

## EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION (EPQ)



### Background

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a project-based qualification run by Exam Boards including AQA. The qualification is worth half a full A-Level qualification. The projects can consist of either a written report on a topic of your choice, or it can be the creation of some sort of artefact and a supporting report. In this way, the project can connect to any area of school life.

### What does it involve?

Over Year 12 and into Year 13, you will carry out an independent investigation into any topic of interest. It doesn't have to be the same as you're looking at for A-Level – in fact, you need to make sure it's something extra to what you already do. Previous studies have looked at WaterAid, depression, planning in cities, teenage witches and even the future of transplants in the medical industry.

Over the course of the year, you will have a number of taught sessions, learning how to research and investigate, before you go on to complete the project. At all times, you have the support of the programme coordinator, and individual teacher mentors. You can write an essay, or you can produce some sort of artefact, such as a piece of art, or a technological installation.

### Why should I do it?

Many universities will offer a lower grade entry profile if you have successfully completed the EPQ. For example, the University of Southampton has a dedicated admissions offer for students who excel in the EPQ. The University of East Anglia offers a £3000 bursary for students with excellent research project results. At the University of Birmingham, applicants who take an EPQ and meet the offer criteria will be made the standard offer for their programme of choice plus an alternative offer which will be one grade lower and a grade A in the EPQ. Some universities are not even requiring a specific grade in the EPQ to reduce offers, merely that the student has successfully completed the project.

As well as this, students who complete the EPQ are often more likely to achieve a better grade in their degrees. A Cambridge Assessment Research Report found that 'Students with the EP were more likely than those without it to obtain a good degree (odds of achieving a first class degree increased by 1.25 and of achieving at least an upper second class degree by 1.30).'

You will also have more to talk about on your personal statement and at university interviews. You have to be able to show universities that they should offer you a place on their course over someone else, and the EPQ gives you more to talk about. This can be particularly important for the Russell Group universities. Lastly, you can develop the key skills needed to succeed not just at university, but in the real world, including research, report writing and presentation.

### Approximate Programme Dates

September Year 12

- Programme launched to all new Year 12s in an assembly, encouraging applications
- Applications received, reviewed and students informed of success

October Year 12

- Projects matched to supervisors
- Initial discussion meetings

November Year 12

- Previous year's projects perform presentations at Open Evening

By February Year 12

- Students to have met with supervisors at least twice
- Project Proposal forms to be submitted and agreed

By June Year 12

- Mid-Project Review to check research
- Students can begin writing their projects if their research is adequate

By September Year 13

- Product Draft reviewed
- Final Product handed in

October Year 13

- Presentations delivered
- Projects marked
- Marks delivered to students for appeal

November Year 13

- Marks submitted and work sent off for moderation

### Teachers to contact:

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