

Partner Schools
Global Network

SCHOOLS NOW! 2018

Innovation in Education
(System, School and Classroom)



How schools can prepare students for advanced study (and employment) through extended project work



What makes your students special?



What makes your students special?



- ✓ Hard working?
- ✓ Determined?
- ✓ Top grades?
- ✓ Applying to top universities?



Is this enough?

Are great exam results enough to get into top universities?

How do you stand out when all the applicants also have top grades?

Context

Since 2006, the number of students taking A-levels has increased by 3.9%.

In 2016, 26% of all A-level grades were A/A*.

Over 19,000 students apply to Oxford University every year.

There are 3,200 places available.

83% of applications are unsuccessful.



Context

Advances in AI mean jobs in industries like law, accountancy and medicine might very shortly become automated.

Employers are looking for young people with key transferable skills:

- Independence
- Creative thinking
- Problem solving
- Critical analysis



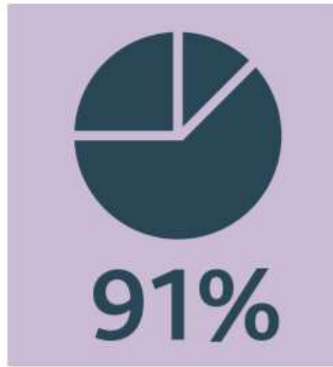
Top five attributes university admission officers look for in student applicants



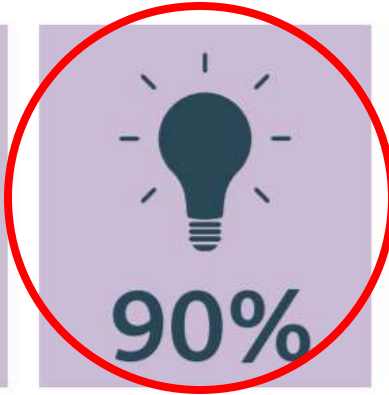
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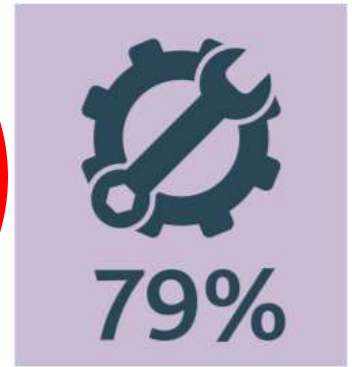
Good written



Evidence of a



Evidence of an ability to think and work independently



Ability to persevere and complete tasks

How could students be better prepared to thrive at university and to successfully complete their degree?



Ensure they are ready to think and learn independently

Which one would you say is most often missing?



