ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP

in Higher Education

A report by
The National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship

The National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) is an independent organisation whose aim is to raise the profile of graduate entrepreneurship and increase the number of students and graduates (within five years of graduation) seriously considering engaging in business start-up in all its forms, including self employment.

ENTERPRISE AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP in Higher Education

1. INTRODUCTION

What does the landscape for enterprise and entrepreneurship education in universities look like? How effectively are we embedding a culture of enterprise and entrepreneurship within our institutional policies, infrastructures and teaching and learning practices? How do current funding regimes impact on provision? To what extent is enterprise and entrepreneurship education engaging the student population?

The National Council for Graduate Entrepreneurship (NCGE) 2007 survey of Enterprise and Entrepreneurship in Higher Education, conducted across 127 universities in England serving a student population of 1.76 million, achieved a 96% response rate. For the first time it provides evidence of the scale and scope of provision and engagement across several key areas.

The picture presented by this survey, and supported by evidence derived from other NCGE research activity, raises some important challenges around sustainability, scale, reach, relevance, consistency, commitment and equality of exposure.

It is clear that action needs to be taken to scale up and embed enterprise and entrepreneurship education across the university campus to expose ALL students to inspiring opportunities and meaningful learning experiences.

2. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

The extent to which enterprise and entrepreneurship is embedded in universities in England is summarised below:

NATIONAL

Student engagement

- Rates of engagement have grown. The Student Engagement Rate is now 11%
- Gender split is relatively balanced at 53% male; 47% female

In-curricula provision

- Accounts for 36% of enterprise and entrepreneurship activity
- Business and management schools are responsible for 61% of provision (9% engineering; 8% creative; 1% health)
- 80% of provision is at undergraduate level; 87% for full-time study

Extra-curricula provision

- Accounts for 64% of enterprise and entrepreneurship activity
- Wide range of opportunities provided
- Strong reliance on short-term funding

Funding

- More than 80% of funding for extra-curricula activity is from the public purse

Entrepreneurial university characteristics

- <50% of universities have entrepreneurial characteristics

REGIONAL

- Significant regional variances across all aspects of the study (see Page 6)
- All regions display areas of strength and opportunities for growth and development

3. CONCLUSIONS - WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?

The study provides quantitative data on how effectively universities in England are rising to the challenge of embedding an enterprise and entrepreneurship culture across campus.

It also provides the basis for future benchmarking and comparative studies regionally, nationally and internationally, as well as across disciplines. As such, the study has the potential to be a real catalyst for change.

Significant headway has been made in fostering the climate, conditions and impetus for enterprise and entrepreneurship education. The findings reveal there remain significant challenges in shaping the future for enterprise and entrepreneurship education, specifically:

- increasing Student Engagement Rates;
- improving the quality, consistency, equality of exposure and impact of provision;
- institutional culture change;
- sustainable funding structures.

Action needs to be taken to scale up and embed enterprise and entrepreneurship education across the university campus to expose all students to inspiring opportunities and meaningful learning experiences. This is vital to the sustainability of provision and will be assisted by:

- developing an overarching vision and strategic framework with agreed outcomes for enterprise and entrepreneurship education;
- Government and its agents legitimising its value by embedding outcomes within policy frameworks and benchmarking statements;
- creating an entrepreneurial culture within universities which may be facilitated by the development of a new model that reflects a wider world-life view of entrepreneurship;
- overcoming the uncertainties and fragility that threaten sustainability by exploiting and expanding existing funding structures;
- supporting the development of innovative, campus-wide approaches across all faculties, disciplines and subjects;
- building strong leadership to champion long-term change;
- increasing opportunities for professional educator development, including exposure to a wider range of teaching and institutional, national and international exchanges;
- facilitating more opportunities for interaction with entrepreneurial people and organisations;
- securing international recognition of enterprise and entrepreneurship as a priority leadership issue.

