Enterprise project challenge – educator guide

Age range: 14-19

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About the LifeSkills Enterprise project challenge

The LifeSkills Enterprise resources aim to inspire young people to consider entrepreneurship as a potential career path and help educate them around enterprising skill sets.

The content helps to make enterprise and entrepreneurship exciting and achievable – so at its heart are the real-life stories, experiences and film case studies from diverse and inspirational entrepreneurs tackling real world challenges.

This guide helps you support your students to solve a real-world brief set by these entrepreneurs, and to develop core transferable skills such as problem solving, creativity, teamwork and listening and speaking (communication) whilst doing so. Students will progress through a workbook when completing the project. Teams could share a workbook if this works better for you but all students will require a copy of the pitch response reflection on page 17.

While building their challenge response, the separate resources around innovative technologies and sustainability (two of the biggest opportunities facing businesses and the world) can be used to help build knowledge in these areas. If students are not familiar with these concepts, we recommend that you start with these short **lesson plans** to provide helpful context for students to answer the challenge.

How the Enterprise challenge works

The challenge steps

1. Kick the programme off by playing your students the two **Enterprise challenge film case studies** (approximately 4 mins each) found on the Enterprise project challenge web page.

2. Student teams select one of the challenges set by the founders.

3. They complete their challenge response by progressing through sessions in the workbook to select and develop an idea.

4. Once complete, students have the opportunity to pitch their ideas and there is a short follow up film where they will hear back from the founders.

All the resources for the programme are designed to be flexible – they can be tailored to your objectives, curriculum and timetable. They are available for educators to use all year round and embed across your curriculum (to fit with business and enterprise or financial mathematics, but can also support PSHE, citizenship, English and more) in line with your school priorities.

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We have suggested 5 sessions to deliver this content, however, there is flexibility to suit your needs. For example, you could spend longer on sessions, combine sessions, or set some sessions for your students to complete outside of lesson time.

You could also use the resources to support a drop-down day, your own school Enterprise week or to tie into annual milestones like Global Enterprise Week or National Careers Week.

Contents

Session one: Kick off

1. Introduce the challenge

- Tell your students that they are tasked with responding to a project challenge, solving a problem which relates to a real business.

- This would also be a good point to ask your students what they think an entrepreneur is, before helping them define the term as someone who has an original idea and wants to set up a business.

- Show them the two challenge films, **found here**, and on **slides 2** and **3** each featuring a real entrepreneur talking about their business and the story of how it came about. At the end of each film, the entrepreneurs will set a real-world enterprise challenge that relates to their business for students to solve.

- Each film will be from a different industry, so your students can choose which one they would like to take on based on existing knowledge or a personal interest.

- The challenges students can choose to tackle are:

> **Film 1 challenge:**
> *Think about how you could use robotics in an environment that you're very familiar with, such as the home. Your challenge is to find something in the home that you can make easier by just automating a simple task. Think about these three things:*
>
> *What task are you actually looking to automate inside the home?*
>
> *Who are you automating this task for/ who is the user?*
>
> *How can robotics help us live more sustainable lives?*
>
> **Film 2 challenge:**
> *Ride Tandem helps to overcome the barrier of poor transport to help more people get into work. Now it's your turn to come up with a new solution to solve another challenge that might hold people back from getting back into work. Consider the specific group of people you want to help, the specific challenges that they face, how tech could help and if that tech could be sustainable.*

2. Getting your teams started

- Divide students into their teams – normally it works best to assign them into preassigned, mixed ability groups, but you can allow them to select their own team if that works best for your class.

- We recommend that students work in teams of up to 5 to develop and present their ideas.

- Explain to students that they will work in teams to choose and solve their enterprise challenge, as many real entrepreneurs will work collaboratively using teamwork to solve problems.

- Explain to student teams that they will develop and refine their challenge responses through using the **Project challenge workbook**. The workbook will guide them through some of the different stages of a possible entrepreneur journey when planning out a business idea.

- Distribute the workbooks so each team has one which will help them develop ideas and their challenge response.
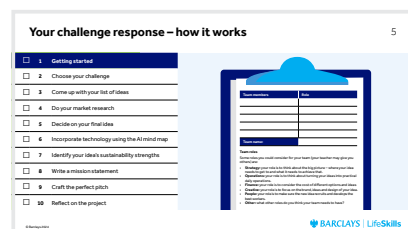
Session one: Kick off

- Let them know that the first step is to start by picking and recording a **team name** on the first page of the workbook as well as the names of team members.

