



# Extended Project Qualification

Student Guide  
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## Introduction

The Extended Project (EP) is an A Level standard qualification which involves you researching a topic of your choice. Many students decide that their EP should be closely related to their chosen university course; however, this need not be the case. Similarly, although most projects submitted tend to be in the traditional 5,000-word dissertation format, this is not exclusively so as diversity is a key element of the EP philosophy. As such, live performance, film, software creation, a design portfolio and other artefact-based projects are all valid alternative outcomes.

The EP is a qualification that has been welcomed by universities and employers as it enables you to gain skills and knowledge that prepare you for higher education and employment. Extended Project will make you an independent learner, capable of planning and developing an academic research project over an extended period of time. It also allows you to use your own initiative and demonstrate innovation and creativity in producing a project of your choice; a freedom which is seldom to be found in traditional A Level specifications.

Taking up the Extended Project gives you numerous benefits as a learner and as an individual. The qualification helps you:

- develop **knowledge and understanding** of a specific topic through research
- develop as **critical, independent, self-evaluative learners** by improving and reviewing your own learning and performance
- develop your **communication and presentation skills**
- demonstrate initiative, creativity and flexibility in responding to challenges and in **applying new technologies**, where appropriate
- support your personal aspirations for **higher education and employment**

The Extended Project is the equivalent of half an A Level (50%), whereas an AS level is only worth 40%, so the Extended Project is a valuable consideration instead of undertaking a fourth AS subject to boost UCAS points, as follows:

Grade	Tariff points
A*	28
A	24
B	20
C	16
D	12
E	8

The number of EPQ entries nationally has grown significantly since 2009 with over 40,000 submitted in the Summer 2019 season. The reasons for this growth are:

- a) The EPQ helps students develop a range of independent learning skills that are so important for success at university and in employment
- b) Increasingly, universities are including the EPQ in their UCAS offers. Very often an A/A\* grade in the EPQ will lead to a lower A Level grade requirement
- c) The educational climate has changed. Fewer students are now pursuing a fourth A level as the focus is increasingly on quality rather than quantity of grades
- d) The EPQ allows the student to pursue a research topic of their choice; a freedom which is seldom to be found in traditional A Level specifications

Here are some quotes from universities and the media on why they value the Extended Project.

*'We value the skills of research and independent learning that the Extended Project is designed to develop. We welcome applications from students offering the Extended Project alongside A levels. As the Extended Project is optional it is not a requirement for application...if you offer Extended Project.... Your offer may be varied as a result, in recognition of the level of study skills you will have developed.'*

[www.newcastle.ac.uk](http://www.newcastle.ac.uk)

*'UCL welcomes the introduction of the Extended Project into the curriculum, recognising that it will develop many of the skills necessary for successful study at university. For students presenting A levels, UCL will be accepting a pass in the Extended Project as an alternative to the need to offer a pass in a fourth AS level.'*

[www.ucl.ac.uk](http://www.ucl.ac.uk)

## Overview of the Qualification

Qualification structure: One final outcome completed either individually or as a group project with each student having a distinct, individual role.

Guided Learning Hours: 120

Teaching/Contact time: recommended 45 guided learning hours with your supervisor.

Assessment methods: Your work will be marked by your supervisor. These marks will then be moderated by WJEC.

Grading: A\* / A / B / C / D / E

## Expectations from Students

It is a process-driven qualification and you are expected to undertake a project which can be in a variety of formats and contexts, e.g. a dissertation, field investigation, artefact, design or performance. Your project topic can be linked to your study programme of GCE A Level or Level 3 Vocational qualifications, on a topic of personal interest or a topic you'd like to study at university.

There is a taught element of approximately 45 guided learning hours which you will be required to attend. You will be taught skills that will help you complete your project.

You will be working with a supervisor who is possibly one of your tutors.

The Extended Project is underpinned by research and would entail a piece of written work. If you have chosen a dissertation or field study, you are required to produce a piece of work that consists of at least 5,000 words. If you have chosen an artefact, design, performance or a piece of creative writing, then you must produce Project Outcome Notes of at least 1,500 words to support the product you have created.

The process involves learners and supervisors completing the EPQ File forms, as follows:

### **PART A      Learner Records**

#### **EPF1          Proposal and Title**

Choosing a project topic and writing a proposal outlining the aims and objectives of the project and a project plan of how the project outcome will be achieved.

#### **EPF2 (A-E)    Extended Project Record**

Recording progress demonstrating what was learned from the taught element, how research has been conducted, decisions made, problems solved and how the whole process was reviewed and evaluated including meetings with supervisors.

**EPF3 Extended Project Outcome**

Producing a project outcome (for an intelligent non-specialist), providing evidence of the final piece of written work or product in an appropriate format.

**EPF 4 Extended Project Presentation**

Making a presentation to a non-specialist audience explaining the project outcome including a review of their own performance and learning through a question and answer session.

**PART B - Supervisor Records**

**In addition to the above, your supervisor will complete this section which includes:**

**EPF 5 Extended Project Presentation Witness Statement**

This must be completed and signed by the supervisor/assessor and include Q & A information.

**EPF 6 Extended Project Supervisor Final Assessment Mark Sheet & Centre Internal Standardisation Form**

Marking against the separate strands of the Assessment Objective criteria, together with evidence of effective internal moderation.

At the time of submission, therefore, each of you will submit the following evidence:

**PROJECT FORMS – LEARNERS**

- Project File front sheet
- Learner Declaration Form  
*(signed by both you and your supervisor)*
- Project Proposal and Title
- Project Plan
- Project Record and Meetings with your Supervisor
- Project Outcome
- Project Presentation Evidence  
e.g. scanned cue cards and your slides

**PROJECT FORMS – SUPERVISORS**

- Project File front sheet
- Learner Declaration Form *(signed by both learner and supervisor)*
- Project Presentation Witness Statement
- Supervisor Final Assessment Mark Sheet
- Centre Internal Standardisation Form

## The role of the supervisor

Your **Supervisor** is responsible for guiding you through the EP process. Your supervisor is there to support you.

You will have at least 3 – 4 formal meetings at various stages of the project to discuss your progress. You may have informal meetings also, but this will depend on how much advice and guidance you require. This will help you to ensure that you remain focused and meet your deadlines.

You will be able to approach your supervisor and other subject staff if you have specific queries. However, your supervisor and other teaching staff must avoid taking over control of the project and over directing you. **Think of your supervisor as a critical friend.** For example, your supervisor should pose questions to you, rather than simply provide you with the answers. Your supervisor may pose questions such as, 'do you think you have referenced all your sources accurately?' Similarly, your supervisor may ask you whether you feel the conclusion is sufficiently developed. It is not in the spirit of the qualification for the supervisor to 'correct' any drafts in terms of spelling, punctuation and grammar, nor is the supervisor to provide an initial mark for you to go away and improve upon. Your supervisor will assess and mark your project at the end of the course.

### 1. Taught Element

The Extended Project includes a **teaching programme** delivered through lessons on a range of skills from a generic package and in some circumstances, specific skills to be developed that are peculiar to the subject matter of your individual/group project.

In the **teaching programme**, generic skills include detailed familiarisation with the **assessment objectives** and **core skills** like research methods, how to reference sources, interpreting and analysing information and data, writing styles, organising and prioritising tasks/activities, conducting meetings, effective presentations. **Specialist skills** might include specific needs like engineering principles, web-site design or sport coaching techniques.

You will receive some training on **problem-solving and decision-making** and encouraged to apply these areas to your specific projects.

You will also be made aware of ethical guidelines and potential pitfalls and issues such as plagiarism to ensure a safe environment in the development of your project.

