

# **Extended Project Qualification**

## **(Enrichment Qualification)**



# Extended Project Qualification Transition Pack

## What is the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)?

The EPQ is an A-level standard, standalone qualification designed to extend and develop your abilities beyond the A-level syllabus and prepare for university or your future career.

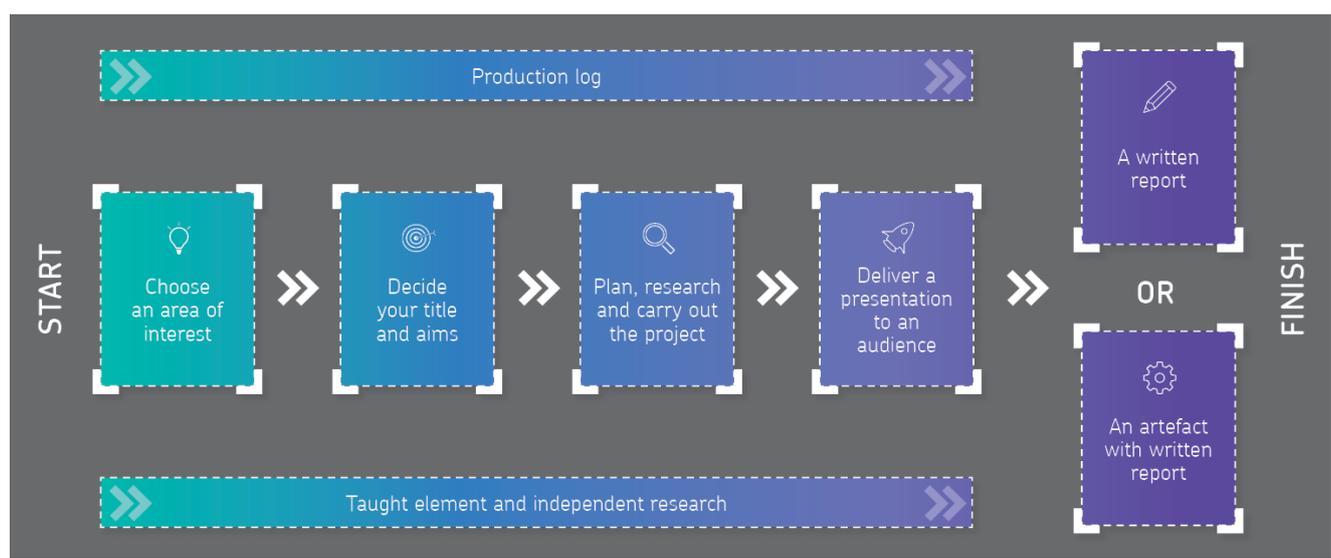
- It can be taken as an extension of other Level 3 qualifications or vocational qualifications.
- It's worth half an A-level in terms of UCAS points.
- It's recognised by universities and employers.

EPQ provides an opportunity for you to extend your abilities beyond your sixth form course of study, stand out and prepare for university or your future career. You'll be supported by your EPQ supervisor throughout the duration of the course, but it's down to you to plan the time you need to complete your project

## Where the journey starts

The EPQ can take two formats – written or practical – so it's suitable for all students. The final piece will either be a written report of around 5,000 words, or an artefact with a written report, which could be, for example, a 3D piece of artwork, a play or musical composition, a robot, a model aeroplane, a website.

How it works:



The process is simple: choose your interest, decide your title and aims, create your project, then present it to an audience.

This is all underpinned by lots of independent research and completing a production log, to track your progress throughout the project.

## Find your interest, something you're truly passionate about.

As the EPQ is student-led, you really can do your project about anything. Some students choose to do an EPQ on a topic that supports their interest in what they'd like to do at university. Other students want to extend their learning beyond their A-level subjects, and some choose to do something completely different.



## The taught element

The specification requires 30 hours of supervised learning, however these may not be typical lessons. During these lessons, you'll learn skills such as:

- how to develop titles, questions and proposals
- project management skills, including time management, planning techniques, and setting aims and objectives.
- research methods, including research ethics, analysis and evaluation, risk assessment and data collection techniques
- report writing and presentation skills.

## Independent research

Independent research is the foundation of the EPQ and will allow you to:

- carry out detailed research that informs the project product outcome and format
- use of a wide range of relevant resources
- perform critical analysis and evaluation of resources
- use a mix of sources to realise the project product outcome

## Examples of past projects

- To research, plan and produce an eighteenth-century ball gown.
- Can true happiness be found in a single moment?
- To what extent do genetic factors contribute towards addiction in humans?
- How dimples affect the aerodynamic drag of a golf ball.
- Should you be concerned about mass surveillance?
- How sustainable is the financial inequality between teams in the English Premier League?
- Create an original scene for the musical 'Wicked'.