...ready to think and learn independently

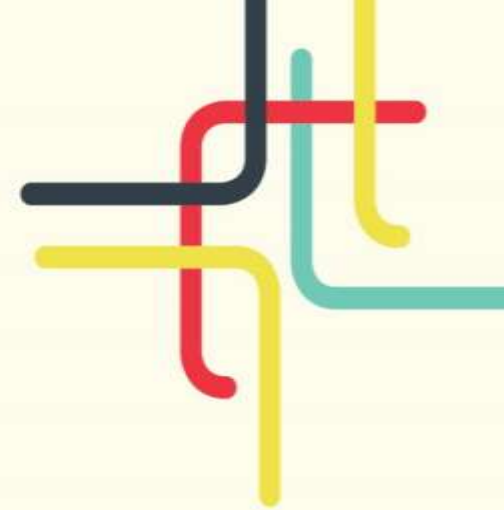


... chosen a subject they are passionate about

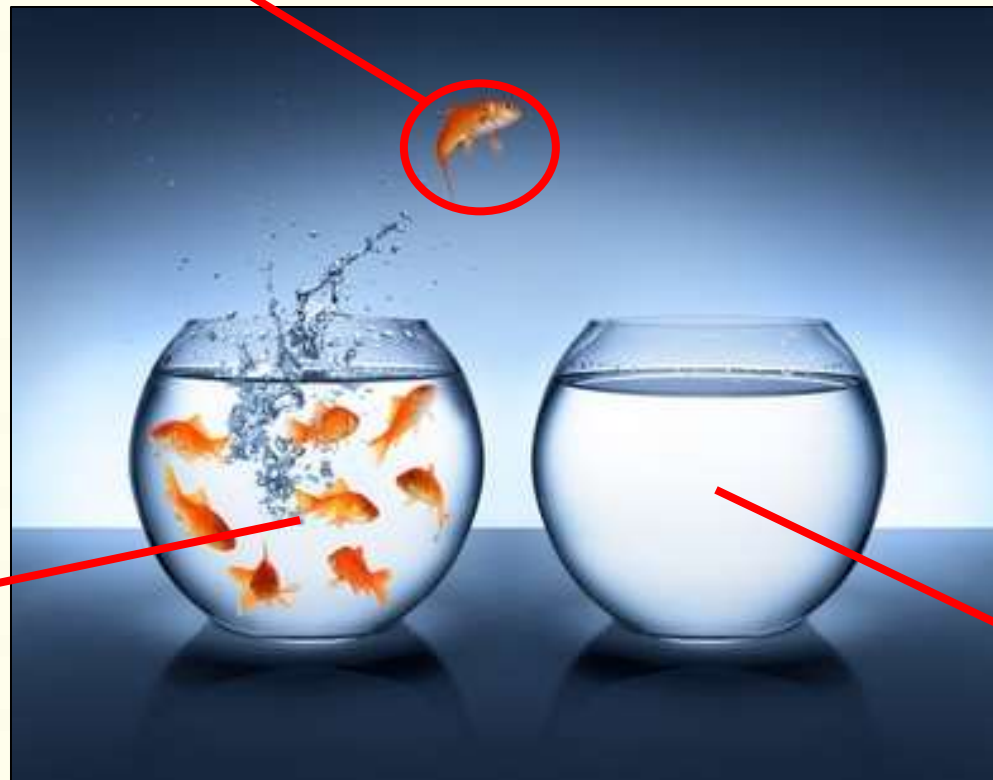


... have a secure understanding of the demands of the course

How do you teach independence?



Push students out of their comfort zone – challenge them



Not do what everyone else is doing

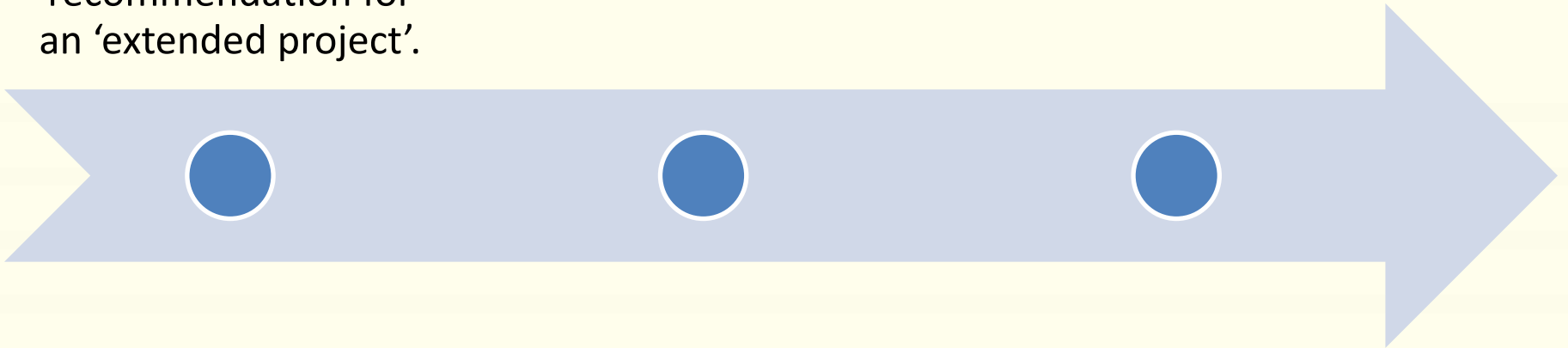
Explore new ideas, outside of their normal outlook (outside the curriculum?)