**ORAL COMMUNICATION** – informal dialogue and discussion, semi-formal interviews, and presentation.

**RESEARCH**– reading range, understanding skills, referencing.

**WRITING** - Content and organisation, technical accuracy; style and purpose.

You need to be aware of **ethical and moral considerations** in developing and completing a

project. In addition, you might focus on the following **areas of self-improvement**:

**Challenges** - making notes of any problems and challenges faced and actions that are needed.

**Reflections** – reflecting on progress, including successes and failures, strengths and weaknesses and considering possible strategies for improvement.

**Meetings** – preparing for key lessons and supervision meetings for discussions on the project.

## **Research**

You should be aware of the importance of research to the Extended Project Qualification. The onus is on you, albeit with support from your supervisor, to show initiative and use a range of relevant resources to find material. For projects to be successful, you must reveal some significant learning in the form of advance in knowledge and understanding.

This should be apparent in the quality of the outcome – in terms of the assimilation of the reading and research, and your ability to articulate your understanding in your own words.

You should apply the soundest of principles for using resources – namely, to read, select, re-organise and use the material relevantly.

Depending on the topic and the type of project, the range of source material may include numerical data, graphs, surveys, questionnaires, written and oral communications. It is important that the material plays an integral part in the purpose of the project, and that simplistic primary sources (such as peer questionnaires and graphs) are not overvalued. Primary sources (such as developed interviews), however, potentially have a significant role to play.

You should learn how to reference source material and should be aware of the issue of plagiarism. Extracts taken directly from books or websites should be clearly identified as quotations.



## Assessment

You will be given sufficient time during the teaching and learning programme to enable you to develop the essential research skills to your full potential. The teaching and learning programme will cover the following content.

Content
<b>AO1 Manage</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Realising the identified project aims and objectives</li><li>• Project planning and design – action planning, setting timescales, milestones and deadlines, identifying sub tasks and activities, setting targets, priorities and goals</li><li>• Project management – check, measure, monitor and assess progress, adapt to change, manage risks, health and safety, use of project management software, e.g. Gantt and PERT charts, Critical Path Analysis, time management</li><li>• Project accountability – establishing appropriate success criteria, methods to measure success</li></ul>
<b>AO2 Use Resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Source selection and application</li><li>• Source evaluation, evaluating credibility, e.g. using BRAVENS analysis, evaluating source utility</li><li>• Data analysis and validity</li><li>• Source referencing and avoiding plagiarism</li><li>• Synthesising complex information and data</li><li>• Ethical considerations</li></ul>
<b>AO3 Develop and Realise</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Problem solving</li><li>• Decision making</li><li>• Use of language and argument</li><li>• Use of new technologies</li><li>• The standard of the dissertation or artefact as a final outcome</li></ul>
<b>AO4 Review and Communicate</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Presentation skills, e.g. structuring ideas effectively, ensuring audience engagement and avoiding ‘death-by-slide’, dealing with challenging questions</li><li>• Evaluation and reflection</li></ul>

At the end of the course you will be required to submit your completed Extended Project File. Your work will be assessed by your supervisor based on four Assessment Objectives.

## AO1 – Manage - Aims and Objectives

The primary focus of the Project should be expressed in terms of aims and objectives.

- Quite simply, aims are the strategy; objectives are the tactics
- Aims are general statements describing what you hope to achieve. They should be written in broad terms of the knowledge and understanding that is needed in order to answer the research question or to full fill the research statement
- Objectives are specific statements that are about actions which explain the outcomes of the steps of how you are going to go about the project. They are practical, measurable and achievable tasks
- Objectives define the structure of the project

When articulating your aims and objectives, you should use suitable action verbs and ensure that they are direct and concise. Look at the following examples and discuss which ones would be most appropriate for your project.

### Skills

To assemble	To chart	To collect	To construct	To design
To devise	To establish	To generate	To illustrate	To locate
To maintain	To produce	To organise	To complete	To create

### Knowledge

To analyse	To calculate	To classify	To compare	To contrast
To define	To describe	To differentiate	To discover	To explain
To explore	To identify	To interpret	To outline	To plan
To record	To review	To select	To solve	To evaluate

### Attitudes

To assess	To develop	To evaluate	To formulate	To judge
To justify	To manage	To model	To recommend	To specify

Weak verbs such as *appreciate, consider, enquire, learn, be aware of* and *listen* must be avoided.

Close planning and monitoring of progress are important elements for AO1. However, you must ensure that you use the most appropriate tool for them. Many learners are led to believe that a Gantt chart is somehow an essential element of the Extended Project. It is not. Simply putting a chart in your Learner Record will not ensure a good mark. It is important that you explain your reasoning behind the construction of the chart, for example in terms of time scales. Moreover, you must refer to the chart throughout the process, i.e. providing clear evidence that it is being used and that it has/has not been effective. Indeed, there are other equally worthy planning tools such as Programme Evaluation Review Technique (PERT) charts.

However, again remember that the success of a PERT or Gantt chart depends on how it is used. Just including such a chart does not necessarily add to a project or mark. It is a tool to help keep your project on track. For some learners they can be more of a hindrance than a help, so be careful how you use them.

## AO2 – Use Resources



For AO2 it is important that you select sources that are appropriate for your project topic (source utility) and critically evaluate them (source credibility). Here are some points to consider:

1. Wikipedia can be a useful starting point but, given anyone can make changes to Wikipedia articles, it certainly should **not** be a key source in your research.
2. An article written by a newspaper journalist or a blogger on the Internet will not have been subjected to the scrutiny involved in published academic research. If your project relies mostly upon 'light weight' sources AO2 marks will be lost.
3. You must be very selective in your use of sources or you can waste a great deal of time and become overwhelmed by the material. If a source is not really focused on their area of research, you should discard it and explain why in your source table.
4. Record accurate details of the sites they search as this is important when it comes to your referencing of the material. You would also be well advised to save key sites to your 'favourites' in case you need to revisit them.
5. A Level textbooks can be a useful starting point for subject based EPs but you are expected to go much further than this.
6. A TV documentary can be a valid source, providing useful information or even providing the inspiration for a particular EP.
7. There is no requirement for an Extended Project to include primary data collection. You only need to do this if it is appropriate for your topic. The most important potential pitfall to avoid when carrying out primary data collection is not to draw flawed conclusions due to invalid results. You can waste a great deal of time for little gain with survey questionnaires. Think about the respondent profile; is it appropriate for the project being developed? For example, asking local sixth formers about dementia is

unlikely to produce valid results unless the topic is investigating teenagers' attitudes to the condition. Similarly, you need to consider the sample size in terms of validity. Typically, the larger the sample size, the better.

If you do think a survey questionnaire would be useful, there are several points you need to be clear about. Clearly, you need to ask the right questions to get the most accurate results. The three key principles are clarity; avoiding bias and analysis. For example, the respondent must understand what is being asked so it's important to avoid jargon and double negatives. There must be no ambiguity. You should also avoid leading questions that push a respondent to answer in a certain way. Most respondents will want to be giving the most politically correct or popular answer.

Obviously, the responses will need to be analysed so you should think carefully how many closed questions (questions with a fixed set of answers that can be counted/measured) and open questions (respondent opinions that will vary considerably and therefore cannot be counted) are used.

You also need to think carefully about the design of your questionnaire to get the most accurate results. For example, in deciding the order of your questions it is best to start with factual closed questions that are easy to complete so that respondents are not put off. Variety of questions is also important to keep respondents engaged. You should also think carefully about whether you use a paper survey or an on-line site such as [www.surveymonkey.com](http://www.surveymonkey.com). There are advantages and disadvantages of both.

It is also advisable for you to carry out a pilot study to check for ambiguities. By carrying out a trial run with five people you may spot a flaw with a particular question. Better you know about it early and re-word it than wait until they have a hundred completed and flawed questionnaires.