## EPQ and University

- Studies have shown that you're a-level results can improve by up to 29% when studying for an EPQ at the same time.
- Gain an extra half an A-level in UCAS points if you choose EPQ as your fourth option.
- Make a strong first impression in your university interviews with your EPQ as a discussion point.
- Impress your professors and get ahead of the class by learning how to reference before you've even attended your first seminar.

## EPQ and the workplace

Even if Higher Education isn't your end goal, completing an EPQ will set you up with some key skills for the workplace, including interviewing, conducting research, time management and planning.



## How is EPQ assessed?

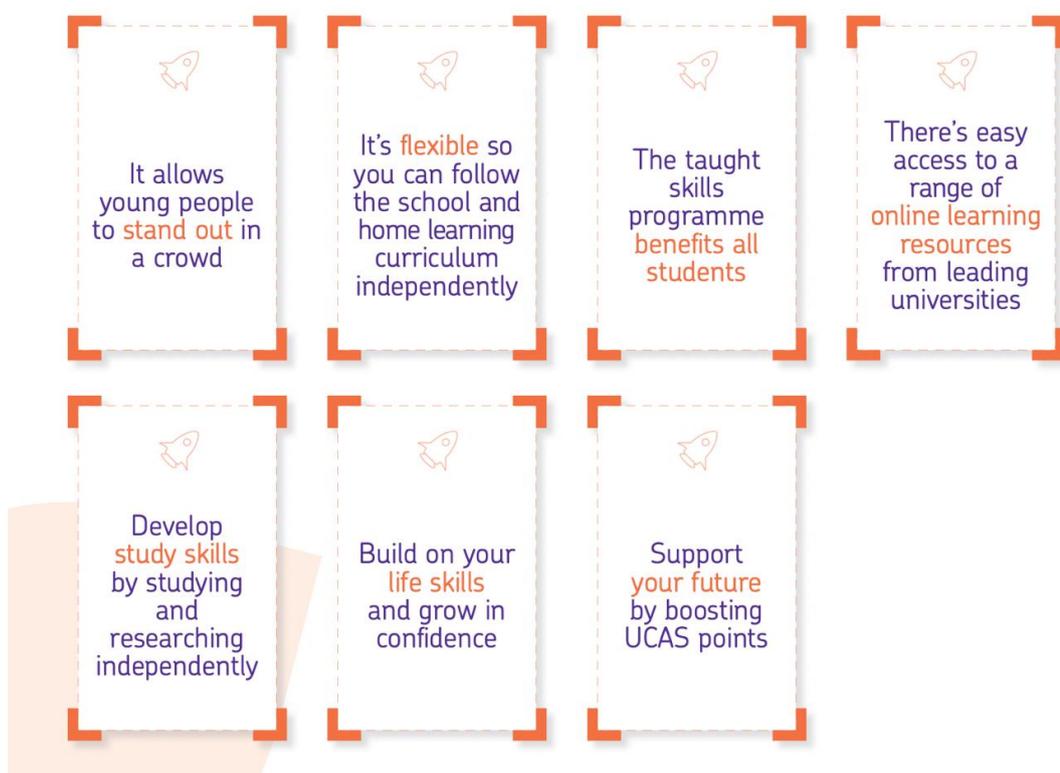
It is important to remember when choosing EPQ that it is not simply your final product or dissertation that is assessed. The process of how you complete your project and document your journey towards developing these skills and producing your final outcome is just as important as the outcome itself.

You will produce a portfolio of work that contains supporting evidence for each of four assessment objectives. This portfolio must include at least one piece of extended written evidence, as well as evidence supporting: project management, research and development of the project, the final outcome and on-going reviews of the project.

You are also required to produce a presentation at the end of your project.

## How will EPQ help you to progress?

The EPQ lends itself to any future programme of study or career because it is focused on transferable skills. If you choose to do a project on an area that links to your future university or career plans, this will give you a competitive edge above other applicants because you will have conducted research and developed a specialism within that area.



Even if your project does not link to a future course or career, you will have shown you have key skills in areas such as project management, research, extended writing, independent learning, evaluation, critical analysis and time management.

# EPQ Preparatory Tasks

Please complete each of the tasks set out in the rest of this transition pack and bring your answers and/or findings with you to the first lesson in September if you join the course.

Alternatively if you prefer there is an online course running through the University of Southampton which is specifically designed to help you prepare for EPQ. You can access this by clicking on the link below. It is run through the 'Future Learn' platform. It is an 8 week course starting in June and you would be required to complete 1 hour of study a week. You must register and select when you would like to complete the course, (choose the June option). Don't forget to select the 'Join Free' option. Remember to bring your work and findings with you to the first lesson in September.

