get involved: we need your support

Young Enterprise is the UK’s leading enterprise education charity, creating a connected world of young people, business volunteers and educators, inspiring each other to succeed through enterprise.

Each year, our business volunteers inspire over 220,000 young people aged 4 to 25. Our programmes empower the next generation with the confidence, ability and ambition to succeed in a rapidly changing global economy.

With the support of more than 3,500 businesses and over 5,000 schools, colleges and local communities Young Enterprise is helping to inspire the UK’s next generation of enterprising young people.

find out more...
To get involved across the UK or in your region visit us at: www.young-enterprise.org.uk
Young Enterprise team Opus, from Tiffin Girls’ School, Kingston, London, reached the 2006 Innovation Awards final with an educational toy called the Mag-it.
My father, Sir Walter Salomon, founded Young Enterprise in 1962 to help young people in the UK develop the skills and knowledge needed to take charge of their own lives and succeed in business and enterprise. Since then one million 15-19 year-olds have taken part in the charity’s flagship Company Programme.

I know that if he were alive today my father would be extremely proud of the legacy Young Enterprise has created for young people in the UK. Throughout this report you will see testimonies from 50 of the charity’s alumni who ran their own real businesses for a year with guidance from business mentors. In their own words they explain how Young Enterprise inspired them to achieve business success. Many say they would never have done so without the charity.

Steve Manley said Young Enterprise gave him the "clear vision" to launch Universal Office Products from his mother’s back bedroom - and turn it into one of the UK’s top 10 independent office supply companies. Naomi Kibble said the charity “planted the seed” for her crushed ice cocktails business, ‘Rocktails.’ Jonathan Lewis said he learned a tough lesson from Young Enterprise while a Wolverhampton Grammar School pupil: “How hard you have to work to make a living.” It helped him rise to become Co Deputy Chief Financial Officer at Japan’s powerful Nomura bank.

Anthony Impey said Young Enterprise helped him with the skills to launch his £6.5 million a year technology business. Multi-millionaire Nick Ogden, hailed as the ‘founder of e-commerce’, said Young Enterprise was “critical.” These are the business stars whom, as teenagers, my father was determined to help and inspire. You only have to read this report to see that Young Enterprise has been even more successful than he might have hoped.

As well as giving young people the skills and knowledge they need, Young Enterprise gives them the confidence to be independent individuals with a thirst for success that characterises all the best entrepreneurs. My sister Carolyn Townsend and I and our families look forward to supporting Young Enterprise over the next 50 years.

William Salomon

“As well as giving young people the skills and knowledge they need, Young Enterprise gives them the confidence to be independent individuals with a thirst for success that characterises all the best entrepreneurs.”
welcome

To mark the 50th Anniversary of Young Enterprise we asked Kingston University Business School to study the impact of our work on the UK economy.

The results presented in this report are utterly compelling and highlight how successful it has been in meeting Sir Walter Salomon’s vision to change young people’s lives. They show Young Enterprise alumni are twice as likely to end up running their own firms as their peers. Their businesses have a larger turnover, they are more likely to employ people, they are more innovative and their owners are more resilient in surviving the recession.

Youth unemployment remains unacceptably high. So we believe the hard data gathered for this report by Dr Rosemary Athayde and her team is indisputable evidence of Young Enterprise’s value.

During her nine-month investigation Dr Athayde surveyed the careers of hundreds of alumni. Despite the scepticism of some, this research proves that exposing young people to enterprise education in school, colleges and universities gives Britain far more entrepreneurs than it would otherwise have had.

Some critics claim Young Enterprise does little but encourage teenagers from privileged backgrounds who would do well anyway. This report explodes that myth. It shows Young Enterprise unlocked the entrepreneurial creativity of many alumni from modest provincial backgrounds that could otherwise have remained undiscovered.

For example, Roy Stanley said that as a “working class kid with no exposure to business, Young Enterprise suddenly gave me a lot of knowledge”. Roy went on to establish The Tanfield Group, one of the world’s largest makers of commercial electric vehicles.

David Lammy MP was born in deprived Tottenham, London, one of five children raised by a single mother. He attended a State-funded school. He said Young Enterprise inspired him to be a leader and he subsequently became an Education Minister and a rising political star.

Sabirul Islam, from London’s tough Tower Hamlets, has carved out a successful career for himself as a global speaker, published author and social entrepreneur at the age of just 21.

In total, 3.8million young people aged 4 to 25 have taken part in Young Enterprise programmes over the last 50 years. The 50 alumni featured in this report are just some of those whose lives Young Enterprise has touched, and often transformed.

They are why we look forward with enormous confidence to another half century of inspiring and preparing young people to achieve their potential and succeed in business. We hope you enjoy reading this report.

Best Wishes
Michael Mercieca
Chief Executive

“...Young Enterprise unlocked the entrepreneurial creativity of many alumni from modest provincial backgrounds that could otherwise have remained undiscovered”
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Starting from humble beginnings, Young Enterprise gradually caught the imagination of the nation’s youth, attracted the participation of major businesses, galvanised volunteers and ultimately gained the admiration and support of Government. Young Enterprise is now the largest enterprise education charity in the UK.

1960s
Sir Walter Salomon founded Young Enterprise in 1962. It was based on the successful Junior Achievement programme in America. He admired the US charity’s ability to foster workreadiness, entrepreneurship, financial literacy skills, and its philosophy of learning by doing that encouraged tens of thousands of young people to reach their potential. The first UK Company Programme was launched in 1963 in Chatham, Kent and it attracted 113 teenagers who formed eight student firms.

1970s
In a great leap forward, twenty-two Young Enterprise Area Boards of volunteers started up across the UK in 1973. They created Young Enterprise Centres in disused warehouses and factories, a church building and a pub. The European Federation of Young Enterprise got going in 1977.

1980s
With backing from giants such as Mobil Oil, the Young Enterprise Company Competition took off in 1981, starting the exciting format it has today. Six regional winners attended national finals in London with the Best Company receiving £1,500 in cash, Sir Walter Salomon received a KBE from The Queen in 1982, recognising his achievement.

1990s
As student numbers hit a new peak of 24,000, the Department of Trade and Industry joined Midland Bank (now HSBC) in 1997 to support the UK finals of the Young Enterprise Company Competition. The Salomon family donated two Founder’s Awards in memory of Sir Walter: for leadership and personal progress. The national charity developed its website in 1998, piloted an international trading extension to the Company Programme, introduced the ‘Entrepreneurship Masterclass’ for 13-17 year olds and the Graduate Programme for university students.

2000s
We marked the millennium by mounting more than 1,000 stands at Young Enterprise trade fairs on the same weekend throughout the UK. In 2001 the number of businesses supporting Young Enterprise hit 2,000 and we launched the Primary Programme for 4 to 12 year olds. Young Enterprise launched more than 100,000 young people a year in 2005, an astonishing 40% annual growth. In 2005 our then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Gordon Brown, announced Young Enterprise would lead the Government’s new Pathfinder Enterprise Summer Schools.

Now
In 2012, Young Enterprise worked with 290,000 Young people aged 4 to 25 in 5,000 schools, colleges and universities with help from volunteers from 3,500 businesses. Young Enterprise’s pioneering Start-up scheme to help university students launch their own business boomed as the economic downturn triggered a surge towards graduate self-employment. The scheme fits superbly with what we already do and provides a potential catalyst for major expansion.
Executive Summary

Governments around the world have increased investment in enterprise education in recent decades. The reason why is not hard to find. International bodies such as the European Commission (EC) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) see encouraging enterprise in schools, colleges and universities as a key way of boosting innovation, sustaining social progress and ensuring economic recovery.

But this trend is not without its critics. Some argue that the evidence on which these assumptions are based is sparse. Has the public investment in enterprise education - which aims to give young people the skills to succeed at work and potentially run their own businesses - been worthwhile? Where is the evidence to justify such expenditure?

This report presents the findings of a study designed to investigate the outcomes of Young Enterprise programmes in the UK, commissioned to mark the charity’s 50th anniversary year. Using three on-line surveys, face-to-face and telephone interviews it provides evidence to begin to start answering some of these questions.

To put it together, Kingston University Business School surveyed a total of 371 Young Enterprise alumni and contrasted their responses to those of a directly comparable control group made up of 202 people who have never been on a Young Enterprise programme. Most of the alumni featured here took part in the charity’s Company Programme which helps young people run a real business for a year at secondary school. Others took part in the Start-up scheme which helps students create a fully-fledged company at university.

Every region of the UK is represented in the sample. The respondents’ ages ranged from under 25 to over 65, and roughly equal numbers of men and women took part.

So, what are Young Enterprise alumni doing now? Many say they are running their own business (42%); others are working in large organisations; some are freelance or professionals, or studying for a higher degree. Some are working in small firms. What is notable is that Young Enterprise alumni are significantly more likely to be running their own businesses than people in the control group (26%).

Many Young Enterprise alumni are serial entrepreneurs, and have run their own business in the past, or are currently setting up additional businesses. Some run several businesses already.

What kind of businesses do the Young Enterprise alumni run? They are highly diverse and often very innovative. The typical small firm in Britain, according to the latest national statistics, is in construction, has no or few employees and a modest turnover.

But this sample shows that firms run by Young Enterprise alumni are, by contrast, most likely (21.2%) to be digital businesses such as e-commerce; consulting; professional services; or studying for a higher degree. Some are working in small firms. What is notable is that Young Enterprise alumni are significantly more likely to be running their own businesses than people in the control group (26%).

An unusually high proportion of Young Enterprise firms are limited companies, employ others and have a larger turnover than average to run their own business; be serial entrepreneurs or study for a higher degree. Some are working in small firms. What is notable is that Young Enterprise alumni are significantly more likely to be running their own businesses than people in the control group (26%).

As one alumnus put it: “You can’t learn to swim by reading a book. You have to at least paddle around a bit while doing it, and Young Enterprise gives you that, the chance to paddle.”

An unusually high proportion of Young Enterprise firms are limited companies (42%), compared to both the national average (27.7%) and the control group (23%). This might suggest the alumni gained from their Young Enterprise training a healthier understanding of how to protect themselves against risk.

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Almost half (49.6%) of them identified increasing sales as their main business objective, and a further 30% said they were developing new products or services to make things better for their customers. Just 6.5% talked about maintaining sales and only 5% saw salvation in increasing efficiency.

The evidence presented in this report demonstrates that Young Enterprise has made a contribution both to society and potentially to the economy as well.

Young Enterprise alumni like those in this research are more likely than average to run their own business; be serial entrepreneurs; and show resilience in developing strategies to cope with difficult times. The businesses they run are more likely to be innovative, limited companies, employ others and have a larger turnover than the typical small firm in the UK.

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They are more likely to employ other people and have on average a higher turnover. For instance, one in eight (12.2%) of Young Enterprise businesses have a turnover greater than £500,000 compared with 3% of businesses in the control group. In fact, 3% of Young Enterprise businesses have a turnover of more than £1m compared to none in the control group.

When asked about the contribution Young Enterprise has made to their business skills and knowledge, Young Enterprise alumni were very positive. In order of importance they said Young Enterprise improved their ability to: achieve objectives, cope with problems, deal with change, do business planning, start up a company, build business relationships and networks, innovate, spot opportunities and evaluate ideas.

As one alumnus put it: “You can’t learn to swim by reading a book. You have to at least paddle around a bit while doing it, and Young Enterprise gives you that, the chance to paddle.”

When it comes to coping with and adapting to the recession, Young Enterprise alumni are resilient, rather than vulnerable. Almost half (49.6%) of them identified increasing sales as their main business objective, and a further 30% said they were developing new products or services to make things better for their customers. Just 6.5% talked about maintaining sales and only 5% saw salvation in increasing efficiency.

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More Young Enterprise alumni end up running their own business: 42% of alumni surveyed started firms compared to 26% in the control group of non-alumni.

Alumni firms have a larger turnover: 12% of alumni firms turn over £500,000 compared to 3% of the control group’s firms. In fact, 3% of Alumni firms turn over more than 1 million, compared to none of the control group’s firms.

Alumni companies employ more people: 11% have 51-99 employees compared to 9% of the control group. Two per cent of the alumni have 100-249 employees compared to none in the control group.

