IB Business Management Syllabus

Enhanced representation of the official content syllabus from the IB Subject Guide.

SL Content Recommended teaching hours: 150
HL Content Recommended teaching hours: +90 = 240

I **bolded** key words/phrases in the descriptions to make it easier to glance over. AO = Assessment Objective (see clarification at end of document), a measure of the "depth of knowledge" required.

(For now), this is SL-only; HL details do not exist, and their topic numbers are grayed-out.

Last update: 25th Apr 2024

#	Topic	A O	Description	Notes
			**UNIT 1: Intro** to Business Management	
			**Tools**: SWOT + STEEPLE Analysis, Ansoff Matrix, Decision Trees, Business Plan, Circular Business Models **HL**: Porter's Generic Strategies, Simple Linear Regression	
1.1	What's a Business?	1	The Nature of Business	
		2	**Economic Sectors**: Primary, Secondary, Tertiary, and Quaternary	
		2	**Challenges** and **Opportunities** for **starting** a business	
1.2	Types of Businesses	2	**Private and Public Sectors**	
		3	Types of **Organizations**, their **main features**: - Sole Traders - Partnerships - Privately Held companies - Publicly Held companies	
		3	**For-profit Social Enterprises**, their **main features**: - Private Sector companies - Public Sector companies - Cooperatives	
		3	**Non-profit Social Enterprises**, their **main features**: - Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs)	
1.3	Business Objectives	2	**Vision** and **Mission Statements**	
		2	**Common business Objectives**: - Profit - Growth - Protecting Shareholder Value - Ethical objectives	
		3	**Strategic and Tactical** Objectives	
		3	Corporate Social Responsibility (**CSR**)	
1.4	Stakeholders	2	**Internal** and **External** Stakeholders	
		2	**Conflict** between Stakeholders	
1.5	Growth & Evolution	2	Internal & External **Economies & Diseconomies of Scale**	
		2	**Internal** vs **External Growth**	
		3	**Reasons** for businesses **to Grow**	
		3	**Reasons** for businesses **to Stay Small**	
		3	**External Growth Methods**:	

			- Mergers & Acquisitions (M&As) - Takeovers - Joint Ventures - Strategic Alliances - Franchising	
1.6	Multinational Companies	3	The **impact of MNCs** on host countries	

<table>
<tr><td colspan="5" style="background:yellow;text-align:center">UNIT 2: Human Resource Management</td></tr>
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Tools: SWOT + STEEPLE Analysis, Descriptive Statistics
HL: Force Field Analysis, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

		2	Role of HRM	
2.1	Intro to HRM	2	Internal & External **Factors that affect HR** Planning. E.g.: - Demographic - Labor Mobility - Immigration - Flexi-time - Gig Economy	
		2	Reasons for **Resistance to Change**	
		3	Strategies to Reduce the Impact of and Resistance to Change	
2.2	Organizational Structure	2	**Terminology**, in relation to different Organizational Structures: - Delegation - Span of Control - Levels of the hierarchy - Chain of Command - Bureaucracy - Centralization - Decentralization - Delayering - Matrix Structure	
		2 4	**Organizational Charts**: - Flat/horizontal - Tall/vertical - By Product, Function, or Region	
		3	**Appropriateness** of different structures given a change in external factors	
		3	(HL) ...	
2.3	Leadership & Management	2	(HL) ...	
		2	Management and Leadership	
		3	**Leadership Styles**: - Autocratic - Paternalistic - Democratic - Laissez-faire - Situational	
2.4	Motivation & Demotivation	3	**Motivation Theories**: - Taylor (scientific management) - Maslow (hierarchy of needs) - Herzberg (motivation-hygiene theory)	
		3	(HL) ...	
		2 4	(HL) ...	
		2	(HL) ...	

