



BUSINESS STUDIES

COURSE FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

This Course Framework provides a basis for the development of senior secondary courses in business studies and for the assessment and reporting of student outcomes in these courses. The *Business Studies Course Framework* is intended to apply to all courses in business studies, whether classified as A, V or T. It has been written to be consistent with the *Statement on studies of society and environment for Australian schools*, and the *ACT Studies of Society and Environment Curriculum Framework* and takes into consideration the *Statement on technology for Australian schools*. The Course Framework covers courses that incorporate the following broad areas:

- Management
- Marketing
- Human Resource Management
- Borrowing and Investing
- Computers in Business
- Industrial Relations
- Business Law
- Business Taxation
- Accounting
- Retail

SUBJECT RATIONALE

Business Studies is a study of a variety of disciplines which are relevant to the business environment for employees, employers, consumers and those dealing with business. Courses are designed to develop knowledge and skills associated with the ever changing business world, be it local or global, in the context of a pluralistic society. By studying relevant business disciplines in depth, and by contact with a variety of business men and women, students enrich their understanding of how businesses operate, the challenges and responsibilities of business and the broad ethical and social consequences of business decisions. They become aware of the value of resources and the conflict of interest that may occur between the goals of business and an ever increasing concern for the global ecosystem. Students are challenged to think critically, become independent learners and develop problem solving skills.

Courses within this framework support student development of a range of skills including business acumen, enterprise and literacy competence with emphasis on the language of business. The skills and attitudes gained in these courses will prepare students for a variety of entry points to employment including continuing study at tertiary level as well as employee and employer roles.

GOALS

Goals are statements of intended student outcomes. All courses based on this Course Framework should enable students to:

- understand the subject matter, concepts, techniques and terms appropriate to the course being submitted;
- communicate effectively and to argue logically in both oral and written forms;
- select, classify, analyse and interpret data and to make forecasts;
- use technology to record information and to assist in decision making;
- work effectively, both individually and as a member of a group; and
- evaluate the economic, social and ethical implications of resource management.

KEY CONTENT, CONCEPTS AND SKILLS

KEY CONTENT AND CONCEPTS

The key content and concepts covered in the Business Studies courses include:

- The importance of small business in the Australian economy
- Success and failure of small business
- Innovation and establishing a business
- The macroeconomic business environment
- The Business Plan
- The role of Marketing
- Resource management and supply chains
- History of industrial relations in Australia and industrial conflict
- Human Resource Management and an understanding of the application of management theories
- Broad ethical and social consequences of business decisions
- Business Ethics
- Globalisation

SKILLS

- Communication with business organizations and members of the business community
- Market research and analysis of potential business opportunities
- Financial Management of a business
- Interpretation of financial records
- Application and use of software packages and business technology

ASSESSMENT

Assessment Criteria for Assessment and Reporting of Student Achievement

The following assessment criteria are a focus for assessment and reporting in all courses based on this Course Framework. Criteria are the essential qualities which teachers look for in student work. Over a unit, these criteria must be used by teachers to assess students' performance, however not all of them need to be used on each task. Assessment criteria are to be used holistically on a given task and in determining the Unit Grade.

Students will be assessed on the degree to which they demonstrate:

Knowledge Acquisition and Application

Knowledge, understanding and application of:

- business terms and concepts;
- the forces and behaviours that influence organisations;
- the impact of the business cycle;
- basic business skills, eg preparation of a business plan;
- the use of business technology;
- business knowledge, concepts and skills to hypothetical and real life situations, eg establishing and operating a business; and
- the ability to identify relevant information and issues.

Communication

- the ability to select, interpret and present information from a variety of sources and in a variety of forms appropriate to the material and audience.

Critical Analysis

- the ability to distinguish between fact, theory, opinion and projections;
- appreciation of the variables that change through time and space; and

- the ability to draw appropriate conclusions from available information.

Assessment Tasks

In order to provide a common basis for moderation across colleges, assessment tasks are designed to address the assessment criteria in the Course Framework. Assessment tasks elicit the degree to which students have achieved the assessment criteria and therefore the goals of a course and the units within it.

Assessment of 'A' courses

'A' course task weightings are provided to guide teachers about the relative importance of the tasks, not for providing a unit or course score.