Alumni firms are more innovative: 21.2% of alumni firms were digital and ‘cloud’-based firms compared to 3% in the control group.

Alumni firms are more diverse: Alumni firms ranged from internet sales to advanced engineering, corrosion control and ‘retro’ tourism. Control group firms were concentrated in fewer sectors, particularly healthcare and education.

Alumni firms are more likely to be limited companies: This suggests alumni have a healthier understanding of risk than the non-alumni.

Alumni are more likely to be serial entrepreneurs: They are less deterred by the prospect of failing than others.

They are more likely to be resilient: 49.6% of alumni said boosting sales was the top priority in the downturn while only 5% opted for internal cuts.

Alumni were very positive about their experience of Young Enterprise: They said the charity had helped them most with achieving objectives, coping with problems and dealing with change.

"Alumni said Young Enterprise helped them most with improving their ability to achieve objectives, cope with problems and deal with change”
In fact the British Government has made substantial investment in primary, secondary and tertiary institutions over the last few decades. Enterprise education was a mandatory requirement in secondary schools (BERR 2008; Ofsted 2005) until the current Coalition Government abolished work-related learning for 14 to 16 year olds at Key Stage 4 in 2012. But, what evidence is there to justify public investment in enterprise education? For instance, a recent report highlights the continuing need to strengthen young people’s understanding of enterprise capability (McLarty et al. 2010).

What do the self-employed actually do and what do they contribute? Research has found that there is a tendency for the self-employed in the UK to take up craft occupations. They are much less likely than their counterparts in other European countries such as Germany, Denmark and Austria to be engaged in innovative businesses employing others (Brinkley 2008; Cowling 2003). So, have decades of investment in enterprise education been worthwhile, and are these programmes really effective?

“The aim of Young Enterprise is to help young people develop the attitudes and skills they need to succeed in the world of work and enterprise, to promote life-long learning and boost their employability. The charity delivers practical, activity-based enterprise programmes in schools, colleges and universities, led by business volunteers who act as mentors. Enterprise education has become a key element in schools and universities, even if it is not part of the national curriculum.

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“I had a massive wake-up call when I went into corporate life. I used to get the same train every morning, sat at the same desk, and did the same thing. I thought: ‘I do not want to be doing this.’ Life is for living and I just thought you have to get out there and do something fun.”

Female Young Enterprise alumnus 2005.

We conducted the study using three on-line surveys: one was emailed directly to alumni contacts provided by Young Enterprise; the second was a public survey distributed to all Young Enterprise regions and Kingston university contacts; and the third was an on-going survey carried out by Kingston University of university alumni at several universities across the UK. We supplemented these findings with a focus group and interviews with Young Enterprise alumni.

The first section of this report answers the question ‘who are the Young Enterprise alumni?’, and takes a look at their current occupations. We analyse which Young Enterprise programme they did and in which region. In the second section we present details of the business run by Young Enterprise alumni, highlighting the sector they operate in, legal status, number of employees, age of business, turnover, and note the prevalence of serial entrepreneurs. Next, we present a comparison between businesses run by Young Enterprise alumni and a control group of respondents who have never taken part in one of the charity’s programmes. In the fourth section of the report we analyse how Young Enterprise alumni who own businesses rate the value of their Young Enterprise experiences.

Who are the Young Enterprise alumni? and what are they doing now?

In this section we aim to present a picture of the 171 Young Enterprise alumni who took part in the on-line surveys. Each respondent was asked a series of demographic questions based on factors such as age, ethnic background, gender, current occupation, level of education and employment.

By far the largest proportion of the Young Enterprise alumni surveyed (42%) described themselves as running their own business (Figure 1). A further 9% said they were freelance. Nearly one in five was an employee in a large organisation, while 12% were studying for a higher degree. Of the remainder, 6% described themselves as professionals, 4% were working as employees in a small business, while 5% are unemployed.

“And even if business isn’t necessarily for them, I think Young Enterprise teaches you a lot more than just how to be an entrepreneur. It teaches you management skills, it teaches you about communication. It teaches you about commercial awareness and selling and organisation. So I think it is broader than just knowing how to be an entrepreneur.”

Young Enterprise male alumnus 2009.

“If you made a mistake, you made a mistake and there was no running away or hiding from it. These were real-life problems that you were trying to solve and challenges you were facing every day.”

Justin Turner, Founder of Carrot Media, took part 2003.


Which Young Enterprise programme and where?

So what did all these people actually do when they participated in Young Enterprise? Respondents were asked to select from four options to answer this question: Company Programme; Graduate Enterprise; Other and I don’t remember.

The Company Programme runs in secondary schools. It gives young people aged 15-19 the opportunity to work in teams running their own enterprise over the course of one academic year, with help from volunteer mentors from businesses. Teams show off their products and services at local, regional and national trade fairs and they compete with each other for the top prize in a national Young Enterprise awards competition.

Graduate Enterprise, now known as Start-up, is a similar programme aimed at university under-graduates. A key feature of both is experiential learning – or learning by doing, not sitting around in a classroom or lecture theatre. These young people actually set up their own business with all the usual functions of marketing; production; sales; and keeping accounts. They then have to present their ideas and achievements to panels of experts.

Most of the Young Enterprise alumni in this study took part in the Company Programme (67%) (Figure 2). Almost one in five (18%) participated in Graduate Enterprise. Of those respondents who chose the ‘other’ category, 12 mentioned Primary Programme, which as the name suggests is designed to introduce primary school pupils to work and enterprise. Four mentioned Key Programme, a cross-community activity run by Young Enterprise Northern Ireland that imparts vital life skills, and the remainder did not specify which programme they took part in.

“Then it was at the North West final, we won that, and got to be at the UK national final which was held in London. We were finalists there so there were 12 schools competing there. So, out of the 3,500 schools that had originally taken up the programme that year, we were placed in the final 12. That was an amazing achievement.”

Fenella Young Enterprise alumnae 2006.

“Young Enterprise gave me a real taste for business, working for myself and generating profit from my ideas.”


“I look back on my time as the MD of Cocktail, our Young Enterprise Company, as a deeply enriching personal journey. That was the experience that first sparked my passion for entrepreneurship and it has stayed with me ever since. Now, in my capacity as a Trustee of Young Enterprise, I am proud to be in a position to help shape the vision of the charity and the great work Young Enterprise does in inspiring and empowering our Young Achievers to become the future entrepreneurs and business leaders of this country.”


The largest group of alumni who took part in this survey came from the South East (24.2%). Approximately 10% participated in each of the following regions: the North West; East Midlands; West Midlands and the South West. Scotland represents 7.3% of the sample. Approximately 5% came from the North East; Yorkshire and Humberside; East of England and London. Wales represents 3.7% of the sample, while Northern Ireland represents 1.8%.

Young Enterprise has traditionally had a strong local focus and this study includes respondents from all 12 regions of the UK.
Who are the Young Enterprise Alumni?

The Young Enterprise alumni were asked to provide some personal details such as gender, age and ethnic background, plus their highest qualification.

The largest proportion were under 25 years old (42%) (Table 1). Almost one third were in the 26 to 35 age bracket. Nearly one in five were aged between 36 and 45, while 7% were aged 46 to 55. There were fewer respondents in the oldest age categories: only 2% were between 56 and 65 and 1% were over 65 years old, reflecting the fact that Young Enterprise was a small but fast growing charity in the 1960s.

The group is fairly evenly split between men and women. A majority were white (81%), but almost one fifth were from ethnic minority backgrounds.

Respondents were asked to choose their highest qualification from five categories. They were a highly educated group. Almost one in three had a first degree (32.1%), while 8.3% had a higher degree. The largest group chose A Levels as their highest qualification (40.8%) (Figure 4). Just one in ten chose GCSEs as their highest qualification.

An alternative view to the importance of educational qualifications was provided via focus groups and interviews with Young Enterprise alumni: “Because it’s like all the smart kids go to university, and then they have to pick up a vocation. But, actually in hindsight they are probably much smarter if they structure their own apprenticeships.”

Female Young Enterprise alumnus 2002.

There was a considerable amount of innovation on display elsewhere. One company offered fashionable “retro” heritage tourism; another oil and gas exploration; and another manufactured polymers for corrosion resistance and control. Alongside these firms there were advertising agencies; design consultancies; internet sales; importers of pre-cast concrete and reinforcement machinery; healthcare and educational services. Considering this is a sample of just 156 firms, these businesses represent a very innovative and diverse group compared with UK business as a whole today.

“I did a year-long management course and it really didn’t give me any skills. It just gave me a nice thing on the CV that is good for investors. You can’t read to

Male Young Enterprise alumnus 2003.

“...but my career to my Young Enterprise experience.”

Andrew Oddie, Sales Support Manager - Cumberland Building Society. Took part: 2000

Figure 4. Highest Qualification of Young Enterprise Alumni

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<th>Qualification</th>
<th>Number</th>
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<td>Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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Table 1. Respondent Characteristics

Businesses run by Young Enterprise Alumni

A large proportion of the alumni are business owners, with 42% describing themselves as running their own firm (156 respondents) (Figure 1). They were asked to give us information about their company including the date it was established; legal status; number of employees; sector and turnover.

The findings show businesses run by Young Enterprise alumni are highly diverse and often very innovative. The largest group was digital businesses. Figure 5 shows the breakdown of firms by sector.

This contrasts strongly with the typical British small firms. Latest national statistics show that the largest proportion of small firms are in construction (19.3%)9. This is followed by professional, scientific and technical areas (13.3%). The third largest sector, based on national statistics, is the wholesale, retail and repair sector (10.7%).

A significant proportion of firms run by Young Enterprise alumni are digital and ‘cloud’ computing-based businesses (21.2%). These include cloud infrastructure services and platforms, storage, and service-oriented architecture. One alumni firm provides mathematical modelling and bespoke application development. The second largest category of Young Enterprise alumni businesses is professional, scientific, technological, legal and accounting consultancy (18.6%).

Next comes engineering and technology design (10.3%), with their owners saying their firms provided advanced engineering and product development; engineering solutions; high pressure engineering and environmental technologies.

There was a considerable amount of innovation on display elsewhere. One company offered fashionable “retro” heritage tourism; another oil and gas exploration; and another manufactured polymers for corrosion resistance and control. Alongside these firms there were advertising agencies; design consultancies; internet sales; importers of pre-cast concrete and reinforcement machinery; healthcare and educational services. Considering this is a sample of just 156 firms, these businesses represent a very innovative and diverse group compared with UK business as a whole today.

“I did a year-long management course and it really didn’t give me any skills. It just gave me a nice thing on the CV that is good for investors. You can’t read to learn how to swim.”

Male Young Enterprise alumnus 2003.

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Figure 5. Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses by Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
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<td>Engineering/Technology</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Importing Goods</td>
<td>10.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Business/Cloud Based</td>
<td>21.2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Company</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising/Design/Recruitment</td>
<td>9.8</td>
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<td>Healthcare/Education</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Consultancy (mgmt/tax/accounting)</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy/Oil/gas sector</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction/Property</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet Sales</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is no doubt that I owe both my place at University and my career to my Young Enterprise experience.”

Female Ye alumnus 2002.

Andrew Oddie, Sales Support Manager - Cumberland Building Society. Took part: 2000

“...but my career to my Young Enterprise experience.”

Female Ye alumnus 2002.

[9] It was intended to use the UKSIC 2007 codes, but due to the specific nature of the firms in the sample categories were modified to reflect their actual activities.

Details of the UKSIC 2007 can be found in the appendices.


Female Ye alumnus 2002.

“The plumbers, the electricians - they are all entrepreneurs - lifestyle entrepreneurs. They want to do what they want to do - they just don’t want to be employees for someone else. I had two very similar friends at school. One went on to do an apprenticeship as a plumber and one went on to do forensics at some university. And, you know, the guy who went through his plumbing apprenticeship is doing much better. He is enjoying life, and he has made a lot more money.”

Male Young Enterprise alumnus 2004.
Previous research has looked at the concept of serial entrepreneurs; and at the relatively negative perception business failure has in the UK compared to the US. In particular, research in the UK has identified the existence of serial entrepreneurs, that is the tendency of some people to set up and close businesses, and go on to establish new businesses (Rosa 1998). Stokes and Blackburn (2002) investigated the concept of business closure and what actually happens to both the business and the owner as well as the motivations behind these closures. So we asked Young Enterprise alumni business owners about their previous experience of business ownership and also whether they were involved in setting up additional businesses.

