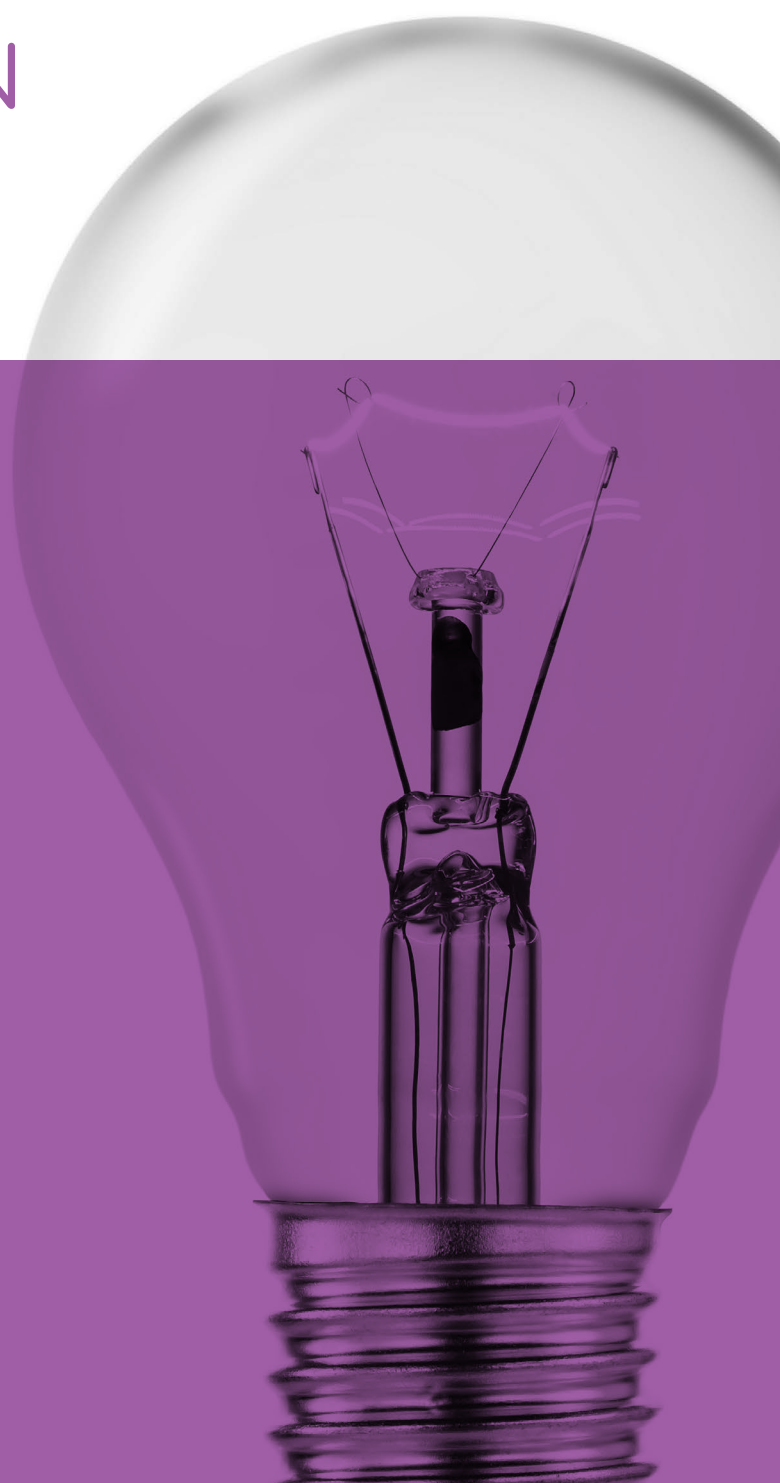


LEVEL 3



Case studies of how current centres
deliver and timetable the Level 3

EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION



DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Christ the King High School and Sixth Form, Southport, Merseyside

Christ the King Catholic High School are proud of the excellent education they have provided for thousands of young people since they opened in 1965. The school has a flourishing Sixth Form which provides an outstanding environment in which their students thrive, both academically and personally. At the root of this is their determination to meet the needs of all of their students, maintain high academic standards and provide opportunities to ensure that their students are well prepared for the next stage in their life journey.