A brief history of the Extended Project Qualification



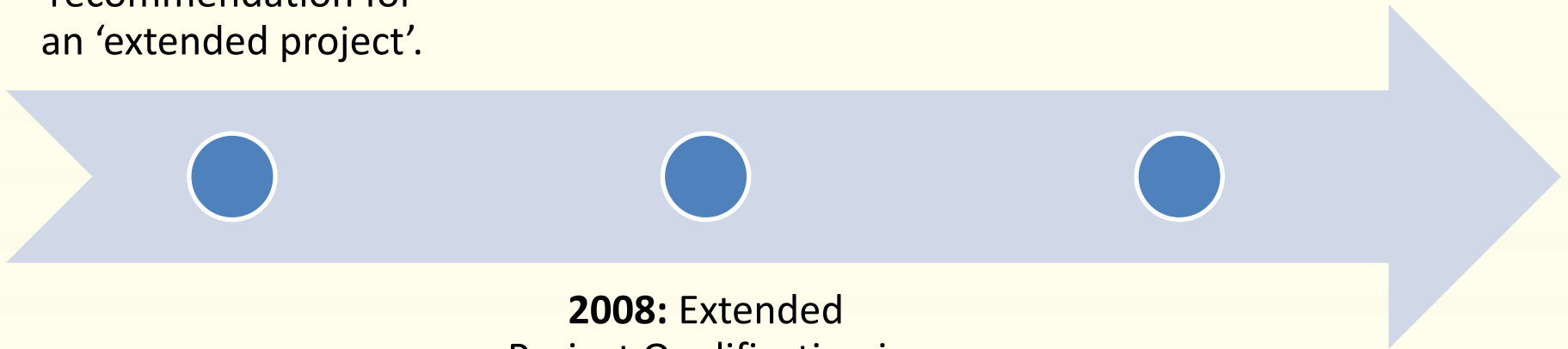
2006: Sir Mike Tomlinson leads a review of UK 16–19 education. Makes recommendation for an ‘extended project’.



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2008: Extended Project Qualification is launched in the UK.

3,752 entries.



A brief history of the Extended Project Qualification



2006: Sir Mike Tomlinson leads a review of UK 16–19 education. Makes recommendation for an ‘extended project’.

2018: Nearly 40,000 students in the UK take the EPQ.
70% take the AQA version.

2008: Extended Project Qualification is launched in the UK.
3,752 entries.

Why has it been so popular?



A huge hit with top UK universities

“...provide[s] an applicant with the opportunity to develop research and academic skills relevant for study at Oxford. Candidates are encouraged to draw upon relevant EPQ experience when writing their personal statement.”



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“We welcome the Extended Project and would encourage applicants to undertake one as it will help to develop independent study and research skills valuable for higher education.”



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“The skills ... are directly relevant to and useful for university-level study”



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“We welcome the Extended Project and would encourage applicants to undertake one as it will help to develop independent study and research skills valuable for higher education.”



“The skills ... are directly relevant to and useful for university-level study”



“...a positive attribute when selecting amongst applicants with similar levels of overall achievement”



Some universities now make alternative grade offers to students with an Extended Project Qualification.

Impact on other A-level results



Centre for Education Research and Practice

Does the Extended Project Qualification enhance students' GCE A-level performance?

Ben Jones

Abstract

The skills nurtured by, and engendered through, the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) are clearly stipulated, and have led to its becoming an increasingly popular qualification with all its stakeholders: students, colleges, employers and higher education. Future research is planned regarding the value that the EPQ adds to students' subsequent performances at higher education, but the aim of this brief paper is to describe a statistical analysis of whether, and how much, the EPQ appears to have supplementary effects on students' performance in their GCE A-levels. In other words, are the skills required of the EPQ transferable to more curriculum-embedded qualifications?

Only AQA A-level and EPQ data were used in the analyses, although permission was granted to use students' mean GCSE prior attainment scores. Since two thirds of the national EPQ entry is currently with AQA, the results of the analyses can fairly confidently be considered to be generalisable.

Those results indicate that, after controlling for other available explanatory variables – of which mean GCSE prior attainment score is the most critical – taking the EPQ enhances the odds of achieving a higher grade A-level (A*-B) by 29 per cent. For each incremental grade achieved in the EPQ, the chances of being awarded a higher grade A-level increases by 7 per cent.

However, the effects were not uniform across A-level subject types. In most cases the impact was similar to the above figure, yet for mathematics and languages, there was no effect.