"...the culture is different in America because they encourage you to do it and if it fails then they give you a pat on the back and say 'well done for trying. Get up and do it again.' In the UK people are just sort of sat there waiting to see if there are any cracks. Then if you fail it's like 'well you really should go back to the drawing board.'"

Male Young Enterprise alumni 2002.

"It's almost like you are expected to fail in America before you are even going to have success."

Female Young Enterprise alumni 2006.

"So many people said 'that was a real risk you took. That was brave, very courageous.' But not really, a real risk would be to re-mortgage your house when you are 45 and you've got a family. To actually do it in your 20s...if it all goes wrong, the lessons that you learn are much more worthwhile than what you would have been learning as an employee."

Male Young Enterprise alumni 2002.

"I think I had written seven business plans before Young Enterprise came along. Then it (Young Enterprise) gave me a focus. By the time I had sat my A Levels I had been running one company for just over a year, and another for just under a year."

Male Young Enterprise alumni 2005.

"I started my first business when I was 15. I had no idea what I was doing - I just knew I wanted to do this."

Female Young Enterprise alumni 2006.

A remarkably high proportion of Young Enterprise alumni (one in four) said they had been a business owner in the past; nearly one in three reported that they would like to set up an additional business in the future. Interestingly, over half were setting up another business in addition to their current firm. People who are at the beginning stages of setting up a business are described by the Global Entrepreneurship Monitor as nascent entrepreneurs. But, in the case of the Young Enterprise alumni, they are not nascent entrepreneurs, but rather experienced business owners starting nascent businesses.

The results are perhaps surprising but they confirm the prevalence of serial entrepreneurs in the UK and that Young Enterprise alumni may be less deterred by the prospect of failing than others as they have previous experience of running an enterprise on a Young Enterprise programme. Businesses may close for a wide variety of reasons, not just because of the ‘failure’ of the business. Other explanations include: mergers; closure to set up an improved business model; succession issues in family firms resulting in new firms; employee buy-outs, to name but a few.

"There is so much less risk when you are younger. I was 16 when I set up my first company, and actually, they were like 'So why and how did you set up at that point?' Well, actually, no kids, no mortgage. So, I set up another one. Five years down the line they are both still running."

Male Young Enterprise alumni 2007.

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Young Enterprise alumni firms tend to be larger than the average small business in the UK based on national statistics for 2011. Only one in four have just the owner working in the business. Approximately one quarter have between 10 and 24 employees, and 15% have between 25 and 99 employees. Just over one in ten employ between 51 and 99 employees, and 2% employ 100 to 249 employees. By contrast the average small business in the UK is most likely to be a sole proprietor with no employees.

What has made these businesses grow and be successful? Previous research would suggest a combination of previous experience in business; an understanding of risk; a healthy perception of business failure; and enterprise education early on in their careers.

Given the diversity of the firms that Young Enterprise alumni ran it may not be surprising that their turnovers also varied widely. Nearly one third had an annual turnover of less than £50,000 (31%) (Figure 9). But it is remarkable that one in eight (12%) turned over between £200,000 and £499,000; while 9% scored £500,000 to £999,000. Three in every 100 businesses had a turnover of over £1m, a level none of the control group businesses had reached.

“Young Enterprise helped me develop the confidence to produce ideas that would otherwise have just remained in my head.”

Jo Jackson, Beyond the Valley founder. Took part: 1996

“When you look back it really was great practice.”


““Young Enterprise Businesses by Age”

More than one in four alumni-led businesses are less than three years old (28%) (Figure 10). But two in every hundred have lasted 30 years.

“I learnt that failure is simply a learning curve and being positive and optimistic is crucial.”

How have Young Enterprise Businesses Coped with Post-Recession Adaptation?

According to a recent study by Kitching et al. (2009)12, the response by small firms to recession has typically been characterised by two main opposing approaches: vulnerability and resilience. Recessions can constrain business growth and threaten survival, but they also represent periods when new technologies can emerge to ignite stagnant markets.

The Kitching et al. (2009) study in the UK found that small firms experience the recession in a variety of ways depending on resources and market conditions. There is no ‘one right way’ to beat a recession. Some firms suffer a severe demand or cost shock while for others the impact is limited or they are able to exploit new markets. Firms may respond to a recession by retrenching - cost or asset-cutting - while others focus on income-generation - on investment, innovation and diversification (Kitching et al. 2011).

The Young Enterprise alumni firms were asked to describe their main business objective from a choice of six options including sales, innovation and efficiency. Almost half of the Young Enterprise business owners chose increased sales, and 30% said they were developing new products or services (Table 2). It appears that Young Enterprise business owners’ response to the recession is more resilience than vulnerability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Business Objectives</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Increasing sales of your current products or services</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing new products or services</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maintaining sales of your current products or services</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>6.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increasing efficiency</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introducing current products or services to new markets</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t know</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Main Business Objectives

“I didn’t let it affect how we do business, I just went around looking for new markets and new ideas. In business you have to keep moving no matter what the current economic climate is like. There are always outlets and new markets for luxury goods – you just have to be prepared to go out and dig them up.”

Female Young Enterprise alumni, 2006.

“When sales are slow… well I think the experience I had with Young Enterprise is go out and get feedback and find a way of refining it, of evolving it to make it work. So, that’s what we did. We went out to customers and said how can we make this better for you? And they responded.”

Male Young Enterprise alumni, 2006.

Comparison of Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses with a Control Group

We compared the alumni with a control group of 202 people who have never taken part in Young Enterprise. The characteristics of the control group’s members were broadly similar to the alumni group, though there are some differences. For example, there were fewer respondents in the under 25 category (28.7% compared with 42%) in the Young Enterprise group (Table 3). There are also slightly more in the 36 to 45 category (28.6% compared with 18%) in the Young Enterprise group.

There were some considerable differences (Figure 11). The most notable was the proportion that currently run their own business: just over one in four compared with almost half of the Young Enterprise alumni. The other main difference was in the proportion who described themselves as freelance: one in five compared to fewer than one in ten of the Young Enterprise alumni.

Next, we compared the control group’s businesses with those run by Young Enterprise alumni.

In particular, we compared the likelihood of Young Enterprise alumni and respondents in the control group being business owners using the statistical test, Pearson’s chi-square which compensates for samples of different sizes. Figure 12 shows the percentage of each group who are currently running their own business. Almost half the Young Enterprise alumni are currently running their own business (42.4%) compared to just over one quarter of the respondents in the control group (26.4%)14. The difference in proportion is significant. It means that Young Enterprise alumni are more likely to end up running their own business than respondents in the control group who have never taken part in a Young Enterprise programme. Like the alumni-run companies, the control group’s businesses are also not typical British small firms when compared to national statistics (Figure 13). First, there were no construction companies, which is the largest category according to official figures. The largest group is consultancy, which is also the second largest category in the national statistics. The third largest sector in the control group is healthcare and education.


14 The statistical test shows that this difference is in fact significant: χ² (3, N= 428) = 20.954, significant at the 0.1% level (full statistical details can be found in the appendices).
However, the differences between the Young Enterprise alumni firms and the control group are more notable. The control group businesses are less diverse and are concentrated in fewer sectors. The largest sector in Young Enterprise alumni-run businesses was digital and cloud-based enterprises (21.2%), but only 1% of the control group businesses was in this category. This may partly be because the control group includes fewer under-25s with the skills and experience to exploit opportunities in this field. Even so, nearly one in three members of the control group were in that age bracket so more digital and cloud-based businesses might have been expected.

There were also more Young Enterprise businesses in the engineering and technology design sector than control group businesses; though fewer in the health and education sector.

To shed more light on what may be behind these differences we made further comparisons, looking at legal status; number of employees; turnover and age of businesses. Young Enterprise alumni businesses had an unusually high percentage of private limited companies (42%). By comparison, only 23% of control businesses were in this category, though there was a greater proportion of sole traders and partnerships. These differences may be related to the sector they operated in, for instance, there was a high proportion of consultancy firms in the control group, where sole traders or partnerships may be a more suitable legal status than limited companies, as there is less personal risk involved. There were also more social enterprises in the control group, which once again may well be related to sector, as many of these businesses were in health and education, of which there were fewer in the Young Enterprise alumni group.

These differences may also account for the fact that there were more businesses with no employees in the control group. Also, there were no control group businesses with between 100 and 249 employees, whereas 2% of Young Enterprise businesses had reached this size.

The turnover of Young Enterprise alumni businesses tended to be larger than that of control group businesses. For instance 12% of Young Enterprise alumni businesses have a turnover of greater than £500,000 compared with only 3% of businesses in the control group. In fact, 3% of Young Enterprise alumni businesses have a turnover of more than £1m compared to none in the control group. At the lower end of the scale 50% of Young Enterprise businesses had a turnover of less than £99,000 compared with 83% of control businesses.

“It wasn’t just an exercise but a real tangible taste of what you could be doing for a living in a year’s time.”

Frank Young and Nick Troen, Poncho No. 8 founders. Took part: 2002.
The two lowest rated business areas were intellectual property (2.61) (N=87) and trading internationally (2.04) (N=73). These are both quite complex and specialised areas, and it may be that it is both unrealistic and unnecessary for Young Enterprise to provide information and training in these areas in its programmes. On the other hand, there may be justification for covering these areas in particular cases. For instance, for aspiring business owners in engineering and technology design an appreciation of intellectual property rights may well be useful. Understanding the intricacies of trading internationally could potentially be useful to business owners in a wide range of sectors and could even prompt consideration of new markets and opportunities.

“For me, one of the main benefits was the networking events. I have got work experience in a number of high profile companies through networking with Young Enterprise. Seeing how, whether it’s a massive corporate nationwide company or a small independent one, it has allowed me to understand the differences and see what areas I am more interested in.”

Female Young Enterprise alumnus, 2008.

“One of my best memories and the biggest thing I took out of the whole programme was the contacts I made through our business mentor. She was phenomenal, and she still brings me along to all her networking events.”

Female Young Enterprise alumnus 2008.

“Young Enterprise gave me the belief that if you have got an idea and you stick with it you might be the only person to believe in it at first. And actually in the long-term it might not work, but it is a risk and you are not going to convince anyone else if you do not believe in it yourself.”

Female Young Enterprise alumnus 2006.

A total of 145 Young Enterprise alumni business owners were asked to rate the impact of Young Enterprise programmes on 13 different types of business knowledge or skill on a scale of 1 (low impact) to 5 (high impact). Overall, business owners rated their experiences very positively. (Figure 14, full table in appendices).

Figure 14. Young Enterprise Business owners’ perceptions of value of Young Enterprise programmes

It was definitely the thrill factor. It gave me a bit more belief that maybe I could have a business.”

Some argue that the evidence on which these assumptions are based is sparse. Has the public investment in enterprise education been worthwhile? Where is the evidence to justify such expenditure? This report presents the findings of a study designed to investigate the outcomes of Young Enterprise programmes in the UK in this the charity’s 50th anniversary year. Using three on-line surveys, face to face and telephone interviews this report has provided evidence to begin to start answering some of these questions.

The main finding is that Young Enterprise alumni are significantly more likely to be running their own business than average. Many Young Enterprise alumni are ‘serial entrepreneurs’, and have run their own business in the past, or are currently setting up additional businesses. Some run several businesses already.

These businesses are highly diverse and often very innovative. The typical small firm according to the latest national statistics is in construction, with no or few employees and a modest turnover. This sample of Young Enterprise firms by contrast are likely to be a digital business; consultancies; engineering and technology design along with several other sectors.

Another significant finding is that Young Enterprise businesses have an unusually high proportion of limited companies, compared to both national statistics and the control group. They are more likely to employ other people and have on average a higher turnover. For instance 12% of Young Enterprise businesses have a turnover of greater than £500,000k compared with 3% of businesses in the control group. In fact, 3% of Young Enterprise businesses have a turnover of more that £1m compared to none in the control group. At the lower end of the scale 50% of Young Enterprise businesses have a turnover of less than £99,000k compared with 83% of businesses in the control group.

