

Set up your school or college for Project Qualifications

Project Qualifications come in three levels; Levels 1 and 2 are both delivered at a standard commensurate with GCSE and Level 3 (The Extended Project) is delivered at A-level standard. All three levels require a Taught Element of at least 30 hours. This Taught Element introduces students to the skills they'll be using and developing within their own unique project.

The chief purpose of Project Qualifications is to establish and develop skills that students can take with them as they progress through their education. For example, all students undertaking a Project Qualification will produce a formal academic report, developing writing skills that will be of immense value. A Project Qualification will bring students skills that will enhance attainment in their sixth form studies and beyond. Students apply these learned skills to a project that is unique.

At Levels 1 and 2, students are expected to work independently on their own project for 30 hours. At Level 3, this independent working is expected to be at least 90 hours. However, the independent working of students should be supervised throughout; students should not be sent away to 'get on with it'. The role played by Project Supervisors is crucial to the qualification. Project Qualifications provide a great opportunity for students looking to enhance their skills by studying at home or outside the timetable or school environment. Some students will want to use their research to bring about a positive change. This is best treated as Social Action Research and there is [advice on how to supervise these projects](#).

The value of the EPQ is recognised by Higher Education; the EPQ is equivalent to one half of an A-level qualification in terms of UCAS points and [many universities](#) now include the EPQ as part of a UCAS offer.

Roles and responsibilities

First and foremost, you need to think about the staffing requirements within your centre. You must appoint a Centre Coordinator, who'll manage the delivery of the Project Qualification within your centre. If you're delivering Project Qualifications at more than one level, then you could have a different Centre Coordinator at each level. If you're setting up the qualification in a large centre, you may also require some Assistant Coordinators. (See the *Notes and guidance: When and how to deliver Project Qualifications* for advice on delivering to large cohorts).

The Centre Coordinator is one of the key roles for the Project Qualifications. The Centre Coordinator is responsible for delivering the qualification within a particular school, college or consortium. They take on the full quality assurance and management responsibility for the qualification.

You'll also need to appoint Project Supervisors who'll be working in a one-to-one supervisory capacity with your students. The supervisor-student relationship is the key to success in Project Qualifications. Supervisors help students through a new and challenging programme of study. Supervisors don't need to be a subject specialist in the chosen area of project research. It's better for a Supervisor to have no specialist subject knowledge so that student and Supervisor embark on a learning journey together.

Finally, you'll need skills teachers; appropriately trained and qualified individuals who can deliver the Taught Element. The skills teacher(s) may be you, the Centre Coordinator and your supervisor team, or other colleagues such as librarians. Centres can also call on the specialist knowledge of teaching staff. For example, a Psychology teacher may be asked to deliver training related to the ethics of research, an English teacher may be asked to deliver training related to writing an academic report, etc. Many centres enlist the services provided by HE institutions to help deliver the Taught Element.

Everyone involved with the delivery of Project Qualifications must read [the most up to date JCQ regulations](#) that govern the qualifications. It's important that all concerned with Project Qualifications, including the students and their parents, understand what is and what isn't considered to be acceptable practice.

Job description: What's expected of a Centre Coordinator?

The key areas of responsibility include:

- developing staff's understanding of the requirements of the qualification, ensuring that professional and research ethics are included
- devising, timetabling and delivering the Taught Element (delivery may be delegated to other colleagues or outsourced to other experts but it must be centrally organised to ensure consistency for all students)
- scrutinising and approving all project proposals – it's imperative that the Centre Coordinator refer to the five point checklist in section 2.4 of the [specification](#) to ensure that all students have devised effective proposals that will allow them access to the full range of marks
- quality assuring the standard of supervision received by each student undertaking a Project Qualification
- ensuring that Supervisors carry out their roles ethically and that the work submitted by the centre is ethically sound
- ensuring that the AQA marking standard is understood by all Supervisors and that it's maintained within the centre. This includes attending AQA standardisation meetings, communicating the standard to the Supervisors who are marking the projects, arranging internal moderation of the marking of each Supervisor and managing the internal review process before marks submission.

