

# 2018 YOUNG ENTERPRISE ALUMNI REPORT



# LOOKING BACK, MOVING FORWARD

## WHAT DIFFERENCE HAS THE COMPANY PROGRAMME MADE?

### COMPANY PROGRAMME: It's all about...TEAMWORK!

At Young Enterprise we are committed to understanding what long-term difference we make to young people. For the last 3 years we have followed up with our Company Programme Alumni to find out what difference the experience has made to their employability skills, subsequent career decisions and future aspirations. This year we asked our 2015/16 Alumni to reflect on what was the most important thing that they learnt. Our Alumni most frequently mentioned **teamwork**, **communication** and **confidence** as the most important things they had gained from the experience<sup>1</sup>. Teamwork is particularly surprising as the results of the programme evaluation in 2015/16 showed that young people reported the least progress in this skill.

The results indicate that at the end of the Company Programme, students felt that they had not immediately developed teamwork skills. On reflection, two years later they identified the importance of compromise and found ways to work with others who have different opinions to their own. Also, young people often associate teamwork with maintaining their friendships during the programme; however it is only later are they able to reflect on how different the nature of teamwork is within an employment context. The ability to work as a member of a team and manage differences of opinion is rapidly growing in importance as more jobs require their employees to work collaboratively and this is only expected to increase. A benefit of participating in Company Programme is that **employers recognise the realistic experience** that our Alumni gain and that it can be directly applied to their work.



Research shows **50%** of work today **requires collaboration with colleagues** compared to 10 years ago when 80% of work performance was due to the efforts of an individual!<sup>2</sup>

"Teamwork and compromise were two very key lessons I learnt through the programme and provided good examples to bring up in interviews about situations in which I've overcome difficulty and disagreement"

**CP Alumni**

<sup>1</sup> Results stated in this report are based on a sample size of 441 from participants who were aged 16+ at the time of participation in CP. This sample is also England and Wales only.

<sup>2</sup> Statistic taken from CEB research 2013



## WHAT IS THE COMPANY PROGRAMME?

Students set up and run a student enterprise for up to one academic year under the guidance of a business volunteer. They gain the practical experience of creating a truly functioning YE Company in a safe and supportive environment including access to YE Marketplace, an online sales platform bespoke to YE. For more information visit: [www.young-enterprise.org.uk/what-we-do/secondary-programmes/company-programme/](http://www.young-enterprise.org.uk/what-we-do/secondary-programmes/company-programme/)

"It was good at providing a relatively realistic first experience in what it is like to be part of a working business team. At school and as a youth you rarely get this experience before the real working environment..."

**CP Alumni**

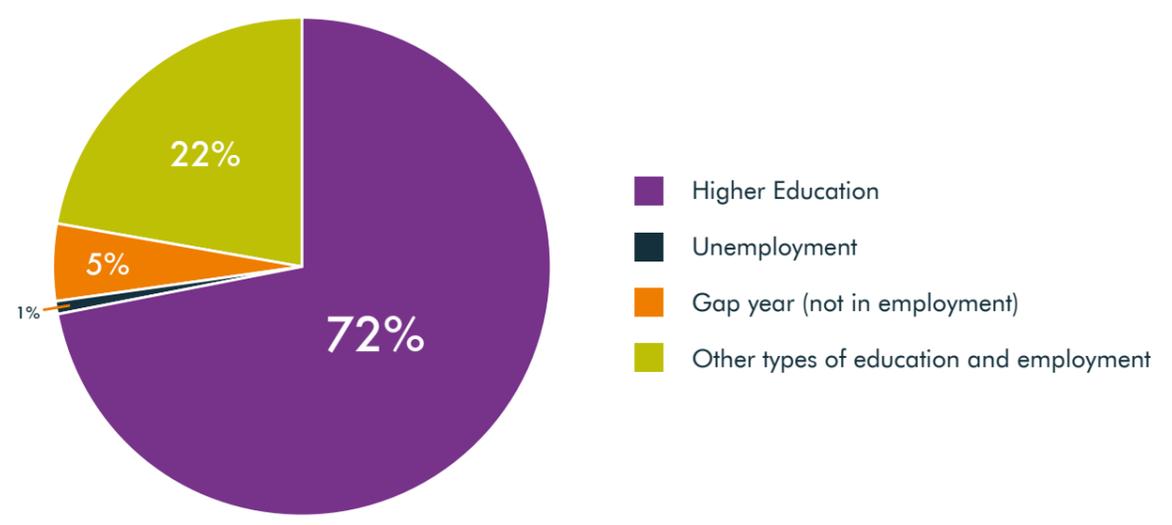
# WHAT ARE OUR 2015/16 ALUMNI UP TO NOW?

The world of work needs young people who are enterprising. This doesn't mean that our aim is for all young people to become entrepreneurs, it's about young people developing enterprising skillsets that increase their aspirations and opportunities. This year we followed up with our 2015/16 Alumni to find out where they were two years after completing Company Programme. We believe the most important experience was that participating in Company Programme gave young people real insight for the future world of work, an experience that can't be taught through traditional forms of education.

