

Be

seen with an EPQ

Your guide to
understanding the EPQ

Student guide

AQA 
Realising potential



Be
seen

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“It’s really opened up so many different things for me, changed my whole lifestyle and it’s really helped me at uni.”

Kizzy, former EPQ student

What is the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)?

The EPQ is an A-level standard, standalone qualification designed to extend and develop your abilities beyond the A-level syllabus and prepare for university or your future career.

- It can be taken as an extension of other Level 3 qualifications or vocational qualifications.
- It's worth half an A-level in terms of UCAS points.
- It's recognised by universities and employers.

Our EPQ is popular with students and teachers alike. It provides an opportunity for you to extend your abilities beyond your sixth form course of study, stand out and prepare for university or your future career.

You'll be supported by your EPQ supervisor throughout the duration of the course, but it's down to you to plan the time you need to complete your project.

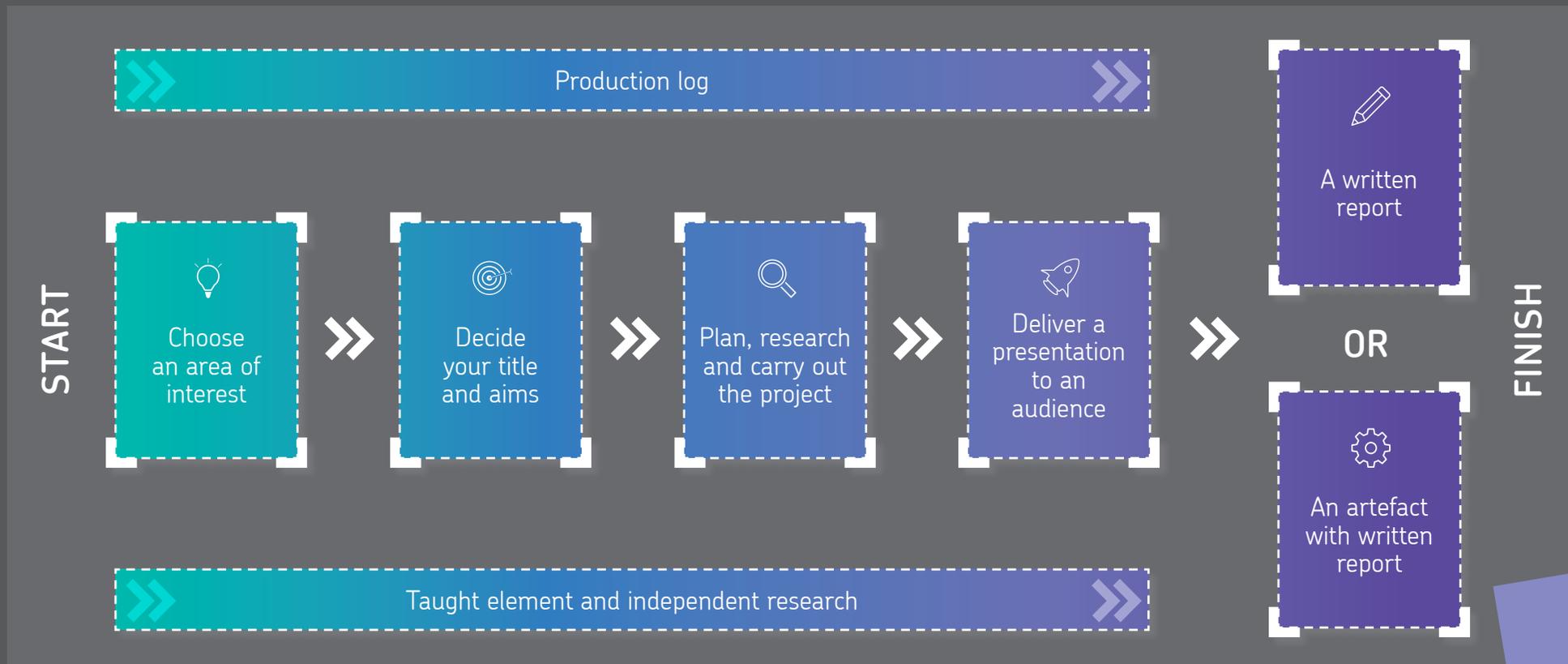
“What we see as teachers in the classroom is the student developing some really wonderful skills, in terms of really growing as a human being, and growing as a young adult.”

