

Young Enterprise Examination 2025

Examiner's Report

The Young Enterprise examination is designed to give candidates the opportunity to write about their experience and the learning gained from the programme. It also asks to give accounts of the extent of their individual roles and what they have learnt about creating and developing a business. Candidates are encouraged to take centre stage by providing a comprehensive account of their efforts and impact.

This year's distinction and credit levels reflect the same high level of achievement as in previous years. The insights and awareness demonstrated in almost all papers show significant learning outcomes and impressive self-evaluation and awareness.

As the examination centres on the student's individual experience, there are no right or wrong answers. Overall, this year's cohort demonstrated a marked level of understanding and application in the following areas:

- The importance of leadership and collaboration
- Effective use of social media as a marketing tool
- Environmental and mental health considerations

Grade breakdown by number and percentage

Distinction	26	6%
Credit	205	49%
Pass	187	45%
Ungraded	2	0%
Total	420	

The highest marks were achieved by candidates who planned and structured their answers. The examination guidelines provide prompt notes to assist with this. Papers awarded distinctions expressed detailed and comprehensive accounts of the candidate's experience and learning.

The best results were achieved by those giving equal attention to each question and reading the questions carefully. As in previous years, the higher graded papers came from schools where teachers and advisors provide support. In schools where a large team has worked well together and all sit the exam, there tends to be a higher standard.

Some candidates simply provide a commentary on the Young Enterprise project process with little analysis or insight. Good papers often compromise their potential when all six questions are attempted or equally, when only three are tackled.

There is no need to rewrite the questions before the answers. This wastes valuable time.

Table 2: Questions Answered

2025	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6
Number of Students	420	420	38	277	255	267
Percentage of Students	100%	100%	9%	66%	61%	64%

Question 1

The question asks candidates to evaluate their personal contribution and how their existing talents and emerging skills were utilised and further developed. It also asks what learning outcomes were achieved. A number of very good papers lost marks because the candidates focused more on the team rather than their own involvement. Too much we, not enough me.

- *'This has influenced and benefitted my ambitions, as it has encouraged me to think about a career relating to business in some way. I discovered that I enjoyed this type of work and found it very rewarding, especially meeting new people and making a profit, which was the overall biggest achievement that I feel I made. On a personal level, I have developed, as it has taught me more about respect and that even such a thing as being on time and completing small tasks can have a huge impact for a business.'*
- *'A final area where my contributions were positive was in my conducting market research, hosting several focus groups with different demographics of students and teachers at the school to gauge interest in the product and how much they would pay for it, it was very successful and guided our vision for the product as well as its low price for the duration of the programme.'*
- *'Hopefully I have developed many skills that I will build on when I leave school and improved my ability to deal with financial problems. Also, I had to communicate with the school*

accountant many times about cash flow I think this really helped me develop the skill of communicating with higher ups in the future, such as 'the boss figure'.

- *Overall, this experience has been an absolute rollercoaster of emotions, but I feel like it has been very reflective of a real business and the triumphs and struggles involved in running and being a part of a business. Personally, I feel like I have been able to improve on my teamwork and communication skills as I've experienced what not to do which has allowed me to identify what works best for me which I can apply to school life and work life in the future. I still definitely want to work in the business sector when I'm older, but I have to say that I will avoid the role of Managing Director until I know for sure that I'm ready.'*

Question 2

This question asks candidates to reflect on the overall development of the project from the initial inception through all the planned stages, allocation of roles, creating the product or service to final delivery. All papers scored well in this section.

- *'In assigning team members to their roles, we tried to play to their strengths, for example, the fastest writer in our group became the secretary, creative people with a knack for art were appointed to marketing, the person who said they were good with money took on our finances'.*
- *'A big success for us was motivating each other by the introduction of a compliments box where we got to each select a team member, we thought did well that week and give them praise.'*
- *'The product our team came up with was handcrafted, nature inspired trinket dishes and animal figures of endangered and protected animals found within Scotland made from air-dry clay. The reason for this choice is that we wanted something that would be sustainable and impactful. Our choice of using air-dry clay ticked the sustainable box. The choice of making figures of endangered animals was to spread awareness was to spread awareness to out audience and to build a community that shared the same goals.'*

Question 3

As in all previous years, this question was the least popular giving it an all-time low of 9%. It asks about understanding finance, company compliance and general administration. Over the years it has been the least popular question.