Sandrine Calvignac is the school's Head of Languages, Sixth Form Mentor and EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

Year 13 students can opt to do it should they wish to. Numbers vary between 25 and 35. Years 12s (in the past) were picking 4 subjects at AS and we felt that an EPQ on top would be too much.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

Each group has 1 hour a week although some students' options clash with the EPQ sessions and I meet with them after school once a week to make up for it. We only have 2 supervisors each year and they are teachers with a surplus of non-contact periods on their timetable. Therefore, the colleague who is supervising with me is a different one each year.

Why and how did you choose this model?

Cost effective to use surplus of non-contact periods. One hour per week per group is the bare minimum so I have asked for this.

How is it working so far?

It is important to have the regular contact with the candidates so I do value having one session per week. When I am free, I join the session led by the supervisor who is delivering for the first time.

The most difficult thing is to find time to sit with all candidates for the interviews so I usually arrange to meet with them during registration.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

I am not expecting a change – I have not been informed of any changes for the future.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

- i) Select candidates carefully to ensure that, before they opt for it, they are extremely clear about what the EPQ entails and about the workload.
- ii) Try with a small number first in order to gain knowledge and understanding of assessment criteria and specifications.
- iii) Ensure that the candidates have at least one session of one hour per week for the Taught Element section.
- iv) Interview the candidates during registration in the morning so it might be an idea to ask to move to the KS5 Pastoral Team.
- v) Email the examination board if you are unsure of anything as they respond very quickly.
- vi) Use the teacher's guide and attend the examination board's CPD events as it is the most useful source of information.
- vii) Network with local centres to gain ideas, experience, tips and materials.
- viii) Ask for the time for the presentations early in the year so you have the dates that you want in the school calendar.
- ix) Contact parents if candidates do not meet deadlines as it can really help.
- x) Ensure that the students investigate an area that they are passionate about!

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Colyton Grammar School, Devon

Since its founding in 1546, Colyton Grammar School has enjoyed a long and distinguished history. The school has a tradition of high academic expectation, nurtured by a culture, which values achievement in all activities and supports fully the development of each student to achieve success, gain self-confidence and be equipped as independent learners, ready to take their place as responsible 21st century citizens.

Andrew Gregson is the Deputy Headteacher within the school and is the EPQ Centre Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

Presently all Year 12 students start the qualification, though a number will discontinue this or their fourth A Level before the submission deadline. We start it in Year 12 as, with the demise of General Studies, there was curriculum time available.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

The EP is timetabled for two 70-minute periods a fortnight. The lessons are delivered to tutor groups i.e., one teacher to 28-30 students, though the students also have access to a supervisor outside of these sessions. The timetabled lessons take place in IT rooms, which is also very helpful.

Why and how did you choose this model?

This is much better than the old model, which involved taking all students off timetable for EP study days during the year. The timetabled approach ensures a consistent development of the project.

How is it working so far?

Well, in that students are able to develop detailed thinking early on in the process, thereby helping them to make the right decisions regarding topic and question.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

We are looking to team teach the timetabled sessions i.e. have two teachers to each class.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

It is an enjoyable qualification for students, given they have control over the topic researched. It is also a qualification genuinely accessible to all and a great preparation for undergraduate study. Timetabling the sessions I would certainly recommend to ensure the course has a clear structure and it is taken seriously by all students. With the demise of AS qualifications, the EPQ makes more sense now than ever.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

St Edmund Campion Catholic School, Birmingham

St. Edmund Campion School exists as part of a partnership of home, parish and school, which together educate and pass on the Faith to their children. They aim to assist parents in their God given role as educators by providing a Catholic secondary education.

Sandra Griffiths is the Post-16 Learning Leader as well as the EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

We offer the EPQ to students in both Years 12 and 13. We chose to do it like this as this is the first year we have offered the course and we knew that there were a number of Year 13 students who were interested in completing a project. We have noticed, already, a considerable difference in the quality of work between the two year groups and recognised that some Year 12 students did not have the maturity to undertake a project in addition to their other Level 3 qualifications. For this reason, we will probably continue to offer the qualification to both year groups.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

(Please give details regarding number of sessions per week and number of students per supervisor, etc.)

We have two timetabled sessions a week of an hour long. We have 17 students across years 12 and 13 and have two supervisors.

Why and how did you choose this model?

We chose this model due to staffing and timetabling constraints. Other level 3 subjects are allocated to blocks and EPQ is extra to these blocks. It means that all students are able to access the EPQ if they want to.

How is it working so far?