Jen Obaditch, AQA Head of Curriculum and former teacher

Where the journey starts

The EPQ can take two formats – written or practical – so it's suitable for all students. The final piece will either be a written report of around 5,000 words, or an artefact with a written report, which could be, for example, a three dimensional piece of artwork, a play or musical composition, a robot, a model aeroplane, even a website.

How it works:



The taught element

The specification requires 30 hours of supervised learning, however these may not be typical lessons and could encompass:

- visits from guest speakers
- visits to university libraries
- completing online courses.

During these lessons, you'll learn skills such as:

- how to develop titles, questions and proposals
- project management skills, including time management, planning techniques, and setting aims and objectives.
- research methods, including research ethics, analysis and evaluation, risk assessment and data collection techniques
- report writing and presentation skills.

Independent research

Independent research is the foundation of the EPQ and will allow you to:

- carry out detailed research that informs the project product outcome and format
- use of a wide range of relevant resources
- perform critical analysis and evaluation of resources
- use a mix of sources to realise the project product outcome

Logging progress and accomplishments

The Production log is an ongoing record of your project's progress. It's a tool to track and manage the EPQ process. You'll have ownership of it and it'll be completed by you, your supervisor and your coordinator.

The Production log records:

- your initial ideas
- the project proposal recommendation and approval
- meetings between you and your supervisor
- project planning, progress and decision making
- development of the project from the initial ideas to summary and reflection
- the live presentation and Q and A
- marking.

“The EPQ appealed to me because of the freedom to research a topic that I really cared about”

Lucy, former EPQ student

Discovering true passions

Find your interest, something you're truly passionate about.

As the EPQ is student-led, you really can do your project about anything. Some students choose to do an EPQ on a topic that supports their interest in what they'd like to do at university. Other students want to extend their learning beyond their A-level subjects, and some choose to do something completely different.

Examples of past projects

 <p>To research, plan and produce (own needlework) an eighteenth century ball gown.</p>	 <p>Can true happiness be found in a single moment?</p>	 <p>To what extent do genetic factors contribute to a propensity towards addiction in humans?</p>	 <p>How dimples affect the aerodynamic drag of a golf ball.</p>	 <p>Should you be concerned about mass surveillance?</p>	 <p>Recreating an accurate and representative WW1 trench for the set of 'Journey's End'.</p>
 <p>Could hydro-electric power be created outside our front door?</p>	 <p>How sustainable is the financial inequality between teams in the English Premier League?</p>	 <p>How can we help those suffering from elderly loneliness?</p>	 <p>Can emergency whistles be optimised for design and use in rural environments?</p>	 <p>Create an original scene for the musical 'Wicked'.</p>	 <p>Construction and testing of a small-scale hybrid rocket motor.</p>

A group of four students in a classroom setting. A young woman in the center is holding a tablet, and three other students (two men and one woman) are looking at it with interest. The scene is dimly lit, with a focus on the students and their interaction with the technology.

Be seen

“You’re really only limited by your imagination.”

Jen Obaditch, AQA Head of Curriculum and former teacher

Be seen by universities

Studies have shown there is an increased chance of achieving A-level A*-B by up to 29% when studying for an EPQ at the same time¹. Universities look on the EPQ favourably and can make alternative offers of lower A-level grades if accompanied by an EPQ.