Of those who completed our survey 94% were in Employment, Education and Training (EET) and the majority (72%) were in Higher Education. This 94% compares to the overall ONS National Average for EET of 89%. However, this gap is reducing. One of reasons for this could be changes to how young people are employed. In their 2018 Working Lives report<sup>3</sup>, the CIPD highlight that young people (18-24 years) are far more likely to have atypical employment contracts (e.g. zero hours, gig economy) than traditional forms. We will explore this further in future surveys.

 **94%** of our Alumni were in **Employment, Education or Training** compared to the ONS National Average of 89%.

22% of our Alumni were in some form of employment or training, including 9% who were in apprenticeships or job related training. Only 6% of our Alumni were not in any form of employment, education or training which is almost half that of the ONS Average (11%) for the National same age group.



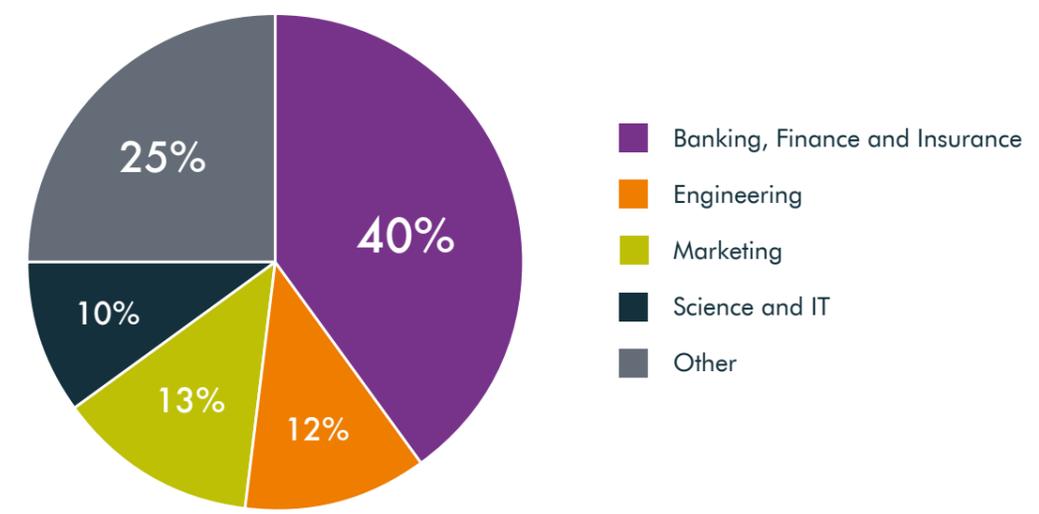
<sup>3</sup> CIPD Working Lives report 2018

Of the 9% of Alumni who were in apprenticeships or job-related training, 40% were in Banking, Finance and Insurance. Some of our Alumni highlighted that it was their experience of the Company Programme that motivated what industry they were now working in.

*"Before [CP], my confidence wasn't very high when trying to sell products to people who I am not familiar with. Since Young Enterprise, I have now been employed in a specialised retail field with a well-known company AND I have gained confidence to start up two of my own businesses – all whilst studying at Uni!"*

**CP Alumni**

## WHAT INDUSTRIES ARE OUR APPRENTICESHIP AND JOB-RELATED TRAINING ALUMNI IN?



Young people were asked to select one option that best described their current job status, however further exploration of comments, highlighted that alumni may fit into multiple categories. In some instances, Alumni reported that were in higher education, in part-time employment and had set up their own business. This is an area we will explore further in future surveys to identify how prevalent multiple destination activity is.

## WHAT DIFFERENCE DID PARTICIPATION IN COMPANY PROGRAMME MAKE TO OUR ALUMNI?

In the academic year 2015/16, students participating in the Company Programme made most improvements in **work-readiness, communication** and **aspirations** and the smallest improvement in teamwork. However, when reflecting on their experiences in the Alumni survey, **teamwork** was the most frequently reported skill, followed by **communication** and **confidence** (see word cloud below for most frequent key words from free text response question in relation to what Alumni had learnt). This suggests that Company Programme is particularly effective at developing social and self-insight skills that students may not develop through traditional curriculum-based education.