Two lessons a week has made it difficult to get through the taught elements of the guided learning hours with enough haste. As coordinators/supervisors we are enjoying working with the students. It has been very interesting seeing what they wish to study in depth and very encouraging to see how the EPQ has made them learn to work things out for themselves as they cannot rely on teachers to deliver the content.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

Timetabling will continue in the same way. We don't expect our number of entries to increase too much as our sixth form is only small (currently 130 students on roll).

We would like to have more supervisors, particularly subject specific, but this raises concerns with regards to staff timetabling, training and funding needs. We are relying on goodwill at the moment! We currently have no departmental budget for the EPQ and know that this is not ideal.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

I definitely believe the EPQ is valuable and challenges students.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Exeter College, Devon

Exeter College is a tertiary college in the city of Exeter, providing further education for 16-18-year-old students, including apprenticeships, A levels and the International Baccalaureate, as well as a range of courses for 14 to 16-year-olds, higher education and adult courses, community education and professional development courses.

Exeter College was established in 1970 as the first tertiary college in England. The college offers higher education in partnership with institutions including the University of Exeter, The University of Plymouth Colleges network, the University of St Mark & St John and Kingston University.

Jan England teaches Psychology and coordinates the International Baccalaureate as well as the EPQ

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

Our students complete the EPQ in year 2 of their A levels in addition to their other qualifications. During 2017-2018, we made some slight amendments to our delivery model however further to the A level reforms and year 12 learners are now also able to participate in a pre-EPQ course in the autumn and spring term to prepare them for embarking on their EPQ during the second year.

We prefer to have 2nd year rather than first year students as have gained the academic maturity and study habits to support their project. Learners wishing to progress to university can also fit their EPQ more clearly to their choice of university course.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

Students all have one lesson per week from September to the end of the spring term. This lesson is taught by the supervisor. Group sizes are approx. 10 students. However, for the students, the EPQ really starts in the summer term of year 12 when they express an interest and attend introductory sessions to learn about what it involves and receive tuition on research skills. Many of them then start the research process over the summer holidays between years 12 and 13 and return to college ready to shape their working title. (We ask them to, provisionally, complete EPF1 sections 1-10 before they break up for the summer to show their commitment.)

Why and how did you choose this model?

When we first started offering the EPQ in 2012, we wished to have subject specialists as supervisors but in such a large college, this made the timetabling of staff quite complicated. We now operate a model in which the supervisor double up as the person who delivers the T & L programme and also conducts 1:1 supervision. Whilst they are therefore unlikely to be a subject specialist, we don't feel this hampers their ability to guide and facilitate the students on their EPQ journey.

How is it working so far?

We are really pleased with our results over the years and have been happy to help the WJEC pilot EPQ online submissions.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

To continue to refine and shape our EPQ offer, particularly the introduction of the 'Preparations for the EPQ' modules in year 12. We are fully committed to continuing with the EPQ programme and feel the current model in year 13 is effective. In addition, our model of meeting once a week to a) deliver the T & L programme and b) be on hand to supervise as needed each week (as well as carve out specific times during the year to conduct the 3 formal supervision meetings) works well.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

As indicated above, we would recommend considering a clearly timetabled and designated slot on all learner timetables to ensure the effective delivery of the taught elements and adequate support for learners. A detailed scheme of work to underpin the taught elements and a bank of resources which can support a range of project types is also invaluable to ensure learner engagement with the programme.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Gower College Swansea (History Department)

Gower College Swansea is a further education college in Swansea, Wales. It was formed in 2010 by the merger of Gorseinon College and Swansea College. Mark Jones, previously principal of Bridgend College, became principal in July 2013. The college's vision is "To be the best college in Wales".

Nikki Roderick is a Psychology lecturer and responsible for the EPQ students wishing to undertake a Psychology Extended Project.

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

We have offered EPQ in Psychology and Sociology for about 7 years to A2 level (Year 13) students who have received a grade A or B in the subject in which they want to pursue EPQ. This year we have rolled the qualification out further so we are now offering EPQ in Psychology, Sociology, English, Chemistry and History.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

The EPQ is timetabled for 2 hours per week on a Wednesday afternoon until the Easter holidays. There is one lecturer responsible for the EPQ in each of the above subjects and between 10 and 20 students in each subject group (depending on the year), so each lecturer is responsible for delivering material to and supervising all of the EPQ students in their subject group, regardless of the specific specialist focus of the EPQ.

Why and how did you choose this model?

