

Technopreneurship

If we stick with the original title for a minute, here are some relevant definitions.

Entrepreneur definition

a person who organizes and manages any enterprise, esp. a business, usually with considerable initiative and risk.

an employer of productive labor; contractor.

[\(reference\)](#) [1]

Technopreneur

an entrepreneur involved with high technology

[\(reference\)](#) [2]

My personal view is that these are a reasonable starting point (even if we don't like the word) given that specialist computing and maths elements will be handled in other units.

Given this and the philosophy of Diplomas, the qualifications should reflect applied learning in a hi-tech context that is associated with business ventures and the associated risk.

The aim would be then to develop learning so that students increase their capability in analysing markets to find opportunities that can be met through the use of hi-tech creativity including applying existing technologies in innovative ways as well as developing new technologies to solve problems. Could be software, hardware or a combination. They should be able to evaluate the risk associated with a venture and make reasonable judgements about the prospects of success taking these into account. Specific knowledge will be needed about

- how to raise the finance they need
- the nature of the competition in that market
- the barriers to entry to the market for themselves and others
- the barriers to take up by customers
- the technological and social contexts of products and services
- possible partnerships
- the importance of sales
- factors affecting business growth
- options for exit strategies

While this might look like a business start up situation, it also applies to existing businesses. If established companies do not employ "technopreneurs" to develop new products and services they will die. Someone who does not want to take the personal financial risk of starting their own business still needs to understand that risk on behalf of their employer and still innovates using resources from their company. They might well have to sell their idea to a line manager in the first instance. Of course if some of these are covered in the Principal Learning a Specialist Learning qualification would take it further and into more depth.

Are entrepreneurs born or made?

I believe the answer is the same as to the question is a mathematician born or made? Some people have a natural flair and interest in maths but all people can be taught to improve their maths, to

understand why mathematics is important in society and to develop an interest. A good book that provides rich evidence that the at least some of Entrepreneurship is to do with learning is "Movers and Shakers, The Brains and Bravado Behind Business" (Bloomsbury 2003) [Available from Amazon](#) [3]

[John Adair](#) [4] - 50:50 rule. 50% of motivation is from within, 50% from the environment.

Partly attitude, partly motivation, partly knowledge, partly skills, entrepreneurship is a complex mixture of genetic and environmental interaction so it is perfectly legitimate to run courses and qualifications in it to recognise learning and attainment.

Projects, case studies, theory.

I think that a combination of case studies and project could cover the assessment in a meaningful way. I prefer shorter units since they provide more flexibility eg for use by high attainers who can breeze grade As in GCSEs in KS4 as well as more combinations in KS5.

eg 120 hours Programming, 120 hours Technopreneurship, 120 hours maths for computer scientists. Gives 360 GLH.

(Web and games would then be options too and they would do 3 out of 5 or you could make say maths mandatory and pick to others)

Any one of these could fit in to KS4 in a single subject slot with bright learners (just about). Then they could have more flexibility in the Sixth Form having gained some earlier credit. For Sixth Form age, if you make the components bigger you increasingly block off other options. If you make them 180 hours just do Programming and TP and miss out the maths. (Or a different combination) OTOH you could make them 180 hours and insist on Programming and Maths eg for a CS course. But then why not just insist on AS maths? Or indeed say A level maths for the whole 360 hours? Question then is how many people capable of a good A level in maths would be doing the IT Diploma?

[TES article about entrepreneurship](#)

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Links

[1] <http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/entrepreneur>

[2] <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/technopreneur>

[3] <http://tinyurl.com/n3bfm3>

[4] <http://www.johnadair.co.uk/>

[5] <http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6006046>