- Next they should discuss which challenge film was most interesting to them, and which challenge they would like to work together to solve as a team. Remind students that they are working towards a common goal, and the importance of recognising what is a respectable discussion, making sure everyone's voice is heard to reach a consensus through teamwork.

- Ask students to record which challenge they will be working on and the problem they will be solving once they have come to a decision as a group.

Top tip on effective group work:

- Evidence suggests groups of 3-5 work best for collaborative learning tasks (**EEF**).

- To make sure all students are involved in the work and feel engaged, it is a good idea to make sure they each have a clear role while working towards a shared outcome.

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3. Explaining student teams' next steps

- Show students **slide 5** with the overall steps they will be working through in the Enterprise project challenge.

- Explain they will start by coming up with ideas, refining them through market research, then developing a business plan, marketing ideas and then 'pitching' to you and their peers within the last lesson.

- Tell students they have flexibility to decide the best way to 'pitch' their idea, just like a real-life entrepreneur. Depending on what support/facilities students have available, you could give them ideas like creating a slideshow presentation, a short promotional film or a marketing poster.

- Explain they have 5 minutes to come up with a long list of as many ideas as they can for a solution for their chosen challenge. Remind students to think about who their idea will benefit, the target audience they are focusing on, and what support that audience needs.

- Encourage them to go round their groups, taking it in turns to say an idea with one person nominated to record them in the **Idea table template** in their workbook.

- Remind the team there are no bad ideas, to listen respectfully and be a supportive teammate – creating a space for 'diversity of thought', where when diverse individuals are brought together the diverse perspectives can bring put better outcomes.

- End by reminding students of their next steps, and that in the next session they will be learning about innovation and new ideas in order to narrow down their list of ideas.

Session two: Market research

- Show **slide 6** which reminds students of the definition of innovation and tech innovation. Tell students this session is all about learning how to make their own idea more innovative.

- Tell them their first task is to regroup on the ideas they came up with within their groups and discuss/vote on up to three promising ideas they would like to investigate further.

- Once they have decided on their ideas (we recommend that no longer than 5 minutes is spent on this), encourage them to think about what solutions currently exist within the industry which the ideas they have chosen belong to. Is there anything similar that already exists?

- To help students start thinking about the differences between competitors and how different businesses stand out, you could facilitate a discussion on other competitive markets. Encourage them to think about industries where there are well-known competitors like supermarkets or social media and ask them to reflect on the differences between different businesses' products or approaches.

- From this, have them work through the **Market research template** (page 7) for their chosen challenge, where they will research what's already out there and what their 'competitors' are doing. This helps them decide on what their strongest idea is, and at the bottom there is a space to record the idea they are moving forward with and refine it to be more innovative.

- Some good starting points for their research are could be to look at news articles on the topic, company websites, or any more insight to help them understand the current need for their idea.

- At the end of the session, ask students to make sure they're happy with their chosen idea and how they have adapted it to be more innovative.

- This would be a good place to reiterate the role intellectual property (IP) plays (covered in **Lesson 1: Tech innovation and entrepreneurship**), page 7) within business decision making processes and the importance of having a creative or unique idea to stand out and succeed.

Session three: The role of technology

- Helpful background to this session can be found in our **Digital technology and AI in business lesson**.

- Recap what technology driven innovation means by showing the definition on **slide 6**.

- Tell your students that now they have completed the **Market research template** in their workbooks and identified the most innovative idea to work on for their own challenge response, they will think about how they could use technology to bring their idea to life.

- In their teams, ask them to think about some of the ways a business could use AI to solve challenges in the future.

- Encourage them to come up with as many ideas as they can in 5 minutes - taking it in turns to share one, and recording all their answers using the **AI mind map template** (page 9 of the team workbook).

- Next, ask them to discuss their list of ideas and vote on the ones that could be most relevant to their challenge response idea. As always, remind students of the principles of a positive, constructive debate and listening to all ideas.

- Ask them to discuss how these AI ideas could bring their own challenge response to life. Make sure to remind your students about the importance of being specific about how this technology will help the issue they are trying to tackle.

- Once they have agreed on an AI element to their solution, ask them to complete the final section of the **AI mind map template** (page 10) creating a short paragraph explaining how their idea will be enabled or enhanced with a relevant application of AI.

Session four: Sustainable business practices and mission statements

- Helpful background to this session covering various aspects relating to sustainability in business can be found **here**.

Part 1

- Having discussed the concept of sustainability within business practice to your students this would be a good place to recap some of the key concepts, like emissions, net zero, circularity and climate tech, particularly if they have not participated in the sustainability lessons.

- At this point, direct your students to the **Sustainability considerations template** (page 14) within their workbooks where they can reflect on the sustainability concepts above, and identify the most relevant concepts for their challenge response.