- *'My main achievement has been learning to be more adept using more complicated spreadsheet formula and accurately representing data to the business decision makers. The ways that i did this was asking my dad who was able to show me how to properly sort data in spreadsheets, i think this will continue to help me in the future when investing or budgeting which are both essential skills to have in the future.'*

- *'I completed several vital tasks including emailing companies and compiling pricing data for the finance director to maximise our profit margins. I completed the business registration form to formally establish the company. Other tasks involved organising orders and contacting customers as required.'*
- *'In terms of meeting legal requirements, we followed the YE rule book and we ensured we made informed choices with the help of adults.'*
- *'Company Connect was used to manage accounts which was accessible at all times and meant that all financial data was stored in one place.'*

Question 4

This question attracted the attention of over half the candidates. Many papers gave excellent accounts of how external forces and support from teachers, families, advisors assisted the team's efforts. It also required candidates to discuss leadership and management.

- *'We couldn't have achieved what we did without our link teacher who guided us along the right path and was able to give me advice when our team was going through a rough patch by sharing her leadership skills with me. Family members also played a key part. My mother stayed up late helping me produce the products that a team member failed to do. My father printed out multiple leaflets and images using his office printer.'*
- *'My role model throughout was Indra Nooyi the former CEO of PepsiCo. She inspired me with her inventive leadership style, her huge emphasis on eco-friendliness and advocacy for women's empowerment and inclusion.'*
- *'Resilience is an essential for a business to succeed and to learn from failures. If we chose to shut down our business at the first hurdle, we wouldn't have achieved the success we did such as winning the best sales and marketing award, making a profit and growing a community and social media platform. It is the resilience of pushing harder especially when things get difficult that won our success and made us stronger. Being grateful and positive towards failures and learn from them is a lesson in itself.'*

Question 5

The question asks candidates to outline how their product was marketed. Most candidates gave impressive and often inspiring insights while demonstrating a clear understanding of the marketing concept. An outstanding feature of this year's exam was the advanced knowledge of using social media as a marketing tool alongside established principles such as image, branding, customer focus and market research.

- *'An example is Lux Collective, who was founded by brothers Ben & Joe Gallagher. They had a passion for pre-loved clothing and fashion items and designed a website for people to sell used luxury items. Similar to Vinted and Depop but designed and marketed to high end luxury shoppers. They had the passion and drive for their business, which made it so successful. I also think another key ingredient is marketing correctly. You should not just be selling a product, but an experience or feeling. An example is Apple. You could buy another similar phone for cheaper, but the smooth, modern and simple experience/feeling that Apple delivers is what makes people keep coming back to them. They sell not just phones but the feeling of exclusivity, innovation and effective simplicity.'*
- *'An example of good marketing in the real world is Dove's Beauty campaigns that fight against false stereotypes about women and girls. Their adverts are raw and present the realities making them relatable and effective as they reach customers on an emotional level. As a company we share similarities with Dove. We also wish to empower and recognise women as presented in our social media posts and overall attitude.'*
- *'Our social media gained traction thanks to the extensive market research we carried out. We investigated the social media accounts of other YE companies to see what posts boosted*

their popularity. Inspired by groups who posted 'behind the scenes' content we began publishing videos and images of us assembling, painting and decorating our products'.

Question 6

This question requires candidates to discuss how the business idea was generated and why it was seen to be viable. The question was the second most popular chosen. Again, most answers were full of insight and sound analysis.

- *'When agreeing the product choice, we had the team split into small groups to brainstorm then come back with a few ideas each. We then began to eliminate on the basis evaluated potential, our abilities, time constraints and in accordance with Young Enterprise guidelines. With the remaining options we then employed a democratic vote using the 'single transferable' voting system to agree on the final product.'*
- *'The business was planned to be a sustainable company using local resources from the local area such as moss, stones and small plants to give people a 'slice of the Valley' to take home for decoration to make people think of the area's rich and diverse ecosystem.'*

In Summary:

The standard of examination papers for this year was exceptionally high. In previous reports we highlighted the ten best papers but this year it was not possible due to the high quality overall. The fluency and quality of insights increases year by year and it is a credit to the commitment of all those taking part. Long may it continue!

Student ‘takeaways’ to the best grade

Read the guidance notes and questions carefully
Answer all four questions
Follow the prompts for best structure
Write honestly about the experience
Detail how well you performed and how much you learnt
Write as clearly as you can and tell your story in your own words
You will not be marked down for poor spelling or bad grammar
But make sure it is readable
There are no right or wrong answers
Number all questions

Frank Dunne, Senior Examiner, May 2025