		2	(HL) ...	
		3	(HL) ...	
		2	**Financial Rewards**: - Salary - Wages (time- & piece-rates) - Commission - Performance-Related Pay (PRP) - Profit-Related Pay - Employee Share Ownership schemes - Fringe Payments/benefits	
		2	**Non-financial Rewards**: - Job Enrichment - Job Rotation - Job Enlargement - Empowerment - Purpose/opportunity to make a difference - Teamwork	
		2	**Types of Training**: - Induction - On the Job - Off the Job	
2.5 (HL)	Corporate Culture			
2.6	Communica-tion	3	**Formal** and **Informal Methods** of Communication in a given situation	
		2	**Barriers to Communication**	
2.7 (HL)	Employee Relations			
UNIT 3: Finance & Accounts				
Tools: SWOT Analysis, Descriptive Statistics, Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Matrix **HL**: Contribution				
3.1	Intro to Finance	2	Role of Finance (**types of expenditures**): - Capital Expenditure - Revenue Expenditure	
3.2	Sources of Finance	2	**Internal Sources of Finance**: - Personal Funds (for sole traders) - Retained Profit - Sale of Assets	
		2	**External Sources of Finance**: - Share capital - Loan capital - Overdrafts - Trade Credit - Crowdfunding - Leasing - Microfinancing - Business Angels	
		3	**Appropriateness** of Short- or Long-term Sources of Finance for a given situation	
3.3	Costs & Revenues	2	**Types of Cost** (and examples): - Fixed - Variable - Direct - Indirect/overhead	
		2	Total Revenue, **Revenue Streams** (and examples)	
3.4	Final Accounts	2	**Purpose of Accounts** to different Stakeholders	

		2 4	**Final Accounts**: - Profit and Loss Account - Balance Sheet	
		2	Types of **Intangible Assets**	
		2 4	(HL) ...	
		3	(HL) ...	
3.5	Profitability & Liquidity Ratio	2 4	**Profitability Ratios**: - Gross Profit Margin - Profit Margin - Return on Capital Employed (ROCE)	
		3	**Strategies to improve** Profitability Ratios	
		2 4	**Liquidity Ratios**: - Current Ratio - Acid test (Quick) Ratio	
		3	**Strategies to improve** Liquidity Ratios	
3.6 (HL)	Debt/Equity Ratio			
3.7	Cash Flow	2	**Profit vs Cash Flow**	
		2 4	**Cash Flow Forecasts**	
		2	**Relationship** between Investment, Profit, and Cash Flow	
		3	**Strategies** to deal with Cash Flow Problems	
3.8	Investment Appraisal	3 4	**Evaluation of Investment Opportunities** using: - Payback Period - Average Rate of Return (ARR) - (HL) NPV	
3.9 (HL)	Budgets			

UNIT 4: Marketing

Tools: SWOT + STEEPLE Analysis, Ansoff Matrix, BCG Matrix, Descriptive Statistics
HL: Gantt Chart, Simple Linear Regression, Critical Path Analysis, Contribution, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

4.1	Intro to Marketing	2	**Market Orientation vs Product Orientation**	
		2 4	**Market Share**	
		2 4	**Market Growth**	
		3	(HL) ...	
4.2	Marketing Planning	2	Role of **Market Planning**	
		2 4	**Segmentation**, **Targeting** (target market), and **Positioning** (position maps)	
		2	**Niche vs Mass Markets**	
		2	Importance of a **Unique Selling Point** (USP)	
		3	**How to Differentiate** self and products from Competitors	
4.3 (HL)	Sales Forecasting			
4.4	Market Research	3	**Why and How** Organizations do **Market Research**	
		2	**Methods of Primary Market Research**: - Surveys - Interviews	