8. Consider using a source evaluation table and including it at the end of your final outcome. It could look something like this:

Source title/date of publication	Authorship	Source utility	Source credibility
Here give the full title of the source and include the publisher; place of publication and the date of publication. For internet sources you should provide the date you accessed the site.	Yes, give the author's name but can you do more? Have you researched them? Have they written ten other books on this topic? Are they a recognised national or international figure in this field?	Sum up here how the material is relevant, e.g. 'Provided useful data and case studies on.....' Or, 'Provided me with a basic knowledge and understanding of the events in the period.....' Alternatively point out the weaknesses, e.g. 'As the book was written twenty years ago, much of the technology referred to is now out of date. As a result, I did not use the material.'	Here you should draw on your Critical Thinking course, e.g. use BRAVEN to assess reliability (i.e. credibility) of the writer. You must make your assessment detailed and not just make throw away comments such as 'it is biased'. For example, a pressure group will have a clear <b>vested interest</b> to influence a public debate in its favour. However, it must be careful. Inaccurate statements will lead to an erosion of public support and ultimately the discrediting of the organisation.

9. When you use material gathered from a particular source you must reference it. If you do not, you can be accused of plagiarism, i.e. making out that someone else's work is your own.
10. Quotes can be good, i.e. they provide a theoretical underpinning of your argument. However, they should be short and memorable and preferably written by someone with authority in the area of study. Certainly, you should avoid excessively long quotations, i.e. ten lines or more.
11. Remember that the material you research eventually must be synthesised, i.e. put together in an argument. A dissertation that simply goes through a series of writers in separate 'blocks' is weak. Rather, you will need to show how certain writers support or corroborate each other and while others challenge and contradict. This is an important skill assessed under AO2.04.

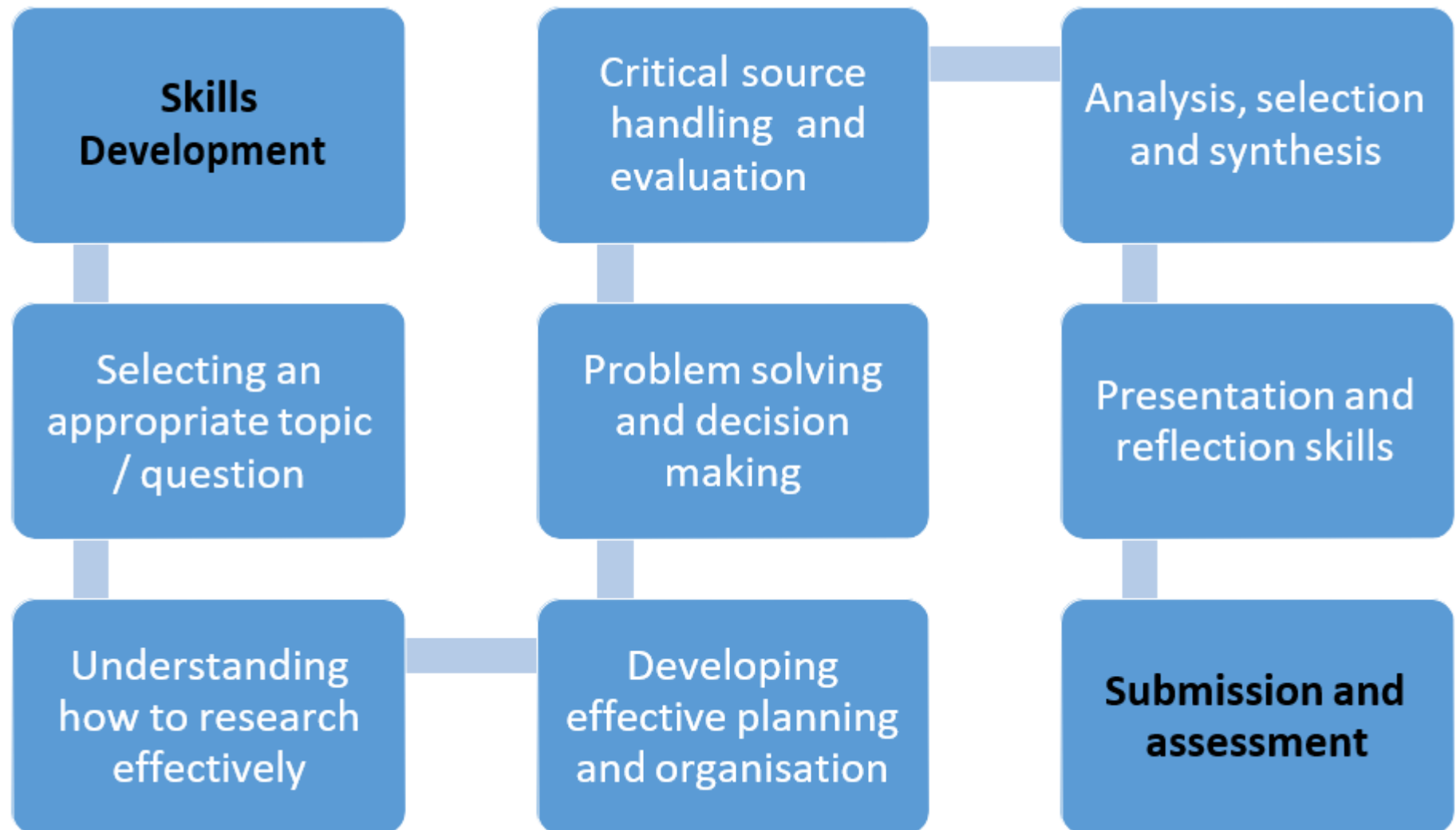
## A03 – Develop and Realise



In terms of the mark scheme, this is the most significant Assessment Objective as it carries 40/100 marks. The two main points of focus here relate to skills development and the standard of the final outcome.

A key aspect of the EPQ is the development of skills and it is therefore important that you fully appreciate the range of possibilities here in terms of their planning. Very often learners offer only limited comment on the skills they hope to develop and apply in EPF1 Section 7 which is a pity. You should think about the following possible areas. As always, there is no definitive model here as the skills selected will depend greatly upon the nature of the outcome envisaged.





In terms of the standard of the final outcome, there is much that you need to consider. In the case of dissertation projects, for example:

- Structured and fluent writing with a clear line of argument
- A focus on critical analysis over description
- Strong supporting evidence, correctly referenced
- Evidence of the counter argument
- Well-structured and coherent paragraphs
- 5,000-word minimum length
- Evidence of drafting and proof reading
- An evidence based and developed conclusion that fully addresses the identified aims & objectives
- An academic bibliography
- Attention to SPaG issues, for example, accurate and mature use of vocabulary

It is certainly important that you appreciate that, whilst the EPQ counts as half an A Level, it is of A Level standard. As such, you should clearly pay attention to detail in how the outcome is presented. To help here, you should develop check lists of your own to aid drafting and proof reading. This will help you demonstrate independence and the extent to which you have taken full responsibility for your project.

## A04 – Review and Communicate



For A04 LO7, you must make a presentation. Presentations should take around 20 to 30 minutes, including time for questions but as always this will depend upon you and the topic. As a general guide, you should consider both the research process and what you've learnt, e.g.

### a) The process:

- Why this particular topic?
- What research did I conduct?
- Which sources turned out to be most/least useful and why?
- What key problems did I have to overcome?
- What were the most important decisions I made in shaping the project?
- What skills have I developed as a result of the project?
- What do I see as the main strengths of the project?
- Have I achieved the aims and objectives I originally identified at the start of the project?
- What would I change if I were to repeat the project?