When asked about the contribution Young Enterprise has made to their business skills and knowledge, Young Enterprise alumni were very positive. They highlighted solving problems, business strategy; researching and evaluating ideas as particular areas where Young Enterprise made a big contribution. Others talked about the importance of learning how to sell, building confidence and networking opportunities as key moments during their Young Enterprise programmes.

Finally, the evidence presented in this report demonstrates that Young Enterprise has made a contribution to society and potentially to the economy as well. This is through the activities of Young Enterprise alumni, like those in this research, who are more likely than average to run their own business; be serial entrepreneurs and show resilience in developing strategies.

“Without Young Enterprise none of this would have happened.”

“Conclusions

The increase in enterprise education witnessed during recent decades is motivated by national governments and international bodies like the European Commission (EC) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), which perceive enterprise as a key driver of innovation, sustained social development and economic recovery.

‘The evidence presented in this report demonstrates that Young Enterprise has made a contribution to society and potentially more likely to be running their own businesses than those who did not take part in the programme’

Kingston University Business School

Kingston University Business School
Anthony Impey has made a fortune helping fast-growing businesses get their technology to work harder. The firm he founded nine years ago, London-based Optimity, currently advises over 1,000 firms on how to make more profit by finding exactly the right kit—whether fixed, mobile, voice or data equipment.

With clients including BAE Systems, Calvin Klein, many Government departments and a whole range of European companies, he has turned it into one of Europe’s leading technological providers for medium-sized businesses.

But Anthony’s achievements do not end there. He is also the founder and Managing Director of Technology House, which specialises in fibre optics, and Planning Director of Inception. Together the three firms, which employ a total of 45 people, turnover £6.5 million a year. Yet despite his demanding schedule, Anthony still finds time to act as a Young Enterprise business mentor. He said it was the least he can do to recognise the contribution the Company Programme made to his success.

“Young Enterprise is essential for two reasons,” he said. “Firstly, the job market is so competitive that you have to stand out from everyone else. When I’m looking at recruiting people I place more emphasis on things like Young Enterprise than A Levels. A levels have quite a narrow skills focus while Young Enterprise has a broader skills focus and presents a much more comprehensive view of the kind of person you are. Secondly, the economic challenges the country is facing are not going to go away.

“Company Programme was a turning point for me.” He worked at Whitworth School in Cardiff as a schoolgirl and said that the Young Enterprise experience helped her understand the basics of what running a business meant. It also taught her valuable life skills such as working in a team, time management and presentation skills; all of which proved to be very useful in the future.

Lucy Cohen says: “I took part in Young Enterprise when I was at Sixth Form at Whitworth High School in Cardiff. To say it has changed my life would be an understatement! It was my first real opportunity to understand the basics of what running a business meant. It also taught me valuable life skills such as working in a team, time management and presentation skills; all of which proved to be very useful in the future. As a result of my involvement, I am now the co-founder and Commercial Director of one of the UK’s fastest-growing accountancy firms which employs over 20 staff.”

“"Young Enterprise is essential for two reasons. Firstly, the job market is so competitive that you have to stand out from everyone else."
Case Study: Helen Wooldridge
Co-founded Cuddledry
Took part: 1987

How Helen Slew her Dragons...
While sipping a glass of wine and watching their husbands bathe their babies, Helen Wooldridge and long-term friend Polly Marsh had the idea that spawned their award-winning business venture. As their spouses jugged bath towels and wet, slippery children the pair observed that there must be an easier way. Shortly afterwards the Cuddledry hooded apron towel, and a £1,000,000 business, was born.

Cuddledry’s range of baby products is now available in 40 countries, including Russia, South Africa, South East Asia, Spain, France and the Netherlands.

However, for Helen, the journey towards owning her own business began as a 16-year-old at Dr Challoner’s High School in Buckinghamshire.

“Young Enterprise was a fantastic experience and should be on the National Curriculum,” she said. “It made us change from giggly school kids who couldn’t take it seriously to a group who really worked together to be the winner in our area.

“I was the Managing Director of ‘Etcetera’ and we worked on some fantastic projects that even now I look back and think were a good idea.

“It really taught me to be enterprising and meant I had the confidence and skills to start something up by myself.

The reason WorldPay existed wasn’t because we needed an internet payment system. It was because we needed something that would tell Barclays Square customers how much things cost in different currencies and then provide the payment mechanism.

“It was a eureka moment. We were in the right place, at the right time and with the right team.”

Modestly, he claims his own Young Enterprise team “wasn’t very successful” however. He said he and his colleagues “made something out of wood” and it didn’t sell very well. But he is convinced the early taste of business it gave him was profoundly important.

“Young Enterprise is critical,” he said. “I think that it has a much greater purpose now than it did 20 years ago.

“The whole way that people seek employment, gain employment and have a career is going to be challenging for the next 10 years.

“What is going to come out of that is that more people will become entrepreneurs or self-employed.

“We have to get back to understanding that we have to be responsible for ourselves and take on more roles and be more capable.

“The way Young Enterprise works is that it makes you realise that if you let your mates down in the business it affects you financially and socially.

“I vividly remember going to stand up on the stage and my legs were shaking. I wasn’t out-going and that was quite fundamental to the approach I have to business, being more capable and a turning point for me. I remember coming off the stage thinking I could do it.

“I’ve done endless presentations since but I think that experience early on in life gave me the confidence to believe I could do other presentations and things like Dragons’ Den.”
Energised by Young Enterprise

Spotting the potential in the burgeoning renewable energy industry helped Justin Elliott build a £1 million eco-business in just three years. The 26-year-old set up Leadstoyou Ltd in 2009, an innovative website designed to connect green fuel firms with families wanting to make their homes more energy efficient.

With 400 reputable eco-energy companies on his books, in 2011 alone he helped 40,000 people who were looking to install home insulation, wind turbines, solar panels, heat pumps, wood burners and replacement boilers. But it was his early experience on the Company Programme - selling a device that warned you if it was raining outside - that gave him the confidence to know he could go into business for himself.

“I took part in Young Enterprise when I was 16 and my friend created a device that sounded an alarm in the house when it started raining,” he said. “It was basically a box with a dish on top that filled with water and sent a signal via a circuit indoors.

“The idea was that if you had your washing outside or the roof of the car down you’d know to go outside and do something about it.”

Justin’s Young Enterprise company won the most innovative product award at the charity’s South East regional finals and helped cement his decision to study business at Portsmouth University.

Two years after working for a marketing company, Corpdata, in Devon, he set up Leadstoyou as a part-time concern before going full-time six months later. Justin’s father joined as a Director and they now employ three full-time employees.

“Some of the challenges were more familiar to me because I’d done the Company Programme - things like setting up a bank account, some of the marketing and just talking to customers.

“I had flashbacks of doing it at school albeit on a different scale and it makes it easier because you think ‘I did it at that age so there is no reason I can’t do it now.’”

“Anyone is thinking of starting their own business then Young Enterprise is invaluable. It gives you that confidence and breadth of experience that will help you further down the line.

“Our mentor had also set up his own business so that was useful as I could talk to someone who’d done it.”

“Taking part in Young Enterprise inspired me with confidence”

Case Study: Justin Elliott

Founded Leadstoyou Ltd

Took part: 2002

Case Study: David Lammy

MP for Tottenham and former Education Minister

Took part: 1982

How Young Enterprise changed my life

Born in Tottenham, one of the most deprived areas of Britain, in 1972, David Lammy was one of five children raised by a single mother. At 11 he won a choral scholarship to attend the State-funded The Kings School in Peterborough. Working together with teenage friends he created a real business as part of the Company Programme which made money producing greetings cards.

“It was a challenging project and it really inspired me. We were very successful and raised quite a lot of money. I think it was one of the first things that gave me a very ‘can do’ attitude and a sense of leadership that has stayed with me throughout my career. For me it was about confidence and teamwork,” he said.

David studied law in London and was admitted to the Bar of England and Wales in 1994. He became the first Black Briton to study a Masters in law at the Harvard Law School in 1997. Now David is the Labour MP for Tottenham and a former Higher Education Minister who spent nine years on the front bench. The recession has convinced him that Young Enterprise has a vital role to play in inspiring young people to make their own jobs by going into business for themselves.

“There is too strong an expectation that people will become employed rather than becoming employers,” he said.

“We need to get right back in touch with what it means to run your own business and we need generation X, Y and the millennium generation to have this at their core.

“We’ve got into this bind where entrepreneurs sound exclusive but running a small business can be something as seemingly straightforward as buying a set of clippers and setting yourself up as a barber.”

“We’ve got into this bind where entrepreneurs sound exclusive but running a small business can be something as seemingly straightforward as buying a set of clippers and setting yourself up as a barber”
Case Study: Roy Stanley

Founded: The Tanfield Group
Took part: Late 1960s

Hybrid power visionary who revolutionised world electric vehicle business

Entrepreneur Roy Stanley is most famous for founding one of the world’s largest makers of commercial electric vehicles. He established Wearside-based Tanfield Group in 1996 and saw it rise to become a significant employer in the North East of England.

At its height before the financial crisis Tanfield was turning over £140m a year. Roy oversees its transition to AIM, the stock market for smaller firms, in December 2003 and later went on to start another listed company, Optare Plc, the well-known maker of hybrid buses.

Roy no longer has shares in Optare, but the company has continued its enormous success, employing 500 people and turning over £80 million a year.

Roy is also a major shareholder of US-based Smith Electric Vehicles, a company that is now the world leader in commercial electric vehicles. He is now a non-executive director at Tanfield and has also set up BDaily, an online business newspaper and the fastest growing newspaper in the North East.

Took part: Late 1960s

“Given the fact that it’s so difficult for young people to get jobs now, the more they can do for themselves the more opportunities they are going to have,” he said.

“Young Enterprise taught me that you can put a bunch of people in a room and really get an insight into the type of person they are, in terms of their leadership skills, their willingness to work and their aptitude for risk.

“You get a lot of clever people but you get very few with that spark. Young Enterprise allows people with spark to elevate themselves within the group.

“I’ve volunteered with students who were probably average academically but shone in a business context.

“I learnt that you can’t count on everybody to pull their weight. But it also indicated to me that I was prepared to pull my weight. You learn that perseverance is the key to success and nothing comes easy.

“When I did Young Enterprise it was in the very early days in management thinking so it was really far ahead of its time.

“For a young working class kid who hadn’t had any formal exposure to business it suddenly gave me a lot of knowledge.”

Case Study: Naomi Kibble

Co-founded: Rocktails®
Took part: 2004

Bringing a cracking cocktail to a fridge near you!

Naomi Kibble found her perfect business idea when she wondered why you couldn’t enjoy a decent cocktail at home when it was so easy to get one in a bar. From that flash of inspiration, the revolutionary concept of ROCKTAILS was born - crushed ice cocktails sold in pouches that you store in the freezer.

She set up the company with fellow graduate Helen McAvoy and started selling frozen, pre-mixed cocktails in 2011. Two of their flavoured cocktails - Raspberry and Pulsed Pear and Passionfruit and Pineapple Fusion - are now on sale in Sainsbury’s stores nation-wide.

ROCKTAILS started life from the ground floor of their shared house in Cardiff - but it was the Company Programme that first sparked Naomi’s desire to pursue a career in business.

“Young Enterprise really did plant the seed for me,” she said.

“I really attribute the time I spent on the scheme to where I am now.

“The biggest value for me was working with the business mentors. They taught me a lot of things and one of them is now a very good friend of mine. We joke about how she took me into a shop one day and asked for lots of free stuff to help get the company started."

“Then I put my hand up to be the MD and that’s where it started really. I was an extra-curricular junkie but I don’t think I realised what I was getting into when I agreed to do the Company Programme.

“Then I put my hand up to be the MD and that’s where it started really. I didn’t really understand what business was before that but it opened up my eyes and was the reason I went to university to study business.

“My mentor said I’d be really good at HR – because of the way I’d managed the team – and that gave me the confidence to study Business Management and HR.”

Naomi said she had no interest in going into business before she took part in Young Enterprise.

“I always say I fell into it,” she said.

“If anything it was the Company Programme that first sparked Naomi’s desire to pursue a career in business.”

