

SOUTHEND HIGH SCHOOL FOR BOYS

ACADEMY GRAMMAR SCHOOL

Prittlewell Chase, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 0RG
(01702) 606200 enquiries@shsb.org.uk www.shsb.org.uk

Headteacher: Mrs R V Worth



20th August 2026

Re: Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)

What is EPQ?

EPQ is a standalone qualification worth half of an A level. It is taken as an independent research project, and students are responsible for ensuring that they are making progress with their work. Each student selects the topic to be researched from an area of personal interest outside of their main field of study and as such the range of EPQ titles is extraordinarily diverse. The EPQ itself is a research project that results in a report in excess of 5000 words. It comprises three assessed elements: a production log, the project itself and a formal presentation.

Why take EPQ?

It is a widely recognised qualification and is worth up to 28 UCAS points. Since A level reform the qualification is growing hugely in popularity; it provides a competitive edge for Sixth Form students leaving school to enter a competitive marketplace. All universities (and this includes those in the Russell Group) as well as an increasing number of employers view the project in a positive light for several reasons:

- It is student driven and demonstrates initiative and independence
- It develops key skills:
 - Research & Referencing
 - Time management
 - ICT and project management
 - Critical analysis
 - Presenting
- Good EPQ projects require the ability to research and synthesise ideas
- Projects take students beyond the confines of subjects and deepens their understanding

How is it delivered and how is progress monitored?

The course is very much a student-driven endeavour with some taught elements. Students attend EPQ sessions with our EPQ Co-ordinator during Health and Wellbeing in the library on a Wednesday



afternoon. During these sessions the development of students' projects is monitored, and guidance is given. Students are also allocated an individual mentor who is there to assist and offer further guidance and expertise as required. This will take the form of another member of staff from the school.

Because of the independent nature of the EPQ it is important that students take responsibility for keeping on track with their projects although detailed feedback specific to the mark scheme will be given following the pre-submission draft of the project. There is a specific piece of software called Project Q that is used to support students with this.

Acceptance onto the course

In our experience, it is the most highly motivated and independent students who get the most out of EPQ. Furthermore, those with higher prior attainment often fare better with the demands of the course. Undertaking an EPQ is not to be entered lightly: It is not easy – *'it wouldn't be worth doing if it was'* - but it is certainly manageable and rewarding! It is good for students who are self-motivated, who like to be challenged, who are organised and who are inquisitive. We ask that all students who wish to participate in the qualification submit a short letter of application (around 150-200 words) detailing why they would like to undertake the EPQ.

Places are limited and there is a cost of £250 attached to the course, payable in three instalments. It is an extra course that we offer and as such is not included in normal teaching hours. There is financial support available for any student who finds themselves in genuine financial hardship. Please come and speak to one of the sixth form team to discuss this further.

If your child wishes to participate in the qualification, please complete the return slip at the bottom of this letter with both your signature and that of your son or daughter; confirming you are happy with the commitment that they are undertaking.

The deadline date for the return of the slip is 11th September.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries concerning the course.

Yours sincerely,



Mrs L Ryan
Head of Sixth Form

Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) 2026

Name of student

Form

Please tick the boxes below and sign at the bottom

I am happy for my son/daughter to undertake an EPQ

I am aware that there is a cost of £250 attached to the course that will be payable in three instalments and that it will be payable even in the event of non-completion. I also accept that failure to pay the fee for the EPQ may see my child's project withdrawn from entry

Signed (Parent)

Date

I am aware of the commitment I am making and how much work will be involved

Signed (Student)

Date

Please return to the sixth form office by 11th September along with a letter of application addressed to Mrs Ryan setting out why you would like to complete an EPQ.