**b) The outcome:**

- What have I learnt about the topic?
- What are the most significant factors/themes in answering this question?
- What are my key conclusions and how convincing is my evidence for making these judgements?

Many learners choose to deliver a traditional oral presentation supported by either a PowerPoint or a Prezi slide show. However, some choose a different approach such as an exhibition; both approaches are equally valid. As always, it is you, not the teacher, who decides upon the format, location and audience for the presentation. For example, if you're too nervous to present in front of all your peers, you may want to simply present to your supervisor only.

The only key requirements are that:

- your supervisor must be present as ultimately s/he has to assess the effectiveness of the presentation
- you must answer a series of questions from the audience at the end of the presentation and these questions must not be previously shared with you, i.e. you must demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of the topic.

## Project Documentation

Several of the Learner Record project forms (EPF1-4) within the EPQ File exist to gather evidence of the project process from yourself and the supervisor. This documentation should be completed as thoroughly as possible.

Completing the forms at the appropriate times should be an opportunity to consolidate evidence for credit in all areas of assessment from Managing (AO1) to Reviewing (AO4), and therefore, should not be completed retrospectively.

### EPF1 – Project proposal and title

Choosing a project topic and writing a proposal outlining the aims and objectives of the project and a project plan of how the project outcome will be achieved.

Theoretically, you can choose any research topic for the EPQ; it is after all **your** project. However, you should consider the following:

- Projects do not have to be linked to your higher education ambitions. However, if it does, this can be a useful tool in helping you to write your UCAS Personal Statement. It may also help you to demonstrate real enthusiasm for your chosen degree subject if you are called for interview.
- If you are doing a 5,000-word dissertation, the title **must be an analytically phrased question**. Titles such as 'Investigate the influences of Thomas Hardy's writing on 19th century English literature' are not appropriate.
- Artefact projects are **not** phrased as a question but rather the completion of a task with set criteria, e.g. 'To research and manufacture a small-scale trebuchet for less than £50 that has the capacity to fire a tennis ball more than ten metres.'
- Projects must be both feasible and manageable in the timeframe available. Titles such as 'Write one hundred short stories' will likely lead to failure as they involve excessive time commitments. Similarly, a dissertation such as, 'Explain which revolution in history has been the most important' is far too broad to work effectively.
- A dissertation question must be analytical, not descriptive. In other words, questions that begin 'to what extent' or 'how valid is it to say that' tend to work well, e.g. 'To what extent has German unification been politically and economically successful?' or 'The artistic influence of Picasso's cubism was short lived.' How valid is this statement? These questions allow you to provide a balanced analytical argument and a final judgement based upon evidence. Avoid questions that start 'What are' and 'How has' as they can lead to you simply describing developments, e.g. 'How has the British aviation industry developed since 1950?' or 'What are the features of a democratic state?' As a Level 3 qualification it is not enough to simply 'tell the story' of a particular event or development. Rather, you must analyse the material to reach **your own** clear conclusions.

- Avoid dissertation titles that speculate about the future. How can you possibly reach evidence-based conclusions if you are talking about future events? For example, the following questions would not be suitable for an EPQ:
  - a. 'By 2030 all cars will be driverless.' How valid is this statement?
  - b. 'Manned space missions to Pluto will be possible in the next twenty years.' How far do you agree with this statement?
  - c. 'The NHS as we know it will not exist in 2030.' How valid is this opinion?
- If you decide to complete a group project with someone else, your title must emphasise your individual responsibility for the joint outcome, e.g. two learners decide to put on a school play. One learner's EP title might be, 'To write a school play for Year 7 learners that focuses upon the theme of Shakespeare's life.' The second learner's title may then be, 'To produce the scenery and costumes for a new school play on Shakespeare's life set in 1960s Britain.'
- Remember that the EP is about research rather than creativity. This is especially important if you are planning an artefact or live performance outcome, e.g. you might compose a fantastic symphony but you would not achieve a high grade unless you could demonstrate the research carried out and how this research had influenced the final outcome. Simply 'being inspired' is not enough.
- Avoid topics/questions that link too closely to one of your A Level subject syllabus. This is called 'dual accreditation' and is not allowed. For example, if you are submitting a piece of History coursework on a topic, you are not allowed have that same topic as the basis of your EP.
- You are allowed to amend questions in-light of your on-going research. This is because you might find very little material on the topic area initially selected but a great deal on a related topic.
- Avoid overly long and complicated questions. Keep it simple.

Once you think you have the right question, initially at least, you should complete the **Stage 2** section of the EPF1 in the EP File and inform your supervisor. The Supervisor should then provide a feedback comment in your log. If s/he thinks the question/title is fine, the Centre Co-ordinator should then be informed as s/he needs to give final approval in the **Stage 3** comment box. If it looks fine, s/he will give full approval. If it is suggested that some changes be made to the title, 'partial approval' may be given, subject to the changes being made. If there is a major problem with the title it should be rejected and will need to have a rethink and will have to resubmit a new title.

Under no circumstances should you go ahead with a project until it has been approved. Remember too that if you later decide on a major change of direction, e.g. your original EP was focused on a

geography dissertation topic but you later decide to focus instead upon ballet related live performance, you will need to resubmit the new title for approval.

You should realise the importance of EPF1. This part of the process should not be rushed as to embark upon a flawed topic and/or question will only lead to problems later. The following may help to clarify the requirements further:

### STAGE 1 - THINKING ABOUT YOUR EXTENDED PROJECT

1. What topics might you choose for your Extended Project?
2. Briefly explore each of the possible topics you have listed in question 1 considering the positive aspects and potential challenges.
3. Identify from one of the topics above the project you would like to select and the reasons why.

This is for your initial 'blue sky thinking', i.e. you should think of as many possible topics as you can and identify them here. A bullet point list is fine. Be open minded about possible areas of research.

For each topic identified above, now think about the possible advantages and disadvantages of each one. Don't bullet point in this section but instead use continuous prose.

When you have carried some initial research into the stated possible topics, you should identify the chosen topic here and explain the reasons for the choice. You should not complete this box until you are sure.

4. What are the aims and objectives of your selected project? (maximum of 4 objectives)

5. Is this an individual project?

Yes ☐ No ☐

For group projects, please state what your individual role is and the roles of the other members of the group.

My role is:

The other group members' roles are:

(a)

(b)

(c)

6. What type of project will this be: dissertation/field investigation, artefact, design or performance? Why is this type of project appropriate to your selected topic?

Here you should identify the aims & objectives for the project, i.e. what you are setting out to achieve. Are the objectives SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Timely)?

Here identify the type of project and explain why the format is appropriate for the topic e.g. *'I am investigating the different causes behind the Russian Revolution. Therefore a 5,000-word report will allow me to explain and analyse how the different factors contributed to the event.'* Check that you are filling in the correct template for their chosen project; if not, you will have to copy and paste the work at a later date into the correct template.

If you are involved in a group project, you must tick 'YES' and explain CLEARLY the specific focus of each member of your group. Remember that ultimately, your project could be undermined by another group member who does not complete their work.



7. What skills do you think you will need to develop to complete your Extended Project?

8. What resources do you think you will require in completing your Extended Project?

9. How do you think your Extended Project will help you to meet your aspirations (e.g. further study, employment)?

10. Please include any other additional information relevant to your project development.  
(Please attach any additional documents to support your statement e.g. mind maps)

For example, think about ICT, research skills, project management skills, reflective learning skills, problem solving, extended writing, manufacturing, analysing primary data, academic referencing and use of recording equipment.

For example, for a 5,000-word report think about articles, books, websites, documentaries, interviews and survey questionnaires. For artefact-based projects, think about specialised equipment, software packages and health & safety equipment. For all projects, time is also an important resource to explain in terms of your approach.

