

Subject: Extended Project Qualification	Awarding Body: AQA
Head of Dept: Dr Edwards	Teacher: Dr Edwards, Miss Watson

Preferred entry requirements:

This Level 3 project qualification is offered to all students in their Lower Sixth year. Like an AS level, it is essentially half an A-level in terms of size and, like other A-levels, it is graded A*-E, with an A* awarded 28 UCAS points. After an introduction to the assessment objectives and research skills, students are invited to submit a research proposal. If their proposal successfully meets the criteria set down by AQA then students will be able to take over the management of their individual project and work independently to agreed deadlines and a final submission date in March of their Upper Sixth year.

Structure of the course:

The AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a piece of autonomous work on a topic of a student's choosing. Students may produce a written project of 5000 words or, alternatively, an "artefact" based project which would entail the production of a product plus an accompanying report of 1500 words. Artefact possibilities are numerous and examples include animations, scripts, models and events.

Before their individual project work begins, students will have weekly skills lessons to develop the skills that are needed for project work and for academic study in general. Skills covered in the first term will include: time-management, searching and evaluating sources and effective note-taking.

The process of designing their personal extended project will begin early in the Autumn term of the Lower Sixth year. The process formally starts with the opening of an AQA log book, the written recording of initial ideas followed by a formal research proposal which, once approved, will initiate the project's production.

Once their project commences, students are expected to independently devote 90 hours to its production. As the first year progresses, skills lessons will provide a back-bone to students' independent study by continuing to develop students' project skills and offering guidance in the management of the project and the required log book. In the Summer term of the Lower Sixth year, skills lessons will focus on the written and oral presentation of the project, enabling students to move to the final stages of the project.

The written project will be completed by February of their Upper Sixth year. All students will then be required to give an oral presentation of their findings to a small audience and the presentation will be followed by a question and answer session. The project and log book will then be submitted for moderation in March of the Upper Sixth year.

Methodology:

Skills lessons will require active participation in a wide range of activities so that students can practise the required project skills: from time-management, to idea development, to research, through to presentations. During the project, students will be further supported by at least four one-to-one meetings with a supervisor who will be available throughout the year for guidance and support. However, students are ultimately in charge of their own learning and project management, with 90 hours independent study required.

Strengths/Skills developed through studying this subject:

This qualification develops many skills that are vital for both successful academic study and project work. Students can expect to improve their time-management skills, become more effective in their searching for source material, develop their critical thinking; and build their confidence in written and oral presentation.

What students do with this qualification:

This qualification is a great opportunity for students to demonstrate their passion for a topic and their ability to work independently. It is therefore a valuable resource for personal statements and interviews and, in its development of mature study skills, it provides an excellent preparation for study at undergraduate level. Some universities make lower "alternative" offers based on achievement of grade A or above in EPQ.