

# Extended Project FAQs

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## What is the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)?

The EPQ is a new qualification piloted in 2007 and introduced in 2008 as a result of the 14-19 Education and Skills White Paper<sup>1</sup>. It requires students to create

“a single piece of work, requiring a high degree of planning, preparation and autonomous working. The projects that students complete will differ by subject, but all will require persistence over time and research skills to explore a subject independently in real depth.”

## What is the EPQ worth?

The EPQ is worth a maximum of 70 UCAS points, slightly more than an AS Level (60 points) as the A\* grade is available for the EPQ.

## What timetable options are available with the EPQ?

Students can study either 3 A Levels and the EPQ, or 4 A Levels and the EPQ. These options exist alongside the existing options of 4 A Levels, 4 A Levels and an AS Level, or 5 A Levels.

## What is an Extended Project?

All projects must include a written report of at least 1000 words but the outcome of the EPQ can be almost anything: a dissertation, an artefact or model, a performance, a short film, a website or piece of software, a design or blueprints, etc. Once their project is completed students must also give a short presentation on their project to a non-specialist audience.

## What range of topics are available for the EPQ?

Students may study any topic they wish; there is no requirement for students to study a topic within the range of subjects offered at A Level. Pupils may wish to study a topic related to the subject that they intend to study at university.

## How do universities view the EPQ?

Universities view the EPQ very positively. The EPQ gives students the opportunity to develop independent learning skills (e.g. project management, decision-making, problem-solving, planning, research, critical thinking) that are important at university but which are underdeveloped during A Level courses.

“The Extended Project is widely welcomed in principle and in prospect. A large majority of departmental admissions tutors expect to recognise it as a positive attribute when selecting among applicants with similar levels of achievement ... Tutors also welcome its potential to enhance study skills, to align with undergraduate modes of study and to provide additional diagnostic evidence when selecting among applicants.”

— The 1994 Group<sup>2</sup>

“[T]he University recognises that the EPQ will provide an applicant with the opportunity to develop research and academic skills relevant for study at Oxford. Candidates are encouraged to draw upon relevant EPQ experience when writing their personal statement.”

— University of Oxford

<sup>1</sup> Department for Education and Skills (2005). *14-19 Education and Skills White Paper*, London: HMSO

<sup>2</sup> The 1994 group is composed of the Universities of Bath, Birkbeck, Durham, East Anglia, Essex, Exeter, Goldsmiths, Royal Holloway, Lancaster, Leicester, Loughborough, Queen Mary, Reading, St Andrews, Surrey, Sussex and York and the School of Oriental and African Studies and the Institute of Education.

“The Cambridge Colleges welcome the introduction of the Extended Project ... primarily because of the benefit we recognise in the skills it will develop in learners and the consequent easing of the transition from study in secondary to higher education.”

— University of Cambridge

“Applicants presenting the Extended Project are encouraged to discuss their research in their personal statement and reflect on how undertaking the project will help prepare them for studying their chosen degree at Warwick.”

— University of Warwick

“The University recognises that some A Level students may also choose to offer the Extended Project. In such cases some admissions tutors may make two alternative offers, one of which involves success in the Extended Project.”

— University of Bristol

“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 their A Levels ... If you offer an Extended Project, it will be taken into account. Your offer may be varied as a result, in recognition of the level of study skills you will have developed.”

— University of Newcastle

“The University very much values the Extended Project and its role in preparing students for a successful higher education experience ... in highly selective areas preference may be given to students entering from 2010 with A Levels, who also offer the Extended Project for entry.”

— University of Glasgow

### **How is the EPQ taught?**

The EPQ course is taught over four terms. The first term is primarily concerned with developing the project title and the skills required to complete the project. During the remaining three terms students research and realise their project under the supervision of their Project Supervisor.

### **How is the EPQ supervised and assessed?**

The Project Supervisor will be a teacher from RGS chosen so that the interests of the teacher and of the student overlap. They will be responsible for overseeing the development of the project during regular meetings with the student and assessing the project once it is completed.

### **What are the requirements for EPQ?**

The EPQ is intended to be accessible to students with a wide range of abilities. Students undertaking the EPQ will need to demonstrate a great deal of commitment and motivation, and an ability to work independently. Students who have difficulty completing coursework or handing in work on time would be advised to consider other options.

### **Which exam board administrates the EPQ?**

The EPQ is offered by all the main exam boards; RGS is using the AQA specification.