



# EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION



**Exam Board: Welsh Joint Education Committee (WJEC)**

**Staff: Gwyn Williams**

**What is the EPQ (Extended Project Qualification)?**

It is a 5,000-word academic dissertation that you write over the year, focusing on an evaluative topic of your choice. It is accompanied by a series of forms which evidence your process of writing the EPQ, with a strong focus on self-reflection, achievements and how you have overcome challenges.

**What skills am I developing by choosing an EPQ?**

Independent thinking, critical evaluation, research, analysis, essay writing techniques, self-reflection, tracking your own progress, time management, presentation, developing an interest in a subject that goes beyond a syllabus or curriculum.

**Can any student at Cardiff Sixth Form College do an EPQ?**

If you are doing well in your main subjects, and are strong at English, then this course could be an excellent choice, enhancing and developing your skill set.

**If I choose to do the EPQ am I committed?**

Initially, you can give the EPQ a go, and try to complete as much of the research as you can by or around Christmas. You have until March to decide before you are enrolled.

**How much work is involved in an EPQ?**

Outside the teaching guided hours (actual classes) of around 45 in the year, you would be expected to commit to approximately 75 hours of independent research and writing in order to successfully complete the EPQ.

**What does the EPQ look like on the timetable?**

You will have an hourly lesson of input, and there will also be regular tutorials focussed on your own EPQ journey regarding research and development of your analysis and evaluation. The teacher acts as a facilitator, promoting your autonomy, respecting your choices, and guiding your ability to think for yourselves both creatively and critically.



# EXTENDED PROJECT QUALIFICATION



## What makes an effective EPQ dissertation?

We would recommend that you choose an evaluative, debatable topic that is directly linked to your university subject choice, and goes beyond your current syllabus. This clearly demonstrates your passion for your subject without needing to use clichéd expressions like 'passion' on your personal statement. So, think super-curricular when it comes to creating an appropriate EPQ dissertation question. Topics that have come up this year have been exciting, diverse and at a high challenge level, which we would expect and hope for. Examples include themes around anti-corruption legislations, terrorism vs extremism, the possibility of cryonics, viable forms of jet engines,

too-big-to-fail banks, organ donations, global warming, Alzheimers and end-of-life care, experimental cures, the economics of migration, funding scientific research.

## How could an EPQ help me get a place at university?

This is what some universities say about the EPQ:

**Oxford University:** "Where applicants have undertaken the Extended Project (EP), the University will not make this a condition for an offer but recognises that the EP will provide an applicant with the opportunity to develop research and academic skills relevant for study at Oxford. Candidates are encouraged to draw upon their experience of undertaking the project when writing their personal statement, particularly if the topic is allied to their chosen degree course."

**UCL:** "UCL welcomes the introduction of the Extended Project into the curriculum, recognising that it will develop many of the skills necessary for successful study at university."

**Cambridge:** "We welcome the introduction of the Extended Project and would encourage you to undertake one as it will help you develop independent study and research skills and ease the transition from school/college to higher education."