 explain the impact of business in the development of the economy;
- 6.7.8 identify important environmental issues in business;
- 6.7.9 list the ways in which the Government creates a suitable climate for business.
- 6.7.10 explain the ways which the Government affects the labour force;
- 6.7.11 define ethical business practice;
- 6.7.12 describe the characteristics of an environmentally conscious company (**HL**);
- 6.7.13 analyse the impact of environmental issues on business (**HL**);
- 6.7.14 discuss the social responsibilities of business (**HL**);
- 6.7.15 evaluate the effects on a firm's costs of meeting its ethical, social and environmental responsibilities (**HL**).

## Unit 7. INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

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Objective:

To enable students to understand the opportunities and challenges facing Irish business in the international environment.

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### 7.1 Introduction to the international trading environment

The significance of international trade for the Irish economy

The changing nature of the international economy and its effects on Irish business

Opportunities and challenges for Irish business in international trade

Trading blocs and agreements

### 7.2 European Union

The importance of the European Union

The purpose of the main European Union policies and directives and their impact on Irish business

An outline of the decision-making process in the main European Union institutions

The role of the special interest groups in this process

### 7.3 International business

The global marketing of products and services

The development and impact of transnational companies

### 7.4 Outcomes

On completion, the student should be able to:

7.4.1 identify the effects of the single market on Irish business;

7.4.2 outline reasons for the development of transnational companies;

7.4.3 explain the role of information technology on international trade;

7.4.4 discuss the opportunities and challenges facing Irish business in developed and developing markets;

7.4.5 explain the role of global marketing in international business;

7.4.6 explain the purpose of the main European Union policies and directives (**HL**).