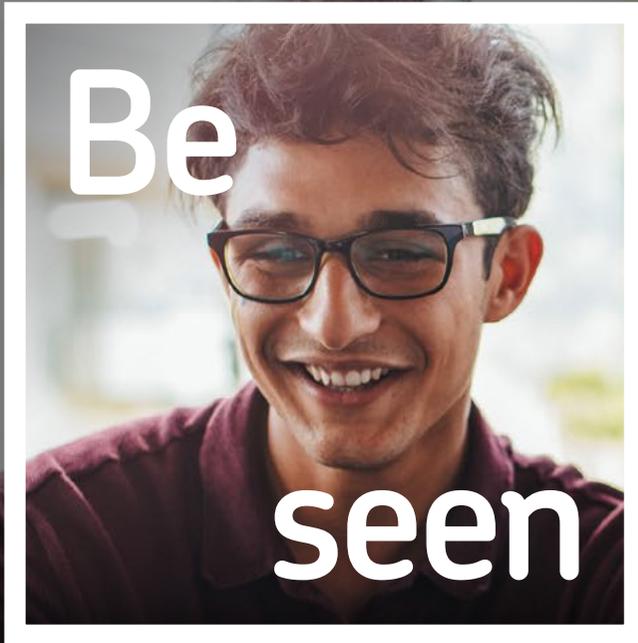
Research has revealed that EPQ students are less likely to leave their course after the first year, compared to students who did not take the qualification and more likely to obtain a 1st or 2:1².

“If you want to get a head start on university-style work, the EPQ is great for introducing concepts like independent learning, research and time management.”

Lucy, former EPQ student

References

1. Jones 2015
2. Thompson and Jones 2016



“I conducted some internal research at my school and found that around fifty percent of our EPQ students were given lower offers at university, based on their involvement with the qualification”

Jane Stevens, Head of Projects,
Uppingham School.



Be

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Be seen in the workplace

Even if Higher Education isn't the end goal, completing an EPQ provides key skills for the workplace

These include:



“It’s hard to imagine a career where the skills learnt in the EPQ wouldn’t help – the planning and managing element of the qualification will always feed into work-life.”

Jane Stevens, Head of Projects, Uppingham School

More benefits of doing the EPQ

Doing an EPQ allows students to develop their confidence and gain valuable skills to help them stand out from thousands of others.

It allows young people to **stand out** in a crowd

It's **flexible** so you can follow the school and home learning curriculum independently

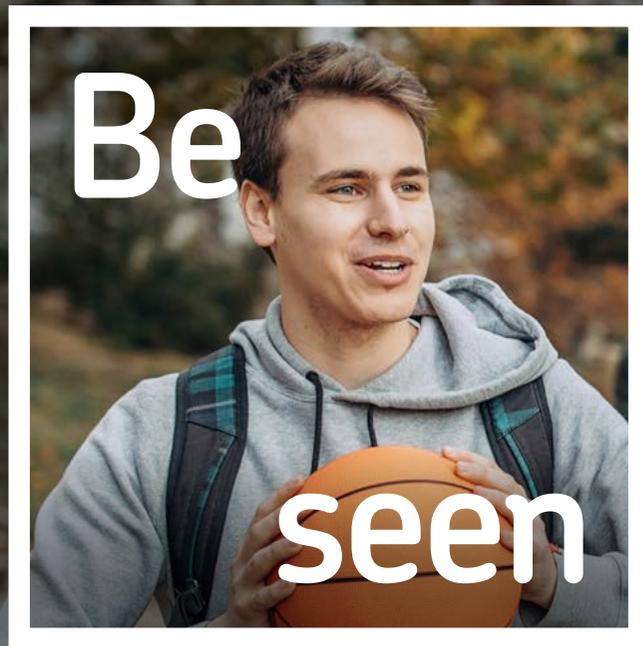
The taught skills programme **benefits all students**

There's easy access to a range of **online learning resources** from leading universities

Develop **study skills** by studying and researching independently

Build on your **life skills** and grow in confidence

Support **your future** by boosting UCAS points



For more
information
speak to your
teacher

aqa.org.uk/extended-project-qualification

aqa.org.uk

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