“I always say I fell into it,” she said.

‘what am I doing this for?’ but it had a massive influence on what I was going into when I agreed to do the Company Programme.

“My mentor said I’d be really good at HR – because of the way I’d managed the team – and that gave me the confidence to study Business Management and HR.”

Naomi said she would encourage any young person who dreamed of owning their own business to take part in the Company Programme.

“I had to really pull the team along and sometimes I’d be thinking ‘what am I doing this for?’ but it had a massive influence on what I went on to do,” she said.

“It led me to where I am now and means I can be my own boss.”

Case Histories

47
Case Study: Benn Jessney

Co-founded KH Smilers

Took part: 2004

How green fingered teenagers transformed failing firm into an award winner

Not many teenagers get to do that

The trio have now scaled back the business while they focus on their university studies but it continues to make a healthy profit. Benn is now studying medicine, David is studying to be a doctor while Mike is working in IT.

The trio are now studying medicine, David is studying to be a doctor while Mike is working in IT.

Case Study: Jonathan Lewis

Nomura

Took part: 1983

What Nomura’s Chief Financial Officer learned from Young Enterprise

Jonathan Lewis remembers gaining one lesson above all from his experience of Young Enterprise.

"It taught me how hard you have to work to make a living," he said.

His recollection is particularly revealing because he has risen high in the financial world since the frantic year he spent running a student business at Wolverhampton Grammar School.

Jonathan is now a key player within the Japanese-owned global investment bank, Nomura. Speaking at the bank’s impressive headquarters in the City of London, he said working with his Young Enterprise team woke him up to the realities of how he would have to pay his way in the world in later life.

"We put on discos and events and despite all the effort and good will from people it was still really hard for us to make a profit," he said.

"We were allowed to use the school hall for free but once you'd brought the snacks and paid security there wasn't a lot left over.

"That was a bit of an awakening for me that things don't just fall in your lap. Before that I hadn't really thought about how I was going to pay my way.

"So it was a good experience because I was inspired and excited about finding out what business was all about and then I got a much-needed reality check at the end of it."

Jonathan is now Co-Deputy Group Chief Financial Officer at Nomura. Based in Tokyo with regional headquarters in Hong Kong, London and New York, the company employs over 27,000 staff worldwide.

He leads a team of more than 1,100 with responsibility for the finance structure across Nomura’s Wholesale division.

After studying economics at Salford University, he joined Deloitte in 1990 and qualified as a chartered accountant in 1993. He worked for multinational professional services firm PwC in London and New York for three years, before returning to the UK to work for investment bank Bear Stearns for 12 years as a Senior Managing Director and International Controller, responsible for Finance in all regions outside of the United States.

He joined Nomura as Chief Financial Officer for Europe, Middle East and Africa in 2008.

"Young Enterprise is exactly what we need to galvanise young people and get them thinking about their futures," he said. "It’s about giving people the opportunity to start to think about business.

"The public sector is shrinking and the traditional professional options of being doctors, lawyers and accountants are going to get harder to get into. We need to encourage more young people in our society to be creative and entrepreneurial in order to better themselves and give back to society.

"I certainly didn’t win any Young Enterprise competitions but that’s not the point. I got a taste for business that inspired me to go on and find out more."
Case Study: Peter Bateson
Chief Executive, Witham Fourth District Internal Drainage Board
Took part: Early 1980s

**Flood defence boss learns key lesson on the importance of planning ahead**

Guesswork is no way to run an organisation, Peter Bateson discovered early on in school. This lesson came home to him when he took the role of Finance Director on the Company Programme at West Bridgford College in Nottingham.

"We produced and sold t-shirts and we carried out a survey to see what sizes people wanted," he said.

"But when we came to order the t-shirts we didn’t have the results with us so we made a guess as to what sizes we needed. We ended up with all these small t-shirts that nobody wanted."

"It was a lesson in planning and made me realise the importance of market research. You learn from your mistakes when you get things wrong and I always remember back to that incident now."

After a business accountancy degree course, Peter joined Deloitte, becoming senior manager, and then became a Director of Tax at PKF. He also volunteered as a Young Enterprise business adviser to students at Haven High School in Boston.

"Young Enterprise was the first time I’d done anything with other people actually relying on me."

"I mentor Young Enterprise students now and they really bond together through the process."

"It’s about giving young people real world experience because you can get a bit cosseted in school."

"It gives you more practical experience - you’re working with other people, dealing with the outside world and making real decisions that actually have a financial impact."

"If people from real businesses act as advisors you can give students real life examples of what it’s like working in business. Plus it’s also great fun!"

Case Study: Lorraine McAleer
Learning SPACE
Took part: 1998

**Lorraine’s lesson in business brilliance**

Former teacher Lorraine McAleer was spurred into setting up her award-winning business Learning SPACE by her frustration at the lack of a one-stop shop for educational toys for children, particularly those with specific learning needs.

So after five years of research she created her own company to supply UK and Ireland customers with good advice and innovative products all in one store like the American Parent Teacher stores.

But she said it was taking part in the Young Enterprise Company Programme as a teenager that meant she knew she could turn her dreams of running a business into reality.

Learning SPACE specialises in toys that aid child development, with toys and learning tools for all children’s different needs and interests. Lorraine sells through her shop in Belfast, via area sales representatives and on her specially categorised website. Learning SPACE can provide everything needed to create an innovative educational setting from sensory rooms to wall murals.

"I started Learning SPACE because I was frustrated that it wasn’t easy to find suitable resources to meet particular needs," she said.

"As a teacher I wanted to be able to get appropriate advice and have educational products altogether like in the Parent Teacher stores in America."

She was also a finalist in the Women in Business Entrepreneur and Best New Business Award 2008 and Highly Commended Best Young Business Person & Best New Business Award 2010.

Lorraine said her experience on the Company Programme at 16 in Omagh meant she knew she could combine her desire to work in business with her love of working with children.

"Our Young Enterprise company sold children’s personalised story books and Santa letters and it’s quite ironic to think that we now stock similar books in our store today," she said.

Fourteen years later, Lorraine employs 12 specially trained staff with a background in child education, including teachers and a social worker. Her firm is popular with parents, teachers, therapists and kids.

"My younger sister also has Soto’s syndrome - which is characterised by being intellectually impaired and having behavioural problems - so I’ve always been aware that some children need additional help."

"As a teacher I wanted to be able to get appropriate advice and have educational products altogether like in the Parent Teacher stores in America."

"I also knew that parents wanted to know where to get particular products but I didn’t have anywhere suitable to direct them to. I felt teachers, parents and the children deserved better."

"Young Enterprise opened up the possibilities to me," she said.

"It made me see that anything can become reality if you put your mind to it and that there isn’t a stereotypical type of person who can go into business."

"It gives a great insight into the importance of good communication and teamwork and even the mistakes were part of the learning curve."

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Case Study: Philip Cassidy

**Founded gem, now Concentrix**
**Took part: 1983**

**From exam failure to business gem**

As a student, I didn’t like school, teachers, and especially exams. I avoided them until I got involved in the Company Programme in 1983 when I was at St Mary’s Christian Brothers Grammar School, Belfast.

We screen-printed t-shirts. It was a great team effort from a set of students who loved the thrill of running their own business. It was at this point that I realized I wanted to run my own company. I thought the best route was to get a good grounding in accountancy. But my exam results later that year could have put paid to that thought! Someone with a ‘U’ – ungradeable – in A Level maths probably shouldn’t be an accountant.

But my teachers agreed I could repeat my A Levels. I worked hard, turned the ‘U’ into an ‘A’ and got into Queens University Belfast to do Economics with Accounts.

I got my BSc Economics in 1989 and decided that computers were really taking off and to run my own business I needed to understand them. So I enrolled for the Masters in Computer Science and Applications.

I got the MSC and started as a trainee accountant at the Belfast Telegraph. After three years I moved to their head office in London for another three years. I studied for my professional exams while working and became a certified accountant. I moved back to Northern Ireland and took up the role of Finance Director at the cable TV company, NTL.

NTL was very entrepreneurial at first but then it started to become more centralised. That gave me the incentive. I worked on many different business plans as my ‘escape route’ and finally settled on creating a company to help firms cope with the sheer volume of e-mails they received.

It was at this point that my dream from the early Young Enterprise Company Programme all those years ago started to become a reality.

I set up the global email company (gem) with a few friends against the advice of many other people. They told me that many new businesses fail, that I was mad to leave such a cushy role, etc, etc.

I ignored the advice and got on with my dream. We very quickly realized that the business was not going to survive on email alone and we developed into other channels (telephone, text messages, live chat and any other channel that customers wanted to use).

We also started to realize that customers wanted to speak in their language of choice and we now offer support in 31 different languages. We grew to about 900 people with revenues of £17m. We were profitable and then became attractive to some larger organisations.

In 2011 we sold the company to Concentrix which is a US listed company with 7500 people located around the world. The business supports some of the largest companies around the world and the Young Enterprise experience was a key part in helping me realise my dream.

“It was at this point that my dream from the early Young Enterprise Company Programme all those years ago started to become a reality”
Case Study: Evan Parsons

Founded Quinton Stud Farm and Parsons Choice Ltd

Took part: 1980

Firmly in the saddle by 40

Evan Parsons, a 48-year-old entrepreneur from Worcestershire, always harboured an ambition to own his own business. He realised that dream with his wife Sue eight years ago, but credits his experience of Young Enterprise with laying the foundations for his success.

“Taking part in the Company Programme meant I had a very good idea about the demands of running a business from an early age,” he said. “It gave me a grounding and understanding of business so that when you go into a working environment, you know about business practices and basic accounting, which is a great asset.

“But the biggest benefit is that it opens doors for you as it makes employers interested in you and what you have achieved.

“Once I had that experience on my CV it just paid dividends - I’d go for interviews and people just knew that you were 18 and involved in running a business.

“I started in 1980 and the economic climate was really bad. There were mines’ strikes and I remember they were only working three or four days a week. It was a tough time and going on Young Enterprise definitely helped.”

Evan took part in the Company Programme in Halesowen, West Midlands and his company Formula Six made drinks coasters using scrap off-cuts from a presswork company.

After completing a technical apprenticeship at British Steel he became a Purchasing and IT Manager with responsibilities for European steel purchasing based at Titan Steel Wheels Ltd in Kidderminster – an earthmover wheel manufacturer.

At Döttnich Spa-based Parsons Choice, with a team of four employees, he rents out and manages around 130 properties around Worcestershire with a second office operating in Devon. They also source properties for investors, project manage the refurbishment and rent out. At Quinton Stud Farm both Sue and Evan show, breed and sell Welsh Mountain Ponies and offer livery services.

“I had this aim that when I got to 40 I wanted my own business so I left my job in 2003 and set up my own company,” Evan said. “Young Enterprise demonstrated the responsibility and communication skills that are necessary in your own business and it does wonders for your team working skills.

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“It also means you have a much better appreciation and understanding of any business you work for because you understand how all the different parts of the business work, not just the area you’re working in.

“I have worked with young people in schools for over 10 years both as a Business Adviser for the Company Programme and more recently delivering one day Young Enterprise programmes in schools like Learn to Earn, Project Business, Personal Economics and Our Community. This can be very hard work but at the same time very fulfilling and rewarding. It is often the first time these young people get to learn about business, from both the employer and employee point of view and we often discuss things like the national debt and personal taxation.”

Case Study: Rachel Miller

Professional communicator and award-winning blogger

Took part: 1997

Inspiration of an internal communicator

Wearing business dress and standing up in front of a room full of people to communicate a company’s strategy and vision has been a regular part of my career.

However, the first time I did it I was 17, and to say it was daunting is an understatement! I was Company Secretary of a Young Enterprise company, and the experience helped me realise that this was a world I wanted to explore.

I started as a journalist and then moved into Corporate Communications, working in-house and in agencies for large organisations including Visa, L’Oréal, BskyB, GlaxoSmithKline, Tube Lines and London Overground Rail Operations Limited. One thing I learned from Young Enterprise was that listening to what our pupil customers wanted and tailoring our messaging and strategy accordingly was key to business success. It’s a lesson that rings true in my daily working life 13 years later.