Explain how this project links to either your personal interests or university ambitions e.g. knowledge and/or skills development.

Section 10 – if you have any additional material you wish to include in terms of initial planning, insert it here, e.g. a hand drawn spider diagram of planning ideas.

## **EXTENDED PROJECT RECORD - EPF2(a-e)**

Recording progress demonstrating what was learned from the taught element, how research has been conducted, decisions made, problems solved and how the whole process was reviewed and evaluated including meetings with supervisors.

### **Initial Project Plan (EPF(a) and Change to Plan - EPF(b)**

Make an action plan, with milestones, deadlines and details of what you are going to do, why, how and when.

The **initial project plan** is a much more detailed document than the proposal. It should show an estimated timeline of project deliverables and important dates. This should not be done retrospectively as you are likely to have forgotten some of the details. If you must make changes to your project plan, make sure you record it in your diary or add a column on your original project plan where you can record these changes.

A plan would include probable features, tools and points of organisation, issues and challenges of implementation, and what the project would hope to contribute and achieve, what makes the project unique.

The project plan should be part of an engaging process, a contributor to the drafting of the project outcome. The plan is your forward planning tool.

### **Record & Review of Teaching and Learning Programme - EPF(c)**

Here, you will be required to record in detail at least three areas of the teaching and learning programme that influenced and contributed to the project outcome.

### **Record and Review of Individual Progress - EPF(d)**

During the development of your project, you will need to record and review at least three milestones / SMART targets that you have achieved, altered or not achieved. You will be required also to record in detail, any action(s) taken in responding to the challenge(s) or in solving the issue(s). This should be used in conjunction with your Project Plan.

### **Record of Meetings with Supervisors - EPF(e)**

You will meet with the supervisor in one-to-one interviews, small tutorials, and group sessions.

Initially, interaction will focus upon your choice of project and the fine-tuning of the project title, the proposal and the plan.

In all these contexts, informal mutual support between you and your peers is encouraged and valued.

A mid-project interview should mark a point of significant reflection during the project development. This would most usefully be at a point when a substantial amount of research has been carried out, and the initial drafting of the project outcome has started.

During a mid-project interview, you and your supervisor should engage in discussion about:

- the progress of your project, including any problems or challenges which may have arisen and ways in which these may be overcome;
- your project management, including time management and the progress of your project diary;
- your teaching and learning programme, identifying any further training needs in terms of skills development; and
- a deadline for the first draft submission of the Extended Project and the final interview.

The final interview between you and your supervisor should take place following the submission of the first draft of your Project Outcome. Your supervisor will not give detailed assistance to you at this point.

You and your supervisor should discuss:

- what actions are necessary before your final submission;
- the progress of your project diary and what further actions are necessary;
- the requirements and preparation for your Project Presentation; and
- a date for the final submission of your Extended Project File.

### **Produce a Project Outcome (EPF3)**

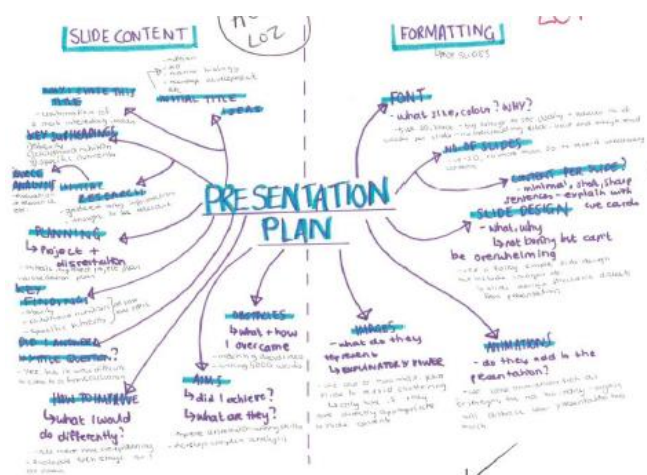
All projects must contain a substantial written element. Many projects will consist entirely of written work, dissertation, field investigation, this would require at least 5,000 words.

A project with a predominantly non-written outcome needs to be accompanied by Project Outcome Notes of at least 1,500 words. This is expected to take the reader much further and deeper into the project process than the diary that is obligatory for all projects.

Other written outcomes which are broadly journalistic, creative or have an explicit requirement of 'purpose and audience' are categorised as 'artefact'. An obvious example of this would be an original poetry submission, where the poem(s) would be the 'artefact' and a project commentary would be required. Similarly, website material as a written outcome would also require Project Outcome Notes.

Group projects are supported, in cases where individual contributions can be identified and assessed effectively. Everyone would be expected to have a distinct role within the group and would be expected to complete project requirements without shortcuts or significant duplication. From experience, small groups of four and below are more likely to be effective than bigger groups.

## Make a Project Presentation (EPF4)



You are required to make a **Project presentation** on your Project Outcome and a review on the achievement of both the outcome and the process self-critically at the end of the project.

Your presentation is an 'oral' event in which you reflect on the outcome and your own achievements. This could be a set-piece and should be a talk with purpose, advancing the substantive content of the project. There will be a Question and Answer session that allows you to respond to challenging/supplementary questions.

You can view the project presentation as another challenge and experience, although 'review' is an ever-present quality throughout your project.

PowerPoint slides are not, on their own, significant evidence of quality. However, evidence in the form of economically used slides, plus prompt cards, plus question-and-answer comments, plus a balanced teacher commentary on oral skills can be valued.

If you do decide to use computer generated slides, try to develop your use of the technology. For example, ask yourself, how are these slides different from the ones I could produce in Year 7? Remember that the whole point of using slides should be to help engage your audience. If the slides encourage them to simply read rather than listen to you; or they are simple and dull, you will be detracting from the quality of your presentation. Think about how you could embed a relevant video clip and the reasons for including a particular image. Above all, remember that for a 20-30 minute presentation, you should have no more than about 12 slides in total.

## Guide to Planning



Planning is a vital element of a successful project. Do not be tempted to take planning for granted; for this reason, it is important to stop and think. Firstly, you might not have prepared an assignment within this kind of extended time period previously. Similarly, you might not have written a 5,000-word dissertation before. Equally important, is that you have an *'effectively designed and thorough project plan'* which also sets *'realistic targets'* and *'prioritised goals'*.

In your planning, you can use several appropriate tools. Mind maps are a well-known way of producing initial plans and a means of showing links and connections. These are valid elements for you to upload as part of their initial thinking. The next stage might be to consider how you can break down tasks over a given time period. A flow chart or timeline approach can work well here. Many learners opt for a Gantt or PERT Chart, produced on a computer. However, this again depends upon the type of project you are undertaking. It should also be stressed that examples of what you are thinking behind plans is useful i.e., here you can again demonstrate decision-making and problem-solving skills.

Above all, it is important that each element of the project is planned; for example, there would be little point in producing an initial research plan if there was later no evidence of a presentation plan and a final outcome completion plan. With each of these, moreover, changes to the project plan are not necessarily seen as a negative thing. Indeed, in some cases, dealing with unforeseen events can demonstrate your ability to be flexible and pragmatic.

## Guide to Research



In terms of organising your research, you should organise your notes thematically rather than simply by source. Such an approach will certainly aid the synthesis of material at the final production or write up stage. Similarly, it is vital that the source of all material is carefully noted. You will not be able to reach top marks unless you can demonstrate that *'All resources are acknowledged and referenced using a recognised form.'*

In this sense, referencing is important as it highlights exactly how you have applied your research. It also acknowledges that the material is not your own theory or data and hence helps to avoid plagiarism. Thirdly, footnotes can also be used to develop a point made in the dissertation, without interrupting the flow of the main argument.

