

# **The Extended Project Qualification**

## **What is the Extended Project Qualification?**

The AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is based on an independent, student-driven piece of work. While the choice of subject is the student's own, it follows a clearly structured process, during which the student researches the topic and creates a product.

The Project can be an extension (but not duplication) of a student's A-level studies. Alternatively, a candidate can explore an area of personal interest, possibly one related to his or her plans for university or employment.

As well as allowing students to increase their knowledge of a subject not covered in lessons, the EPQ has the potential to earn students up to 70 additional UCAS points. It can also help a candidate to stand out when applying to university, particularly when access to places is highly competitive.

The possibilities for a topic include virtually anything that is legal, safe and provides scope for achieving the Assessment Objectives! The Project can consist of an artefact, although the majority of students opt for an extended essay. Examples of past Projects completed at Hartismere include composition of an operatic aria, an analysis of military strategy in the Vietnam War, design and creation of furnishings in the rococo style, and design, manufacture and sale of charity Christmas cards.

## **What is the Extended Project candidate required to do?**

- choose an area of interest and draft a Project title, aims and objectives
- plan, research and carry out the Project
- provide evidence of all stages of Project production by keeping a Production Log
- deliver a presentation to a specified audience
- record his or her reflections on the whole process

## **What does the examining board accept as appropriate evidence of a Project Product?**

The AQA examining board says:

“Depending on the subject area or topic chosen, a variety of evidence may be submitted for assessment.

Evidence can be provided in any form appropriate to the type of Project chosen, and may include:

- an artefact, model or construction
- a CD/video/DVD of performances or activities
- an audiotape/multimedia presentation
- a journal of activities or events
- a slide or PowerPoint presentation
- a photographic record of the Project.

All Project products must include a written report of between 1000 and 5000 words. The exact length of each written report will depend on the nature of the Project, the subject area or topic chosen and the other evidence provided. A Project which consists solely of written work should be approximately 5000 words, for example a research report of an investigation, exploration of a hypothesis, an extended essay or academic report in appropriate form. Projects where the majority of the evidence is provided in other formats should include a report which is at least 1000 words.”

## How is the Extended Project assessed?

There are four Assessment Objectives for the EPQ, weighted as indicated below:

	Assessment Objectives	Weighting
<b>AO1</b>	<b>Manage</b> Identify, design, plan, and carry out a project, applying a range of skills, strategies and methods to achieve objectives.	20%
<b>AO2</b>	<b>Use Resources</b> Research, critically select, organise and use information, and select and use a range of resources. Analyse data apply relevantly and demonstrate understanding of any links, connections and complexities of the topic.	20%
<b>AO3</b>	<b>Develop and Realise</b> Select and use a range of skills, including, where appropriate, new technologies and problem-solving, to take decisions critically and achieve planned outcomes.	40%
<b>AO4</b>	<b>Review</b> Evaluate all aspects of the extended project, including outcomes in relation to stated objectives and own learning and performance. Select and use a range of communication skills and media to present evidenced project outcomes and conclusions in an appropriate format.	20%

The EPQ involves about 120 hours work so it is *not* an easy option! Some of the work will involve taught skills and all will be under the general guidance of a supervisor but, ultimately, the Project is an independent piece of work. This can be a challenge for students unaccustomed to self-management!

On the other hand, it provides a rare opportunity for suitable candidates to explore something that really interests them and develop skills (and even a degree of expertise) that will be very useful for higher education and/or future employment.

## Contact

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