Assessment of 'A' Courses

Assessment pattern	Semester Unit	Term Unit
	Test 1-2 40%	Tests 1-2 40%
	Minor assignments 2-3 60%	Minor assignments 2-3 60%

Tests	Minor Assignments
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mid semester and final tests approximately 1 hour 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in class assignment/questions/document study video study • oral presentation • business simulations • journal • project • excursion report <p>500 words minimum</p> <p>(In class exercises should be approximately 1 hour's duration)</p>

5. Assessment of T Courses

Assessment pattern	Semester Unit	Term Unit
	Tests 2 x 25%	Tests 1-2 50%
	Major assignment 25-30%	Major assignment 25-30%

	Minor assignment 15-20%	Minor assignment 15-20%
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Tests	Major Assignment	Minor Assignment
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mid-semester test 1-1.5 hours minimum • final test 1-1.5 hours minimum 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • essay • report • take home assignment <p>1000 words minimum-2000 words maximum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • in class assignment/questions/document study • video study • oral presentation • computer simulations • business simulations <p>500 words minimum-1000 words maximum</p> <p>(in class exercises should be a minimum of 1 hour's duration)</p>

Awarding Unit Grades

On completion of a unit of study, judgements about student achievement against the criteria outlined in this framework contribute to the unit grade decision. The Unit Grade is arrived at by decision-making based on the grade descriptors.

The grade describes the standard achieved by the student over the whole unit. The Unit Grade is given by the teacher to each student's portfolio of assessment responses as a whole. Evidence of all assessment responses on which the unit grade decision has been made is to be included in the review portfolio presented for moderation.

Unit Grades range from A to E, with A representing the highest standard and E representing the lowest standard. A to E grades are awarded on the proviso that the assessment requirements have been met.

The unit grade standards for this Course Framework are as follows:

Unit Grades for A Courses

GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
A student who achieves the grade A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a very high level of recall of business knowledge and concepts • Demonstrates a very high level of application of business knowledge and concepts in a variety of familiar situations • Always communicates unit related information using correct terminology • Has a high level of fluency in both written and oral communication
A student who achieves the grade B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a high level of recall of business knowledge and concepts • Demonstrates a high level of application of business knowledge and concepts in a variety of familiar situations • Usually communicates unit related information using correct terminology • Has a competent level of fluency in both written and oral communication
A student who a achieves the grade C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a sound level of recall of business knowledge and concepts • Demonstrates a sound level of application of business knowledge and concepts in a variety of familiar situations • Sometimes communicates unit related information using correct terminology • Has satisfactory written and oral communication skills
A student who achieves the grade D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a basic level of recall of business knowledge and concepts • Demonstrates a basic level of application of business knowledge and concepts in a variety of familiar situations • Occasionally communicates unit related information using correct terminology • Has a basic level of written and oral communication
A student who achieves the grade E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a minimal level of recall of business knowledge and concepts • Demonstrates a minimal level of application of business knowledge and concepts in a variety of familiar situations • Demonstrates minimal communication of unit related information using correct terminology • Has limited written and oral communication skills

Unit Grades for T Courses

GRADE	DESCRIPTOR
A student who achieves the grade A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates sophisticated use of business concepts, terms and techniques • Demonstrates a very high level of application of business knowledge and concepts in familiar and unfamiliar situations • Demonstrates the ability to carry out critical analysis and to draw appropriate conclusions at a very high level • Demonstrates a very high level of fluency in both written and oral communication
A student who achieves the grade B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates a high level of use of all business concepts, terms and techniques • Demonstrates a high level of application of business knowledge and concepts in familiar and unfamiliar situations • Demonstrates the ability to carry out critical analysis and to draw appropriate conclusions at a high level • Demonstrates a high level of fluency in both written and oral communication
A student who achieves the grade C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates use of most business concepts, terms and techniques • Demonstrates a satisfactory level of application of business knowledge and concepts in familiar and unfamiliar situations • Demonstrates the ability to carry out critical analysis and to draw appropriate conclusions on some occasions • Demonstrates a satisfactory level of fluency in written and oral communication
A student who achieves the grade D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates use of some business concepts, terms and techniques • Demonstrates an ability to apply some business knowledge and concepts in familiar and unfamiliar situations • Demonstrates limited ability to carry out critical analysis and to draw appropriate conclusions • Demonstrates a basic level of fluency in written and oral communication
A student who achieves the grade E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrates very little use of business concepts, terms and techniques • Demonstrates limited ability to apply business knowledge and concepts in familiar and unfamiliar situations • Demonstrates very limited ability to carry out critical analysis and to draw appropriate conclusions • Demonstrates limited fluency in written and oral communication

MODERATION

Moderation is a system designed and implemented to:

- provide comparability in the system of school-based assessment;
- form the basis for valid and reliable assessment in senior secondary schools;
- involve the ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies and colleges in cooperation and partnership; and
- maintain the quality of school-based assessment and the credibility, validity and acceptability of Board certificates.

Moderation commences within individual colleges. Teachers develop assessment programs and instruments, apply assessment criteria, and allocate Unit Grades, according to the relevant Course Framework. Teachers within course teaching groups conduct consensus discussions to moderate marking or grading of individual assessment instruments and unit grade decisions.