Many university learners choose to use the Harvard method of referencing and many EPQ learners tend to follow suit. However, this decision will depend upon the nature of your project. Most British university websites have advice and guidance on referencing and avoiding plagiarism. Some useful sites include:

<http://www.citethisforme.com/guides/harvard>

<http://www.bristol.ac.uk/arts/exercises/referencing>

In terms of further support, you could look at the free eight week on-line EPQ support course provided by Future Learn in association with Southampton University. This can be found at:

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

From the very start, you need to think carefully about how you will present your project evidence at the time of final submission. The main evidence, whether the project is being e-submitted in terms of uploaded files, or as a traditional hard paper copy, must include the following evidence:



- Learner Declaration Form
- Learner Record
- Project Outcome
- Project Presentation evidence from the learner and the Supervisor's Presentation Witness Statement
- Final Assessment Mark Sheet
- Internal Moderation Form

You may include additional evidence which you feel is appropriate in an appendix; for example, a clean copy of a survey questionnaire. However, you should avoid uploading or printing off the specific content of your research, for example, survey questionnaire returns. The analysis and interpretation of any such information and numerical data should fall in the main body of the project itself. In particular, it should be noted that bulky, heavy, fragile and material of sentimental or intrinsic value **MUST NOT** be posted at the time of moderation.

You must also include a list of references/foot notes and a bibliography of all sources accessed during the research phase. Some learners can be confused here, thinking that a reference list constitutes a bibliography.

Moreover, the dates websites were accessed should be included here, just as the particular edition of a book would be similarly identified.

Finally, in terms of the evidence submitted, you should consider carefully your final conclusion. In particular, you should be aware that:

- all conclusions must be evidence based, not merely subjective opinions
- conclusions should relate directly to your approved question title
- conclusions should explicitly address the extent to which the identified aims and objectives of the project have been met
- conclusions should be developed and of some substance, e.g. a three sentence conclusion to a 5,000 word dissertation would undoubtedly not hit the top marks.



## Guide to Science-based Projects



Most of the science related Extended Projects tend to be in a dissertation format with a key idea or hypothesis at the heart of the question. However, artefact projects with a scientific theme can again work well, for example, producing an exhibition on astro-physics aimed at KS3 pupils or writing a stage play centred on the theme of medical ethics. You may also take the opportunity provided by the EPQ to link your interest in science with other curriculum areas such as computing or design & technology; for example, in recent years learners have produced a camera gimbal; programmed and manufactured a working quad copter and created a science related website.

Given the specialist nature of the topics, you are encouraged to seek further guidance from either their science teachers or science department technicians, especially if the project involves carrying out experiments. It is normal practice for schools to have rigorous health and safety policies and hence you would automatically be expected to carry out a detailed risk assessment as part of your research. In addition, you may be able to elicit support from university departments via email. Although many lecturers may not respond, evidence shows that some do, being ready to support A Level learners who are working in their area of specialism.

National organisations are also showing increasing interest in the Extended Project and therefore the following may be of interest to you:

Organisation	Website	Focus
The Ogden Trust	<a href="http://www.ogdentrust.com">www.ogdentrust.com</a>	Aims is to maximise the opportunities available to young people in all parts of the UK's educational system and is now focused on science, particularly physics. The Trust supports a range of initiatives, programmes and projects to promote the teaching and learning of physics
The Institute of Physics	<a href="http://www.iop.org">www.iop.org</a>	Provides case study examples and EPQ support materials
The National STEM Learning Network	<a href="http://www.stem.org.uk">www.stem.org.uk</a>	Is dedicated to raising young people's engagement & achievement in STEM and increasing the numbers of young people progressing in STEM studies and related careers post- 16
Royal Society of Chemistry	<a href="http://www.rsc.org">www.rsc.org</a>	Provides a series of educational resources aimed at both teachers and learners
Wellcome Trust	<a href="http://www.welcome.ac.uk">www.welcome.ac.uk</a>	Provides detailed ethical guidance for anyone pursuing a science related EP
Royal Society	<a href="http://www.royalsociety.org">www.royalsociety.org</a>	To recognise, promote and support excellence in science and to encourage the development and use of science for the benefit of humanity

## Guide to Artefact-based Projects



Although most learners follow the traditional dissertation route with their EP, a number prefer to produce an artefact instead. Artefacts come in many different forms but essentially involves you producing or manufacturing a physical outcome; for example, a documentary film, a series of short stories or a camera gimbal. In other words, an artefact-based project allows you to be more creative and pursue an area of particular interest.

### Dissertation or artefact?

Both dissertation (written) projects and artefact (non-written) projects can be equally valid and score well against the assessment criteria. Do not be misled into believing that an artefact-based project, such as making a short film, writing a series of short stories or designing and manufacturing a bomber jacket is an easy option as it involves writing just 1500 words rather than 5,000. It is not; if anything artefact projects involve **more** work as you have to research both the **content and nature** of the artefact itself, e.g. if you decided you wanted to teach an introductory lesson on Shakespeare to a Year 7 class, you would not only have to research the literary content but also the topic of teaching and learning – lesson planning; literacy levels; assessment methods, etc. Similarly, if you were planning a documentary on genealogy you would not only have to research your family tree but would also explicitly have to research the making of such documentaries and the associated technical issues such as sound engineering and editing software.

Finally, be aware of weak artefacts that are unlikely to meet the demands of a Level 3 qualification. For example, if you wanted to create a football fan magazine, you may think that you can simply print off some images from the internet and staple a booklet together. However, would you have the right to use the images selected? Has the magazine been costed and a profit margin per copy identified? Has the 'magazine' been presented to a high standard?

The best artefacts have clear aims and objectives and are rooted explicitly in research. A common pitfall is that you can focus more on the creativity and manufacture side and thereby neglect the essential research element.

Instead, you must demonstrate how the research has influenced the design and manufacture of the outcome, which itself is of a high standard. Moreover, your conclusion should include a detailed evaluation of the artefact and its fitness for purpose. To this end, you should incorporate specific success criteria when submitting your title for approval. In this sense, an artefact proposal is different from a dissertation.

Examples of well framed artefact projects would include:

- To produce a scale model of a trebuchet for under £100 that is capable of throwing a tennis ball over ten metres.
- To manufacture a leather bomber jacket for under £100 using the school laser cutter.
- To write and produce a short film on the Syrian refugee crisis aimed at learners of sixth form age

It is also important to note that if you produce an artefact you should keep a Development Record of how the artefact has been designed and produced. The analysis of data and information should be contained in the Development Record as it must inform the design of the artefact. A copy of the final design should be included with some explanation of why the design has been chosen (critical thinking and problem-solving skills). You must capture how you have produced the artefact and include evidence of any practical skills you have developed in preparation for the production of the artefact. The Development Record can be presented in any visual form, for example a scrapbook, PowerPoint, Prezi, etc.

Some learners, especially those specialising in theatre studies and music, are often keen to produce a performance related Extended Project. Such projects can work well, provided certain guidelines are followed.

- You/your supervisor must explicitly confirm when title approval is given that the performance work submitted for the EPQ does not overlap with A Level course content; for example, in the case of music, a composition submitted as part of an A Level Music course, cannot be submitted as an Extended Project. The key principle here is avoiding dual accreditation.
- You must remember that the EPQ is centred upon research, not creativity. Hence, if you wrote and acted out a short play, you would need to explicitly show how the research had shaped the outcome. This means that as part of your work, we would

expect to see evidence of research into the work of playwrights in addition to research into the content of the play itself. It is not enough to simply be 'inspired' to produce an outcome in a certain way. The development of the outcome needs to be fully documented and explained.

