

# Young Enterprise Examination 2018 Examiner's Report

## Introduction

The bad weather in March and the school closures had an adverse effect on the number of candidates sitting the exam this year.

A total of 724 candidates sat the exam compared to 994 in the previous year.

However the commitment and enthusiasm of those who did participate is reflected in the increase in the overall standard.

For the first year ever the number of credits awarded exceed the pass level and by a substantial margin.

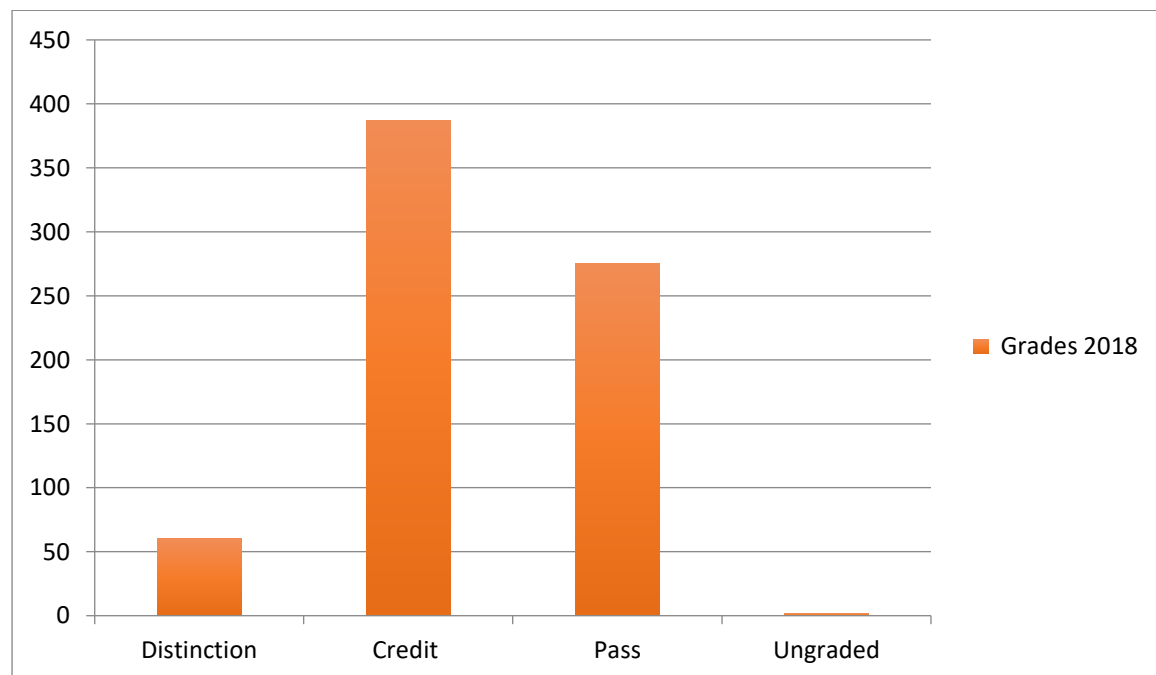
Achieving a credit requires effort and a candidate must show a high level of reporting and analysis.

For the examiners this meant that almost all the papers were rich with insight and sound analysis.

Examiners reported a continuing upward trend in the quality of the papers overall and the students' ability to:

- Outline their ability to learn from the YES experience
- Demonstrate how the experience was of benefit to them as individuals and as team players
- Show that they understood the expectations and scope of their respective roles
- Show considered reflection on their performance and commitment

## The Grade Levels



**Table 1: Grade Breakdown**

Distinction	60	8%
Credit	387	53%
Pass	275	38%
Ungraded	2	0.3%

Looking at the grades over the years we can see the increase in the overall standard.

**Table 2: Grades awarded by year**

Year	Distinction	Credit	Pass	Ungraded
2010	3%	29%	66%	2%
2011	6%	38%	53%	3%
2012	3%	36%	56%	5%
2013	4%	28%	64%	4%
2014	3%	33%	61%	3%
2015	4%	37%	57%	2%
2016	7%	35%	57%	1%
2017	7%	42%	51%	1%
2018	8%	54%	36%	<1%

## Examiners' Observations

### Positives

All examiners commented on the quality of answers in this year's examination. The answers clearly conveyed the candidates' enthusiasm, degrees of involvement and even passion for the programme.