			- Focus Groups - Observations	
		2	**Methods of Secondary Market Research:** - Market Analyses - Academic Journals - Government Publications - Media Articles - Online Content	
		2	**Qualitative vs Quantitative** Research	
		2	**Methods of Sampling:** - Quota - Random - Convenience	
4.5	7 P's / Marketing Mix	3	**Appropriate Marketing Mixes** for particular products or businesses	
			Product:	
		2	Relationship between Product Life Cycle, Product Portfolio, and the Marketing Mix	
		3	**Extension Strategies**	
		2	Relationship between Product Life Cycle, Investment, Profit, and Cash Flow	
		2	Aspects of **Branding**: - Awareness - Development - Loyalty - Value	
		2	Importance of Branding	
			Price:	
		3	Appropriateness of **Pricing Methods**: - Cost-plus (mark-up) pricing - Penetration pricing - Loss Leader - Predatory pricing - Premium pricing ... (HL)	
			Promotion:	
		2	Aspects of **Promotion**: - Above the Line promotion - Below the Line promotion - Through the Lien promotion	
		3	**Social Media Marketing** as a promotional strategy	
			Place:	
		3	Importance of different Types of Distribution Channels	
			People:	
		3	Importance of Employee-Customer Relationships in marketing a service & Cultural Variation in these relationships	
			Process:	
		3	Importance of Delivery Processes in marketing a service & Changes in these processes	
			Physical (evidence):	
		3	Importance of Tangible Evidence in marketing a service	

#	Topic		Description	Notes
4.6 (HL)	International Marketing			

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colspan UNIT 5

UNIT 5: Operations Management

Tools: Decision Trees, Circular Business Models, Descriptive Statistics
HL: Gantt Chart, Simple Linear Regression, Critical Path Analysis, Contribution, Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

#	Topic		Description	Notes
5.1	Intro to Operations	2	Role of Operations Management	
5.2	Operations Methods	3	**Operations Methods**: - Job Production - Batch Production - Mass/flow Production - Mass Customization	
5.3 (HL)	Lean Production & Quality Management			
5.4	Location	2	**Reasons for a specific Location** of Production	
		3	Ways of **Reorganizing Production**, Nationally and Internationally: - Outsourcing/subcontracting - Offshoring - Insourcing - Reshoring	
5.5	Break-even Analysis	2	Total **Contribution** vs **Contribution per Unit**	
		24	**Break-even Charts**; the following aspects of Break-even Analysis: - Break-even quantity/point (BEQ) - Profit or Loss - Margin of Safety (MoS) - Target Profit Output - Target Profit - Target Price	
		24	How **Changes in Price or Cost** affects BEQ, Profit, and MoS; use graphical and quantitative methods.	
		3	**Limitations** of Break-even as a Decision-making Tool	
5.6 (HL)	Production Planning			
5.7 (HL)	Crisis Management & Contingency Planning			
5.8 (HL)	Research & Development			
5.9 (HL)	Management Information Systems			

END OF SYLLABUS :)

#	Topic		Description	Notes

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All Tools: (8 for SL)

Tool Name	Description

Ansoff Matrix	Framework helping classify and risk-assess growth strategies. → More Risk → A 2×2 matrix with columns "Same Products" and "New Products", and rows "Same Market" and "New Market" (↓ More Risk ↓): - Same Products / Same Market: **Market Penetration** - New Products / Same Market: **Product Development** - Same Products / New Market: **Market Development** - New Products / New Market: **Diversification**
SWOT Analysis	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats. Used to understand the position of a business by analyzing both its internal strengths/weaknesses and the external opportunities/threats faced. Internal factors are usually considered per business function (4 of them). External factors are usually considered using the STEEPLE framework.
STEEPLE Analysis	7 External factors that work well in determining the O/T of the SWOT analysis. Sociocultural, Technological, Economic, Environmental, Political, Legal, Ethical.
Business Plan	Used to describe key info of a new business (or a large change to an existing one). A plan helps lay everything out so the overall idea can be more effectively evaluated, spotting opportunities and challenges before actioning on the plan. Also helps communication; one can use a plan to build trust with investors and others. A structured document explaining the Why (goal of business; a human need satisfied), How (production, supply, setup), and What (properties of the product itself) of a business idea. Example sections: 1. Executive Summary 2. Mission / Vision 3. The Problem 4. The Solution 5. The Market (or Social/Partnership Ecosystem) 6. Marketing 7. SWOT / Evaluation 8. Sources of Finance 9. Budget 10. Milestones
Decision Trees	Square: Decision Node; where the business makes a choice Circle: Probability Node; where outcomes are by chance, externally affected Double Crossed-out Lines: Rejected Options; used on all branches after a decision node except the optimal/recommended decision
BCG Matrix	Planning tool that helps businesses analyze their *product portfolios*. It characterizes products based on the growth rate of their market and the share they have in that market. → Market Share → A 2×2 matrix with columns "Low" and "High", and rows "Slow" and "Fast" (↓ Market Growth ↓): - Low / Slow: **Dogs** - High / Slow: **Cash Cows** - Low / Fast: **Question Marks** - High / Fast: **Stars**

