



Bridging Pack for A-Level Economics

So, you are considering A-Level Economics?

This pack contains a programme of activities that will help you in your transition on to the A-Level course in September. It is aimed to be used after you have completed your GCSEs over the summer and you will be asked to present the results of your investigations in September.

What are the course details?

Examination

The course is examined at the end of Year 12 and as a whole at end of Year 13. Students need to apply their knowledge and understanding to both familiar and unfamiliar contexts in the assessments and demonstrate an awareness of current economic events and policies.

Year 12

Economics seeks to explain how and why individuals, governments and firms make decisions, and to determine which policies might deliver desirable economic outcomes. Students develop an understanding of competing theories, principles and practices, and apply these to a variety of economic contexts.





**SUMMER WORK FOR
INTRODUCTION TO YEAR 12 – Economics**

TASK	TOPIC	
1.	Specification	Read and review the Edexcel specification for AS Level (1 hour). https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/edexcel-a-levels/economics-a-2015.html
2.	Economics Blog	Sign up to the Tutor2U Economics blog. A brilliant place to read around the subject. http://beta.tutor2u.net/economics/blog
3.	Research Task	Complete the attached: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Research task for macroeconomics- Answer the questions related to the article for microeconomics
4.	Wider Reading	See the attached reading list.

WIDER READING TO PREPARE FOR COURSE

Students should spend some of their summer holiday reading around their new choice of subjects to develop their evaluation skills. It is not the intention that students read the entire list, but they should choose one or two that interest them, so they return in September with the ability to talk with maturity on certain key topics. Many of these books can be purchased for a reasonable price second-hand from Amazon. Students can then swap with other classmates to reduce the costs per head. This task can make the difference between grades at the end of course.



Introductory books to get you think like an economist:

Books by Tim Harford (The Undercover Economist / Logic of Life / Fifty Things that Made the Modern Economy / Adapt) - all Harford's books are highly readable and introduces basic economic concepts into real world scenarios.

Nudge – Thaler and Sunstein - this illustrates a number of key principles of behavioural economics, and then delves into a range of social issues that could benefit from nudges such as our finances, the environment and health.

Freakonomics – Levitt and Dubner. This book became so popular that there is now some academic snobbery against it, but it is still an interesting and easy read.

FURTHER ACADEMIC READING MATERIAL:

How Markets Fail – John Cassidy – a journey through the key ideas in economics, and those that discovered them. It's a bit stodgy in places, but if you stick with it then it will really give you an insight into the thinkers whose ideas have ended up on your A Level syllabus. Worth briefly noting the ideas of Adam Smith, Keynes, Friedman, Pigou and Coase, all of whom turn up at A Level. (Add Walras and the Arrow-Debreu model if you feel like showing off to your teacher).

Doughnut Economics – Kate Raworth – develops a new model for economics, based around the 'doughnut', which values human well-being and advocates for a 'regenerative and distributive economy'. There are several evocative metaphors and examples to convey economic concepts in accessible terms.

23 Things they don't tell you about capitalism – Ha Joon Chang – a serious book by a serious academic, despite the title. Very easy to read; broken down as the title suggests into 23 short chapters.

The Truth about Markets – John Kay – this was published more than 10 years ago now but is still fresh and relevant. It covers some similar ground to Cassidy's book above, but offers a rigorous critique of free markets, as well as a powerful defence of the benefits they can bring.

Research Tasks

Macroeconomics

Complete the table below on the UK economy:



Macro Objective	Definition	How is it measured?	2017 data	2018 data	2019 data
Economic Growth					
Unemployment					
Inflation					
Current Account					
Add in other statistics that you think are relevant.					

Microeconomics

Complete the table to define the following terms:

Key Term	Definition	Key Term	Definition
Demand		Producer Surplus	
Supply		Command Economy	
Consumer Surplus		Market Mechanism	

Read the article attached and answer the following questions.

1. What are the private benefits to individuals of an active lifestyle?

2. What are the wider benefits to the society and UK economy of an active lifestyle outlined in the article?

Introduce tax breaks on gym memberships and home fitness equipment, Chancellor told



The UK is one of the least active countries, according to the World Health Organisation, ranking 123rd of 168 countries.

The Chancellor is being urged to introduce tax breaks on gym memberships and home fitness equipment. Health experts are calling for the expansion of the “Cycle to work” scheme - which offers bikes as tax-free benefits - to a range of activities, in order to boost Britain’s activity levels.

Research has found that sitting for eight hours a day could increase the risk of premature death by up to 60 per cent. The Lancet study found that one hour’s activity daily could offset the potential harm of a day spent at the desk.

But almost one in four adults in England fail to achieve even half an hour of activity a week.

In a letter to Philip Hammond, ahead of the budget, fitness experts and leading figures in the health sector called on the Treasury to introduce perks which might spur workers to take more exercise.

The signatories, which include former Health Secretary Andrew Lansley, Prof Sir Muir Gray, an advisor to Public Health England (PHE), and Baroness Grey-Thompson, chairman of fitness body UK active, say such measures could have a major impact on Britain’s activity levels.

The letter warns that the UK is now one of the least active countries in the world, ranking 123rd of 168 countries by the World Health Organisation.

And they say many employees who struggle to fit physical activity into long busy working days might be pushed into doing so if financial incentives were in place.

Their analysis suggests that while their proposed Workout from Work scheme would cost the Government and businesses around £145m annually, the economy would gain £2.60 for every £1 invested, in terms of improved health.

In the letter, they say: “Office-based employees in the UK now spend up to three quarters of their day sitting down – often for extended periods of time, and every year, employee ill-health negatively impacts UK businesses, despite the fact that much of it is preventable.”

Other signatories include leading figures from the Royal College of GPs, the Royal Society for Public Health and a number of gym operators.



Steven Ward, chief executive of ukactive, said: “Physical inactivity is the silent killer that has crept into our offices, so we need the government to work with the business community to reimagine workplace culture.

“The biggest barriers to physical activity for most people are convenience and cost. While Cycle to Work helped more than a million people to get active, we urgently need a broader scheme which offers tax breaks to more workers, with more options for exercise.”

Official figures suggest that 1.3 million workers a year suffer from ill-health that is classed as work-related, equating to 26 million working days lost.

Sedentary lifestyles increase the risk of a host of diseases. The analysis forecasts that tax breaks on gym memberships and home activity equipment could push more than 200,000 adults into joining a gym or buying home fitness equipment.

In total, such moves could bring economic benefits of £240m annually by 2021, the report says, including productivity boosts and £210m in cost savings to the NHS.

Research suggests that moderate activity - around 30 minutes brisk walking, cycling or swimming, five times a week - can cut the risk of a host of diseases.

A review of the evidence by PHE found diabetes and high blood pressure risks were found to be 50 per cent lower among regular exercisers, with risks of heart disease down by 40 per cent, and rates of depression and cancer at least one quarter lower.

Earlier this week, the Health Secretary urged employers to give workers standing desks and get staff on their feet for meetings.

Matt Hancock called on businesses to help employees to build activity into their days, in a bid to counter deadly sedentary lifestyles.

The health secretary said he uses a standing desk - finding it boosted his increased his activity levels, and boosted productivity.

Source: <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2018/10/21/introduce-tax-breaks-gym-memberships-home-fitness-equipment/>