

The Switchover Pack

Your Year 13 finishes 7132. Your Year 12 starts 7138. For two years you teach both, and almost everything on your shelf was written for the one that is leaving.

This pack is the new specification reduced to the things that change what you do on Monday: the dates, the shape of the course, the papers, the command words and the one change that quietly rewrites your essay teaching. It is nine pages and it takes about fifteen minutes to read.

Where every fact here comes from

Everything in this pack was read out of AQA's own specification for 7137 and 7138, version 1.1, November 2025. Section numbers are printed next to each claim so you can open the PDF and land on it. Nothing here is copied from a revision site, a textbook or another teacher's summary, because those repeat each other's mistakes.

[aqa.org.uk/7138](https://www.aqa.org.uk/7138) → the specification, printed on every page of the document itself. The source table is on page 9.

What is actually inside

Page 2	The dates. Which of your groups sits which specification, and when.
Page 3	Ten sections become three units. The two contents lists side by side.
Page 4	The papers, AS and A-level, with the question counts.
Page 5	The five command words, in AQA's own wording, with their mark tariffs.
Page 6	The change that matters most: the top tariff is now 15.
Page 7	Sophisticated concepts, the part of 7138 with no equivalent on 7132.
Page 8	What your existing 7132 material still does, and what it no longer does.
Page 9	A department checklist, and how to check this pack against AQA yourself.

The whole thing in six sentences

- Ten numbered sections become three units, and the whole of the third unit is A-level only.
- Three A-level papers, all case study, all two hours, all 33.3%.
- Five command words, each with a fixed mark tariff, and only three of them appear at A-level.
- The 25 mark essay is gone. The largest question on any paper is worth 15.
- The nine mark question used to be Analyse with no judgement credited. It is now Assess, and AQA writes that it requires one.
- And there is a new category of credit, sophisticated concepts, which every 15 mark question rewards.

One thing before you start. Where this pack states a fact, it is AQA's. Where it offers a view about teaching, it is labelled

OUR VIEW and you are free to ignore it. Nothing in between.

Which group sits which specification

The two specifications overlap for two academic years. Getting this wrong costs a whole year of the wrong past papers, so it is worth ten seconds with a pen.

ACADEMIC YEAR	YOUR YEAR 12	YOUR YEAR 13
2026 / 27	7138 , first year of teaching	7132 , sits the final exams in summer 2027
2027 / 28	7138	7138 , sits the first 7138 exams in summer 2028

The dates AQA prints

EVENT	WHEN
First teaching of 7137 and 7138	September 2026
First AS assessment and certification, 7137	May / June 2027
Final A-level exams for the outgoing 7132	Summer 2027
First A-level assessment and certification, 7138	May / June 2028

Assessments and certification for the AS specification are available for the first time in May/June 2027 and then every May/June for the life of the specification. Assessments and certification for the A-level specification are available for the first time in May/June 2028 and then every May/June for the life of the specification.

AQA 7137 and 7138 specification, section 4, Scheme of assessment

Both are linear. AQA states that to achieve the award, learners must complete all exams in a single May or June series, and that all assessments must be taken in the same series.

The practical consequence

In 2026/27 your department is running two live A-level specifications at once with two different sets of past papers, two different command word lists and two different top tariffs. If your shared drive has one folder called "A-Level Business", that is the first job of the year, not the last.

Does the AS matter to you?

AQA writes that the AS, 7137, is designed to be taken over one or two years and the A-level, 7138, over two, with all assessments at the end of the course in both cases. The AS is available from May or June 2027, so a Year 12 starting this September could sit it at the end of the year.

Two things follow if you enter anyone. The AS has its own assessment objective weightings, and they are not the A-level's: AO1 32.5, AO2 27.5, AO3 20, AO4 20, against 24.44, 24.44, 26.66 and 24.44 at A-level. And the AS uses two command words the A-level does not, Define at two marks and Explain at four.