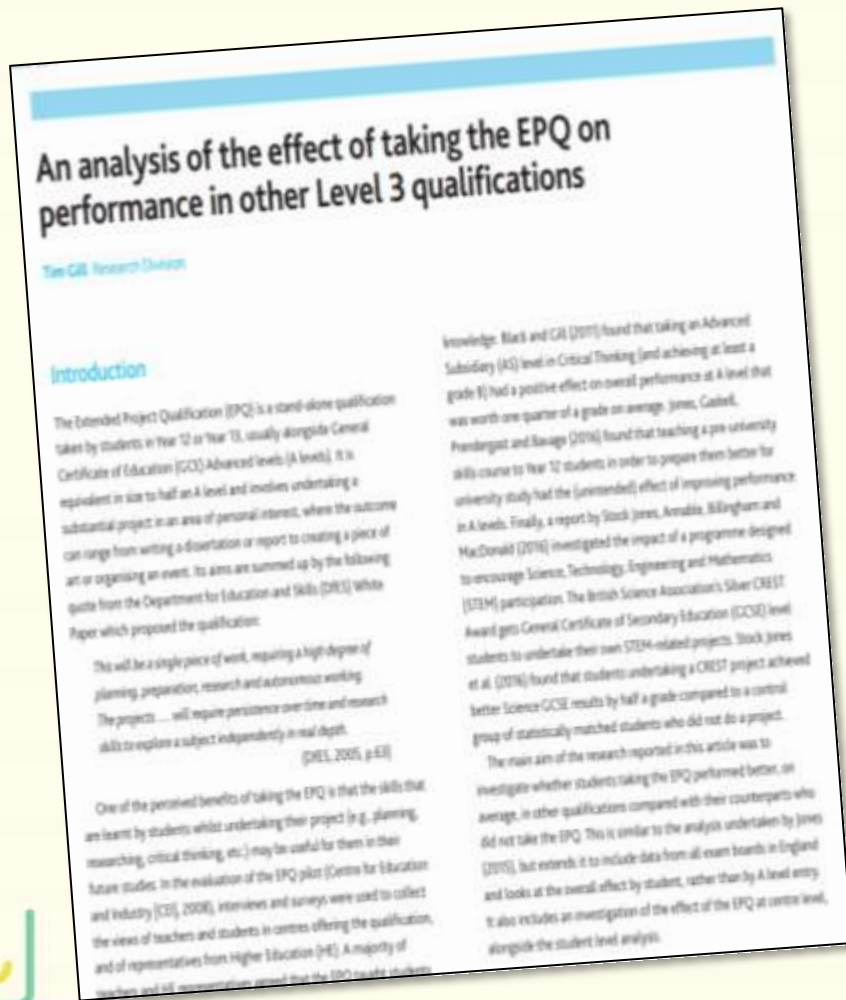
Introduction to the EPQ

Recent years have seen an implicit – and sometime explicit – debate regarding the relative importance of knowledge and skills in the curriculum. Some argue the need to inculcate more knowledge, while others argue for the need to inculcate more skills. In all cases, people to prepare them for the world of work and higher education.

Centre for Education Research and Practice (CERP) studied the impact of taking the EPQ on students' results in their other subjects..

...found it enhanced the opportunity of achieving a higher grade A-level (A*-B) by 29%.

Impact on other A-level results



Tim Gill, Cambridge Assessment:

“...taking the EPQ was associated with an improvement in mean UCAS tariff of around five to six points...This is equivalent to an improvement of one grade in one A level.”