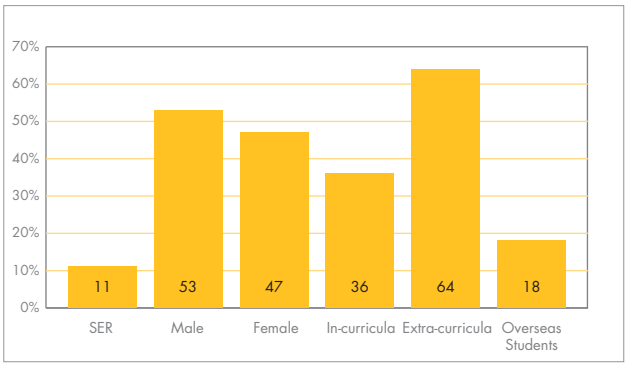
Through further analysis, partnership working with all key stakeholders and drawing on our studies into good practice, the NCGE is committed to improving the effectiveness of enterprise and entrepreneurship provision across the HE sector.

4. KEY FINDINGS

The following charts summarise key findings nationally and regionally.

4.1 Summary of national findings

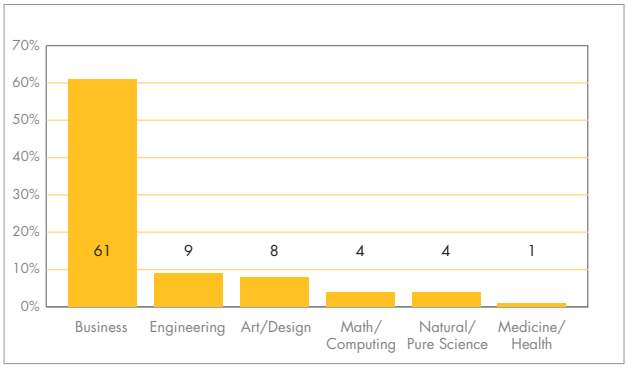
Student Engagement Rate (SER)



Student engagement has grown over the past ten years. The Student Engagement Rate of 11% suggests more needs to be done to scale up engagement across non-business disciplines. All students should understand the relevance of enterprise and entrepreneurship to their lives and careers.

- Gender split relatively balanced at 53% male; female 47%
- 36% in-curricula provision; 64% extra-curricula
- 18% overseas students

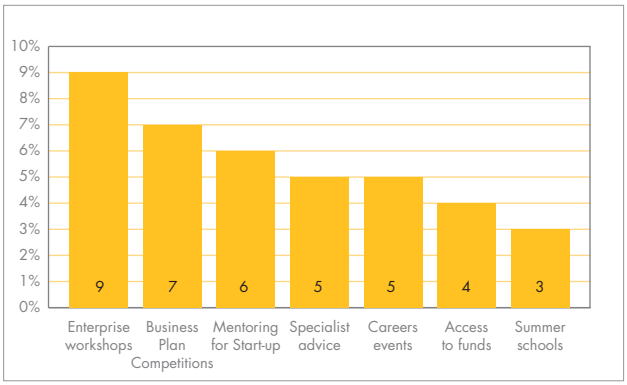
In-curricula Provision



Provision is dominated by business and management schools, whose conceptualisation of entrepreneurship is often at odds with the need for a broader view that can embrace the needs of non-business disciplines. Embedding enterprise and entrepreneurship education across all disciplines and faculties is a major challenge.