AS papers are 1 hour 45 and 80 marks, against 2 hours and 90 at A-level. The AS is not the A-level with a paper removed.

Check this yourself in one minute. Open the 7137 and 7138 specification, section 4: its opening carries the two assessment dates. First teaching is on the cover, and the 7132 end date is on the AQA 7132 page.

Ten numbered sections become three units

This is the change your scheme of work feels first. On 7132 the content ran as ten sections, 3.1 to 3.10, with 3.7 to 3.10 marked A-level only. On 7138 it is three units, and AQA marks the whole of Unit 3.3 A-level only.

AQA 7132, the outgoing course

3.1	What is business?
3.2	Managers, leadership and decision making
3.3	Marketing management
3.4	Operational management
3.5	Financial management
3.6	Human resource management
3.7	Analysing the strategic position (A-level only)
3.8	Choosing strategic direction (A-level only)
3.9	Strategic methods (A-level only)
3.10	Managing strategic change (A-level only)

AQA 7138, from September 2026

3.1	What is business? Managing marketing and finance
3.1.1	Business and objectives
3.1.2	Forms of business and stakeholders
3.1.3	Marketing management
3.1.4	Financial management
3.2	Managing people and operations
3.2.1	People management
3.2.2	Operations management
3.2.3	Managing business culture (A-level)
3.3	Business and society, business and the external environment, and business strategy (A-level only)
3.3.1	Business and society
3.3.2	Business and the external environment
3.3.3	Strategy
3.3.4	Change

This is two contents lists, not a mapping

Read the two columns as what each specification says it contains. They are not lined up with each other and nothing here says that 7132 section 3.3 becomes 7138 section 3.1.3. AQA does not print a content mapping in the specification itself, so any mapping you use is somebody's judgement. Make it your department's, in writing, before anyone plans a lesson from it.

Two things the columns show without any mapping at all. Both specifications have a section called Financial management: on 7132 it is 3.5, the fifth of ten, and on 7138 it is 3.1.4, inside the first unit. And the A-level only material is still a block at the end, but it has grown. On 7132 it was four sections that were all strategy. On 7138 it is the whole of Unit 3.3, which puts business and society and the external environment alongside strategy and change, and five further (A-level only) rows sit inside Units 3.1 and 3.2, from international marketing to ethics, plus 3.2.3.

OUR VIEW The two year shape survives, so your Year 13 can still be the A-level only year. What moves is what that year contains: it is no longer four flavours of strategy.

Where to look. 7138 subject content, sections 3.1 to 3.3. AQA prints "(A-level only)" on the Unit 3.3 heading itself and "(A-level)" on section 3.2.3, and on five further "(A-level only)" content rows inside Units 3.1 and 3.2.

The A-level: three papers, one per unit

PAPER	ASSESSES	FORMAT	QUESTIONS
1	Unit 3.1	2 hours · 90 marks · 33.3%	Two case studies, each followed by five compulsory questions worth 45 marks in total
2	Unit 3.2, with links to Unit 3.1	2 hours · 90 marks · 33.3%	The same
3	Unit 3.3, A-level only, with links to Units 3.1 and 3.2	2 hours · 90 marks · 33.3%	The same
Total scaled mark		270	Each paper scales at x1

The AS: two papers

PAPER	ASSESSES	FORMAT	QUESTIONS
1	AS content in Unit 3.1	1 h 45 · 80 marks · 50%	Two case studies, each followed by six compulsory questions worth 40 marks in total
2	AS content in Unit 3.2, with links to 3.1	1 h 45 · 80 marks · 50%	The same
Total scaled mark		160	Each paper scales at x1

Three things worth noticing

- **Every paper is a case study paper.** There is no paper of standalone essays, so a Year 12 who cannot read a case study and find the number in it has a problem on all three.
- **The weightings are flat.** Three papers at 33.3% each. No paper is worth more than another, so no paper is a safe one to run short of time on.
- **Paper 3 is the synoptic one, and Unit 3.3 is A-level only.** AQA writes that synopticity is especially relevant in AS paper 2 and A-level paper 3, and that Paper 3's extended responses take a strategic view.