Independent Project Qualification

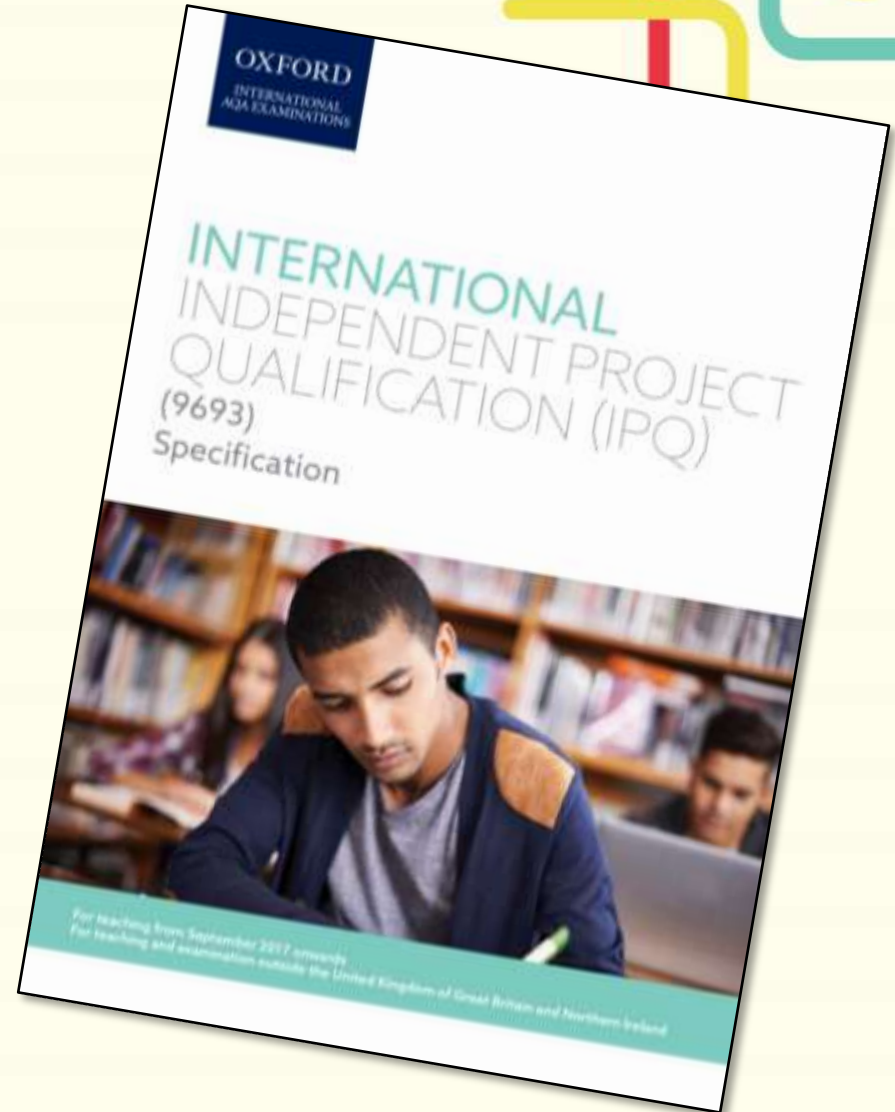
An international version of AQA's EPQ – the UK's leading extended project qualification

A-level standard qualification

30 hours of taught skills

90 hours independent work...

...into a subject of the student's own choosing



The process



Idea for project

Student discusses initial idea with supervisor and (optionally) a specialist



Project proposal



Produce project



Submission



The process



Idea for project



Project proposal

Student researches; develops Project Proposal for supervisor to endorse



Produce project



Submission



The process



Idea for project



Project proposal



Produce project



Submission

Taught skills

- Project planning and management
- Research skills
- Report writing
- Presentation and oral communication skills
- Creative thinking and decision making

Student produces project and maintains a Production Log, guided by taught skills.

The process



Idea for project



Project proposal



Produce project



Submission

Student submits 5000-word report, Production Log, and oral presentation to supervisor and non-specialist audience.



One qualification: five key skills

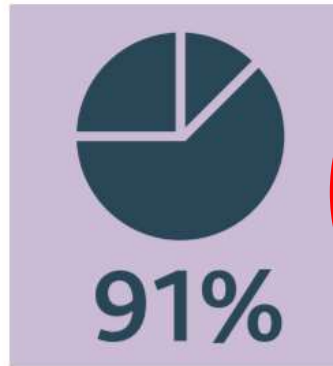
Top five attributes university admission officers look for in student applicants



