

28 February 2023

Dear Prime Minister,

I hope this letter finds you well.

I write to you as the co-founder of KOMI Group, a multimillion-pound Manchester-based social media, marketing, and licensing business that employs over 80 people, which I exited in 2022. And I write to you as someone who fell into entrepreneurship, only to discover that Britain's education system has fallen well short of priming our young talent for enterprise and entrepreneurship.

I grew up in a small town called Chadderton with a love of technology. Unsure what to study, I took A-Level business studies, and I hated it. It bored me to death, and, shockingly, it taught me I didn't have what it would take to build a successful business.

As Prime Minister, you have stressed the vital importance of mathematics education. I admire your ambition to improve the next generation's numeracy skills, and I share your passion for education, which is why I am writing to you today.

I recently sold my shareholding in KOMI Group to focus on supporting the creation of young entrepreneurs. I believe you are the best person to help me in this venture.

Enterprise education is fast becoming the forgotten child of the curriculum and not the catalyst for young entrepreneurs that we need it to be. A-Level business studies is killing opportunity and is in desperate need of reform. We are denying young people the opportunity to enrich their lives and their communities.

I was lucky enough to discover entrepreneurship is for me, but there will be countless others out there who never get the chance.

Economic growth is nowhere to be seen and the Bank of England expects the UK to enter recession this year – at this time, surely, first-class enterprise education should be a key priority for the Government.

It is right that growing the economy is one of your five immediate priorities, but you must also take a long-term approach to economic prosperity – as any decent Prime Minister should. Such an approach must have the fostering of entrepreneurial talent at its heart.

According to your Government (via GOV.UK), the newly formed Department for Business and Trade "will bring together business expertise and world-class trade negotiators under the vision of making the UK the best place to start and grow a business – driving growth, increasing jobs, and raising wages and living standards".

Yet, to date, your Government has shunned the opportunity to support the creation of the next generation of British entrepreneurs – the very people who will start and grow the businesses you say we need. What is the point of making the UK the best business environment if young people are not interested in business?

Since April 2021, Ofsted has reviewed the science curriculum twice, as well as mathematics, languages, geography, music, history, PE, art and design, computing, and English. Why not business studies?

In its current state, business studies is unfit for purpose and is turning young people off entrepreneurship. It teaches children that if you want to start a business, you need to write an exhaustive business plan in microscopic detail. From my own business journey, I know this is not true. I networked, developed an idea, and was determined to make it work. And it did.

The curriculum is far too detail-oriented, theory-driven, and book-heavy. It is not only boring – it is unsuited to many of the new, fast-moving industries that fill the modern world. Business studies is not taken as seriously as more traditional subjects such as science and maths, making it a second, or even last, choice for students. Education in enterprise should be highly sought after, not pushed aside. Where is our entrepreneurial spirit?

Through reform of the curriculum, business studies can become the go-to career springboard for tens of thousands of bright entrepreneurial children. It must be laser-focused on giving children the tools, drive, and expertise they need to be successful in business. It needs to put strong emphasis on practical learning, allowing students to hone their skills through their own enterprise projects and support children to gain experience in real-world business settings.

It is also vital that interaction with entrepreneurs, investors, start-ups, incubators, and others from the business world is built into the very curriculum. This real-world insight will provide students with accurate and inspiring knowledge of the opportunities available to them – something that cannot be achieved with a textbook.

As a self-made and highly successful entrepreneur yourself, I am certain you will share my aspiration to support the next generation of entrepreneurs. For this reason, I urge you to commission an urgent review of the business studies curriculum, with the aim of developing a strategy for raising its credibility, modernising it for today's business environment, and increasing its practical element.

There has never been a greater need for this reform. I urge you to take the initiative and support entrepreneur-driven prosperity through education.

Yours sincerely,

Ryan Williams