Assessment objective weightings, A-level

	AO1	AO2	AO3	AO4
Each paper, approx %	8.14	8.14	8.89	8.14
Overall, approx %	24.44	24.44	26.66	24.44

AO3, analysis, is the largest single objective and it is identical on all three papers. The AS split is different and is on page 2.

Where to look. Specification section 2 for the paper tables, 4.2 and 4.3 for the weightings and the scaling, 4.5 for the strategic view, 4.6 for synoptic assessment.

Five command words, each with a fixed tariff

AQA prints the command words in a table with the mark tariff attached to each one. That is unusual and it is useful: on this specification the command word tells your students how many marks the question is worth before they read the number.

WORD	MARKS	AQA'S OWN DESCRIPTION, CONDENSED	AOS
Define *	2	Knowledge and understanding only.	AO1
Explain *	4	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a business term or concept in the context of the case study material provided.	AO1, AO2
Analyse	6	Analyse an issue in the context of the case study material provided.	AO1, AO2, AO3
Assess	9	Assess the arguments for and against a particular issue and make a judgement. Learners weigh up the arguments and decide which is stronger. This question type requires a judgement.	AO1 to AO4
Evaluate	15	Two types. Either identify and evaluate two possible courses of action and recommend which is most suitable, or evaluate two options presented in the question and judge which the business should choose.	AO1 to AO4

* AQA's footnote: used in AS assessment only. So at A-level you are teaching three command words, not five.

The nine mark question changed job

On 7132 the nine mark question was **Analyse**, marked AO1 2, AO2 3, AO3 4. No AO4, so no judgement was credited and a student who stopped to weigh things up was spending time for nothing.

On 7138 the nine mark question is **Assess**, it carries all four objectives, and AQA writes in the specification that this question type requires a judgement. The same tariff, the opposite instruction.

If one habit survives from your 7132 teaching by accident, this is the one that will cost marks.

Four words have gone

AQA's published command word list for 7132 had seven entries: Analyse, Calculate, Describe, Evaluate, Explain, Justify and To what extent. The 7138 list above has five: Calculate, Describe, Justify and To what extent are not on it. Assess, which was not on the 7132 list, is now a command word with a fixed tariff of nine.

Where to look. Specification section 4.4, Command Words. The table runs over two pages, so the Assess and Evaluate rows are on the page after Define, Explain and Analyse. The asterisk footnote sits under the Evaluate row.

The top tariff is now fifteen

On 7132 the biggest questions were the 25 mark essay on Paper 1 and the 20 and 24 mark questions on Paper 3. On 7138 the largest question on any paper is worth 15 marks.

7132 tariffs, June 2023 series

PAPER	MARKS SEEN
1	1, 4, 9, 25
2	3, 4, 6, 9, 16
3	12, 16, 20, 24

Read off AQA's own mark schemes for that series. One series, not a rule.

7138 tariffs, from the specification

LEVEL	MARKS AVAILABLE
AS	2, 4, 6, 9, 15
A-level	6, 9, 15

Define and Explain are AS only, so the A-level student meets three tariffs.

What the five questions are worth, as far as it can be known

AQA does not print the split. It prints that each case study is followed by five compulsory questions worth 45 marks in total, that the A-level tariffs are 6, 9 and 15, and, in section 4.6.2, that the sample assessment materials contain a 15 mark question numbered 2.5.

OUR VIEW Put those together. Only two sets of five from 6, 9 and 15 reach 45: **9, 9, 9, 9, 9** and **6, 6, 9, 9, 15**.

Question 2.5 is the fifth question of the second case study and it is worth 15, so that case study cannot be all nines. It is **6, 6, 9, 9, 15**.

