

What is EPQ?

The EPQ is a stand-alone qualification that all students will complete alongside their A Level subjects or other Level 3 qualifications.

It is graded A* - E and is equivalent to half an A Level in size (and UCAS points). It is an independent research project on a topic of **student interest** which is planned, researched and written by them.

Why students choose this course

The EPQ qualification helps develop skills and experience in independent research, time management, problem solving, academic writing and communication.

It has rapidly become an important part of an academic sixth form experience supporting performance whilst preparing students for higher education and working life.

Research substantiates that students who complete the EPQ have higher attainment levels across all their A-Level courses in comparison to their peers who do not undertake the EPQ. For this reason, all Dixons Sixth Form Academy students take an EPQ as part of their programme of study.

What the course covers

Students will choose ONE of FOUR possible units to complete

Unit 1: Dissertation:

A theoretical written project on any topic presenting an argument, e.g. research into a biological or historical issue.

Unit 2: Investigation/Field Study:

A practical investigatory project involving the collection of data, e.g. a geographical study of erosion.

Unit 3: Performance:

Development of practical skills, e.g. performing music, drama, sport.

Unit 4: Artefact:

Creating a painting/sculpture, designing furniture or a garment, creating a website or solving an engineering/construction problem.

Students will complete an activity log to record the stages of their project and the decisions made, which contributes to the final result, and an oral presentation is delivered at the end.

During their lesson each week students will be taught the skills needed to successfully complete their project. EPQ teachers will be project supervisors and meet students regularly to discuss their progress.

The EPQ is a fantastic opportunity for students to explore an academic area related to their career goals – the titles below demonstrate the flexibility of this qualification.

- o Are passwords an out-of-date technology for authentication?
- o How important was Bletchley Park to the Allied Victory of WW2?
- o Does the freedom of the press outweigh the people's right to privacy?
- o To what extent can current immunological research advance cancer treatments?
- o Could stem cell research lead to a viable cure for Alzheimer's disease?
- o Can Britain in the 21st Century still be regarded as a patriarchal society?

What students can do with this course

Achieving an EPQ qualification is not only useful for one's personal development, it is also highly valued by universities and employers as evidence of the students' ability to engage in research, independent learning and extended writing. In this way, the EPQ can help students gain a competitive edge when applying to university.

How this course is assessed

The completed project is assessed holistically – i.e. the final report, presentation and activity log are all used collectively to arrive at a final mark. It is assessed in the areas detailed below:

A01 - Manage 17%

A02 - Use Resources 22%

A03 - Develop and Realise 44%

A04 - Review 17%

Entry requirements

All our course entry requirements are detailed in the Entry Requirements document located in the admissions section of our website.

Further Reading?

The complete specification can be viewed on:
<https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/home.html>

Guide covering essential skills: Student Guide Level 3 Extended Project by Elizabeth Swinbank and John Taylor

Student Profile:



Before Sixth Form, Katie was a student at Dixons Allerton Academy. At Dixons Sixth Form, she studied A level Mathematics, Biology and Chemistry.

“ My EPQ question is: ‘Are mental illnesses accurately depicted in television series of the drama genre?’. I’m deeply interested in human biology and psychology and thus I’m keen to research a topic that will expand my knowledge of physical or mental illness. ”