34 Entrepreneurial learning

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How to use this policy

This entrepreneurial learning policy can be used by schools, and groups within schools such as student councils, to guide, support and communicate their entrepreneurial learning approach. This policy can complement or extend policies on student voice and agency, which underpin entrepreneurial learning. The policy provides a broad and flexible framework to guide the actions of all staff and students involved and communicates the rationale and expectations of entrepreneurial learning to participants, their families and the broader school community.

Best practice entrepreneurial learning involves students and teachers co-designing teaching and learning approaches, ideally *led* by students who identify problems or opportunities in their school or community (global or local) and then develop, prototype, test and refine solutions, products or services that respond to these gaps in a way that creates authentic value (real benefit) for others. In doing so, they develop skills and capabilities, apply knowledge and form connections, which together prepares them to pursue and achieve success in school and especially in the world beyond school.

Examples of entrepreneurial learning approaches used in schools include:

- Redesigning and leading the end of year activity week with more meaningful activities that support local and global communities and develop students' skills
- Redesigning the elective program, using evidence from student proposals and surveys
- Reimagining the school's image by researching, hosting events and making a showcase video
- Creating sculpture parks, community markets and outdoor learning spaces
- Building a website to showcase and sell students' art and design
- Starting small businesses and inventing new products

This policy example is intentionally broad and school policy creators are encouraged to delete and build upon suggestions below to create a policy that best represents their school.

[To adapt and use this policy, delete or modify the text as indicated]

[INSERT name of school] Entrepreneurial learning policy

Rationale

Entrepreneurial learning, sometimes referred to as entrepreneurial education, is an emerging way of responding to the growing need to enhance student capabilities to cultivate and apply knowledge in sophisticated ways, to deepen student engagement and to cultivate the mindsets and critical capabilities – such as critical thinking, creativity and collaboration – needed to succeed in school and the dynamic and uncertain future that awaits students (Lackéus, 2015; Zhao, 2012). It has been used in primary and secondary schools, technical colleges and universities around the world in a dizzying array of contexts and forms (Department of Education, 2018; Van Dijk & Mensch, 2015; European Commission, EACEA & Eurydice 2016; Hass, 2016; Lackéus, 2015). In schools, it has been used to engage at-risk students and to extend high-performing students. It has also been used across the school as a strategy to personalise education and enable students to find or pursue their passions and talents, to build confidence and resilience, to strengthen learning and social engagement and to make connections between *schoolwork* and the *real world* and apply this to solve real issues and/or create a positive difference (create value) for others (Anderson et al., 2017).

Entrepreneurial learning is a promising strategy for responding to the dual challenges of

- 1 Cultivating the capabilities and mindsets students need to succeed in school and especially beyond school
- 2 Deepening student agency and engagement in their learning (Anderson et al., 2017; Lackéus, 2015)

Such an approach is important, with research suggesting that up to 40 percent of students are disengaged from their learning and not reaching their full educational potential (Angus et al., 2013). It is also important as growing research indicates that mastery of content knowledge and test-taking skills are no longer enough to succeed in the world of work (Zhao, 2012).

The need for advanced problem-solving skills, creative and critical thinking and collaboration and communication skills is high and continues to grow (Foundation for Young Australians, 2016; OECD, 2019; World Economic Forum, 2016).

The evidence base

The variety of ways in which entrepreneurial learning has been developed and implemented in different educational settings and the accompanying diversity in research on these initiatives (e.g., study size, scope, questions, methods, measurements, subject area, student age, duration, etc.) makes it difficult to generalise or speak with authority on its impacts. The latest research on entrepreneurship education, which has many parallels with entrepreneurial learning, emphasises that assessment “cannot take a one size fits all approach” (Morselli, 2019, p. 17). However, there is a growing evidence base, largely captured in a review of the literature by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (Lackéus, 2015), indicating multiple educational benefits:

- Improved enjoyment of school and stronger connections to peers and teachers (Anderson et al., 2017; Huber et al., 2012)
- Improved capabilities, such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication (Anderson et al., 2017; Kruger, 2015)
- Improved skills in managing and adapting to change, including persisting in the face of challenges (Anderson et al., 2017; Moberg & Vestergaard, 2013)
- Deeper student voice and agency, contributing to stronger learning engagement (Anderson et al., 2017).