That is our arithmetic on AQA's numbers, not a statement by AQA. It is proved for one case study, not for all six, and a question with a tariff outside the command word table would break it. Download the sample assessment materials and settle it properly in a minute.

What this does to your essay teaching **OUR VIEW**

A 25 mark essay and a 15 mark evaluation are not the same task at different lengths. The 25 rewarded a student who could build several strands and hold an argument across a page and a half. The 15 rewards one who can take two options, weigh them and land a recommendation in far less space. That is a tighter skill, not a smaller one. The thinking you already teach transfers; the writing shape does not.

Three things to do with your 25 mark essay bank **OUR VIEW**

OPTION	WHAT IT COSTS	WHEN IT IS RIGHT
Retire it	Years of writing, gone in a folder move	Never on its own. Archive it, do not delete it: your Year 13 still sits 7132 in summer 2027
Keep it for Year 13 only	Nothing, until summer 2027	The safe default for 2026/27, and it needs a label on the folder, not a decision
Cut each one down to 15	Real work, one at a time	With the sample assessment materials open beside you, so you cut towards a real stem

Where to look. Specification section 2 for the question counts, 4.4 for the tariffs, 4.6.2 for the sample assessment question numbers.

The part of 7138 that has no equivalent on 7132

7138 adds a category of credit called **sophisticated concepts**, set out in Annex 8 of the specification. It is the one thing in the new course that your existing material cannot cover by accident, because it did not exist before.

Learners that make use of relevant theories, concepts, models and frameworks in their responses, that are not the direct focus of a question are making use of sophisticated concepts. The appropriate use of these sophisticated concepts strengthens the quality of their analysis.

AQA 7137 and 7138 specification, Annex: Sophisticated concepts

Three sentences that decide how you teach this

- AQA writes that **all 15 mark questions award the use of sophisticated concepts**, and that accurate use will be credited.
- It is **identified as a typical characteristic of a Level 5 response**, and the sample mark schemes confirm the grid runs to five levels.
- But: **where the use of sophisticated concepts is demonstrated in any response, the impact on the quality of analysis will be recognised**. It is not gated to the top band.

AQA's own list, by category

CATEGORY	WHAT IS ON THE LIST
Models and frameworks 13 items	Market mapping. Product life cycle. Boston Matrix. Network analysis, including float and critical path. Hackman's model of team effectiveness. Ansoff Matrix. SWOT. Stakeholder mapping, power against interest. Porter's Five Forces. Triple Bottom Line. Carroll's CSR pyramid. Lewin's force field analysis. Kotter and Schlesinger on resistance to change.
Theorists 3 items	Taylor. Maslow. Herzberg.
Financial concepts 22 items	Profitability: gross, operating and profit for the year with their margins, ROCE, return on investment, return on marketing spend. Liquidity: current ratio, acid test. Efficiency: payables days, receivables days, inventory turnover, employee costs as a percentage of revenue. Then dividends and dividend yield, market share, gearing, cash flow forecasting, contribution and contribution per unit, break-even output, margin of safety, budget variance, ARR and NPV.
Analytical concepts 11 items	Price and income elasticity of demand. Correlation, strong or weak and positive or negative. Labour productivity. Capacity utilisation. Opportunity cost. Economies of scale. Stakeholder vs shareholder approaches. ESG metrics. Risk vs uncertainty. Strategic drift.

OUR VIEW Most of this is already in your teaching. What is new is that a student gets credit for reaching for one *when the question did not ask*. That is a habit, not a topic, and it is built by asking "what else does this let you say" every time a 15 mark answer is planned, not by adding a lesson called Sophisticated Concepts.

Where to look. Specification Annex 8, Sophisticated concepts, near the back. The rule that all 15 mark questions credit them is in section 4.6, Synoptic assessment.

What still works, and what does not OUR VIEW

Everything on this page is a judgement about teaching, not a statement by AQA. It is here because somebody has to make the call before September and it is quicker to argue with a list than to write one.

