

Background

MyBnk is the UK's leading direct deliverer of financial education and enterprise experiences for young people.

Our charity has reached 75,000 11 to 25 year olds in over 450 schools and youth groups with a range of 100 minute to all-day sessions covering topics such as saving, borrowing, pensions, budgeting and university finance.

We also give young people access to interest-free loans to set-up their own enterprise in their local community and have created the first ever youth-led banking scheme - run by young people for young people, allowing them to save and develop positive habits around money.

Young people are at the heart of everything we do and we take a holistic approach to education, catering for audio, visual and kinesthetic learners. Our team is made up of teachers, youth workers and people who have worked in the financial sector.

We use real life case studies, colourful resources, games and videos drawn from their age group and popular culture, enabling young people to explore and form their own opinions. Our team is made up of teachers, youth workers and people who have worked in the financial sector - most of who are in their twenties and share their university experiences with pupils.

Programmes are created in-house by teachers, former finance sector workers, youth workers and young people via a Youth Advisory Panel. Our Education Officers are rigorously trained in core subject knowledge and classroom techniques over two weeks, are assessed by young people and teachers after every session and sit exams every six months. In 2012/13, 97% of young people and 100% of teachers rated our trainers three to four out of four for [effectiveness](#).

MyBnk have a growing [national](#) and [international](#) demand for our expertise, this has led to us training educators in Europe and Africa and consulting others in Asia, South America and beyond. There is also a growing demand from [housing associations and local authorities](#) for our services.

We also recently won a [Centre for Social Justice Award](#) for Preventing Poverty, were named [Charity of the Year](#) by Children & Young People Now magazine and provide the financial literacy element of the government's [National Citizens Service](#) and face-to-face side of the [Money Advice Service](#).

MyBnk welcomes the opportunity to contribute to this study.

Our observations are in the context of us delivering financial and enterprise education to young people.

Response

1. We believe young people need financial capability and entrepreneurial training to enable them to assess employment and lifestyle opportunities and choices. Training has to be 'real' and effectively delivered, implying:

- It is delivered by experts free of bias
- It is relevant and effective (MINDSPACE principles)

- It is very focused on the needs of young people, not business or celebrity
- It is assessed systematically and independently
- Employers are better placed to support entrepreneurship and career advice rather than deliver financial training

2. Both monetary and opportunity cost must be considered given the full school day.

3. Central funding is more efficient than the present mixture of charitable, commercial, central and school budget. Consistency is required.

4. Superficial intervention and/ or very short duration and/ or delivery by insufficiently trained facilitators (potentially including teachers) is unlikely to work in our view. The lack of monitoring and evaluation means this cannot be proven.

More detailed points

Interpretation:

We believe the question should highlight self-employment, not just 'a job', as a growing route to economic independence. We also suggest that the focus should be beyond ensuring 'skills, experience and advice' to encouraging and ensuring behavioural change.

Relevance:

MyBnk believes that financial and enterprise education can significantly enhance the ability of young people to understand what it takes to become financially independent and understand their options. We aim to help students gain the skills, knowledge and confidence to prepare for lifestyle choices and make entrepreneurial decisions. This includes the consideration of further education, potential employment opportunities, the deferral of instant gratification, savings, and direct experience of dealing with money in an entrepreneurial context.

We welcomed the inclusion of financial education by the Department for Education into the National Curriculum from September 2014. Our view is enterprise education should also be included. The government has been inconsistent with regards to the awarding and withdrawal of enterprise funding over the last few years. Consistency is required.

Although we generally support giving schools and teachers discretion, in this case we are concerned as to the lack of guidance to the depth of content required, and to the time to be devoted to the subject, as well as to specific monitoring and evaluation. A subject that is compulsory, but enjoys no specific funding or assessment, is at high risk of becoming a 'box-ticking' exercise. Either the Department for Education or The Money Advice Service, which has a mandate to equip young people with the skills, attitudes and behaviours they need to manage money, needs to take responsibility for monitoring and evaluation.

Schools need to fund compulsory financial education and optional enterprise education from within their budget. They will naturally be drawn to services free at the point of delivery. Providers of financial education include commercial operators in finance, such as high street banks and insurers, private education companies, and or social/ charitable concerns such as MyBnk. We are concerned on two counts regarding the involvement of private companies: the lack of independence (accepting there is legislation in place to stop direct marketing), but, more

importantly, the lack of teaching skills and training of those delivering the content, and hence a likely significant reduction in effectiveness. We do not in general question that those giving the training, have strong financial knowledge, rather that their financial knowledge of what is relevant to a young person is not deep or wide enough. More important is the lack of teaching skills – if the young person is not engaged very little will be achieved.

We reference the Cabinet Office's focus on the principles of behavioural economics and MINDSPACE as a framework for influencing the formation of policy. At MyBnk we demand our programmes and instructors are SUPER (Specific, Unique, Participatory, Effective and Relevant). We are using the MINDSPACE principles and that of effective teaching as this is the way we believe relatively limited interventions can maximise the chance of success.

We are very aware that schools face cash constraints, but also very high opportunity cost. Even a programme delivered free at the point of delivery must offer value for money to the school and its students. Our programmes are designed to be effective for the Key Stage 3 or Key Stage 4 cohorts over a period of five hours, either delivered within a day or in three separate sessions. Our experience is schools have very little timetable flexibility given all the statutory requirements they face. Hence any extra input needs to be effective and needs to be measured. MyBnk evaluates every programme we deliver and publishes a detailed impact report on our website. We would enthusiastically welcome more systematic and rigorous evaluation of the sector by an independent body. Furthermore, if we accept specific financial education will comprise, say, five to ten hours over two school years, it is challenging and maybe not cost-effective for a school to develop and maintain a specialist teacher themselves. MyBnk trainers undertake 2-3 weeks of home study in relevant financial knowledge before being tested on the programmes and then trained in the SUPER methodology. This training includes them observing experienced trainers, co-delivery and observation of them by our Training and Quality team. They are continually rated by participants and facilitators.

There has been strong growth in programmes that are 'celebrity' backed, taking advantage of the publicity and branding from using, for example, television shows or personalities. Many of these programmes could be effective but we should not confuse 'The Apprentice' with a real entrepreneurial experience or training. MyBnk ensures its entrepreneurial programmes are real i.e. there is actual money involved and a live market event in which the participants will experience making a profit or loss. We are concerned some programmes of mass participation which lead to gala events and prizes may risk being too superficial and ineffective.

Having a statutory requirement that is not specifically funded or evaluated has an impact on cost-effectiveness. MyBnk is one of the largest direct deliverers of financial and enterprise education in England, employing an Education Director who is primarily responsible for programme development, a further four in-house education officers who deliver and help develop the programmes, a four person training and quality team, a three person facilitation team, plus a leadership, operations and fund raising team.

We employ over 30 freelance trainers. MyBnk estimate the cost of delivering financial education. Last year we reached 20,000 young people and this year we will be close to 30,000 of which around two thirds will be in schools. We can presently provide our class-based programmes for approximately £30 per young person, and more scale will bring down that cost as we defray programme development, training and quality and fundraising over a larger group.

Funding for the sector is threatened now that there is a statutory requirement for schools to provide financial education themselves and it is intrinsically inefficient requiring us to contact and persuade funders to support something that is statutory.