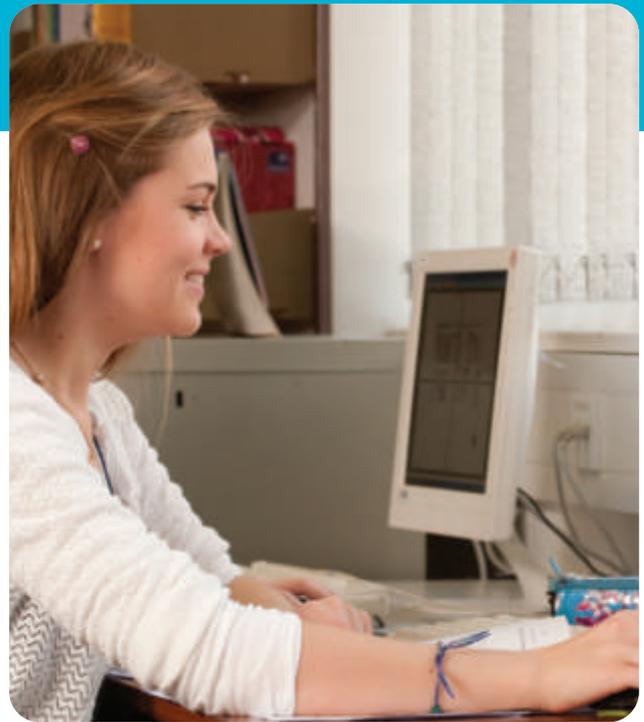


Case Study: AQA Baccalaureate and Extended Project Qualification Alexandra and Lucy Stone

Universities love it because it shows that you have different research skills and, in interviews especially, they did always ask me about the Baccalaureate and how I'd been doing. [Ali]



Alexandra Stone (Ali) has just completed the AQA Baccalaureate, which includes Enrichment activities and the Extended Project Qualification, at Aylesbury High School. She studied French, Music and Maths A-levels, took an AS-level in Critical Thinking and chose the French poet Baudelaire as the subject of her Extended Project. She plans to read French and Italian at university. Lucy Stone is Ali's mother and teaches French at Aylesbury High School.

Lucy says that, 'at a university interview she [Ali] attended, her interviewers were far more interested in her independent study than in discussing her set A-level texts.' Ali agrees: 'I do think it increases your chances of getting an offer, especially at competitive universities because they need to look for something different and the Baccalaureate incorporates lots of different skills, especially with all the community involvement work we had to do as well. They did seem very interested in it.'

For Ali, the Extended Project 'was a really good experience and a huge challenge... at school you know a few facts about lots of different subjects, but to really learn about something – you feel almost like an expert in it.'

Ali had 'a real sense of achievement' when she delivered her presentation to her teachers. 'The roles were reversed and I was teaching them about something that I knew a lot about.'

Lucy thought the Extended Project prepared Ali for university: 'What I particularly liked about the Extended Project was how it provided the opportunity for students to have a taste of the kind of work they'll be doing over the next few years. Another aspect that I like is the breadth of study it offers. A-levels are fairly restricted in terms of content and Ali had discovered a passion for French literature which she was able to pursue thanks to this project.'



‘ I was really impressed with the AQA Bacc. For students doing traditional A-levels, this does seem to be a unique opportunity. ’
[Lucy]

Ali also enjoyed the independent study. ‘We didn’t have any guidelines; we didn’t have a sheet of questions to answer, so it was a complete oyster for us and we could research anything, go off on any tangent.’ So how did she manage to fit the work around her A-levels? ‘I found that if you just did a couple of hours every week so that you kept it ticking over, it didn’t take much time out of your other subjects at all – it’s just time management.’

Ali assisted in a local primary school as part of the Enrichment element. ‘It did make me feel more independent and it was really enjoyable, really rewarding. It was one of the first times that we really didn’t have people telling us what to do along the whole way – that’s what pushed me to do it, because I knew that if I didn’t do it, it was completely my responsibility. I think that’s really good because it’s really set me up for later life.’

Recording activities through the Enrichment Diary helped Ali when applying for university. ‘You had to write a reflection on each thing you did. That really helped with my Personal Statement because it made me think, ‘Oh, I’ve done this, but what have I learnt from doing it?’

‘ I’m really, really glad that I stuck with it because it’s just been so rewarding... you think, “Yes, now I am ready.” I love it! ’ [Ali]

aqa.org.uk/bacc

Copyright © 2010 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved.

The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723) and a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

July 2010

MSD 1115.10