This model developed naturally. Firstly it was felt that offering it on a Wednesday afternoon would enable most students to access the class slots. Secondly, having one lecturer responsible for each subject group was easier to timetable: our contracts are based on annualised teaching contact hours so if only one lecturer is responsible they can be given 2 hours on their timetable regardless of class size. If there were more than one lecturer responsible the timetables would have to be recalculated if there was a smaller group that year, so it was for logistical convenience.

How is it working so far?

This model has strengths and weaknesses. Wednesday afternoon is generally a good time to offer the classes as most students are free but students who do Sports Academy usually cannot make it. This means that most of these students choose not to do EP. Having only one member of staff responsible for each subject group enables standardisation within each subject and makes it more manageable across subjects. However it can be quite a heavy teaching load, particularly in the first few years when becoming familiar with the EPQ requirements and developing a system of delivery and supervision.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

We are planning on keeping the model that we currently use over the next 3 years, although we are hoping to roll it out to more subjects.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Guernsey Grammar School & Sixth Form Centre

The Grammar School and Sixth Form Centre is a public grammar school located in St. Andrew's in Guernsey and opened in 1985. The school's motto is Qui veult peult: 'Those who want to, can'.

The mixed gender school is for students aged 11-18 and entry requires passing of the 11-plus tests for those aged 11-16. It admits students from across the Bailiwick of Guernsey. However, students from other secondary schools in Guernsey who want to pursue A Levels or the IB Diploma Programme transfer to the school after GCSEs.

Susanna Good is a Teacher of Psychology and Sociology and EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

This is a year 13 course only. Students are prepared in year 12 with study skills as part of a tutor programme and can choose to apply these skills to their EPQ the following year if they wish.

Students of all ability are accepted onto the EPQ. The majority of year 13 complete this course.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

We run a Personal Enrichment Programme (PEP). Students are offered a variety of qualifications, activities and sports. They are encouraged to make a choice which best places them for their next step.

They are timetabled for one taught session per week, which is either a smaller group with a supervisor or with the co-ordinator as a whole group for generic information (referencing, sources, assessment criteria, etc).

Why and how did you choose this model?

It fits well within our current system.

How is it working so far?

Well... We are working on how to reduce the attrition rate as students often sign up as a backup in case they need it and then later drop the EPQ if the university they are applying for do not offer any bonus.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

We have considered removing EPQ from our PEP system and running it as its own department with regular staff each year. This may be a better option with the linear courses. We would keep the completion of the EPQ to year 13 only.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

Having a key set of staff on the EPQ really helps with the delivery and the marking of the EPQ's. We tend to have large numbers at our centre, I would advise a maximum of 12 in a group.

One session per week seems to work well for us. We have a first draft in after Christmas.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Kingston College, London

Kingston College is a College of Further, Higher and Adult Education based in Kingston upon Thames, Greater London, England. It has four campuses in the town of Kingston.

In February 2013, Ofsted awarded Kingston College Grade 2 – 'Good', making the College one of only a few London colleges with rising academic standards.

Brittany Bainbridge is the Team Leader - Pastoral and Academic Progress as well as the EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

Year 13 only – this is based on their attendance and performance in mock exams (i.e. they must meet their TMG to do the EPQ). This year, I gave them a task to complete over the summer and if they completed this (in addition to the other criteria), they were allowed to take part.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

We do one hour timetabled lesson per week and 1:1s every 4-6 weeks. I currently support 13 students on my own.

Why and how did you choose this model?

We are doing a 'trial year' currently and are short-staffed, but wanted to give the opportunity to keen students.

How is it working so far?

I have had to withdraw two students already as they found it overwhelming, but these were two I had reservations about in the first place. The other students are thriving!

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

I will likely try to begin the course earlier this year; potentially after Easter Break as we are unlikely to be able to change the timetabling model. Unless more reliable staff are hired, I will keep the number of entries low (10 - 15 per year).

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

Not yet as this is my first year!

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Oldfield School, Bath

Oldfield School was founded in 1892 to serve the City of Bath; in 1959 the school moved from the city centre to agricultural land on the western outskirts of the city, overlooking the River Avon valley, and now attracts pupils from a much wider area including the eastern outskirts of Bristol.