<https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/research-project>

## Task 1: Set up a folder in your school Google Drive entitled EPQ

Start as you mean to go on and get organised! Set up a folder titled EPQ in your school google drive. You can complete all these tasks on paper, however if you choose to complete these tasks digitally then save all your work in your EPQ folder ready for September.

## Task 2 : Exploring ideas for your project

**How you explore and select ideas for what to choose for your project is a very important aspect of EPQ.** It is a great opportunity to provide evidence that you have researched a variety of possible ideas, analysed the pros and cons of each project idea and evaluated which will best suit you and why. It is also a good opportunity to begin collecting evidence for your portfolio and demonstrate the skills you are developing.

1. Start by making a mind map of all the subjects, activities and hobbies that interest you. You should come up with at least 20 ideas. This could be anything from subjects you enjoy or topics of study you have found interesting from History, science, RS, the news, to things you like to do like reading fantasy fiction novels, cooking, playing a musical instrument or even rock climbing.
  2. Now highlight 10 areas that you think might be most interesting/enjoyable to complete a project on.
  3. Next put a star next to any that may link to your future plans for university or career. (If you do not know what you want to do yet maybe now is a good time to start researching university courses and careers!)
  4. Of the ideas that you have highlighted and starred, rank them in order of interest with 1 being the most interesting to 10 being the least.
  5. Choose your 5 top areas of interest. For each area create an individual mind map for how you could turn each into a project. Think of all the examples of possible projects I explained in the introduction and use these to explore some ideas for what your project could be for each area. For example....
- Organise an event – charity event, concert, sports event, cookery class etc
  - Produce a product/ artefact – book, magazine, comic, app, website, toy, game, costume, script etc
  - Produce a report with findings – medical research, fieldwork, business venture, working with disadvantaged people etc
  - Dissertation – historical figure, critical analysis of a film, author etc

### Task 3: Researching and referencing

The Extended Project Qualification requires you to research as widely as possible from a variety of sources; you will need the ability to research and reference your research.

**Researching** just means finding and gathering relevant information.

**Referencing** is how you acknowledge and make a record of where this information is from.

#### **Task - Create a guide to researching and referencing using the links below:**

- identify all the possible sources of information you could use to gather information
- include an explanation of the difference of primary and secondary sources
- include a section explaining why referencing is so important and what plagiarism is
- explain how to reference the different sources of information you have identified
- contain examples of how to reference “quotes” from books, websites, museums, interviewees and other sources you will use

Guidance on how to reference, why referencing is important and what plagiarism is.....

<https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/all-resources/writing/writing-resources/ref-bib>

[http://edshare.soton.ac.uk/4065/1/acknowledging\\_knowledge.pdf](http://edshare.soton.ac.uk/4065/1/acknowledging_knowledge.pdf)

An explanation about the difference between primary and secondary sources...

<https://www.umgc.edu/current-students/learning-resources/writing-center/online-guide-to-writing/tutorial/chapter4/ch4-06.html>

### Task 4: Start testing out your project ideas

It is very important that before you select your project you have made sure there is sufficient scope for research and development. For example there is no point trying to write a dissertation answering the question, “How has the civil rights movement influenced modern political figures today?” or beginning work for a brief, ‘To create a piece of art inspired by the impressionist Edgar Degas and his work with the photographer Muybridge’ if you are unable to access a variety of information from different sources that allows you to investigate this. Remember EPQ requires you to research as widely as possible from a variety of sources.

It is also important to make sure your area of research for your project is not too narrow. For example, if you choose to start exploring the broader area of “The Civil Rights Movement’ you could begin research on a variety of areas like the history of civil rights, advances in civil rights and how they are applied around the world before choosing an area to focus on if you wish. Alternatively, if you choose to begin with a brief, ‘To produce a series of artworks inspired by the work of the Impressionists’ this would allow you to explore the work of a variety of artists before focusing on one if that is what you choose to do.

#### **Task - Begin reading and researching the 5 areas you are most interested in. As you gather information ask these questions to help you evaluate your ideas.**

- Is there a lot of information available about this topic and can I easily access it?
- Will I be able to gather information about this from a wide variety of sources?
- Is the outcome I may be setting myself practical?

Thank you for working through the tasks in this transition pack. Doing so will help you make a good start to the EPQ course. If you have any questions about the tasks or EPQ generally please email me at: [kaye.patrick@oatforge.co.uk](mailto:kaye.patrick@oatforge.co.uk).

Please bring all of the work you have completed to your first EPQ lesson.  
I look forward to seeing you in September.