- Encourage them to use the template to map any considerations around making their idea have a sustainability focus and what this might be.

- Conclude this session by asking them to reflect on their template and discuss how their core business value could be made more sustainable across the areas indicated.

- Ask each group to share what they think the most important process/objective would be for ensuring their business has a more positive impact on the world (based on their **Sustainability considerations template**).

- If you have time, facilitate a discussion between groups with prompts like: what do they care about? Is it a circular supply chain, is it meeting and maintaining ethical standards for example? If there are differences between groups, this is a good opportunity to get them to justify why they have made those choices.

Part 2

- Explain to your students that businesses tend to create mission statements, which are usually the summary of the aims and values of a company or organisation. A mission statement is often short being one or two sentences, it should be precise and clearly outline your goals and values as a business and as a team.

- Ask teams to use the **Mission statement template** (page 15) to summarize everything they have worked on in their project by creating a mission statement for their idea. A good place to start may be revisiting what they recorder in part 4 around market research for inspiration.

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Session four: Sustainable business practices and mission statements

Extension

- Reflecting on the core transferable skills they have used so far within the project ask students to reflect on their individual entrepreneurship strengths. What do they think they do well? What do they need to work on? (You could prompt by asking which activities they found easiest or most challenging).

- When they have had some thinking time, bring them together in their teams. Ask them to reflect on how their skills within the team balanced out (if you have given each team member a different role, you can ask them to reflect on that too – did the roles suit them or would they have been a better fit to a different role?)

- What other skills might they need in their team to make their idea a reality? How would they go about getting them?

Top tips:

- Remind students that entrepreneurs take advantage of their own and other people's skills by building great teams. Entrepreneurs don't have to do it all alone.

- Give the examples of founders working together, with each co-founder having a different skillset. You can also use examples about how entrepreneurs recruit people with skills that balance their own.

- It would be good at this point to ask your students to reflect on the process (so far) and consider if there are any gaps are in their plans – is there a pivot to be made this point within their teams, simulating the challenges a real business might experiences?

Session 5: Pitching ideas

- Explain to you students that presenting ideas by pitching is an important element of business, particularly for entrepreneurs trying to share their ideas. This can take a variety of forms, depending on the audience and goal. Sometimes the goal might be financial support, other times it might be to ensure partnerships or collaborations.
- When preparing your students for their responses, remind them that they can choose to present their 'pitch' in a way that feels most comfortable to them. Suggestions include:
  - Submitting a recording.
  - Presenting a slide deck.
  - Reading through the challenge workbook.
  - Coming up with a role play scenario that demonstrates their idea.
- Tell students their mission statement is a great place to start, as it summarises their idea and the problem it solves. It should give them the outline of the story they want to tell.
- Have a think about what timings might work best, perhaps assigning that they work on their responses in their own time within groups and then use your hour for each team to present their responses and receive feedback.
- There is lots of flexibility in how you would like them to present their ideas, depending on the size and number of the groups participating. Give students a timeframe to practice their pitch to, we recommend around 3-5 minutes.
- When groups are presenting, ask the rest of the class to think of questions for them, reminding them that it is not an opportunity to criticise but rather to collaborate and help them build a better product.
- You could ask each group to provide a constructive suggestion to the presenting team after each presentation – this can also help them stay focused while they are listening.
- After your students have completed their pitch responses, show them the **short follow up films** (approx 1.5 mins) from the entrepreneurs found on the Enterprise project challenge web page.
- To wrap up the project ask students to individually complete the **Reflection template** in their student workbooks (page 17). Have a discussion around any skills developed by taking part in the project and and how these can be demonstrated on a CV or during an interview in relation to taking part in the project.

Top tips:

- If you are able to block out a specific lesson time for your students to present, see if there are other networks you can build on to make this feel like a real business scenario for your students.
- Consider any connections your school might have. Is there anyone on the school's governing body who can come in and take part? Or are there parents with business experience who could listen to teams' challenges responses and give feedback based on their own experiences?
- If you are able to plan out the timeline of the whole programme in advance, reaching out to these connections early is great to ensure their attendance to better the experience for your students.

Further support

- **Steps to starting a business** (16-25(. If your students are curious about finding more out about starting a business try this lesson which goes through the enterprising steps required to do this.

- **Putting enterprise skills into action** (11-19). If further developing enterprise skills would benefit our group why not deliver our lesson taking a closer look at what it takes to be truly enterprising.

- For independent learning resources point your students to **this page** for resources around enterprise and business from an interactive tool to support developing enterprise skills to a Business start up planner which is a great first step to mapping out a business idea.