- Performance related EPs often appeal to pairs or groups of learners; for example, two learners may decide that they would like to put on a school musical. If this is the case, you must identify from the very start which aspects of the final outcome you are taking responsibility, for example, although a single outcome is produced, the work of everyone is assessed separately. Hence, in the case of a school musical, you may take responsibility for musical direction whilst someone else has responsibility for costumes and scenery.
- You must keep your projects manageable; in the case of performance related EPs this can be a challenge. You should think realistically, i.e. composing and performing two tracks, one in the style of Bob Dylan and the other in the style of Lilly Allen, would be preferable as opposed to producing a ten track album or a symphony. Although your supervisor should not diminish your aspirations, similarly they must not set you up to fail. Ultimately the decision is yours but the advice your supervisor gives must be clear.
- Thought must be given to the form in which the evidence is going to be submitted. Uploading the necessary sound files to the WJEC e-submission platform should be straightforward, but if hard copies are being sent, the formatting of the material needs to ensure that it is accessible to a moderator. With this in mind it, would be helpful if CD/DVD submissions were compatible with Microsoft Windows. Similarly, all such material should have the following information clearly highlighted:
  - a) Centre name and number
  - b) Candidate name and number

## Guide to Fieldwork-based Projects



You may want to include fieldwork as part of your EPQ research. This can be highly effective, provided you ensure that:

- The fieldwork is planned in detail
- The fieldwork is supported by other research
- A written methodology is included
- The fieldwork is carefully documented, for example, in terms of film, annotated photographs and/or field notes
- The analysis of the fieldwork is thorough, for example, in terms of written, data and graphical analysis
- The fieldwork in question is not being submitted for a second qualification and would thereby break the dual accreditation regulation

As with any practical research, fieldwork can pose logistical difficulties, for example, due to weather or transport issues which in turn can cause problems of time management. Again, you need to be realistic in planning fieldwork and, if appropriate, complete a risk assessment.



## TESTIMONIALS

### What previous learners have to say about the EPQ

#### 1. Why did you decide to undertake an EPQ?

*I decided to undertake the EPQ because I wanted to have an extra qualification that would help me to get into my university courses. If I achieved an A in it, then my offer would be reduced, and it would greatly help me to reach my goals. I also chose it because I felt like I had some spare time on my hands that I could put into great effect and achieve a qualification from it as well as exploring a topic of interest of mine.*

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*I decided to undertake EPQ as not only did it showcase to my chosen universities that I am capable of undertaking in-depth, independent research, which is essential for university study but it also allowed me to further pursue a subject I am very passionate about outside of the college environment. Moreover, the completion of an EPQ would offer me valuable UCAS points that would help me to secure places at a Russell Group universities. Thus, my decision to undertake an EPQ was an easy one.*

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*I decided to do an EPQ as I thought it would be useful to me in further study after completing my A- levels and the techniques I would use during this project such as research and referencing would aid me in the future.*

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*The EPQ offered me the opportunity to have a creative outlet during my A level studies. All my selected subjects were very academic, so having the opportunity to produce something musical which would both give me an additional qualification and set me apart from other university applicants was an attractive prospect.*

#### 2. What did you choose as a topic and why?

*I chose my topic based on antibiotic resistance. I chose this because it has always been an area of study that I wanted to look into but never really had the chance to do so. By doing the EPQ, it enabled me to do so. Antibiotic resistance is an upcoming threat which I never knew the extent of, so I made it my topic of choice and delved into it to uncover the answers to my questions.*

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*I choose the EPQ question, 'how significant were Jacques-Louis David's paintings as a form of propaganda in supporting the revolutionaries during the French Revolution?', for a multitude of reasons. Firstly, I have a particular fascination for the French Revolution, but more specifically the politicised use of art during this period. Secondly, before starting this project I read a book by Warren Roberts called, 'Jacques-Louis David, Revolutionary Artist – Art, Politics and the French Revolution'. Not only did I really enjoy this book because I like the study and*

*analysis of propaganda, but it also helped me to come up with a question that I would take great pleasure in answering. In addition, it acted as a vital source for my work and it provided me with introductory information that would aid the completion of my dissertation. Lastly, I have applied to study history with politics at university. This specific project title was the most appropriate question in relation to my chosen degree, combining the historical (the French Revolution) with the political (propaganda).*

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*I chose to complete my essay on the sustainability and ethics in the fashion industry as it is a relevant topic to the current times, with the exploitation of human rights becoming a larger focus on the news, as well as it being a topic that interested me as I am passionate about fashion.*

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*I chose to research a defining law case in history and use it for the basis of a Musical Theatre song. I additionally researched the history of Musical Theatre, as well as how a Musical Theatre song is created, to help with the composition process. This choice of topic was the perfect marriage of two topics: Musical Theatre, a hobby of mine, and Law, the subject I intend to study at university. This choice of project played to my interests and strengths, and the research and skills involved will aid me in my future career.*

### **3. What do you like about the qualification?**

*I like the freedom that this qualification possesses. By this, I mean that you can choose a topic of your choice that interests you the most and then explore whatever you want to find out within your topic which you wouldn't be able to do without the EPQ. Moreover, it helps prepare for life at university as you gain key skills that are needed to move forward in your education such as dissertation style writing and coursework deadlines.*

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*I like the fact that an EPQ gives you the freedom to study whatever you want. As a result of this freedom, I was able to expand my knowledge in an area I was already passionate about whilst also learning about history through a lens unavailable to me in A-Level History. Secondly, I found the process of writing the actual dissertation to be particularly interesting. I enjoyed demonstrating the knowledge I had acquired whilst completing this project and displaying it in an aesthetically pleasing and organised manner. I believe my fondness for my chosen topic is most clearly displayed by the detail I included in my dissertation. In fact, I found it hard to stop writing! 5000 words may seem daunting and unachievable to begin with however, once you get into the flow of things you'll have finished writing a draft before you know it. Thirdly, I enjoyed the process of undertaking this project as it acted as a break from my other A-Levels and it gave me an outlet to learn independently. Lastly, I liked the fact that I chose an essay title that allowed for me to read a lot of history books which is certainly a hobby of mine.*

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*EPQ will make my future job application stand out, but it also gave me joy to have a creative outlet during my demanding A level studies. It was a chance to prepare myself for the level of self-discipline and management required for a university degree, while marrying two subjects that I intend to pursue either professionally or vocationally.*

**4. What aspects of the EPQ have you enjoyed the most? E.g. Research, presentation, managing, etc.**

*Definitely the research aspect. This is because you are in control of the research you take out from a large variety of all different sources and you can learn so much from doing this. Moreover, the research aspect is why I chose to do the EPQ because it enabled me to find out about my chosen topic which I would not have done if it did not partake in the EPQ.*

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*When reflecting upon the process of completing my EPQ, I would argue that the two aspects I most enjoyed were carrying out my research and organising my dissertation into a coherent, academic piece whilst also making it look pleasing on the eye. I enjoyed the research process as it enabled me to read a vast number of books on my chosen topic thereby, expanding my knowledge to a higher level than would've been possible before university. I also enjoyed the presentation aspect of the dissertation as I take a great deal of care when it comes to displaying my work. After all the time I put into my EPQ, I wanted it to look as professional as physically possible.*

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*I like that the qualification gave me a brief sense of what university would be like, as you must set your own deadlines etc, but I also liked the freedom that it gave me to research a topic that I enjoyed.*

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*I enjoyed the composing aspect of creating my musical artefact, giving me a chance to exercise my passion for music. The research involved was also engaging. I essentially started with no understanding of theatre's rich history, or the impact the case of R v Dudley and Stephens has had on modern law. While I had a pretty good idea as to what Musical Theatre is now, in the 21st century, I had no knowledge of how history had shaped it to allow it to become what it is today. I also enjoyed the presentation aspect, giving me an opportunity to practice my oral communication skills and public speaking, both of which will be called on a lot in my future career.*