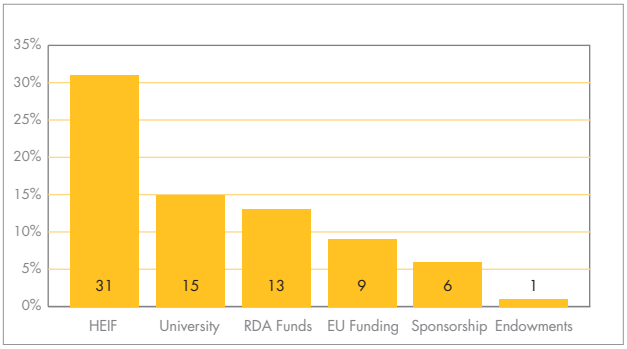
- 61% of provision from business and management schools (9% engineering; 8% creative; 1% health)
- 80% of provision at undergraduate level; 87% for full-time students, suggesting need to increase provision aimed at post graduate and part-time students who are arguably closer to market opportunities

Extra-curricula Provision



Extra-curricula provision is varied and often dependent on short-term project funding.

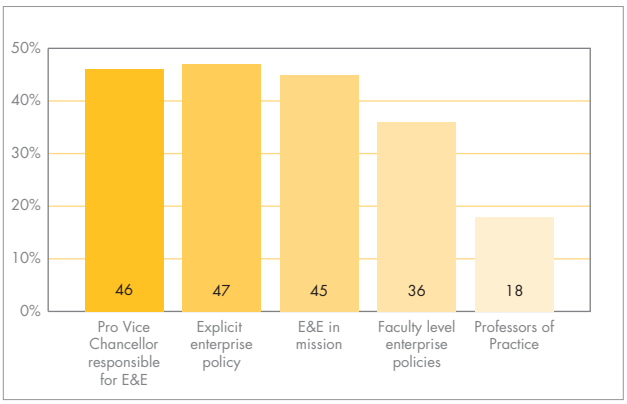
Funding Source



Most provision is reliant on state funding which has been significant in raising visibility and activity. The nature of such short-term support creates uncertainty and is not geared to long term culture/institutional change.

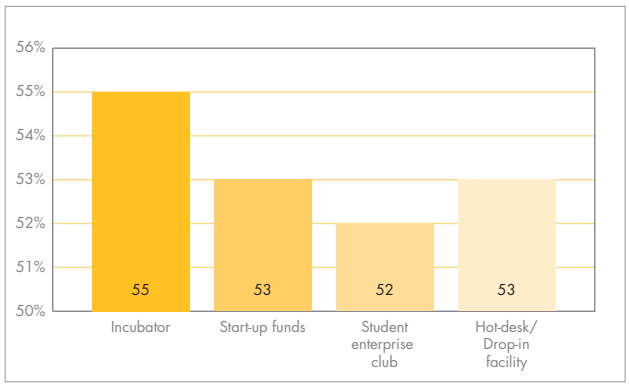
- More than 80% of funding comes from the public purse
- Funding should be mainstreamed
- Increase levels of private endowments

Institutional policy



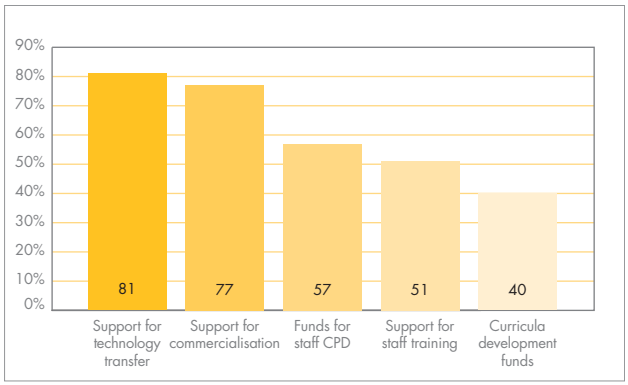
Fewer than 50% of universities display the range of entrepreneurial characteristics across infrastructure, staff development and policy that are crucial to entrepreneurial engagement, institutional development and long-term culture change.

Infrastructure



Just over a half of universities have the basic infrastructure in place for enterprise and entrepreneurship.

Staff



Staff support for technology transfer is well embedded in universities and 77% of universities provide support for commercialisation. More could be done to provide funds to support development of enterprise and entrepreneurship in curricula.