	Cash cows: steady and major established products; "whales". They produce high cash flow due to their market presence and probably won't go anywhere else soon since the market changes very slowly. (So minimal maintenance)
	Stars: major products in a volatile (fast evolving) market. They promise potential to convert into cash cows. (Requires heavy investment)
	Question marks: struggling products that need the most management. Should try to convert to stars, but process may be difficult/risky. (Requires careful management and heavy investment)
	Dogs: steady but minor products. They don't cause big trouble but also don't contribute much to a business. (Leave it alone or drop it)
Descriptive Statistics	Ok this is all common sense. It's charts and stuff. Basic social science infographic skills.
Circular Business Models	Ideals to get businesses to work more like nature, systems that (physically) feedback outputs as inputs, minimizing waste production.
(HL) ...	

SL-only info:

Paper 1: 90mins, 30 marks; 35%

Revolves around the partially **pre-released case study**. (The pre-release includes the context/background and initial excerpts of the full case study.)

Section A: 20 marks

Covers entire syllabus. Answer all questions. (**Structured questions**.)

Section B: 10 marks

Covers entire syllabus. Answer one from two questions. (Singular **10-mark question**)

Paper 2: 90mins, 40 marks; 35%

Uses unseen stimulus material (case studies). Larger **quantitative focus**.

Section A: 20 marks

Covers entire syllabus. Answer all questions (**Structured questions**, based on stimulus material)

Section B: 20 marks

Covers entire syllabus. Answer one from two questions. (Questions contain subparts of **structured + a 10-mark response**)

Assessment Objectives Clarification:

Assessment Objective	Command Terms	Depth
AO1 – knowledge and understanding Recital of definitions, restatement of literal information	Define Describe Identify List Outline State	Basic memorization: definitions and elementary comprehension of information.

| AO2 – application and analysis

Medium to long form prose applying business knowledge to specific cases	Analyze Apply Comment Demonstrate Distinguish Explain Suggest	Pick apart information (stimulus material) into smaller parts and then *applying* knowledge to draw specific conclusions.
AO3 – synthesis and evaluation

Long form (balanced) arguments; made of *coherently linked* smaller AO2 elements | Compare (and contrast)
Contrast
Discuss
Evaluate
Examine
Justify
Recommend
To what extent | Formulate analyzed ideas and information into a whole argument – to make conclusive judgements (based on a set of criteria) |
| AO4 – use of skills

Calculations and drawing diagrams | Annotate
Calculate
Complete
Construct
Determine
Draw
Label
Plot
Prepare | Demonstrate the ability to use subject specific hard skills (calculations, usage and construction of diagrams, etc.) |

Basically, AO1 topics can only come up as 1-2 mark "define" questions, while AO2 topics may appear as 2-4 mark longer-answer questions, and AO3 topics can appear as 10 (or 6) mark essay questions. AO4 topics are the graphs/tables with calculations (non-long-answer, graphical questions).