**5. How has it benefitted you in terms of learning new skills?**

*I previously had little experience with dissertation style writing before and is something that I was never too keen on, hence why I take maths! However, from doing the EPQ I have learnt how to effectively write a large piece of text and I am proud of my achievement from this. This is a benefit to me because it should enable me to feel more at ease when I go to university and*

*have to write my first dissertation because I now have previous experience of this. Also, I have learnt the skills and techniques needed to research facts and figures which I never really knew how to do.*

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*As a result of completing my EPQ I have acquired a vast number of skills, including time management skills, organisational skills, self-discipline, more independence with my learning, researching skills e.g. learning to use Google Scholar, IT skills, planning skills, enhanced academic writing skills for longer pieces of work and Harvard referencing. These transferable skills will be essential for when I embark on my journey to university in the coming months. In addition to this, it will increase my chances of being employed in the future.*

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*I definitely feel as though completing the EPQ has given me the opportunity to obtain new skills as well as improve some that I already had such as time management.*

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*This project has allowed me to get acquainted with the process of research and summary, a skill which will be highly valued and exercised when undergoing a law degree. This could implement my success in university and my subsequent career, especially considering that a research project makes up a module of my degree. This process of self-study, by deciding which genre to research and by taking control of my own education strengthened the core skills needed both in higher education and in my career.*

## **6. How will those skills help in university?**

*These skills will all tie into my university degree and will all be beneficial to me. Being able to write a dissertation as well as researching is vital in university. By having previous experience of using these skills, it will make my transition to university style learning a lot easier as I will not have to learn them from fresh; instead, I can just use them.*

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*The skills mentioned above will be vital when it comes to bridging the gap between sixth form and degree-level study. Ultimately, I believe that the most important thing to come out of this project is the improved understanding I have of my academic strengths and weaknesses which is something I wouldn't have been as aware of without this project. I learnt that I can remain focused when completing a long piece of academic writing and that my independence is crucial when completing a project on this scale. However, I also learnt that I am not as strong when it comes to using the application Microsoft Excel. Although now that I have discovered this weakness, I have time to address it and better myself as a learner. Something else to remember is that I will now be in a more advantageous position than other students doing my degree because of this project. The fact I've had experience writing an academic dissertation significantly increases my chances of outperforming my classmates.*

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*I believe that the skills I have developed during the course of carrying out the project will aid me in university as I feel that my time management has improved which will mean that I can stay on top of my workload at university, as well as this I feel that the improvement to my essay writing skills as well as referencing technique will obviously help me when I'm set similar tasks in university.*

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*Learning to reference will undoubtedly help me with the extensive research required for completing legal essays. The skills of self-discipline and self-study (time keeping, self-motivation, planning) will also be needed in university, as Law has very few contact hours per week. The acquired IT skills, such as creating mind maps, annotating articles, utilising PowerPoint and Word documents, and including hyperlinks will undoubtedly help in research projects, as will the dissertation skills, including the use of structure, accessing sources, and assessing the reliability of those sources. In terms of personal development, the oral communication skills and confidence in public speaking acquired whilst completing the project will be needed in both my career and in university.*

## 7. How has the EPQ helped you with your application to university?

*Some of the universities that I had applied to, required an A\* in one of their requirements. However, if you were to achieve an A grade in the EPQ, the offer can be reduced to an A. This was of great incentive to me and enabled me to feel more at ease with my choices because it took the pressure off to get the highest grade. I also believe that it gave me “the edge” when applying to the competitive universities because I had one more qualification that another may not of have.*

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*It will help me to go to the university I want to go to, in order to study my chosen degree which will lead into my career. The skills learnt during the EPQ can be used throughout my whole life and career due to their importance and significance.*

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*Not only did an EPQ look great on my personal statement, but I was offered lower entry requirements for History and Politics BA at 3 out of the 5 Russell Group universities I applied to if I achieved a grade A.*

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*A few of my university choices stated in their offer that they would reduce the offer requirements if I obtained a certain grade in my EPQ. Furthermore, I believe that the EPQ set me apart from other candidates who perhaps matched my accomplishments in every other field. This extra qualification showed initiative and a desire to learn and progress, two characteristics sought after by universities.*

## 8. How will undertaking the EPQ help with your chosen career path?

*Although I am not 100% certain of what I would like to do in the future, I do know that I would like to be employed within the political sphere and that these transferable skills I have acquired will help my CV standout in comparison to other candidates. I know this because when I completed work experience in an MPs office, I was required to use eloquent diction when writing letters to constituents and I also had to use Microsoft Excel to make a spreadsheet in order to clearly display relevant data from my casework. Thus, the computer skills I had improved throughout the duration of this project came into play. This is just one example of when these newly-acquired skills benefitted me on my work experience and will benefit me in the future.*

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*The skills acquired will undoubtedly help me in my future in law. Public speaking, in-depth research and fact checking will be indispensable for me in the future. It will also set me apart from other applicants for jobs.*

## 9. What tips would you give other students thinking of undertaking the EPQ?

*Personally, I would say that give the EPQ a go and don't have any second thoughts. Focus on an area of interest to you and not something which you would think is easy to do. Also, at first the workload may seem a lot, but if you commit to the work you need to do, the EPQ will become easier and at the end of it all, you will have an extra qualification.*

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*The two main pieces of advice I would give to students who are considering undertaking an EPQ is make sure that your plan is as detailed as you can physically make it. You can do this by breaking everything down into sub-sections. Not only will this act as a tick-list but also, it means you can allocate more exact time frames in which you can get each objective done, thereby meeting deadlines. This leads into my second point. Time management is key. If you want to get your EPQ finished on time and completed to the best of your ability, make sure to manage your time well. Start early and get ahead. Try to come up with a few possible investigative questions over the summer and research them in detail to work out the most viable so that when you return to college in September you are ready to go. I believe that if you do this then you are well on your way to getting a very good grade out of this qualification.*

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*I would advise them to manage their time carefully, as I found that the research process took me a lot longer than I anticipated, I would therefore recommend for future students to make a timetable and stick as close as possible to those deadlines. As well as this I would advise students to select a topic they feel passionate about or enjoy otherwise the project will feel like a chore. 10. Would you recommend the qualification to others? Yes as I feel it has allowed me to improve skills that are needed in future study or would be relevant for someone going straight into work after their A-Levels.*

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*Setting yourself a clear timeline and sticking to it is the most important thing. When you make your timeline, certainly ensure that you give yourself breaks, and periods of less intense work. But having the work spread out over one or two years is much more manageable than trying to cram it all in at the last minute, especially given that universities applications and coursework are due in around this time too. You'll also notice that your work is of a much higher standard this way.*

## **10. Would you recommend the qualification to others?**

*I would certainly recommend the qualification to others. This qualification allows you to research your own little project that you may have always wanted to find out about but have never been given the opportunity to do so. At the end of it all, you would have gained vital life skills to help with transition to university life as well as having an extra qualification under your belt, which shows to others the different types of skills you have learnt along the way.*

.....

*I genuinely believe EPQ to be one of the best decisions I have made throughout the entirety of my academic journey. When you hand in the final product which you created from scratch after the hours of extensive research and writing draft upon draft, you'll realise it'll all have been worth it. The level of pride you feel for putting your heart and soul into this project; persevering when it felt impossible and the relief you feel knowing that this is the best piece of work you could have produced is unlike any other I have experienced.*

.....

*Yes, definitely! This qualification can enhance your university and future job applications, as well as giving you a chance to focus and conduct further research on a topic that really interests and excites you. You'll thank yourself for doing the EPQ - I know I did!*



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