MELIORA SPECTARE

Wath Sixth Form Subject Preparation Pack

EXTENDED PROJECT

Level 3 Extended Project Transition Pack

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What is the Extended Project?

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is your chance to do something a little different from the rest of your A Level subjects – while also helping you to gain those valuable UCAS points for university study. Unlike other subjects, you set your own goals and aims: you come up with a project topic that interests you and then research your topic in depth, ready to use the research to produce something creative or analytical. You might opt to create an artefact, an original piece of work (such as a painting, website, short story, or dramatic production). Alternatively, you might write a research essay about an area of interest, such as history, English, geography or sociology. If you are more scientific, you might put together an investigation to test a hypothesis in an experiment. The course lasts for one year and is assessed through the coursework you produce, rather than through exams. If you love a chance to work independently, this is the perfect course for you!

Why should I study the Extended Project?

Not only is the Extended Project a chance to study in depth a topic you love, it's also great preparation for university. You will learn all the key skills you need to survive after A Level, because you will hone your independent skills in time management, project control, research and analytical writing. This will also make you stand out to universities, and can often lead to lowered entry conditions. In the words of the University of York's Admissions Administrator for English, Sheila Cosgrove: "The EPQ is a definite strength in an application. It can create the heartland of a personal statement and give it depth and substance." Furthermore, it is the only one-year course where you can be awarded an A*, which means you can gain more UCAS points for your time, if you secure the top marks!

What careers could the Extended Project lead to?

Given how flexible the course is, it could lead to any career. Students often shape their Extended Projects around a possible future career. For example, students who have been interested in writing as a career have created short stories for their projects while digital animators have created short animations. A couple of years ago, one student made a short film and came to the conclusion that she preferred the theory of film to practical filmmaking – the Extended Project can be a safe space to try out a career, in case it isn't actually the right one for you!

What will I study?

At Wath Academy Sixth Form, we cover the AQA syllabus for the Extended Project.

Some of the skills you will learn include:

- How to plan and manage time effectively, including SMART targets

- How to effectively collect different types of data (primary, secondary and tertiary)
- How to assess the reliability and credibility of different research sources
- How to write an effective literature review
- How to format a bibliography and how to use citations
- How to effectively structure an extended essay
- How to write an abstract
- How to create an effective presentation

How will I be assessed?

The AQA Extended Project is assessed through the coursework you produce, which means you will not have to sit any exams. If you opt to create a research essay or an investigation, you will be expected to produce a 5,000 word essay or investigation report. If you opt to create an artefact, you must also write a report with a minimum of 1,000 words alongside the creative piece you produce.

When your work is marked at the end of the project, your supervisor will be looking for evidence of four different assessment objectives:

AO1: Manage (10 marks)

This assessment objective tests your ability to set out clear aims for your project and to manage your time in order to achieve those aims.

AO2: Use of Resources (10 marks)

This assessment objective tests your ability to use a wide range of academic research in order to achieve your aims.

AO3: Develop and Realise (20 marks)

This assessment objective tests your ability to develop your project from start to end and to problem-solve, if you face obstacles. It also assesses your ability to realise your aims to a high standard.

AO4: Review (10 marks)

This assessment objective tests your ability to be reflective, to understand your natural strengths and to understand any weaknesses and to know how to overcome these in future.

Recommended resources
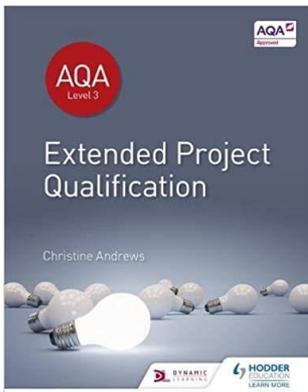
AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) - Philip Allan publishing

This is a guide to the course, written by Christine Andrews, who has extensive experience of EPQs. You can look inside on Amazon.co.uk to pick up some useful tips about how to approach the course at the beginning, even if you decide not to buy the full book.

AQA Extended Project

https://www.aqa.org.uk/subjects/projects/project-qualifications/EPQ-7993

Find out more about the course from the AQA website.

AQA Extended Project Logbook

http://filestore.aqa.org.uk/admin/crf_pdf/AQA-7993-CRF-20.DOCX

You will complete a logbook like this one throughout the course – this is a record of everything you do in order to produce your project.

Google Scholar

https://scholar.google.com/

A useful search engine to find academic research about your topic of interest – much better than Wikipedia!

Cite this for me

https://www.citethisforme.com/harvard-referencing

A useful guide to what it means to reference a piece of research in the Harvard style.

Wellcome Trust Ethics Guide

https://wellcome.ac.uk/sites/default/files/wtp057673_0.pdf

A useful read for any student considering completing some primary research – how to keep it ethical.

