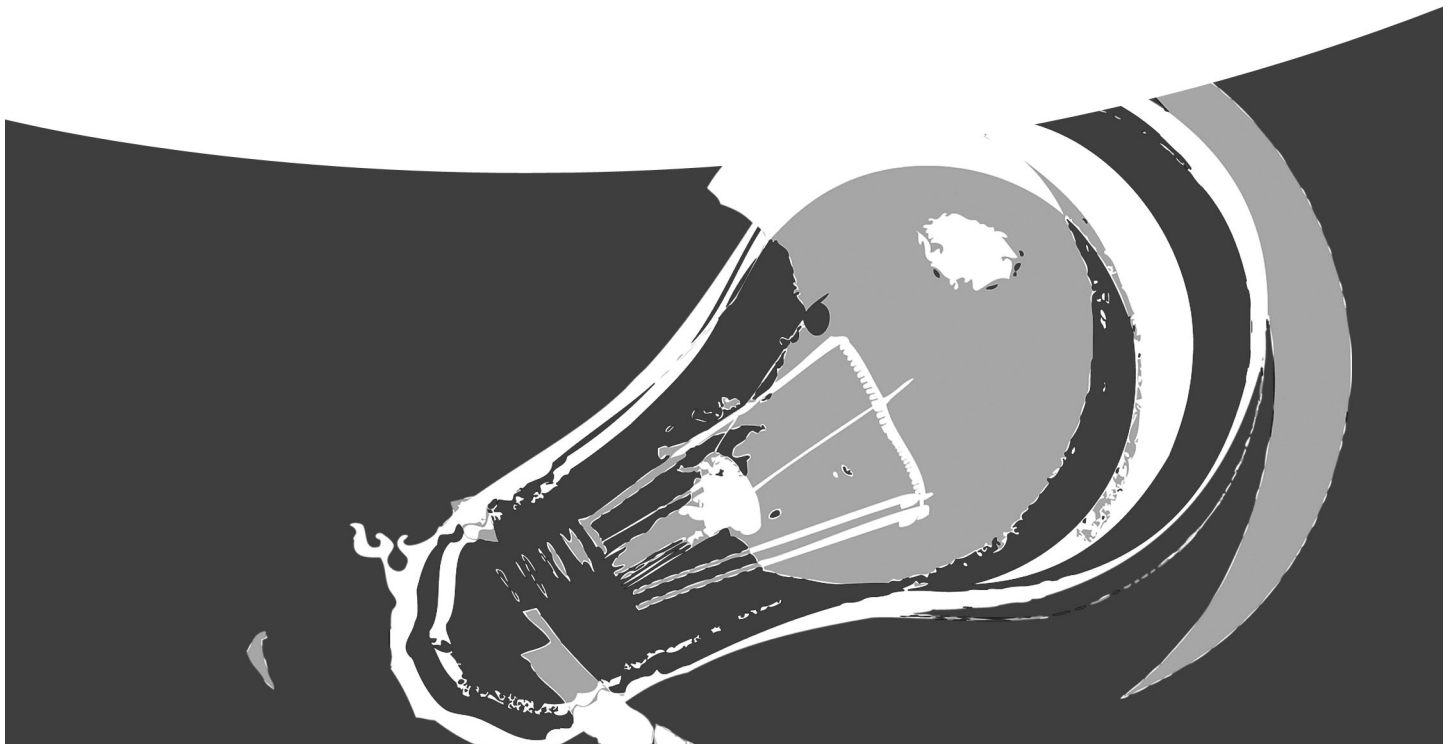


Teacher Resource Bank

Extended Project Qualification

(Level 3)

EP Conferences FAQ's



Extended Project Questions and Answers arising from the EP Conferences in 2008

Is it worth standardising 5000 word essay EPQs separately from artefact based EPQs?

No. The same assessment criteria are used no matter what type of project or project evidence submitted. Each supervisor should mark their own candidate's work but it is then appropriate that internal standardisation takes place as for any other qualification and all supervisors are standardised together. It may also be appropriate for the coordinator to sample the marking of the individual supervisors.

Will it be possible to complete the EPQ if you are given no contact time with interested pupils?

No. The supervisor has a specific mentoring role to play and needs to provide a minimum amount of guidance and support as indicated in the production log and assessment record. A student should not be allowed to go away and carry out an Extended Project without there being the minimum number of meetings and comments/support as reflected in the production log.

Who is marking the projects- the supervisor or the coordinator?

Can the coordinator do some of the assessments?