There are some important administrative tasks that must be completed by the Centre Coordinator to ensure that the submission of the projects for external moderation runs smoothly. These are:

- making the centre's exams officer aware of students who should be entered for the Projects
- setting internal deadlines in order that all AQA deadlines for submission can be met
- submitting marks to AQA and a requested sample of work to an external AQA moderator

- ensuring that every Supervisor and the Centre Coordinator have signed the centre declaration sheet which must be submitted to the external moderator alongside the requested sample of work.

It's important that the Centre Coordinator registers their centre and provides us with relevant contact details in order for us to put them in touch with a Project Adviser and inform them of upcoming meetings and/or specification developments. The Centre Coordinator is the only person who should contact AQA or the Adviser directly and all questions should be escalated via them.

To avoid any challenge from students about the quality of supervision/delivery of the Taught Element, it's essential that the Centre Coordinator keeps good records. These records are likely to include details and dates of all:

- Supervisor training
- supervision meetings that took place during the Project process
- delivery of the Taught Element
- standardisation
- internal moderation.

Job description: What's expected of a Supervisor?

The Supervisor role has four key responsibilities: to regularly meet with their student(s), to complete key sections of the Production Log, to attend each student's presentation and to mark the work of their student(s).

Responsibility 1: Meeting with students

- Field initial ideas and take them through the initial planning stage of their project.
- Advise students on ways to improve and focus their initial ideas to ensure they can achieve the best result possible.
- Attend a planning review, mid-project review and project product review meeting with each student, offering advice and guidance to help the student to progress, without directing the course the project takes. Ideally the supervisor will also have regular meetings with their student(s) to offer support. Regular interaction between student and supervisor is essential to establish the authenticity of the student work.

Supervisors should not give students resources to use, but they can legitimately make students aware of the support and equipment that's potentially available to them, so that students can make informed decisions that lead to viable projects. For example, there may be support and resources available from employers and/or universities.

Responsibility 2: Completing parts of the Production Log

At key points during the project process, it's essential that the Supervisor completes their sections of the Production Log so that the evidence of the project process is comprehensive and authenticated. The Supervisor must:

- provide details of the centre's taught skills programme in the Production Log. (Supervisors are sometimes involved in the delivery of these taught skills depending upon the centre set-up)
- using the checklist in section 2.4 of the [specification](#), comment on the suitability of the student's project proposal in Proposal Part B of the Production Log
- explain how the project will extend and develop from a student's main course of study in Proposal Part B of the Production Log. It's important that dual accreditation is avoided; the Supervisor should provide evidence to demonstrate that the proposed project will genuinely extend from a student's other areas of study where there is potential overlap
- complete the Presentation record part B section of the Production Log, recording the nature of the presentation audience, the nature of the presentation, the delivery of the presentation and the questions asked of/responses given by the student (see Responsibility 3 below)
- complete the Record of Marks section of the Production Log, providing marks for each Assessment Objective and supporting statements that justify the marks awarded, indicating evidence where appropriate
- complete the submission checklist in the Production Log and the necessary Supervisor declaration sign off on the Candidate record form.

Responsibility 3: Attend the presentation

The Supervisor must attend the presentation and keep a comprehensive log of the nature of the audience, the nature of the presentation, the delivery of the presentation and of the questions asked/responses given. This will form the basis of the assessment evidence for this session. It's imperative that this is recorded in the Production Log Presentation record part B as it's often the only evidence the external moderators have of the presentation. Students may choose to include additional relevant information related to the presentation, such as PowerPoint slides, but such evidence is not compulsory.

Responsibility 4: Mark student work

It must be ensured that each supervisor marks the submitted work of students to the same standard as their colleagues by following the system of internal standardisation and moderation that has been set up by the Centre Coordinator. (See *Notes and guidance: Assess the Project Qualifications* for more details about standardisation, marking and internal moderation).