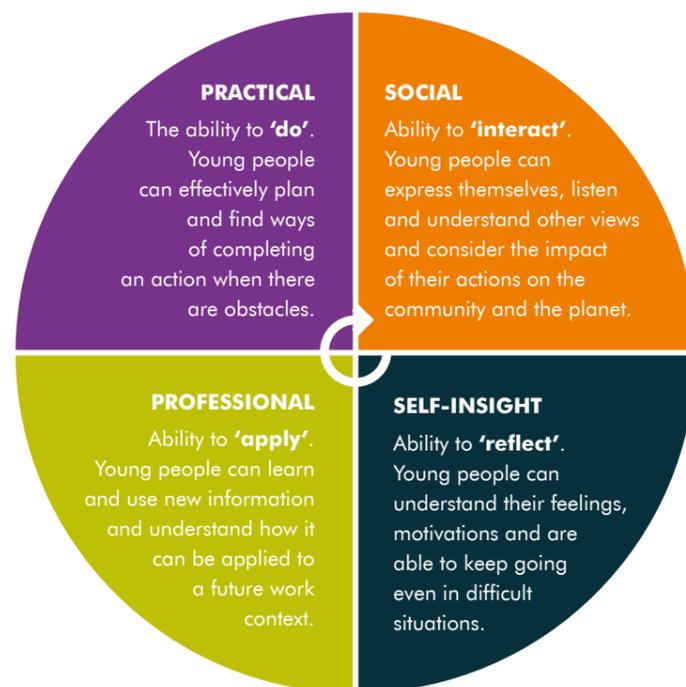
**Public Speaking** Life  
Front of an Audience **University**  
**Programme Helped**  
**Work with New People**  
**Confidence**  
Board **Organisation**  
**Learnt** Issues **Successful**  
**Leadership Skills**  
**Team Work**  
**Strengths** Social Skills  
**Communication**  
**Business** Reach  
**YE programme** Comfortable

# TRANSFORMING FUTURES

## INCREASING EMPLOYABILITY, PROMOTING ADAPTABILITY.

At Young Enterprise, we are continually learning and developing our approach through the findings of our research and evaluation (this includes findings from the Alumni Survey). This review has led to us considering the 'so what?' question – how do employability competencies prepare young people for the world of work? Our thinking has started to evolve, and we believe the Company Programme creates ability across four holistic areas of development that are essential to thrive in the world of work. Within each of these areas of development there are employability skillsets that we believe young people can build through the experience of running their YE Company. By practicing these skills and navigating the ups and downs, that are an inevitable part of the programme, young people develop adaptability, an essential skill for the future.

### Areas of Development for Employability Model



**Adaptability:** The ability to adapt to changes in situation or circumstance, remain future-focused whilst using effective strategies to manage events that may not go to plan.

It is clear from the responses of our 2015/16 Alumni that even two years after they participated in the programme, the transformative effects on their employability and adaptability skills can continue. Below are case study examples that demonstrate how our Alumni developed skills in the four key areas and how it continues to benefit them for their future in the world of work. Young Enterprise will continue to test the four Areas of Development for Employability Model in our 2018/19 evaluation activities.

**CREATING EMPLOYABILITY AND ADAPTABILITY THROUGH ENTERPRISE EDUCATION**

<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">   <b>PRACTICAL</b> </div> <p>"As I participated in the programme I was able to highlight the skills of perseverance, creativity and risk-taking throughout the whole process. In the future I will grow these skills in my career or even start my own business...One thing I learnt to do is always be ready for the unexpected and plan efficiently as it will help in the long run. But when problems of insufficient planning occurred the team kept their heads and were able to get past the problems which is a great lesson to learn."</p>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">   <b>SOCIAL</b> </div> <p>"The most important thing I learned was communication skills and teamwork... We learned quick decision making as well as working as a team to accomplish the task faster. Another experience was talking in front of a crowd of people. I took the position of MD so I had to talk in front of a crowd. I managed to overcome this by having my team with me and all being there to support in the crowd. This gave me public speaking skills and boosted my confidence."</p>
<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">   <b>PROFESSIONAL</b> </div> <p>"I was marketing director in my company. I now work as a social media manager at a small company. One of the main reasons I got the job was because of my experience with Young Enterprise and I was able to refer back to it when applying [for jobs]. The programme helped me learn how to utilise social media platforms and understand analytics. It also taught me that my skills from growing up with social media are actually valuable."</p>	<div style="text-align: center; margin-bottom: 10px;">   <b>SELF-INSIGHT</b> </div> <p>"I suffer from Panic Disorder so [CP] helped me gain confidence and to have control over situations...[CP] gave me the confidence I needed as an extra boost to put myself out there to get a job in the real world, something I would normally never do. [CP] allowed me to realise my love to help and understand people. Because of this I am now at university studying psychology and I work with people."</p>

**Alumni evaluation – next steps:** For the last three years we have carried out a retrospective evaluation with our Alumni to find out their destinations, two years after they have participated in Company Programme. We now want to build our understanding of our Alumni's journey further. In 2019, we will be carrying out a large-scale piece of research with our Alumni to answer three key questions;

- 1) What are the career trajectories of our Alumni and what role did YEs enterprise education play?
- 2) What further support would our Alumni have liked from YE and
- 3) How do our Alumni define 'success'? Results of the research will be published in late 2019.

**Follow us**



Young Enterprise Head office:  
Yeoman House, Sekforde Street,  
London EC1R 0HF

Email: [info@y-e.org.uk](mailto:info@y-e.org.uk)  
Tel: 020 7549 1980

[www.y-e.org.uk](http://www.y-e.org.uk)

Join the Alumni network to continue learning,  
growing and supporting Young Enterprise.

[www.y-e.org.uk/alumni](http://www.y-e.org.uk/alumni)

Produced and distributed by Young Enterprise. Registered Charity No: 313697