Keep, unchanged

- ☐ **Case study reading drills.** All three A-level papers are case study papers. This got more important, not less.
- ☐ **Chains of reasoning.** AO3 is the largest objective on 7138 at 26.66%, and it is the same on every paper.
- ☐ **Your calculation teaching.** Financial management is now 3.1.4, inside the first unit, so the numbers arrive early.
- ☐ **Real business examples.** Nothing in the specification makes your Greggs or Gymshark material stale.

Rewrite before you teach it

- ☐ **Anything built around a 25 mark essay.** That question does not exist on 7138.
- ☐ **Your nine mark model answers.** They almost certainly stop at analysis. The 7138 nine mark question requires a judgement.
- ☐ **Command word posters and knowledge organisers.** Calculate, Describe, Justify and To what extent are off the list. Assess is on it, at a fixed nine marks.
- ☐ **Scheme of work section numbering.** Every 3.7 to 3.10 reference in your documents now points at nothing.

Wait before you rewrite

- ☐ **Anything that claims to know the paper.** Question order, the split of the 45 marks, how AQA words a 15 mark Evaluate stem. None of that is in the specification. AQA's sample assessment materials are the source, and the specification quotes their question numbers, so they are published. Read those, not other people's summaries.
- ☐ **Grade boundary expectations.** There are none for 7138 and there will not be until 2028.

The one that gets missed

In 2026/27 you are teaching two specifications in the same room, in the same week, with the same voice. The risk is not that you forget the new one. It is that a Year 13 on 7132 gets told the nine mark question needs a judgement, or a Year 12 on 7138 gets a 25 mark essay for homework. Label everything you hand out with the specification code, at the top, in the header. It takes a minute and it removes the whole class of mistake.

Disagree with any of this? Good. It is a starting list for a department meeting, not a ruling. The facts on pages 2 to 7 are AQA's and are worth arguing about only with the specification open.

Department checklist for the autumn term

- ☐ Split the shared drive into two folders, **7132 (Year 13, final exams 2027)** and **7138 (Year 12)**. Do it before anyone plans a lesson.
- ☐ Put the specification code in the header of every handout, both courses.
- ☐ Agree in writing which member of staff owns the 7138 scheme of work and by when.
- ☐ Rewrite the command word poster. Five words, three of them in use at A-level.
- ☐ Decide who owns sophisticated concepts, and put Annex 8 in front of the whole department.
- ☐ Rewrite your nine mark model answer so it ends in a judgement.
- ☐ Decide what happens to your 25 mark essay bank. Retire it, or keep it for Year 13 only.
- ☐ Download the 7138 sample assessment materials and mark schemes, and read the mark schemes before the papers.
- ☐ Tell your exams officer which entry code each cohort needs. Two live specifications, two codes.

Check this pack yourself

WHAT TO CHECK	WHERE
The dates, the papers, the AO weightings, the command words	AQA AS and A-level Business 7137, 7138 specification, version 1.1, November 2025. aqa.org.uk/7138
That 7132 ends in summer 2027	aqa.org.uk/subjects/business/a-level/business-7132
The 7132 tariffs quoted on page 6	AQA mark schemes, June 2023 series, 7132/1, 7132/2 and 7132/3, on filestore.aqa.org.uk
The 7132 command word list quoted on page 5	AQA's command words page for 7131 and 7132, under Teach

Why this pack keeps pointing you at the source

In August 2026 we published a free pack that stated the wrong command word for an Edexcel GCSE question. Two teachers caught it publicly inside three hours, and they were right. The fix was not to check harder. It was to stop writing exam board facts from memory, put every one in a file with the URL it came from, and print the source beside the claim so a reader can settle it without us. If you find something wrong here, tell us and we will correct it and say what changed.

Also free for A-level Business: The First Fortnight, Which Sentence Earns Which Mark, Command Words Decoded, Calculation Cheat Sheet. All at thebusiness.school/resources, no sign up. Made something that works? Put it on the same shelf at thebusiness.school/resources/share.