Additional resources

The following resources may or may not link directly to the specification but are useful in developing your wider understanding of key theories and concepts.

youtube.com	bbc.co.uk	cam.ac.uk/research	ox.ac.uk/research
guardian.co.uk	independent.co.uk	telegraph.co.uk	

Meet the staff

Mr Bishop – Extended Project Coordinator

I love the Extended Project because of the opportunities it gives students.

Unlike every other Level 3 qualification, the EPQ allows you to study a completely self-chosen topic that you are really interested in. I have been fascinated to see what students do their projects on. This year, I have seen projects ranging from women in the film industry to research into bacteriophage viruses to Stella McCartney's influence on fashion. Any topic is possible and I've learnt so much from reading students' projects outside my usual teaching specialism of English and Media Studies. I've been just as impressed by students who have produced artefacts – this year even including a short videogame!

The research and self-management skills students learn from the EPQ are so valuable – no wonder universities really like to see it on application forms.

I can't wait to support the next set of EPQ students with their projects.
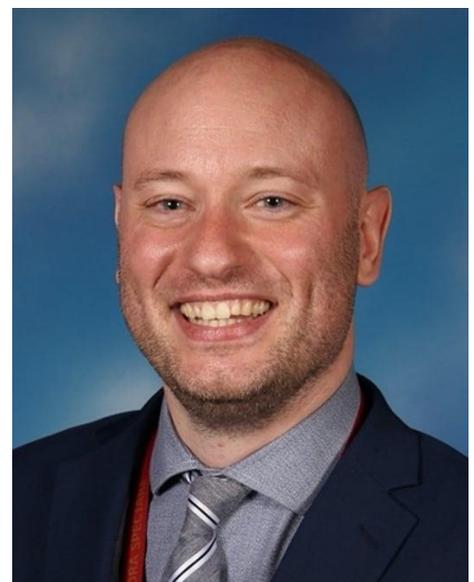
Preparation work

Task 1: Questionnaire

Fill out the short questionnaire below to decide whether you think the Extended Project is the right course for you.

1. Do you have an interest in a topic not offered by traditional A Levels?

2. Do you enjoy researching and discovering new things?

3. Do you enjoy being able to plan your own time and work schedule?

4. Do you like to have the freedom to make your own decisions?

5. Do you have a good level of motivation to keep focused on a year-long task?

Task 2: Exploring Previous Titles

Read the following advice about EPQ titles:

✓ A good project title should make it clear what a project is about.
✓ A good project title should allow a student to complete academic research.
✓ It can be helpful to phrase as a question so the student can reach a conclusion.

The projects in the table below were all completed by previous Wath students.

Work your way through the table below to record your ideas about the example project titles.

Project Title	Does it appear to be an <u>artefact</u>, an <u>essay</u> or an <u>investigation</u>? How can you tell?	Does the project appear to link to any other A Level subject(s)? Why do you think this?	What are the strengths of this essay title, in your opinion?	What are the weaknesses of this essay title, in your opinion?
How does Shakespeare's portrayal of female characters compare to the expectations placed upon women in Elizabethan England?				

Project Title	Does it appear to be an <u>artefact</u>, an <u>essay</u> or an <u>investigation</u>? How can you tell?	Does the project appear to link to any other A Level subject(s)? Why do you think this?	What are the strengths of this essay title, in your opinion?	What are the weaknesses of this essay title, in your opinion?
What is the importance of conserving the species of the Western Chimpanzee and what role do zoos play in their conservation?				
An investigation into how varying concentrations of sensory input affect memory and recall.				
A Celebration of Melodrama				
Can science ever prove the creation story?				
North Korea under Kim Jong-Un: progress, change and development, January 2011 to December 2015.				

Project Title	Does it appear to be an artefact, an essay or an investigation? How can you tell?	Does the project appear to link to any other A Level subject(s)? Why do you think this?	What are the strengths of this essay title, in your opinion?	What are the weaknesses of this essay title, in your opinion?
Can "les émeutes de 2005" ever be justified?				

Task 3: Practice Research

In the table below are a series of terms, which it is important to understand to succeed when you complete research on the Extended Project. Use your research skills in order to find details about the meanings of each term.

Key Term	What it means
reliability	
credibility	
bias	
validity	
temporal validity	
primary research	
secondary research	

Key Term	What it means
tertiary research	
qualitative	
quantitative	
academic	

Now use your ideas to explain why a website like Wikipedia is **<u>not</u>** an appropriate research source:

Task 4: Exploring your own project ideas

To help you generate ideas about what your project could be about, first list all your options:

GCSEs I have	A Levels I'm planning to study	Ideas for after A Level...	Extracurricular/Hobbies/Interests
1.	1.		
2.	2.		
3.	3.		
4.	4.		
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

Now colour code the different options, based on how much they could be a source of inspiration for your project:

RED – Definitely not!

YELLOW – Potential, but not sure.

GREEN – Yes, this could definitely work!

Now use your ideas to generate some possible titles/topics below:

1.

2.

3.

Use the space below to record ideas from some initial research for each topic.

Make sure you write down the names of any books or websites that you use, so you can look back at them easily later on!