Evidence of a passion for their chosen course subject



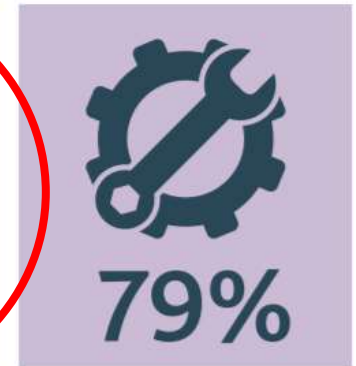
Good written English



Evidence of a positive attitude towards study



Evidence of an ability to think and work independently

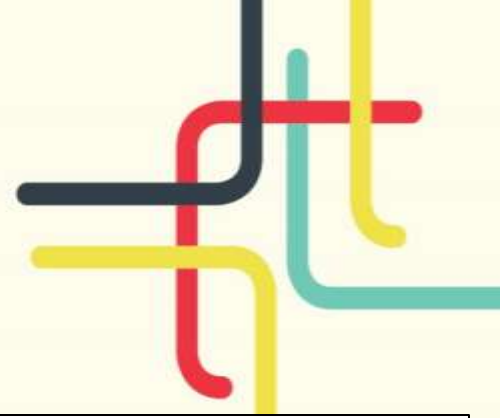


Ability to persevere and complete tasks

What makes your students special?

- ✓ The IPQ could be the qualification that makes your students stand out from the crowd when applying to top universities.

What about GCSE students?



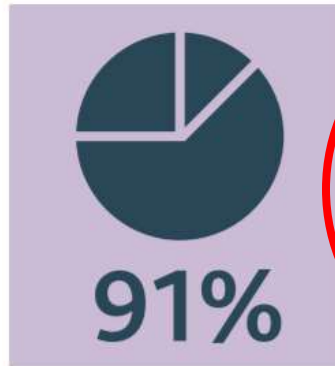
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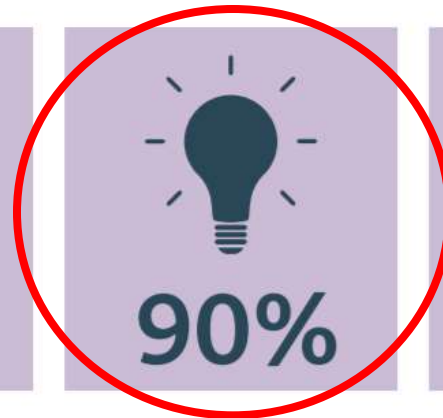
Evidence of a passion for their chosen course subject



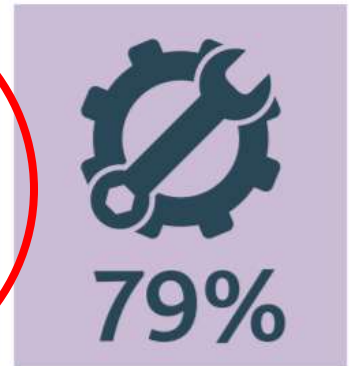
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Ability to persevere and complete tasks



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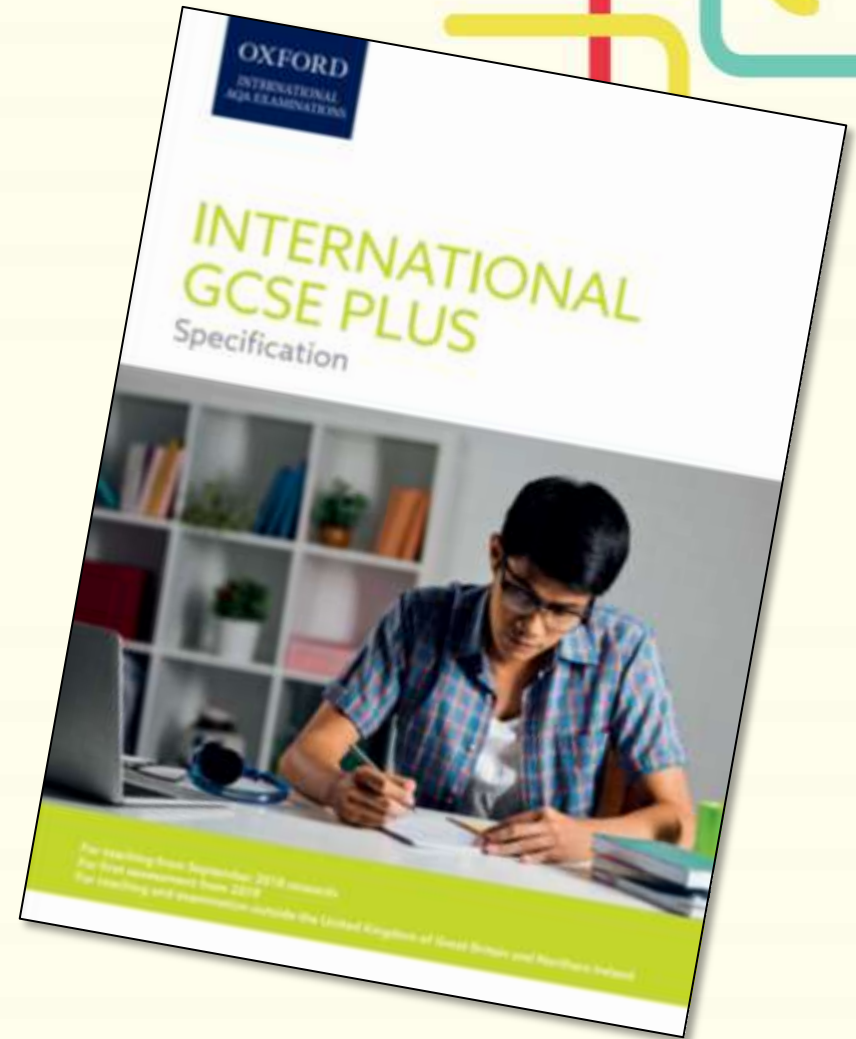
Optional endorsement for
OxfordAQA GCSEs*

