

EPQ Curriculum Statement

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a supplementary exam board (AQA) accredited qualification which students are selected to complete alongside their A-levels. At Kingsdale Foundation School our students complete a 5000-word academic essay as part of the qualification, alongside a Production Log which aims to track the development of their independent academic research project from the conception of an academic question, to the completion of their mini-dissertation; the 5000-word academic essay. The EPQ is designed to equip students with the necessary knowledge and skills to help them make a competitive application to the country's top universities and courses. It allows students to become experts in a particular academic topic, which may form the basis of their application to university – and especially useful when applying to universities that require an interview as part of the application process.

The EPQ programme runs from September to April in Year 12 and encompasses a weekly university-style lecture on study skills, as well as monthly one-to-one academic supervisions. All students are partnered with a specialist academic supervisor in the form of a subject teacher who will provide guidance and advice on how students can develop their academic ideas, as well as the recommendation of subject specific academic sources, including the use of JSTOR – an academic journal database widely used at universities. Students will also receive a weekly research and study skills workshop with the EPQ Coordinator, cultivating skills such as how to identify academic sources, how to structure an academic essay, and how to reference work correctly – among other skills. These skills help to enhance our students' engagement and performance with their other A-levels, as well as preparing them for study beyond their A-levels.

As part of the programme of study skills, academic support teams are invited from popular universities who run workshops for our students, helping them to practise the skills they have learnt elsewhere on the programme, ensuring that our students are well equipped with the skills necessary for life at university. The programme culminates with a 15-minute presentation in which the students present their academic research to the EPQ coordinator, their academic supervisor, as well as their peers – an opportunity for student to showcase their academic research, just as they may do at university. Finally, the EPQ Awards and Presentation Evening is an opportunity for a small number of our students to present their project to the wider school community and parents, and an opportunity to present awards to selected students, as well as an opportunity to present each student with a bound copy of their mini dissertation.

The impact of students completing an EPQ is invaluable. Our students are not only prepared with academic skills sought after by universities, but completing the qualification gives our students a glimpse of the academic research they will be engaging in at university. However, perhaps the greatest benefit of completing an EPQ is the ability of our students to present themselves as experts in an academic topic of their choosing – one that they may well choose to apply to study at university, thereby allowing our students to put forward competitive applications to the most sought after universities and courses. Using their research, they will be able to confidently engage in an academic discussion about their specialist academic area - forming the basis of their personal statement, or their university entrance interview. The programme is coordinated by an EPQ Coordinator with over four years of experience managing and running the qualification, and who moderates the qualification for AQA.