



EPQ Bridging Work

What is an EPQ?

- An EPQ is a level 3 extended project qualification, which equates to one AS level and is completed during year 12.
- It is a qualification which develops transferable skills which will be useful for all of your other A level subjects as well as for future further education courses and careers.
- It's worth half an A-level (28 UCAS points)
- It's recognised by universities and employers
- Many universities make lower A-level offers to students undertaking an EPQ.
- It is a holistic process meaning that it is not just the quality of the end product that you are assessed on but how you arrive there.
- The idea is to independently produce a research-based project, logging details of the whole journey, from initial ideas to final product.

The end product

- By the end of the course you will need to submit a 5000-word dissertation on a suitable topic of your choice or an artefact accompanied by a 1000-3000 word research-based essay.
- A production log, detailing all the ideas, planning, research and developments made during the whole project.
- A presentation, showing your whole EPQ journey and your findings

Structure of the course

- You have 2 compulsory taught periods a fortnight
- Your assigned teacher is your supervisor
- We are following the AQA specification for examination from May 2021
- The finished products are completed by the end of April for internal moderation and assessment.
- Whole EPQ cohort sessions focusing on elements of the production log and new skills required
- Two sessions with the librarian focusing on research and Harvard referencing

Expectations

- You will be expected to meet all of your supervisor's deadlines. These may vary between supervisors – do not compare groups.
- As a taught part of your curriculum, you will be expected to put in an additional minimum of 2 hrs a week personal study time in order to complete your project NOT just the 1hr taught time.
- From experience the more efficient and organised the student, the better the quality of the project
- Most importantly you need to be aware that this is an independent project, and you will be expected to demonstrate that independence.
- Your supervisor can guide and offer support, but they cannot provide you with specific subject material nor can they "tell" you what to write.

The quality of research and the level of English used during the log, essay and presentation should demonstrate the same extensive academic rigour expected at A level.

Tasks - you need to complete the steps below and be prepared to bring it to your first session.

Objective:

The purpose of this bridging work is to help you begin developing your ideas for your AQA Extended Project Qualification (EPQ). This is your opportunity to start exploring possible directions for your project, reflect on your interests, and begin researching and thinking critically.

You **do not** need to have a final EPQ question or title by September, but you **must** arrive with at least **two to three viable topic areas** that could be developed into full EPQ projects.

What We're Looking For:

The students who produce the most **impressive EPQ projects** are those who show:

Strong research skills – being able to find, select, and use appropriate sources

Critical thinking and analysis – not just describing, but evaluating ideas and evidence

Self-reflection and problem-solving – recognising difficulties and adjusting accordingly

Step 1: Idea Generation (1 hour) (approx. 250–300 words)

Think of at least two possible EPQ topics you might want to explore.

- These can be academic, creative, practical, or interdisciplinary.
- Try to avoid sensitive or "dark" topics that may affect your mental wellbeing.
- Check that your topic is *not* directly covered in your A-level specifications. You are not allowed to research a topic that you directly study.
- Include:

- A clear topic title/question idea
- Why it interests you personally
- Where your inspiration came from (e.g., a book, a personal experience, a class topic, a future career)

Example format:

Idea 1: “*How has K-pop influenced global youth culture since 2010?*”

Why I’m interested: I’ve been a fan of K-pop since Year 9, but I’ve recently noticed its wider influence on fashion, language, and online communities. I saw a BBC documentary which made me wonder how far this influence goes.

Potential challenge: Need to define “influence” — what kind? How can it be measured?

Step 2: Initial Research (1.5–2 hours)

Pick one or both ideas and begin exploring whether they are *researchable*. Do this online or using any library resources you can access. It is recommended to use journal articles not just websites.

Try to answer:

- Can I find enough up-to-date, reliable sources?
- Are there different viewpoints or debates within this topic?
- Are academic or expert sources available, not just blogs or opinion pieces?

Make a short list of sources you looked at, including:

- Title, author, and type of source (e.g., journal, article, video, book)
- A one-sentence summary of what it said
- The date you accessed it

Example format:

Source: “Digital Activism and Youth Politics” (Journal of Political Studies, 2022)

Summary: Explores how Instagram and TikTok influence protest behaviour among UK teens.

Accessed: 10 July 2025

Step 3: Reflection on Feasibility (30–45 minutes) (approx 250 words)

Now reflect on your ideas. Which one is stronger in terms of:

- Scope: Is it too vague or too narrow?
- Balance: Will it be analytical and not just descriptive?
- Sources: Are there enough reliable materials available?
- Passion: Are you still interested after reading about it?

Write a short reflection (approx. 150–200 words) on which idea you'd be more likely to pursue and why. If you still aren't sure, that's fine — say so, and explain what further research you might need.

Step 4: Research Log / Initial Q Log (30 minutes) (approx 300 words)

Use the template below to summarise your thinking so far. This is the beginning of your official Project Q Log, which you'll continue during your EPQ journey.

EPQ Initial Ideas Log Template

Your Name:

A-Level Subjects Studied:

Initial Topic Title:

Why this topic?

What questions might I explore?

What problems have I already encountered?

What types of sources have I found so far?

What do I still need to find out?

What help might I need from my supervisor?

Deadline

Please bring your completed bridging work with you to your **first EPQ session in September**. You may type or handwrite the work, but make sure it is clear and structured.

Final Tip:

Approach this as a chance to explore something you're genuinely curious about. You are about to begin one of the most independent and rewarding academic projects of your time at sixth form — take this opportunity to start strong.