Purpose

[INSERT name of school] is committed to providing all students with meaningful opportunities to identify and develop their passions and talents and to deepen and apply knowledge and skills, so that they can flourish in school, in their chosen careers and as full members of society. In doing so, we seek to grow entrepreneurial mindsets, in which our students “are characterised by a curiosity to seek out and identify or solve problems, which they see as opportunities to apply their talents, creativity and collaborative skills, rather than dead-ends” (Anderson et al., 2017, p.7). The purpose of this policy is to enable students to be *creators*, *innovators* and *doers* of things that bring tangible benefits to others, locally and globally.

Scope

The policy applies to students, teachers, leaders and school community members engaged in entrepreneurial learning initiatives at **[INSERT name of school]**.

Policy statement

Entrepreneurial learning extends **[INSERT name of school]**’s strong commitment to student voice and student voice and agency, which have been found to contribute to a positive cycle of learning and enhanced learning outcomes

(Australian Department of Education and Training, 2018; Johnston, 2004; Victorian Department of Education and Training, 2018).

Roles and responsibilities

- School leaders and teachers will:
 - a Extend student voice and agency by creating opportunities for students to provide meaningful feedback on their learning, school governance and culture and by taking students' feedback onboard
 - b Create multiple and diverse opportunities for students and teachers to learn with each other. This may include allowing student and teachers time together and provide funding to facilitate activities and professional development to effectively plan and collaborate
 - c Provide a supporting role in which they encourage and prompt the students to identify, apply, persist, test or refine their entrepreneurial actions
 - d Seek or support strategic partnerships and collaborations with other schools and local organisations, businesses and individuals in pursuit of students' entrepreneurial learning actions
 - e Cultivate buy-in from families and the wider school community by promoting the benefits of entrepreneurial learning, supported risk-taking and innovation as opportunities to apply and extend knowledge, skills and talents
- Students will:
 - a Seek out opportunities to make a real, positive difference in their communities – such as re-inventing a work-experience program, addressing local pollution or improving student wellbeing
 - b Model an entrepreneurial mindset, including perseverance in new or challenging situations
 - c Reach out to peers, teachers, family and community for encouragement and feedback as they go
- Everyone will:
 - a Model mutual respect and the values/philosophy of **[INSERT name of school]**

Rating of evidence base

Figure 34.1. Entrepreneurial Learning and Student-driven Learning Rating of Evidence.

Author Note. The various ways that entrepreneurial learning has been developed and implemented in different educational settings and the accompanying diversity in research on these initiatives (study size, scope, questions, methods, measurements, subject area, student age, duration etc) makes it difficult to generalise or speak with authority on its impacts. As argued by Morselli (2019, p. 17), this means that a “one size fits all” approach to the assessment of entrepreneurial learning is inappropriate. A mixed-methods study by Anderson et al. (2017) involving 19 schools and 106 secondary school students indicates multiple positive impacts (from high to weak) on learning engagement, learning outcomes, connectedness with peers and teachers, capabilities (creativity, critical thinking, collaboration and communication skills) and mindsets (persistence, openness), and even school culture and inclusion. The variety of forms that entrepreneurial learning may assume in different subjects (learning areas), contexts and student groups and the variety of methods and study sizes means that the evidence base is too small and mixed to generalise about the impact in different settings and for different student cohorts. Nonetheless, it appears promising, with studies in tertiary education and industry also finding entrepreneurial education contributes to innovation and perseverance (e.g., Deakins & Bensemann, 2018). Moreover, students as young as 11 years of age have been found to have the necessary self-efficacy for entrepreneurial education (Hass, 2016), and it has been reported to have been used successfully at all levels of school and post-school education (European Commission, EACEA and Eurydice (2016); Lackeus, 2015; Ndou et al., 2018). Entrepreneurial learning is co-created by students and teachers within their context to respond to identified needs and opportunities and is highly adaptable and flexible to different contexts, settings, timeframes and starting points. It can progressively be introduced and embedded into a school’s existing practices and policies. Entrepreneurial learning has been found to contribute to:

- Improved enjoyment of school and stronger connections to peers and teachers, including influencing students decisions to remain in school instead of discontinuing their education (Anderson et al., 2017; Huber et al., 2012)
- Improved capabilities, such as creativity, critical thinking, collaboration, communication, including overcoming profound shyness (Anderson et al., 2017; Kruger, 2015)
- Improved skills in managing and adapting to change, including persisting in the face of challenges such as persisting with difficult mathematics exercises (Anderson et al., 2017; Moberg & Vestergard, 2013)
- Deeper student voice and agency, contributing to stronger learning engagement (Anderson et al., 2017)

Authorship

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[INSERT RELEVANT STAFF MEMBERS]

Related policy and documents

Lackéus, M. (2015). *Entrepreneurship in education: What, why, when and how? Entrepreneurship background paper*. Paris: Local Economic and Employment Development Division of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development.

Victorian Department of Education and Training. (2018) *Amplify: Student voice practice guide*. Melbourne: Government of Victoria.

Date of ratification

This policy was ratified on the [INSERT DATE].

Date of review

This policy will be reviewed by [INSERT DATE].

Further reading and viewing

Hinz, B. (2019). *From voice to agency to entrepreneurial learning: The international evidence base and the local “coal face”*. Webinar commissioned and hosted by the Australian Curriculum Studies Association. <http://www.acsa.edu.au>

MacMillan, J. (2015). *Social enterprise in education program: Formal evaluation*. Scotland: Social Enterprise Academy.

Moberg, K., Vestergaard, L., Redford, D., Cooney, T., Singer, S., Sailer, K., & Filip, D. (2014). *How to assess and evaluate the influence of entrepreneurship*

education. Denmark: The ASTTEE Project – Assessment, Tools and Indicators for Entrepreneurship Education.

Rasmussen, A., & Fritznier, A. (2016). *From dream to reality: Learning outcomes and didactic principles for teaching entrepreneurship in Nordic schools*. Nordic Council of Ministers.

Victorian Department of Education and Training. (2018). *Amplify: Student voice practice guide*. Melbourne: Government of Victoria.

Expert consultation

We suggest you consult with your students, asking them what opportunities or challenges in the school or their communities they would like to address and allowing them to lead the way with appropriate support from the school.

We also suggest you reach out to staff and students to identify opportunities to tap into local expertise within the school and the local community that can be brought into or used to support student-led entrepreneurial actions and developments. Examples include local indigenous elders, local artists and craftspeople, park rangers, galleries and businesses.

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- Hass, A. (2016). Effectiveness of early entrepreneurship education at the primary school level: Evidence from a field research in Morocco. *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education*, 5(2), 83–103.
- Huber, L. F., Sloof, R., & Van Praag, M. (2012). *The effect of early entrepreneurship education: Evidence from a randomised field experiment*. Discussion paper no. 6512. Bonn: The Institute for the Study of Labor.

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- Moberg, K., & Vestergaard, L. (2013). *Impact of entrepreneurship education in Denmark – 2013*. Copenhagen: The Danish Foundation for Entrepreneurship – Young Enterprise.
- Morselli, D. (2019). *The change laboratory for teacher training in entrepreneurship education*. New York: Springer.
- Ndou, V., Secundo, G., Schiuma, G., & Passiante, G. (2018). Insights for shaping entrepreneurship education: Evidence from the European entrepreneurship centres. *Sustainability*, 10(11), 4323–4342.
- Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD]. (2019). *Trends shaping education 2019*. Paris: OECD Publishing.
- Van Dijk, T., & Mensch, C. (2015). *Entrepreneurship education in Swedish compulsory schools: The perception and implementation from an educator's viewpoint*. Lund: Lund University, School of Economics and Management.
- Victorian Department of Education and Training. (2018). *Amplify: Student voice practice guide*. Melbourne: Government of Victoria.
- World Economic Forum [WEF]. (2016). *The future of jobs, employment, skills and workforce strategy for the fourth industrial revolution*. Geneva: WEF.
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