The Moderation Model

Moderation within the ACT encompasses structured, consensus-based peer review of Unit Grades for all accredited courses, as well as statistical moderation of course scores, including small group procedures, for 'T' courses.

Moderation by Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review

Review is a subcategory of moderation, comprising the review of standards and the validation of Unit Grades. In the review process, Unit Grades, determined for Year 11 and Year 12 student assessment portfolios that have been assessed in schools by teachers under accredited courses, are moderated by peer review against system wide criteria and standards. This is done by matching student performance with the criteria and standards outlined in the unit grade descriptors as stated in the Course Framework. Advice is then given to colleges to assist teachers with, and/or reassure them on, their judgments.

Preparation for Structured, Consensus-based Peer Review

Towards the end of each year, for each 'A' and 'T' course offered by the school, the Semester 2 assessment portfolios of a sample of Year 11 students which, after the ordinary application of criteria, is each typical of a given Unit Grade, is sent to the ACTBSSS Secretariat. This material is considered at the first moderation day in March of the following year.

Towards the end of semester 1 each year, the same requirement applies for the Semester 1 assessment portfolios of a sample of Year 12 students. This material is considered at the second moderation day in August of the same year.

The College Course Presentation

The package of materials (College Course Presentation) presented by a college for review on moderation days in each course area will comprise the following:

- a folder containing supporting documentation as requested by the Board Secretariat through memoranda to colleges.
- a set of student portfolios containing marked and/or graded written and non-written assessment responses and completed criteria and standards feedback forms. Evidence of all assessment responses on which the unit grade decision has been made is to be included in the student review portfolios. Specific requirements for subject areas and types of evidence to be presented for each moderation day will be outlined by the Board Secretariat through memoranda and Information Papers.

KEY COMPETENCIES

A number of work-related competencies have been accepted at national level as being important for all young Australians.

These are:

- Collecting and analysing information (KC1)
- Communicating ideas and information (KC2)
- Planning and organising activities (KC3)
- Working with others in teams (KC4)
- Using mathematical ideas and techniques (KC5)
- Solving problems (KC6)
- Using technology (KC7).

Teachers are encouraged to incorporate these competencies into their courses.

VOCATIONAL COURSES ('V' Courses)

To conform to the National agreement on VET in Schools all 'V' courses must be written to the relevant Training Package and be supported by industry.

The 'A' or 'T' components of the course must be written to Board requirements as outlined in the current *Guidelines for the Development and Accreditation of Courses*.

All V courses are required to be competency assessed. Carefully conducted assessment can serve the purposes of graded assessment (A-E) for the 'A' and 'T' components and scores for the 'T' component, as well as provide evidence of competency for the Vocational Certificate component of the course. Some competencies are supported by learning in the workplace.

Reference should be made to the current *ACTBSSS Policy and Procedures Manual* and the current *Guidelines for the Development and Accreditation of Courses* for further information on vocational course development.

ACROSS CURRICULUM PERSPECTIVES

Nine Across Curriculum Perspectives have been identified by the Department of Education and Training as important societal and educational issues which cross curriculum boundaries. The Board has adopted these perspectives for inclusion, where possible, in courses of study at senior secondary level.

The Across Curriculum Perspectives are:

**Aboriginal Education and Torres
Strait Islander Education**

Australian Education

Environment Education

Gender Equity

Information Access

Language for Understanding

Multicultural Education

Special Needs Education

Work Education

Teachers are referred to the documents listed in the bibliography which identify the Across Curriculum Perspectives and provide advice on how to include them in all courses.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

References for Curriculum Development:

A statement on studies of society and the environment for Australian schools, 1994 Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Victoria.

Studies of society and the environment - a curriculum profile for Australian schools, 1994 Curriculum Corporation, Carlton, Victoria

Studies of Society and the Environment, Curriculum Framework, 1994, Department of Education and Training, Canberra A.C.T

Guidelines for the Development and Accreditation of Courses, ACT Board of Senior Secondary Studies, Canberra ACT.

Across Curriculum Perspectives Statement 1997, Department of Education and Training, Canberra, ACT

Some Teacher References for Courses in Business Studies

The following is a brief list of teacher reference materials which will be useful in developing courses based on this framework. It is neither prescriptive nor exhaustive.

Text books

Computer software

Videos/Films/Slides

Newspapers

Magazines and Journals

Television documentaries

Local Area guest speakers

Work experience programmes

Excursions

Business Educators ACT (staff seminars and student activity days)

Small Business Bureau

Government Departments and Publications

Trade Union Speakers and Publications

Professional Associations and other organisations

Simulation Games

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