



Implications for teachers

Teachers' involvement will be:

- to deliver the taught element, including the teaching of research skills and advising on project management
- to support students in scoping the project to ensure that they meet the assessment criteria
- to monitor student progress to ensure that they remain on target to complete the project by the deadline
- to mark the project.

Protocols will need to be established for the provision of advice, guidance, interim reviews and redrafting opportunities. The Joint Council for Qualifications document Instructions for completing coursework/ portfolios (JCQ 2008) should be used as a guide. Teachers are advised to attend awarding body training sessions to ensure that they have the appropriate skills and are aware of requirements.

Assessment

The following aspects will be assessed:

- designing and planning the project
- selecting, organising and using a range of resources
- analysing data, applying findings and demonstrating understanding of any links, connections and complexities of the topic
- selecting and using a range of skills to take decisions critically and to achieve planned outcomes
- evaluating all aspects of the project
- using a range of communication skills and media to present the outcomes of the project.

The extended project will be marked by teachers and externally moderated by the awarding bodies. By monitoring students throughout the process and questioning them on their presentation of outcomes, assessors should be able to authenticate the project as the work of the student. Schools and colleges should have internal standardisation processes in place to ensure consistency of marking within the centre.

Implications for examinations officers

The extended project will be a single assessment qualification. It will be the same qualification whether it is done by A level students, Diploma students or those on any other programme. It will be internally assessed and so materials will need to be submitted to the awarding body for moderation.

Grading

The extended project is graded, like A levels and Advanced Diplomas, from A* to E, where A* is the highest. Achievement that is insufficient to lead to the award of a certificate is reported as unclassified (or U).

If you would like to know more about the extended project, please visit the QCA website at www.qca.org.uk. QCA has produced the following guidance documents on the extended project:

For managers in schools and colleges

Guidance on managing project delivery (QCA/08/3670)

For teachers

Guidance on delivering the extended project (QCA/08/3673)

The above documents are also available in a pack: Guidance on the foundation, higher and extended projects (QCA/08/3669).

You could also visit the websites of the awarding bodies offering the extended project to obtain information on their specifications.

From September 2008 these are:

AQA www.aqa.org.uk
Edexcel www.edexcel.org.uk
EDI www.ediplc.com
OCR www.ocr.org.uk

From September 2009 these will also include:

VTCT www.vtct.org.uk
WJEC www.wjec.co.uk

You may also find the JCQ website helpful: www.jcq.org.uk.



Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
83 Piccadilly
London W1J 8QA

Telephone: 020 7509 5555
Minicom: 020 7509 6546
E-mail: info@qca.org.uk
www.qca.org.uk

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Guidance for teachers

Extended project

Challenging level 3 students



Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

The extended project is new qualification which requires students to produce a single piece of work of their own choosing, showing evidence of planning, preparation, research and autonomous working. It will be offered from September 2008. The aim of the project is to strengthen programmes of study for 16- to 19-year-olds while testing a wide range of skills.

The extended project will be available as a stand-alone qualification. It is a compulsory part of the Diploma programme but can also be taken as an optional part of an A level study programme, and so will provide a link between A levels and Advanced Diplomas.

An extended project is equivalent in size to half an A level and equivalent in standard to a full A level. Most awarding bodies will make their first awards in summer 2009 but some may make their first awards in winter 2008/09. It will up to individual centres to decide whether to offer it to their students. However, the government is currently

consulting on whether to introduce an entitlement to the extended project in the future.

This leaflet explains the main features of the extended project and the impact that it will have on teachers and students.

What does an extended project involve?

The extended project will require students to:

- devise, design and plan the project
- research, critically select, organise and use information
- select and use a range of resources
- analyse data, apply findings and demonstrate understanding of any links, connections and complexities of the topic



- select and use a range of skills to carry out the project and achieve planned outcomes
- evaluate all aspects of the project, including outcomes in relation to stated objectives and their own learning and performance
- select and use a range of communication skills and media to present project outcomes and conclusions.

Examples of possible outcomes for the extended project are:

- a design
- a report with findings from an investigation or study
- a dissertation presenting an argument
- an artefact
- a performance.

Benefits for students

The extended project offers opportunities for students to:

- make a significant contribution to the choice and design of an extended piece of work
- develop and apply decision-making and problem-solving skills, initiative and enterprise
- extend their planning, research, critical thinking, analytical, synthesis, evaluation and presentation skills
- use their learning experiences to support their personal aspirations for higher education and/or career development.

The extended project will help students to develop the skills, knowledge and understanding that they will be able to use when tackling similar projects in the future.



Students might use their project at interview stage for higher education and/or in their personal statement on their UCAS form. The project will develop important independent learning and study skills that will improve the chances of success when progressing to higher education or employment.

Extended project and A levels
A level students may add the extended project to their study programme. Students will be able to carry out a project on a topic of their own choosing, which may or may not be linked to their A level subjects.

Although it is optional for A level students, higher education institutions may wish to encourage potential applicants to take the extended project since it will develop research and independent learning skills.

Extended project and Advanced Diplomas

The extended project is a compulsory constituent part of the Advanced Diploma. Advanced Diploma students' project topics must be relevant to principal learning in either or both of the following ways:

- the project topic complements and develops the themes and topics for students' principal learning set out in the relevant line of learning criteria
- the project supports learner progression.

Extended project timings

There is flexibility as to when students take the extended project. For example, it may be positioned:

- as a culminating activity at the end of a course

- in the middle of a study programme for a one-year course
- towards the end of the first year of a two-year programme
- running over the end of the first year and the start of the second year of a two-year programme, encouraging students to continue work during the summer break
- linked to timetabled sessions, and other learning activities, throughout a programme.

However, it may be advisable for students to complete the project in their second year, since they are more likely to achieve good results at this stage in the course due to their increased maturity and more highly developed skills. It will also be helpful for them to aim to complete the project away from submission dates/examinations for other assessments. This will allow them to include information about the project in their UCAS application, as well as avoiding conflicting pressures