The presentation of the papers improves year on year due to the increased number of word documents and more legible handwriting.

Most students reflected on what they gained from the experience and what they learnt from close working with their fellow team members. There was good analysis on what they had done both the positive aspects and the areas that could be better.

There was little negative criticism, something that was prevalent in other years.

The examiners found some of the papers a joy to read due to the engaging, sometimes gripping prose, as in the following:

*"The dynamics of the playground should not be visible in the boardroom and practices such as watching YouTube videos instead of doing work should be nipped in the bud."*

Many expressed how their confidence was enhanced. In fact the word resilience appeared in many of the papers.

The following quotes encapsulate the essence and aims of the YES programme.

*'I have gained increased resilience as a result of continual and seemingly endless obstacles. My new maxim in life is 'if I got through Young Enterprise I can get through anything'.*

*'The selling event really helped as I was able to talk to customers, in the past this is something I would shy away from.'*

*'YES has influenced my career choice as I am now aiming to go into public relations which in effect combines marketing and management – the two roles I carried out. I want to be creative while encountering new challenges on a daily basis.'*

*'On the whole, the Young Enterprise Programme has given me an appetite for challenge and the inner strength to cope;*

## **Issues**

More and more papers do not have return sheets and cover sheets

Some papers have no company name or number

A number of students rewrite the questions above the answers. This is unnecessary and wastes valuable time.

Some students do not read the guidance notes and attempt all six questions.

Examiners prefer Word rather than PDF format.

Some candidates devote too much time to the two questions in Section A at the expense of questions in Section B. The higher marks tend to be achieved when equal time is afforded to each of the four questions. Lower grades are awarded to papers that 'run out of steam' in section 2.

The lower grades are generally awarded due to insufficient and short answers. Some papers do not reflect that the time allocated for the exam is one and a half hours.

Some candidates do not take the opportunity to shine and it is disappointing to read a mediocre paper by a candidate who receives fulsome praise by their colleagues. One seemed to be the prime mover in the company but did not follow through in the exam to reflect this achievement.

There are still some issues with legibility, presentation and structure.

Finally, one of the greatest challenges faced is finding the right product or service. In nearly all cases the roles are allocated before the business idea is explored and decided. There might be an advantage in looking for the idea first to allow all to participate in the creative process without any pre-conceived influence from their expectation of their future roles.

## Questions Answered

**Table 3: Questions Answered**

2017	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Number of Students	994	994	204	451	793	528
Percentage of Students	100%	100%	21%	45%	80%	53%

2018	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Number of Students	724	724	185	286	500	475
Percentage of Students	100%	100%	25%	40%	69%	66%

Question five is still the clear favourite although less so than last year. The least popular question is still question three. However it has moved up by 4% from last year. This trend is positive as it stood at only 10% in 2016.

It is not surprising that given the choice it is more tempting to tackle a question on marketing rather than one about accounting.

The popularity of 5 seems to emphasise how well 'digital natives' understand how social media can be used to promote and advertise. On the other hand there was strong indication that many enjoyed and benefitted from direct selling. The fairs and social interaction involved increased the confidence and presentation skills of those who view themselves as shy or reserved.

But question five also asks about market research and even in the better papers, there was insufficient detail on how it had been carried out.

In close second place is number six, the question relating to ideas generation and planning. This is an increase of 13% on last year. Often we see information from question one being recycled here.

Question four continues to be a popular choice, but down by 5% from last year. Those attempting it provide some good insights.

It is impressive to read young people discuss how to deal with a bad company culture and express their understanding of the importance of trust, inclusion, empowerment and empathy as leadership qualities.

It may be of interest to show the spread of question choices in the top 10 papers.

2018	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Number of students	10	10	3	6	6	4
Percentage of Students	100%	100%	30%	60%	60%	40%