

AQA Specification

General information:

What is an Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)? It's a Level 3 qualification that is completed alongside a student's main A level choices. The purpose of the EPQ is to give the student a head start on learning, to take on board the skills needed for higher education, to provide evidence of personal commitment to learning and progression, to add value to the student's UCAS personal statement and university entrance interview, and to provide an opportunity for the student's chosen university to, in some instances, adjust the A level entry requirements for them.

How does it work? A student will choose to produce either a written research dissertation that explores, analyses and evaluates a hypothesis they create, derived from an area of personal interest or a topic that is related to their proposed university course or they might decide to develop their practical skills and produce an artefact such as composing a piece of music or building a go-kart from scratch for example.

Why is the EPQ valuable? Research by the University of Southampton has shown that development of these skills means that EPQ students have higher first year pass rates across all subjects taken at degree level, and that EPQ students are valued by universities, as the same research shows that they are significantly more likely to achieve a 1st or 2:1 in their degree.

Course content:

The EPQ is divided into two parts

1. The taught element - teacher-led lessons aimed at developing the skills necessary to complete the project successfully. These include project and time management skills; developing an using primary and secondary research in an academic context; ICT skills; the format and structure of accepted academic forms of research report; Harvard referencing, the evaluation of sources and the prevention of plagiarism; presentation skills.
2. A further 90+ hours of study are dedicated to independent work, where students, guided by a Supervisor, will need to choose an area of interest, draft a title and aims of the project for formal approval by the centre, plan, research and carry out the project, deliver a presentation to a non-specialist audience and provide evidence of all stages of project development and production for assessment.

How is the course assessed?

Whatever route taken, a project log called Project Q is filled in to record their progress from start to finish. This will be evaluated at different stages by their Supervisor, and submitted with their project at the end of the course. It is worth 30% of the qualification.

The dissertation or artefact and its report is the second element, which is worth 50%

A presentation and project reflection report are the final parts – worth 20% of the marks.

Entry requirements:	Results information:	Universities who have considered reduced offers for EPQ students:
In addition to the general entry requirements for BWS, a grade 5 in English Language and Mathematics.	EPQs are marked internally then moderated by the exam board. All students will be given an indication of their mark by the start of Year 13.	Bath, Southampton, Leeds, Birmingham and many others