I was a pupil at St Edward’s Church of England school in Romford, Essex when I got involved with Young Enterprise. With my peers we set up Konnect, a lunchtime sports-café for pupils. We offered them the chance to play computer games, board games, to buy ‘lunch’ and enjoy doing something other than simply wandering around the school grounds. We ploughed the money we made back into the activities, grew the business and made it more enticing. The queues outside proved that our strategy worked.

I remember our brainstorming sessions and the two local business advisers who helped with the logistics of selling shares in Konnect to pupils and ensuring we balanced the books.

“I’d definitely recommend Young Enterprise to today’s pupils and to companies looking to offer business advice”

We put ourselves forward to compete against other schools in the area. I can distinctly recall how nervous we all were as we’d never had to pitch our wares against other pupils in our very own Dragons’ Den. Although we believed in ourselves, convincing the judges was another matter. But our confidence shone through and we won the local competition and the Best Company Award in the London Borough of Havering Final.

The London East Regional Final swiftly followed. We travelled to the capital and I remember Gary Rhodes was the celebrity judge. We were up for Best Company, East London. Unfortunately our winning streak ended, but we all walked away feeling like champions. We’d had a taste of the world of work and practical hands-on experience of what running a company felt like, and gained something extra to put on our CVs. I’d definitely recommend Young Enterprise to today’s pupils and to companies looking to offer business advice.
Case Study: Chris Slater

Chief Operating Officer, Simply Business
Took part: 1994

From start-up to biggest on the net

Chris Slater helped turn Simply Business from a tiny start-up company into one of the UK’s largest online commercial insurance providers in less than ten years.

Recruited by the fledgling firm in 2004, he has been a driving force behind the company becoming a leading insurance broker for small and medium sized UK businesses.

The firm has been phenomenally successful, generating annual revenues of £17 million. The company made over £2 million profit in 2011 and currently insures almost 200,000 customers across the UK.

The business has come a long way since Chris joined as Head of Insurance working with 10 staff from a converted flat in Tower Bridge. Today it employs more than 170 people in London and Northampton.

For four years running it has been listed in The Sunday Times Tech Track 100, a league table of Britain’s top 100 private tech companies. It was also named in the Deloitte Technology ‘Fast 500’ for Europe, the Middle East and Asia in 2011.

Now Chief Operating Officer, Chris, 34, believes that taking part in the Young Enterprise Company Programme as a teenager at Moorside High School in Manchester provided him with a solid set of skills that are ideally suited for working in a start-up company.

Before Simply Business he helped create MORE Than Insurance, working there for two years as a Product Development Manager.

“It taught me some important lessons about the dynamics of people in a business. For example, there were six of us who were school friends and two outsiders as such. This led to a bit of a mutiny at one stage.

“We also decided to change our presentation at the last minute for the regional finals and ended up going over our allocated time - only our Chief Executive got to talk. It taught me that it’s better to stick with what you know rather than make last minute changes!”

As his Young Enterprise company’s Finance Director, the Company Programme also taught him to keep the tax man happy. After they disbanded they got a letter from HMRC saying they owed money.

They had to club together to pay it off. Chris said: “I decided to stay away from finance roles after that!”

“Young Enterprise whetted my appetite for business. At school, my team landed on the idea of producing first aid kits and had three different versions for people at home, at work and at school”
Shaun Harvey has come a long way since he got his first taste of business selling unbreakable mirrors on the Company Programme. Twenty-five years later, he is the powerful and respected Chief Executive of the revered Leeds United Football Club.

Top-flight football is a tough world that demands the ability to take decisions under pressure. Shaun says the grounding he received as a teenage businessman played a key role in preparing him.

Shaun joined Leeds United Football Club as Chief Executive in June 2004 after 10 years at Bradford City. His progress has been impressive. But he hasn’t forgotten how Young Enterprise gave him his initial understanding of business.

“I took part in the Company Programme when I was 15 and it was my first experience of the business world,” he said.

“My father was a panel beater and my mother worked in an electrical drawing office so neither had exposed me to the running of a business. Young Enterprise gave me that initial insight into business and how companies are organised. It gave you the basic principles that apply to running a business in a controlled environment and taught you that cash flow was the most important factor – some things don’t change! It was a real learning curve and taught me the importance of making decisions.”

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“We need Young Enterprise in schools as you can’t learn without practical experience and being able to learn from real business people at such a young age is invaluable”
Case Study: Sam Stones

Founded: www.cheaper-online.co.uk
Took part: 1999

How to create a £1 million online shopping phenomenon

Online homeware entrepreneur Sam Stones had his first experience of business selling chocolate bars in the school tuck shop. He now provides over an online retail shopping store that will turn over more than £1 million this year. Operating from his 10,000 sq foot Lancashire warehouse, the founder of cheaper-online.co.uk sells quality, discounted items for the home, garden and car. The company will fulfill its 80,000th order in 2012.

However, it all began for Sam when he took part in two Young Enterprise schemes, the first of which saw him take on the role of manager at his high school tuck shop.

"I learnt everything, from buying stock and setting up the store, to staff issues and time management," he said.

"My grandparents and father ran a family business but my involvement was really only as a kid and standing behind the counter.

"Taking part in the Young Enterprise scheme enabled me to try it out myself.

"We had 1,000 students and a limited window in which to sell - just 15 minutes - so you had to be ready to go as soon as the bell went.

"It made me realise that anything’s possible and that information kind of rattled around in my head for years before I started to try and do something with it."

Case Study: Phil Macphail

Emerging technologies consultant and Liivatera Founder
Took part: 1984

The man who invented the cordless telephone and the wireless laptop

Emerging technologies consultant Phil Macphail helped to develop Wi-Fi before it was even called Wi-Fi. Another world first in his 25 year career has been digital cordless telephones – common place now but revolutionary in their time.

The 45-year-old worked for Cambridge Silicon Radio Plc, a FTSE 250 Listed company and world leader in wireless technology, audio, visual, connectivity and location solutions.

With eight patents for various technologies to his name, it’s a far cry from his experience on the Company Programme when he designed and sold jewellery to fellow students at Little Heath School in Reading.

After a move to his wife’s home in Estonia, he has now begun to realise a long-held ambition – inspired by Young Enterprise – to start his own business.

"Virtually the whole of my working life has been spent on emerging technologies," he said.

"By the time my friends understand what I’m working on it is in the shops and I’ve moved on to the next big thing.

"I worked on digital cordless telephones which were ground-breaking in their time – you could pick them up in Tesco now for a fiver but 20 years ago they cost £400.

"Another world first for me was Wi-Fi for laptops.

"This was way, way back when everyone told me I was talking rubbish and that you couldn’t connect to the internet without a wire – if they knew what the internet was!

"Before I left Cambridge Silicon Radio I was working on a project where – like oyster cards – you use near field communication so that people can make payments for things using their mobile phones.

"When I first joined the company there were only 35 employees and I was the youngest so Young Enterprise was a valuable background skill to help me keep up with my colleagues."

Phil’s new company Liivatera – the Estonian word for ‘grain of sand’ – makes analogue music synthesizers.

"Grains of sand are essentially the basis of every semiconductor used today and Liivatera develops circuits for electronic music and audio processing," he said. "Young Enterprise makes all the steps to forming your own company familiar.

"It makes all the tasks you need to do - like registering a company and setting-up a company bank account - much easier.

"Young Enterprise helped me understand early on some of the structures of the company and the obligations you have working within one.

"I learnt how to define a company and decide what it’s going to be and that information kind of rattled around in my head for years before I started to try and do something with it."
Case Study: Richard Brown

Head of Transaction Banking, Balance Sheet Management, Bank of Scotland

Took part: 1996

Fast track to success

Richard Brown worked himself up through the ranks to become one of the youngest ever directors at the Bank of Scotland. He was appointed Director, Corporate Banking at the age of just 29 but says it was Young Enterprise that helped sow the seeds of his success.

Now the head of Transaction Banking, Balance Sheet Management, he still remembers how “phenomenally nerve-wracking” it was taking part in the presentations and competitions.

“At that age I had no real idea of what I wanted to do,” he said.

“Young Enterprise gave me a real life example of what working within a business would be like and helped to flesh out what the various different roles involved.

“It was the first time I’d ever been exposed to the role of a finance director or sales director and it helped to establish what I liked doing and what I didn’t like doing.

“It was also a really good insight into working as a team. You get experience of that at school through sports for example but this was the first time it was really ‘live’ - it was real cash, real customers.

“There were advisors there but you made your own decisions and had to deal with your own mistakes - that real level of responsibility really helped.”

His company, ‘Jinx,’ produced and sold 3D cards and calendars at Firrhill High School in Edinburgh. Richard acted as Sales Director and healthy sales were one of the factors that propelled the team to the National Finals. The experience helped inform which courses Richard took on his Business and Economics degree at Edinburgh University. He then worked himself up from Customer Service Officer at the Bank of Scotland to Director, Corporate Banking in 2007.

“It could be phenomenally nerve-wracking as a 17-year-old to stand up and give a presentation to 500 people at the competitions, but it’s a fantastic experience and gives you something to talk about at interviews and university.

“It was the parallel of a real business and it stood me in good stead coming through university and into business.

“The transferable skills we learnt really came across.

“It made me realise that I wanted to be part of a business and that I wanted to be successful in business.

“I do a lot of new product development now and on a grander scale it’s very similar to what I did on Young Enterprise - it’s about focusing on that financial return for your customers.

“When I’m thinking about how we’re going to do something and how much it will sell for I still look back to what we learnt at that time.”

Case Study: Angela Murray

Founded Road To Riches

Took part: 1997

Meet the woman who turns road dust into platinum

The streets are paved with platinum for this Young Enterprise alumnus. Angela Murray is causing a stir in the waste recovery industry after developing a process for recovering precious metal deposits from ordinary road dust. Tiny fragments of platinum and other precious metals are shaken off the so-called ‘catalytic converters’ inside car exhausts.

Angela had the brilliant idea of using ordinary council road-sweeping machines to suck up the dust – and using technical wizardry to filter out the valuable particles that can trade for up to £90 a gram on the global market. Road dust in most areas of the country is currently just swept up and buried in landfill sites. But Angela’s company Road To Riches aims to extract the metals from the dirt.

Only three countries - South Africa, Canada and Russia - currently produce the precious metals used in catalytic converters - exhaust emission control devices which convert toxic chemicals into harmless substances. The scarcity of supplies means that Road To Riches is onto a potential goldmine.

Angela, a microbiologist by trade, plans to sell the metals to refineries, generating revenue for local authorities and conserving a valuable natural resource.

“At the moment millions of pounds of valuable platinum and other precious metals is literally just being thrown away and sent to landfill,” she said.

“You might think the particles are so minute that they’re not worth collecting but part of the reason the metals are so expensive on the global market is because they have to be mined from deep underground.

“However, in this case they’re just sitting on the surfaces of our roads so the production and processing costs are much less.

“You have to sift out all the rubbish, general dust and organic matter and extract the metals using a smelting or bacterial process but it still makes sound financial as well as environmental sense.

“If we can recycle these metals it will generate revenue for local authorities and conserve a finite, valuable and non-renewable natural resource.”

Angela is carrying out her research at the University of Birmingham where she is studying for a PhD in chemical engineering.

It’s all a far cry from her first experience of running a business on the Company Programme at Rochester Grammar School when she was 17.

“I never thought that I’d end up running my own business when I took part,” she said.

“But it gives you an understanding of business and the dynamics of working in a team which is helpful throughout your working life.”
Case Study: Stuart Carthy

Set up Carthy Consulting Ltd
Took part: 1982

How Young Enterprise helped Stuart impress American accountancy giants

The Company Programme was directly responsible for landing Stuart Carthy his first job at a major accountancy firm. Achieving top marks in the Young Enterprise exam back in 1982 brought him into contact with former top US accountancy firm Arthur Andersen where he ended up working for almost 20 years.

After getting wined and dined by senior partners he took a chance a year later and asked them to sponsor his maths degree at Warwick University. The rest, as they say, is history.

“As Lower Sixth Formers we’d never heard of Arthur Andersen,” he said. “They sponsored the Young Enterprise exam and sent me a cheque for $500 because I got the highest marks in the North of England.

“It was quite scary at the time as it was a proper job, working on real company audits.