10 hours of taught skills / 20
hours independent work

2,000-word report plus a
Progress Diary

Graded: Pass, Merit, Distinction

Versatile and easy to timetable



* Biology, Business, Chemistry, Combined Science, Computer Science, English Literature, English as a Second Language, Geography, Mathematics, Physics

What about GCSE students?

Robin Drummond, Lead Developer for OxfordAQA IPQ and GCSE Plus:

“Further, there is no...reason why the general messages from this research would not apply equally at **earlier key stages**...that appropriately-designed extended project work completed alongside GCSE study would **increase GCSE performance and be correlated with better A-level results**. In fact, there is a case for speculating that extended project work at GCSE level might have a **greater positive effect** on factors such as student motivation, given that students have less autonomy over what they study than at A-level, thus potentially amplifying the effect of work where the student determines what and how to learn.”



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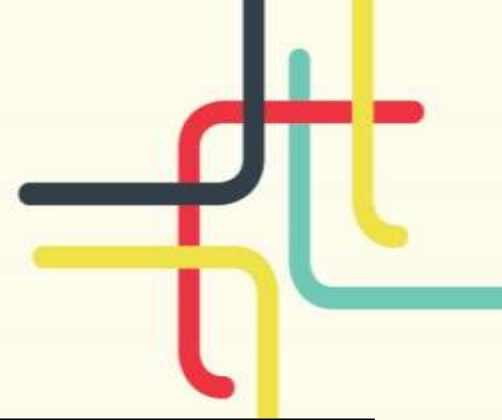


Is this what makes your students special?

Is this why you become a teacher?



Examples of student projects



Certain people have an aptitude for learning foreign languages: truth or myth?

Predictive genetic testing – should it be used?

Will we be able to create a conscious artificial intelligence within the next 20 years?

What caused the 2008 global recession – and how can we avoid a repetition?

Should eating meat be made illegal?



Celebrating learning and success



Presentation opportunities

- ✓ Develop confidence
- ✓ Involve parents
- ✓ Aspiration for younger students
- ✓ Local press
- ✓ Build links with the community and local dignitaries
- ✓ GCSE English Speaking and Listening



What makes your students special?



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- ✓ Determined?
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What makes your students special?



- ✓ Independent, critical thinkers
- ✓ Self-motivated
- ✓ Organised and self-reliant
- ✓ Diagnostic researchers
- ✓ Excellent writers
- ✓ Confident, articulate presenters



Is this why you become a teacher?



Want to find out more?

We are running an extended project work training day:

Sunday 11th March

Le Royal Hotel, Amman

Key themes:

- The benefits of extended project work
- How to run extended project work effectively at your school – at GCSE and A-level

Presenters

Robin Drummond: Lead Developer for OxfordAQA IPQ and GCSE Plus; author of 'Extending into the future'

Matthew Bennett: Chief Examiner, OxfordAQA Combined Sciences; experienced EPQ Supervisor

