

TV MILLIONAIRE HAILS STUDENT IDEAS



DOWN TO BUSINESS Dragons' Den star Peter Jones with students at Manchester Academy – he was impressed by their work on business ideas Photograph Paul Simpson

Praise from Dragon's mouth

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DRAGONS' Den star Peter Jones is used to shooting down business plans with a withering comment. But he was stuck for words after hearing from Manchester students. The no-nonsense millionaire had only praise for Manchester Academy pupils who delivered a string of seamless presentations.

Mr Jones, who made his first million after opening a tennis school and now heads a £200m business portfolio, heard a pitch from three Year 11 students hoping to launch a glossy magazine aimed at teenagers. Students from the Moss Side school, many hailing from different parts of the world, also took part in role-playing where they spoke on behalf of different states and described their selling

points. Mr Jones, who looked at students' work and gave them valuable feedback, said: "I really enjoyed hearing pitches from the kids. They had some good ideas and were very confident in presenting them. "The children come from many backgrounds and speak many different languages and the school seems more vibrant for it. The students I heard were really entrepreneurial and

could teach some of the people who make pitches on Dragons' Den a thing or two." Head teacher Kathy August said: "Peter had heard about the good work our students were doing and we were extremely happy he could come here." Mr Jones is funding an £8m National Enterprise Academy for teenagers, which will be based at Manchester Business School.