“It gave me an interest in business that nothing I was doing at A Level would have given me and was by far the most important non-exam related activity that I did in sixth form.”

Stuart is now a Young Enterprise business mentor and says it is incredibly rewarding to see the difference it makes in the students.

“They just grow in confidence and are able to do things at the end of the year that they could never have done before they started,” he said.

“Young Enterprise shaped much of my working life,” he said.

“It gave me that connection with Arthur Andersen as a 17-year old and without that my career wouldn’t have taken the path it did.

“It gave me an interest in business that nothing I was doing at A Level at that time would have given me and was by far the most important non-exam related activity that I did in sixth form.”

Young Enterprise shaped much of my working life!”

Case Study: Sarah Hutson

Founded Sarah Elizabeth Photography
Took part: 1996

Young Enterprise makes photography business a snap

Taking part in the Company Programme at school made it so much easier for Sarah Hutson to set up her wedding photography business. The 34-year-old, who got her first camera when she was eight, took part in the Company Programme at Firrhill High School in Edinburgh. Six years later her Edinburgh-based business, Sarah Elizabeth Photography, got off to such a flying start she scooped one of Scotland’s most prestigious business awards.

“I wasn’t afraid to ask for help and guidance when it came to setting up my business and that was because of Young Enterprise,” she said.

“You also learn how to work together as a team and cope with different personalities.

“The biggest thing you learn – which you don’t even realise at the time - is how to juggle a lot of work and competing priorities.

“We were running the company, doing our Higher exams and taking part in the competitions all at the same time.

“That really prepares you well for when you start your own business.”

Sarah studied photography at Stevenson College in Edinburgh and at her end of year show was offered a job with Scotland’s foremost photographer, Trevor Yerbury.

Two years later she set up Sarah Elizabeth Photography and with an annual turnover of £90,000 has successfully weathered the recession and the saturation of the wedding photography market.

“My parents also had their own business so I knew I wanted to be involved in Young Enterprise.

“I was the Company Secretary and we made 3D cards which got us to the national finals.

“I had to write a business plan and present it to a panel to get a loan out of running a business.

“It taught me a lot of new skills around marketing and the ins and outs of running a business.

“It gave me an interest in business that nothing I was doing at A Level would have given me and was by far the most important non-exam related activity that I did in sixth form.”

The biggest thing you learn – which you don’t even realise at the time - is how to juggle a lot of work and competing priorities”
Case Study: Adam Cox

Founded Radio Relations
Took part: 1995

Radio guru credits Young Enterprise with business success

Adam Cox founded the UK’s top radio public relations company by making it sound to potential clients like he already had the business he dreamed of.

He started Radio Relations from his front room but always made sure there was plenty of noise in the background when potential clients were on the phone to give them the impression it was a much bigger agency.

“I never would have got the big accounts if they hadn’t thought it was a big agency,” he said.

“So I always had two different radio stations playing in the background to give the impression I was in a big, busy office.

“I’d introduce myself as the account director on the phone rather than ‘I’ - I still do that out of habit today when I’m talking about that time.”

Ten years on, Radio Relations boasts an annual turnover of £1 million, a team of 25 staff and a high profile client list which has included Boots, Mothercare, Santander and BMW.

But Adam says it was Young Enterprise that gave him the confidence to start Radio Relations when he was just 23.

“If you’re in your early 20s and it all goes wrong you’ve still got time to correct it.”

“It teaches you how to conduct yourself in a business meeting and how to give presentations and speak to potential employers and clients”

Case Study: Jo Nathanael

Owner of Parkstone Interiors
Took part: 1986

How Jo sewed up the soft furnishings business

From making cushions for her mother’s friends, Jo Nathanael has established a successful soft furnishings business that’s featured in numerous glossy home and lifestyle magazines. Specialising in the supply of handmade curtains, pelmets, blinds and soft furnishings the 43-year-old mum of one set up Parkstone Interiors in Betchworth in 2003.

Her work has featured in Real Homes, Country Living, Period House and House Beautiful and she’s supplied furnisings to Tonbridge Castle in Kent and Burrows Sea Country House in Guiltford. However, her first taste of business came in 1986 when she took part in the Company Programme as a 17 year-old at the Old Palace School in Croydon.

Studying A level needlework, Jo was integral to the operation as the company stencilled designs onto fabric which they then turned into shopping bags.

“I learnt a lot about working with other people and about how other people’s skills can be different to your own,” she said.

Just because I could sew or use a sewing machine it didn’t mean other people could for example. That was a big lesson in life.

“I also learnt a lot about the best way to ask people to do something and the best way to get something done.”

The experience inspired her to study a Textiles Management degree at Leeds University and made her think more about starting her own business.

“The other school mums think it’s great that I can work when I want to,” she said. “I can fit the business around my childcare commitments and it’s grown steadily in the last nine years.”

“I found out I was pregnant eight months after I started the business so it probably wasn’t the best planning,” she said.

“My favourite jobs are when I work with clients who are moving into a new home. You work really closely together and end up developing really strong friendships with them.”
Case Study: Sabirul Islam
Entrepreneur, author and motivational speaker
Took part: 2004

How 'Teen-Trepreneur' Sabirul has the world at his feet

After growing up witnessing crime and violence on his East London streets Sabirul Islam is on a mission to inspire disadvantaged young people.

Despite being fired from his first job, he has carved out a successful career for himself as a global speaker, published author and social entrepreneur at the age of just 21.

His first book, 'The World at Your Feet,' was published when he was 17 and his second when he was 19. His educational business and the JA-YE Top 20 Young Entrepreneur of the Year Award in 2009.

Case Study: Steve Manley
Co-founded Universal Office Products Ltd
Took part: 1993

From Mum’s back bedroom to £8 million stationery business

Based in his mother’s back bedroom with a borrowed computer and some plastic garden furniture Steve Manley turned a Young Enterprise dream into the UK’s fastest-growing office supply company. His co-founder Mark Broadbent built Universal Office Products into one of the top three independent office supply companies with a turnover of £1m (2012).

The Wakefield-based concern now employs 260 staff and has three companies which are listed on the FTSE 100 league table of top UK firms. Steve said the idea first came to him while at school.

“I want to show people that no matter your age, race, religion or culture, you can succeed if you believe in yourself and have the perseverance and patience to get ahead.”

“I want to show people that no matter your age, race, religion or culture, you can succeed if you believe in yourself and have the perseverance and patience to get ahead.”
Case Study: Toff Wahab

British Diplomat, Her Majesty’s Diplomatic Service (Foreign & Commonwealth Office)

Took part: 1991

British Diplomat Toff Wahab explains in his own words how he got hooked on Young Enterprise.

When we convened at the first Young Enterprise meeting in sixth form, most of us did not know each other. Given my personality, I decided to take the lead and was voted to take up the position of Managing Director. The experience of working with a range of students with different skills, getting to learn how a business works and encouraging everyone to work together as a team was a fantastic experience. We managed a successful business in the academic year and I found it to be a great activity to undertake whilst in education. We were all hooked and it left a great impression on me. So much, that I came back the following year to become a Leading Business Adviser for the Young Enterprise group at the same school. Nineteen years on, I am now getting involved again with Young Enterprise as an area board member.

I am currently a British Diplomat and have served in many countries and continents. I have managed large teams of staff, projects running into the millions of pounds and many portfolios of work from visa, consular, counter-terrorism, migration, aviation security and now commercial diplomacy.

So how has my experience with Young Enterprise helped me? Well, it allowed me to learn and develop skills such as team work, leadership, decision making, communication, creativity at an early stage, which I was able to transfer to my workplace shortly after I left sixth form.

As I see it, getting involved with Young Enterprise is very important in the current climate. Given the nature of our economy, small businesses are central to the economy and therefore we need to support students to think about the opportunities of starting up their own business. It is a fact that not everyone will necessarily want to start a business but enterprise skills can be very valuable in terms of employability skills, even so when many of the businesses someone might be employed in are small. Skills gained through running a Young Enterprise company allow employers to assess your ability to integrate into a working environment. My advice to students is that if Young Enterprise is available in your school/colleges, do not miss the opportunity of taking part. It really does help prepare you for the world out there.

"It allowed me to learn and develop skills such as team work, leadership, decision making, communication, creativity at an early stage, which I was able to transfer to my workplace shortly after I left sixth form."

Case Study: Sue Priest

Director for Europe, Middle East, Africa and India, Verifi

Took part: 1982

How one Young Enterprise business mentor inspired disadvantaged teenagers

Using the example of a blind woman who left school with one GCSE and set up her own successful business, Sue Priest helped a group of disenfranchised teenagers turn their lives around. As a Young Enterprise business mentor she helped them understand that people from any background can go on to success. An alumna of the Company Programme and former Chairman of the Young Enterprise North Oxfordshire Area Board she says it’s vital that big business continues to support the charity.

"Young Enterprise brings about a huge step-change in the expectations of children," she said. "I worked with a group of 10 students who had been internally excluded which meant they had been expelled but still came in to school every day.

The Headteacher wanted to try and engage them and the difference Young Enterprise made was amazing. It was unreal.

It was really hard to get their attention at first but I took in a newspaper clipping of a blind woman who’d left school with one GCSE but gone on to start her own business.

I asked the boys how many GCSEs they thought you needed to start a business. They said nine or ten at which point I showed them the newspaper clipping. It showed them that even those from the most difficult backgrounds could be successful and that if a blind woman with one GCSE could set up her own business there was no reason they couldn’t. They decided to produce a year book and were allowed to go out in the community to persuade local shops to advertise in it. They got three shops to place adverts and were so proud of making those sales.

They were also really buoyed by the fact that they had been trusted to go out of school on a school day.

They made a profit, got a dividend, made a final report and worked extra hard to get to the area final. It inspired a lot of them to want to own their own business and be their own boss one day.

The ones that were leaving school also had the edge over other kids in interviews because they talked so enthusiastically about Young Enterprise. They were much more successful already because of the way they engaged with things.

It gave them encouragement, hope and challenged their beliefs that they couldn’t do something. You give a little through Young Enterprise and you get much, much more back - the returns are enormous.

It works no matter who you are – it stretches and broadens the horizons of the most capable and does amazing things for the disadvantaged and those at the other end of the spectrum."
Case Study: Neil Bevan

Co-founded Hunter Bevan Ltd

Took part: 1984

Company Programme was ‘starting block’ for creative marketing success

Successful Shropshire businessman Neil Bevan started his own business when he was a 17-year-old sixth former.

He rented office space for £2 a week and set about designing logos and stationery for local businesses in Newtown in Wales.

Now based in Shropshire, the 45-year-old is the owner of Knockin-based creative marketing and graphic design company, Hunter Bevan Ltd. He now employs seven staff.

Neil said he was inspired to own his own businesses and start so early after taking part in the Company Programme.

“Our Young Enterprise company designed and produced a school magazine called Grapevine and I was the Graphic Designer,” he said.

He rented premises above a photocopy shop and ended up getting so much design work that when the owner of the copy shop retired he ended up selling his business to me as well.

“It just expanded from there really – I took a year off before I went to university but I was the Managing Director and we made lampshades and notelets. It was the excitement of making money that got me.

“I still cite Young Enterprise as being the starting block that gave me the confidence to start up my own business in the beginning”

Apart from two years during the 1980s recession he’s always been his own boss and set up Hunter Bevan Ltd, with his wife, Kirsten, the year they got married in 1999.

The company offers graphic design services for corporate identity, logos, branding and brand development design for print, stationery, leaflets, brochures, flyers and posters, multimedia presentations and websites.

Their loyal client base includes respected local companies, well-known brands such as Fruit of the Loom and international businesses from as far away as Kuala Lumpur.

“I still cite Young Enterprise as being the starting block that gave me the confidence to start up my own business in the beginning. Young Enterprise gave me the confidence not to follow the traditional academic route but to take the plunge straight into business.

“It exposes you to the fact that there are alternatives to the academic route but to take the plunge straight into business.

“‘My dad was a teacher and my mum didn’t work so business wouldn’t be something that you would naturally think of doing. It was the excitement of making money that got me’”

Case Study: Bob Wigley

Chairman of Hibu plc, Expansys plc and a UK Ambassador for Business

Took part: 1976

How Bob became a business star who inspired two Prime Ministers

Bob Wigley still has the framed photograph in his office marking the moment he introduced Margaret Thatcher to Young Enterprise 30 years ago.