Graham Nash is the Assistant Headteacher – Head of Sixth Form as well as the EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

In our new curriculum model (starting this year) Year 12 students take three A levels plus one from the Oldfield Offer - this includes EPQ, Arts Award, Core Maths, Further Maths AS. We guide students to the choice that best suits them on a one to one basis. The most popular and appropriate pathway is EPQ, with about 80% of students opting for that option. It allows them to tailor something specific to their future pathways, develops skills we know our useful at A level and HE.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

All the Oldfield Offer subjects, including EPQ, have a timetabled slot. For EPQ that is three one-hour lessons over the fortnight. We feel this provides plenty of time for the taught element (which we value beyond its relevance to EPQ as these skills are transferrable throughout their A levels) as well as the subsequent supervisory meetings. We have two members of staff involved - myself and one other who has been on your training CPD. We have just now divided up the students between us. We are a small Sixth Form so this gives us approx. 15 students each

Why and how did you choose this model?

I wanted the EPQ to have real status. Our results at EPQ have been generally good but I was essentially running it alone without any specific lesson time. I didn't feel I was doing justice to the taught element. Also previously students opted into it if they wished and often opted out of it - this way I'm convinced more students will see it through. This is better for the students and I suspect will lead to higher quality EPQs and better results. It's helped formalise it.

How is it working so far?

Really well - students are certainly much better prepared than they used to be and they have a greater focus on the process - just as it should be.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

We are keeping with this model.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

Commit to it - don't think it's something you can do on the cheap and expect students to get the best out of it. I'm convinced that a well taught and delivered EPQ course has benefits that are far reaching for the student.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Paston College, North Walsham, Norfolk

Paston College believes in creating the right environment for learning - their reputation for expert teaching, guidance and support, good transport links, specialist support for Oxbridge entrants and University entry as well as outstanding academic results ensure their students are well prepared for a positive future. With around 800 students they are able to write the timetable around student choice, but small enough to be responsive to every one of their students.

Katharine Day is a French teacher, 'Gifted and Talented' Co-ordinator and the EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

Y12 – High ability groups only (based on GCSE results). This has replaced Critical Thinking on our timetable which we offered as an additional subject to our Gifted and Talented students.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

One timetabled session per week for the taught course for all EPQ students. Taught by me.

Also all students are allocated a supervisor who they meet with 1:1 on a regular basis at a mutually convenient time.

Supervisors have between 11 and 4 students to supervise – depending on their timetable

Why and how did you choose this model?

Talking to other teachers already doing EPQ and a CPD session by WJEC convinced me this was the best Exams Board to use.

How is it working so far?

Well – I hope!

Glenda at WJEC has been really helpful and as I am the only member of staff who has had much involvement so far, this has been invaluable. Three other colleagues have recently joined me in supervising the projects.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

Similar, probably, but my college has just merged with another institution, so it's hard to predict the future.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

My students are really enthusiastic – so a good option for adding breadth in the sixth form.

DELIVERING AND TIMETABLING THE EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION

Thomas Adams College, Wem, Shrewsbury

Thomas Adams School and college is a happy, caring school with an excellent reputation in the community for academic success and pastoral support.

Tom Cuthbert is the schools Head of Physics and is the EPQ Co-ordinator

To which students do you offer the EPQ and why?

Y12 mostly, but one group runs in Y13.

Our college offers only linear A levels, not AS qualifications, so moving EPQ to Y12 gives the students the opportunity to 'get it under their belts' before the high stakes examinations of Y13. One group runs in Y13 for those who really want to do it then.

How have you timetabled the Extended Project Qualification within your centre?

We run one taught session per week with no more than 10 students per supervisor. Students have one compulsory independent study period which is supervised, that they are additionally expected to devote to EPQ.

Why and how did you choose this model?

This model was dictated by timetabling requirements elsewhere in the school and college.

How is it working so far?

More teaching time is always desirable, but the model allows us to cover the taught elements dictated by our scheme of work. Optimum numbers in groups is 6-8 as it allows discussion, but also allows the supervisor to work with students individually on a regular basis.

What are your plans in terms of offering, delivering and timetabling the EPQ over the next 3 years?

Probably to remain stable. About half of our Y12 chose EPQ as has been the case for the last couple of years. Our timetabling will seek to allow for this continuation.

Do you have any advice with regards to offering the EPQ to students and on timetabling the EPQ for other centres?

Keep an eye on the timing of the year. Starting in September of Y12 our hand in date is before Easter. Students must be made aware of the comparatively short time that they have to complete their projects, and need constant reminders!

It is also good to develop a core of staff who are timetabled every year for EPQ. The experience they gain is beneficial for the students as well as for the administration of the course.