The supervisor should mark the student's project as it is the supervisor who is best placed to know the work the student has put into their project. Where a centre has only a few candidates it can be the case that the coordinator also acts as supervisor and in this instance the coordinator, acting as supervisor, should assess the candidate's project.

Does the presentation include the product? i.e. a photographic exhibition marketing t-shirt designs, animation film.....

If the end product is a photographic exhibition or an animation, the student could carry out a presentation on the process they went through to achieve the particular outcome e.g. rationale behind the exhibition/film, the research they carried out and how /why they chose the final content of their work etc

Can the EPQ be submitted in the form of a poem? If so, what form would the research take (choice of topic, study of poetic forms, etc)?

Yes. This would be regarded as an artefact and should therefore be accompanied by a 1,000 word written piece.

E-portfolio. I know this is being promoted: have centres found it relatively straightforward to use? What issues does it throw up for a centre?

A small number of centres have now submitted projects twice by e-portfolio and most if not all of the problems encountered have been resolved. A major key to making this go smoothly for the centre is to have each candidate's work and the appropriate accompanying documentation in a separate folder at the centre so the work can be uploaded relatively easy. It is also wise to start uploading the work before the final deadline because it can take longer than anticipated. Guidance on the minimum requirements for centres wishing to submit work via the Desktop tool (DTT) is available from the subject office.

Can AQA produce an example of projects graded A, B, C and requirements to get A*, A, B?

Yes. Samples are available at the launch meeting, teacher standardisation meetings and increasingly available in the Teacher Resource Bank on the website
http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/epq_trb.php.

Idea: forum for/of all teachers involved in EPQ with their subject specialisms so that we can contact each other for advice?

Best practice forums: do you know of any?

At present we have an informal email forum of centres which have entered students for the EPQ. Funding has been requested for a managed AQA forum. Regular conferences are planned and resources are increasingly being made available on the website to disseminate good practice.

How can I be confident that an A grade from one centre is the same as an A grade from another centre?

Standardisation for the epq takes place in the same way as for other coursework. AQA holds compulsory standardisation meetings for epq centre coordinators who are responsible for standardising teachers within the centre. The process is explained in more detail in the specification (2.4.4)

How many pilot schools did a group project?

Only a small percentage of schools in the pilot tackled a group project and these were mainly in the area of citizenship studies. Please see the advice below concerning group projects.

General guidance on group extended projects would be very useful. Thank you.

Students should be discouraged from working in groups larger than three (four maximum) and it is essential that a significant individual contribution can be defined by the time a project approval form is submitted. Tackling elements of projects in larger groups could be appropriate assuming that the plans and evaluations are individual and based on some individual research that forms the basis of their individual reports and presentations.

It will be important that there is an individual approach taken by students in their research and development of the project and care will be needed to construct the necessary structure of supervision to ensure that individual marks for the research element can be confirmed.

Do students need to include copies of everything they have referred to in their appendices? If not, do you prefer to see them?

It depends what evidence is referred to here but it may be appropriate that the supervisor has seen this evidence and documents referred to are referenced appropriately.

Why is presentation of content, spelling, punctuation, grammar not a consideration? If project moment in commerce/business is essential so is presentation.

These issues are important and implicit in AO4 where the project material has to be consistently relevant, well structured and appropriately presented. Candidates need to clearly communicate their findings and conclusions.

How are grades decided on the Extended Project? What characteristics distinguish a B from a C grade?

The A*/A and E/U boundaries are judgemental boundaries decided at an Award meeting. The other boundaries are statistically produced.

Why is the Extended Project not now approved by AQA at the proposal stage?

The students' titles were approved by an AQA adviser during the pilot phase of the qualification because the qualification was new and centre coordinators had not received training in aspects of the EPQ administration. Also AQA needed to gather specific information to help inform the development of the qualification and meet milestones set by QCA. It was never anticipated that this approval by AQA would continue after the pilot. Now the pilot phase is complete centres have been allocated project advisers to support them during the first two years of entering candidates for the EPQ.

What were the mark/grade boundaries this summer?

During the pilot the examiners reports have not included the grade boundaries especially as the A* was only awarded for the first time this autumn. The examiner report on this November Series will include this information. It will be posted on the epq pages of the website in January.

Is there an exam report?

Two examination reports are on the epq pages of the website. Link attached <http://www.aqa.org.uk/over/extendedproject.php>

The reports relate to Cohort 2 of the epq pilot in November 2007 and Cohort 3 of the pilot in May 2008. The examiner report for November 2008 entry will be posted on the epq pages of the website in January.