He was just 19 years old and he wrote to the Prime Minister to try and raise the profile of the charity. The teenage entrepreneur was inspired to contact the Iron Lady after two victories at the national Young Enterprise awards – first as a student and then as a mentor.

His persistence paid off when the PM invited him to give a presentation at Downing Street.

Bob said it was his early experiences of Young Enterprise that inspired him to seek a career in business. “I took part in the Company Programme when I was 16 and growing up in Exeter,” he said.

“My dad was a teacher and my mum didn’t work so business wouldn’t be something that you would naturally think of doing. It was the excitement of making money that got me.

“I was the Managing Director and we made lampshades and notelets. We didn’t think of anything else.

“We doubled the capital in our first company and it helped to give me an understanding of what a company did and what business is.”

“This ambition turned to reality. In 2004 he became Chairman of Expansys Europe, Africa and Middle East for the financial management and advisory company Merrill Lynch. He was responsible for a turnover of $6 billion in 23 countries.

“Wow - chairman of a bank – that would be a great job to do.”

That ambition turned to reality. In 2016, he was appointed Chairman of the London Investment Banking Association. After the 2008 crash, he wrote a key report on maintaining City competitiveness for London Mayor Boris Johnson.

His standing is high. He was a member of the Chancellor’s ‘wise men’ group of advisers, the Panel on Takeovers and Mergers and the Chairman’s Committee of the London Investment Banking Association.

After the 2008 crash, he wrote a key report on maintaining City competitiveness for London Mayor Boris Johnson.

In 2010, David Cameron appointed him a UK Ambassador for Business. Asked if he will continue to support Young Enterprise he said: “Definitely. We need to have Young Enterprise in every school.”

“She wrote back and said why don’t you come and give a presentation at Downing Street? So we went along and gave a presentation to the press. There were a lot of industry luminaries there. I remember being introduced to the Chairman of one of the banks and thinking ‘Wow - chairman of a bank - that would be a great job to do.’”

That ambition turned to reality. In 2004 he became Chairman of Expansys Europe, Africa and Middle East for the financial management and advisory company Merrill Lynch. He was responsible for a turnover of $6 billion in 23 countries. Bob is currently Chairman of Hibu plc, formerly Yell Group plc, and Non-Executive Director for the Qatar Financial Centre Authority.

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“My dad was a teacher and my mum didn’t work so business wouldn’t be something that you would naturally think of doing. It was the excitement of making money that got me’”
“When I started Young Enterprise, I had never studied business, economics or anything of the sort and I was doubtful whether I would end up in the business world.”

Phil Bailey, Founder of Force-7

“Young Enterprise was like a big sandpit in which we could build things, knock them down again, make mistakes, try absurd things, and run back home to mum and dad if it didn’t work out.”

Rachel Carroll, CEO of Orthom.com

“The thing I most enjoyed about Young Enterprise was being able to have a hands-on approach to running the business rather than just learning theory. It gave me a great opportunity to set up the business to see how things worked and if I was capable of doing it. I just like being in control of what I do and not taking orders from someone else.”

Pip Laurence, Founder of The Naughty Knitwear Company

“I learnt that failure is simply a learning curve and being positive and optimistic is crucial.”

Matt Roberts, Co-founder of Bean2Bed.com

“When you are young it is the best time to start a business as you have no real overheads and no family to support.”

Connor Sephton, 19, Young Enterprise Trustee and founder of Visualise Media

“Young Enterprise lit that enterprise spark for me and I wouldn’t be where I am today without the encouragement and inspiration from the business volunteer.”

Emily Keep, Founder of Green Stag Solutions

Rachel Carrell, CEO of DrThom.com

Phil Batty. Founded Force-7

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Rachel Carrell, CEO of DrThom.com

Phil Batty. Founded Force-7
appendices
1. Current occupations of Young Enterprise Alumni

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own business</td>
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<td>42</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee Large organisation</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Employee small business</td>
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<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
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<tr>
<td>Freelance/self-employed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Higher Degree</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Other</td>
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2. Participation in Young Enterprise programmes

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<th>Programme</th>
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<tr>
<td>Graduate Enterprise</td>
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<td>Other</td>
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3. Participation by Region

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<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tr>
<td>North West</td>
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<tr>
<td>Yorkshire &amp; Humber</td>
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<td>East Midlands</td>
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<td>London</td>
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<tr>
<td>South East</td>
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<td>South West</td>
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<td>Northern Ireland</td>
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4. Participation in Young Enterprise programmes by gender

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
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<td>Female</td>
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5. Participation in Young Enterprise programmes by age

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<th>Age</th>
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<td>Under 25</td>
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<td>26 - 35</td>
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<td>36 - 45</td>
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<td>46 - 55</td>
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<td>56 - 65</td>
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<td>Over 65</td>
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6. Participation in Young Enterprise programmes by ethnic group

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<tr>
<th>Ethnic Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed - White and Black African</td>
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<td>Mixed - White and Black Caribbean</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed - White and Asian</td>
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<td>.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mixed - Any other mixed background</td>
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<td>.3</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Asian or Asian British - Pakistan</td>
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<td>Asian or Asian British - Other</td>
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<tr>
<td>Black or Black British - African</td>
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<tr>
<td>White - British</td>
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<tr>
<td>White - Irish</td>
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<td>White - Other</td>
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### 7. Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses by legal Status

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited Company</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sole Proprietor</td>
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<td>37.6</td>
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<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
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<tr>
<td>Public Ltd Company</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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### 8. Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses by Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering/Technology design</td>
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<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importing goods/food and drink</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital business/Cloud based services</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Company</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ad agency/recruitment/design</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health/Education</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel/tourism</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy (eng/tax/accountancy)</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>18.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy/oil/gas/coal extraction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet sales</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>156</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 9. Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses by Number of Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just you</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10-24</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-49</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-99</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100-249</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>156</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 10. Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses by Age

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;3 years</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 6 years</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 10 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>10.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 20 years</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>11.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 30 years</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&gt; 30 years</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>156</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 11. Current occupations of Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Occupation</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Own business</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee Large organisation</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employee small business</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>15.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freelance/self-employed</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher degree</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>8.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployed</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>202</strong></td>
<td><strong>100.0</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 12. Comparison of Young Enterprise Alumni Businesses with Control Group

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Own Business</th>
<th>YE Alumni</th>
<th>Control Group</th>
<th>X^2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>156 / 42.4%</td>
<td>51 / 26.4%</td>
<td>26.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>215 / 57.5%</td>
<td>142 / 73.6%</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not answered</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>10.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>371</strong></td>
<td><strong>193</strong></td>
<td><strong>X^2</strong> (1) 20.954</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### 13. Control Businesses by Legal Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Status</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Limited Company</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sole Proprietor</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partnership</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public Ltd Company</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Enterprise</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 14. Control Businesses by Sector

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sector</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engineering/Technology Design</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Importing Goods</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Digital Business/Cloud based services</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media Company</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advertising/Design/Recruitment</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthcare/Education</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotel/Tourism</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultancy/Mgmt/tax/accountancy</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>29.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Energy/oil/coal sector</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction/Property</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internet sales</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 15. Control Businesses by Number of Employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Employees</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Just you</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 - 9</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 - 24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 49</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 99</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100 - 249</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 16. Control Businesses by Legal Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt; 3 years</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 - 6 years</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>31.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 - 10 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 - 20 years</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 30 years</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 17. Young Enterprise Businesses by Turnover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&gt;1,000,000</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500,000 - 999,000</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000 - 499,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 - 199,000</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 - 99,000</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 18. Control Businesses by Turnover

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Turnover</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>500,000 - 999,000</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200,000 - 499,000</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100,000 - 199,000</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50,000 - 99,000</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;50,000</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
19. Young Enterprise Business owners’ perceptions of value of Young Enterprise programme
Impact of Young Enterprise on Business Knowledge and skills (% of respondents reporting impact scores, multiple responses allowed) (%)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Business Knowledge and Skills</th>
<th>Mean impact</th>
<th>Not at all</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>Helped me a lot</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>Number of respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Improved my ability to achieve my objectives</td>
<td>3.63</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>25.7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>145</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved my ability to cope with problems</td>
<td>3.81</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>133</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved my ability to cope with change</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>6.8</td>
<td>10.5</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>24.7</td>
<td>128</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business planning/strategy</td>
<td>3.75</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>10.4</td>
<td>19.6</td>
<td>35.5</td>
<td>29.7</td>
<td>108</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business start-up</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>10.1</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>23.6</td>
<td>27.9</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>131</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building business relationships &amp; networks</td>
<td>3.53</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>98</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovation/new product/service development</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>34.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>95</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opportunity identification</td>
<td>3.51</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>26.6</td>
<td>32.7</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>84</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Researching and evaluating ideas</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>10.2</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>41.8</td>
<td>22.2</td>
<td>92</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing research and analysis</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>26.8</td>
<td>15.1</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marketing and selling</td>
<td>3.06</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>12.7</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual property</td>
<td>2.61</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20.6</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>11.3</td>
<td>14.1</td>
<td>87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trading internationally</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>49.8</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>3.34</td>
<td>11.8</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>31.7</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>1375</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: On-line Survey

UKSIC 2007
This table uses the 2007 revision to the Standard Industrial Classification (UKSIC 2007) and is a major revision of the UKSIC 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>UKSIC (2007) Section</th>
<th>Division</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture, forestry and fishing</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>01/03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Production</td>
<td>B, C, D, E</td>
<td>05/39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mining, quarrying and utilities</td>
<td>B, D, E</td>
<td>05/09, 35/39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manufacturing</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>10/33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>41/43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale and retail; repair of motor vehicles</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>45/47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motor trades</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wholesale</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>46</td>
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<td>Retail</td>
<td>G</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport and storage (inc postal)</td>
<td>H</td>
<td>49/53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accommodation and food services</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>55/56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information and communication</td>
<td>J</td>
<td>58/63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finance and insurance</td>
<td>K</td>
<td>64/66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Property</td>
<td>L</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional, scientific and technical</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>69/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business administration and support services</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>77/82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public administration and defence</td>
<td>O</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>P</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Q</td>
<td>86/88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arts, entertainment, recreation and other services</td>
<td>R, S, T, U</td>
<td>90/99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The aim of this research was to investigate what Young Enterprise alumni are doing now, and what impact they think participation in a Young Enterprise programme has had on their careers, including career choices. This note describes how respondents were selected and how the data were collected and analysed. A mixed methods approach to the research design was used. This means that both quantitative techniques (analysing numbers, frequencies and percentages) and qualitative techniques (analysing words, sentences and meanings) were used to provide as well-rounded a picture of Young Enterprise alumni as possible.

The sampling strategy included a combination of purposive and convenience non-probability sampling methods. A database provided by Young Enterprise contained contact details of over 1,000 alumni. This was used for purposive sampling and a discrete on-line survey was emailed directly to all of these contacts. Two other public on-line surveys were distributed to as wide an audience as possible using a convenience sampling technique. The aim was to capture both Young Enterprise alumni and people who have never taken part in a Young Enterprise programme. This was achieved via Young Enterprise contacts, for example regional offices, and contacts in over 30 UK universities, as well as several university networks. These three on-line surveys resulted in useable responses from 371 Young Enterprise alumni and 202 people who had not participated in Young Enterprise. The data were analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), and included frequencies, cross-tabulation and statistical tests of significance. To supplement the statistical analysis, focus group meetings and face-to-face and telephone interviews were also carried out to provide more in-depth information. This more flexible, less-structured research approach enabled participants to discuss why and how they have been affected by their participation in Young Enterprise.

1 Many thanks to Eva Kasperova at the Small Business Research Centre, Kingston University for her help with these surveys.
Acknowledgements

Thanks go to the following people for their assistance with the making of this book:

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The 50 alumni whose stories we have featured in the book along with all those who contributed to the surveys, focus groups and interviews.

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Debbie Berger PR Consultant for Young Enterprise
Emma Pickles Press Officer at Young Enterprise
Bonnie Daniels Events Coordinator at Young Enterprise.

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