

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)

What is the EPQ?

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is free standing qualification. It involves choosing a topic and carrying out research into that particular area, then creating EITHER a 5,000 word report OR a 'product' plus a 1,000 word report. After that, students must deliver a small presentation to a group of non-specialists about their topic, lasting from 10 - 15 minutes.

Why should I do it?

It allows you to develop your personal interests on a topic you feel genuinely passionate about. Plus, it helps when applying for university (especially competitive ones, such as Oxbridge), as you are set apart from all the other candidates. It demonstrates your commitment to a subject, and allows you to develop the independent research skills needed for undergraduate study. If you are lucky enough to receive an interview from your desired university, it gives you something to talk about and really get your teeth into so you don't run out of things to say. Completing an EPQ will bring a huge sense of achievement and personal satisfaction. Along the way you will overcome challenges, find creative solutions, develop maturity, confidence, resilience and self-awareness.

Work-related benefits

Useful work skills that students will develop are:

- Time management and personal organisation
- Problem solving and decision making
- Clear, concise and accurate written communication
- Communicating complex information to a “lay” audience
- Use of ICT to communicate effectively

Educational benefits

- Increasing knowledge and skills across two or more A-level subjects
- Enrich understanding of A-level subjects
- Extending skills

University benefits

Universities really value the EPQ as its helps them to select students with a commitment to their chosen subject and a head-start in the independent learning skills that higher education demands.

Here are some examples of what universities say about the EPQ

Cambridge: “We welcome the introduction of the Extended Project and would encourage students to undertake one as it will help develop independent study and research skills, which will ease the transition from school to higher education. However, completion of an Extended Project won't be a requirement of any offer made.”

Bristol: “The University recognises that some A level students may also choose to offer EPQ. In such cases, some admissions tutors may make two alternative offers, one of which involves success in EPQ – for example AAA at A-level or AAB at A-level plus EPQ.”

Newcastle: “We value the skills of research and independent learning that EPQ is designed to develop. We welcome applications from students offering EPQ alongside A-levels. If students offer EPQ it will be taken into account. The offer may be varied as a result, in recognition of the level of study skills that will have been developed.”

University College London: “UCL welcomes the introduction of EPQ into the curriculum, recognising that it will develop many of the skills necessary for successful study at University. For students offering A-levels, UCL will be accepting a pass in EPQ as an alternative to the need to offer a pass in a fourth subject at AS level”

Does the topic have to be related to my A-levels?

Not at all. It can be on literally ANYTHING you want, within reason. You cannot do a project on WW2 for example - that's far too broad. You must eventually boil it down to an individual research question. It would be wise to choose your topic based on what you intend on studying after school or linked to a career area of interest.

Advice on choosing a topic:

Don't duplicate what you've already done at A-level - choose an aspect of a subject you want to study in more depth - the topic must be clearly focused - ideally, you would want something you could conduct a lot of research into.

What could my 'product' be?

If you don't fancy writing a massive report, here's a few ideas for a product: - a short story or book - a performance (dance or dramatic) - a website or computer programme, a sculpture or a film.

How is it graded?

A*-E. Candidate who don't achieve at least an E will be not be awarded with the qualification. EPQ attracts UCAS tariff points (see below)

UCAS points

| <u>Qualification</u> | <u>Grade</u> | <u>Points</u> |
|----------------------|--------------|---------------|
| EPQ | A* | 28 |
| | A | 24 |
| | B | 20 |
| | C | 16 |
| | D | 12 |
| | E | 8 |

What's the commitment?

Generally, students will spend around 120 hours in all, some may do it in less, some may take considerably longer. 30 hours of this will be a “taught” element which will give students the skills and knowledge to deal with undergraduate level Project Management, Research, Academic report writing etc. Students MUST attend these taught sessions.

Launch and further information to students in summer term.



SOME EXAMPLES OF PAST STUDENTS EPQ TOPICS

- Is it ethical to genetically engineer babies for designer purposes?
- What role does comedy have in serious culture?
- Is the only aim of business to make maximum profit?
- What are the long term health effects of binge drinking?
- Is Marxism still relevant in this post-modern world?
- Have reality TV programmes spawned a generation obsessed with fame?
- Would the vote be beneficial for 16-18 year olds?
- Can music influence crime rates?
- Is censorship justified?
- Is Shakespeare still relevant?
- Dance Choreography based on Slavery
- CD of Irish Music
- Sculpture on the theme of "Relationships"