

Extended Project Qualification



WHAT IS THE EPQ?

The EPQ is an opportunity to independently research a topic of your choice and produce an extended piece of work that presents your findings. Though most EPQs will consist of a 5000-word dissertation style essay, you can produce a musical/dramatic composition, or even build an artefact.

WHY DO THE EPQ?

The EPQ is it a great opportunity to experience university style study and expand your knowledge in an area of interest.

It's also a great way to demonstrate that you're someone who's really up for carrying out your own independent research - which, at the end of the day, is what university study is all about.

DO UNIVERSITIES VALUE THE EPQ?

The general message from universities is that they really like the EPQ - a quick look through online prospectuses confirms this:

- **University of Manchester:** 'The skills that students develop through the Extended Project are excellent preparation for university-level study.'
- **University of Liverpool:** 'We encourage candidates to draw upon their experience of undertaking the project when writing their personal statement.'
- **University of Southampton:** 'Students could use their project at interview stage and/or in their UCAS personal statement. Certain courses at the University will count 'A' grades achieved in the extended project towards their entry criteria.'

WHAT TOPIC CAN I DO MY EPQ ON?

Students are able to propose their own project title, as long as it meets certain criteria. They can research a topic linked to one of their subjects (as long as there is not too much overlap with the syllabus) or something completely unrelated to their A levels. Examples of project titles over the last few years can be seen below:

- Was the Nazi's appropriation of Friedrich Nietzsche's philosophy based on a correct reading or on a distortion?
- Does the depiction of Mary Magdalene in Caravaggio's painting correspond with scholars' ideas of the portrayal of women in Luke's gospel?
- Assess the reasons why the Norwegian prison system is more successful at re-integrating individuals into society than other western countries? A case study of Norway's prison system.
- To what extent has the growth of the meat industry benefitted Brazil?
- Should artefacts taken from British colonies be returned to their country of origin?

EXAM BOARD
AQA

HOW IS IT GRADED?

The EPQ is worth half an A level and accrues UCAS points. It is graded A* - E, like A levels.

WHO SHOULD DO THE EPQ?

The EPQ is taken as an optional additional qualification. It is open to everyone, however, it is important that students are able to manage the extra workload and for it to not impact on their A level subjects. Some students see it as a way of developing their skills, for others, because they have real interest in a particular subject and want to 'delve deeper', others have a real interest in something outside their A level subjects.

WHEN DOES IT RUN?

Lessons start in the Autumn Term and the EPQ is completed by the end of Year 12.

WHAT DO THE STUDENTS SAY ABOUT DOING THE EPQ?

This is what recent EPQ students have said about completing the EPQ:

"I really enjoyed the EPQ process and I would definitely recommend it to others. By completing this project I was able to learn and develop skills which will be invaluable to me at university. Since my project is an extended essay, similar to the type I will be asked to write next year, I was able to gain very useful transferable knowledge from this experience."

"During this process I learnt a great deal about the process of completing an extended essay, and the steps that are needed in order to complete a well-formed argument. I have found the process of research incredibly valuable as I have learnt the benefits of using resources such as JSTOR and how to extract key information from large, sometimes complex text.....another skill I have acquired through studying the EPQ is referencing. I had absolutely no previous knowledge of how to reference sufficiently, so I found the teaching sessions at the beginning of the EPQ process very useful. It meant that referencing became quite an easy thing to do over the course of the project."

RECENT RESULTS

2023: A*-A = 56%, A*-B = 81%

2024: A*-A = 48%, A*-B = 70%

2025: A*-A = 37.5%, A*-B = 70.5%