4.2 Regional Findings by RDA Regions

Regional highlights %	NAT	NWDA	YF	ONE	AWM	EMDA	EEDA	SEEDA	SWRDA	LDA
Number of HEIs in Survey	127	15	11	5	12	9	9	16	13	37
Response rates	96	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	86
Student populations	100	14	11	6	10	9	7	13	9	21
Student Engagement Rate (SER)	11	9	14	6	5	17	15	12	18	8
Male	53	51	63	62	56	47	51	51	52	51
Female	47	49	37	38	44	53	49	49	48	49
In-curricula engagement	36	49	47	29	50	19	63	27	31	23
Extra-curricula engagement	64	51	53	71	50	81	37	73	69	77
Student ethnicity - (White)	67	70	73	0	58	43	56	72	74	71
- (Non-white)	33	30	27	0	42	57	44	28	36	29
Overseas students	18	14	13	27	16	10	23	11	26	33
In-curricula Provision										
Business	61	45	40	67	77	70	82	83	51	61
Engineering	9	10	13	0	5	3	7	4	16	13
Art and Design	8	13	7	9	6	6	7	3	9	3
Extra-curricula Provision										
Enterprise Workshops	9	10	7	7	13	8	10	8	9	11
Business Plan Competitions	7	5	9	7	13	6	9	7	5	9
Mentoring for Start-up	6	6	5	5	10	7	8	6	5	4
Careers Service events	5	3	7	3	3	7	4	7	4	6
Main Funding Sources										
HEIF	31	16	30	36	67	27	33	42	30	37
RDA	13	8	20	18	0	13	0	16	25	11
University Core Funding	10	8	10	9	33	13	17	13	10	6
EU Project Funding	9	16	10	9	0	0	0	10	5	6
Sponsorship	6	4	0	0	0	7	17	6	10	9
University Special Funds	5	6	10	0	0	7	17	3	5	3
Centres for Excellence	4	10	4	0	0	7	0	0	0	3
Institutional Characteristics										
Incubator for students	55	80	73	60	55	78	56	63	69	26
Start-up funds	53	47	91	80	55	22	33	50	77	39
Staff training	51	53	73	20	55	67	78	73	38	26
PVC for E&E	46	47	73	20	36	44	44	40	54	45
Explicit E&E Policy	47	67	91	60	27	56	33	36	54	29
Curricula development funds	40	53	64	40	64	33	44	20	42	26

All regions display areas of strength and opportunities for growth and development, with the key challenge being to create a more level playing field across regions. Significant regional variances are evident across all aspects of the study, some of which are attributable to local influencing factors.

Notable findings include:

- LDA accounts for 1/5th of all students, but has a lower than average Student Engagement Rate
- YF has the highest University Enterprise Mission
- SEEDA and EEDA have higher levels of in-curricula provision led by business schools
- Art and Design is above average in NWDA, ONE and SWRDA
- Engineering is above average in SWRDA, LDA, YF and NWDA
- Regions with higher than average Student Engagement Rates (SWRDA, EMDA, EEDA, SEEDA and YF) also display higher proportions of student incubators:
  - Three (YF, EMDA and SWRDA) also have a higher percentage of explicit enterprise and entrepreneurship policies
  - Four (YF, SEEDA, EEDA and EMDA) also have a higher percentage of staff training
- Extra-curricula provision is strong in AWM and EEDA and below average in ONE and SWRDA
- YF and ONE are the highest providers of start-up funds.

Table Key

highest above average average below average lowest

NAT (National); **NWDA** (Northwest Development Agency); **YF** (Yorkshire Forward Development Agency); **ONE** (One NorthEast Development Agency); **AWM** (Advantage West Midlands Development Agency); **EMDA** (East Midlands Development Agency); **EEDA** (East of England Development Agency); **SEEDA** (South East England Development Agency); **SWRDA** (South West of England Development Agency); **LDA** (London Development Agency)

Research was conducted online and voluntary between February and June 2007.

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