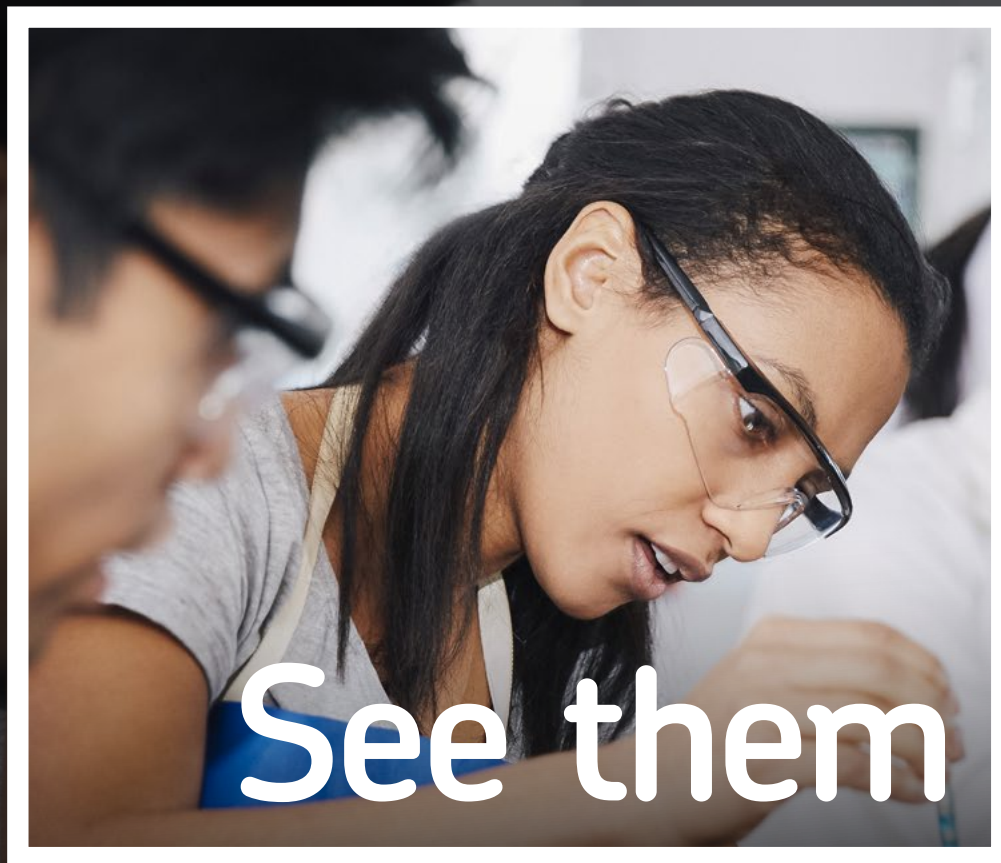


Five top tips for coordinators and supervisors to keep on top of the EPQ

Jane Stevens, Uppingham School



See them

Jane Stevens is Head of Projects at Uppingham School and has been an EPQ coordinator for five years.

Here she shares her five top tips on how coordinators and supervisors can stay on top of the EPQ alongside their other teaching duties.



1. Carry out regular training

As a coordinator it's important to ensure that supervisors are fully aware of what they need to do and when they need to do it in order for them to manage their EPQ workload alongside other teaching duties.

I meet with my supervisors at least three times during the course:

- before the process starts – this can set out the expectations of both supervisor and student, ensuring that the supervisor knows what the qualification is about and their own role
- ahead of presentations – the supervisor needs to attend the student's presentation so it's important they know what they should be looking for – and how best to support the student
- before marking – to explain the marking process, conduct standardisation with the supervisors and work through marked student examples.

We also have a section on our intranet EPQ page dedicated to supervisors where I include anything I think they might find useful (including exam board documents). This gives them a 'one-stop shop' if they have any queries.



2. Understand the Production log

Supervisors need to understand the Production log and its centrality to the qualification.

To help, I've created a page-by-page guide for my supervisors that sets out what each page is used for, and what role they play in the completion of the page – including which parts they can ignore!

Keeping the Production logs online has been a game-changer for me. We have increasing numbers of students opting for the EPQ every year, so having quick access to all the logs makes keeping track of work simple to do. It also allows me to respond quickly to any queries from students.



3. Nail the marking

For supervisors it can be helpful (and time efficient) to mark one student's submission with the coordinator in the room.

I set aside 90 minutes to do this with each of my supervisors and take a back seat while they drive the marking, knowing I'm there to answer any questions. At the end of the process, we compare marks (I mentally mark the work at the same time) and discuss any differences, which also helps to reinforce the supervisor's understanding of how to apply the mark scheme.

Having done this, most supervisors are confident enough to mark subsequent projects independently, but there's always the opportunity to repeat the process if they're still unsure.



4. Make deadlines and stick to them

It's useful to have some suggested dates for completion of specific pages of the Production log planned in, but because the EPQ is about independent study, these have to be fluid, allowing the students to work at their own tempo. Nevertheless, there needs to be a clear final date when the project is to be handed in.

Make sure this deadline gives enough time for supervisors to mark, and for coordinators to moderate and collate all the information needed, and for the student review of marks appeal window.

The more students you have completing the qualification, the longer you may want here. Don't forget that if your school or college has a date for giving NEA marks to students, you'll need to take that into account as well.



5. Have confidence

Ensuring supervisors are confident in what they need to do is the responsibility of the coordinator.

My team know that there is no such thing as a stupid question and will contact me if they're unsure about any aspect. As for me, if I don't know the answer, then I contact my NEA Advisor – don't forget they're there and can help you through more complex issues, so do use them.



Find out more about the EPQ

aqa.org.uk/extended-project-qualification

aqa.org.uk

Copyright © 2021 AQA and its licensors. All rights reserved. AQA Education (AQA) is a registered charity (registered charity number 1073334) and a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (company number 3644723). Registered address: AQA, Devas Street, Manchester M15 6EX.

September 2021