

EPQ Initial Project Proposal – Guidelines for completion are on the next page

Name	Mentor Group
<p>What are your post-school plans? Do you have plans for future university study or an apprenticeship, or are you going into employment? What's the long-term career goal? Be as specific as you can, but don't worry if you are still considering possibilities. Write down all the options you are thinking about.</p>	
<p>4. Please outline your intended area of interest for your EPQ (having read the guidelines on the next page very carefully):</p>	
<p>5. What is your reason for choosing this area of interest?</p>	
<p>6. So your EPQ question might be</p>	
<p>7. Cite fully five academic sources of information that would be relevant you EPQ. Indicate which of them have you already read/listened to/watched?</p>	
Signed:	Date:

Guidance - considering your EPQ project and completion of the Initial Project Proposal form

1. If you are a joining us in Year 12 you will not know your mentor group until the start of the autumn term – don't worry, just leave this blank for now and fill it in when you know.
2. One way to decide what area you want to look at is to work on something that complements your future plans. So if you want to work in the health service, do an EPQ that focuses on a medical issue. When an A Level doesn't exist for the course an EPQ based on this area shows your interest and commitment e.g. architecture. If you want to read History at university, do a History EPQ. If you are going to do an Apprenticeship in Hotel and Catering, you could do an EPQ on e.g. the impact of Airbnb on the hotel industry. If you were aiming to do Geography and International Relations, you could look at the disproportionate impact of global warming. This is why we need to know what your future plans are. Do some hard thinking this summer about your future and then research the paths to that future: know what the controversial topics are in that career/ course, and what might impress future interviewers etc. and then base your EPQ around that.
3. Alternatively, you could choose a topic that is a subject you love but haven't chosen for your A Levels, or is a complete contrast to your A Levels, or just something you are very interested and passionate about.

Guidelines on choosing a focus:

- a. Do not choose anything that was on the syllabus of any of your GCSEs; do not include anything that you will be covering at A Level. So, you need to check out the syllabuses carefully. For instance, in History, this will mean choosing a different period – something that is completely new to you.
 - b. Avoid anything that is current – now in the news, and not something that has happened very recently e.g. the conflict between Israel and Iran, because you will find it very hard to find balanced or knowledgeable source material, and the debate and facts change all the time. You cannot just speculate in an EPQ.
 - c. Choose something that is controversial or has at least two different strong points of view, each supported by evidence. You cannot write a descriptive or narrative-based EPQ. You cannot write a History of Dentistry, for example, but you can write an essay on the benefits (or otherwise) of fluoride in the water. You will be weighing up the points of view
 - d. Check out source material: you need relevant academic books and articles, and perhaps podcasts. If all you can find are headlines from the tabloid press, or anonymous websites, then you need to change topic.
4. Phrasing an EPQ question can make or break your EPQ. Somewhere in that question needs to appear some evaluative and analytical words: 'To what extent ...' or 'How far ...' or 'How accurate ...' or 'How fair ...' etc. This is so that you can give both sides of an argument and decide, based on the evidence you have found, what the answer is. If you come across a wonderful quotation that summarises one of the points of view in the controversy that you are studying, you could use it in the format: e.g. 'The UK bears primary responsibility for global warming.' (Joe Blogs) How fair is this assessment?

5. Citing your sources - examples

For a book;

- Authors (year), Title, edition (if relevant) (publisher's location: publisher)
eg Roberts, M.B.V. (1986), *Biology – A Functional Approach*, 4th ed. (Cheltenham: Nelson Thornes)

For a journal article:

- Authors (year), 'Article title', Journal title, vol. no, issue no, pp. xxx–xxx
eg Meredith, Jr, J. E., Fazeli, B., Schwartz, M. A. (1993), 'The extracellular matrix as a cell survival factor', *Mol. Biol. Cell*, vol. 4, no 9, pp. 953–961 [Date Accessed: 4 April 2025]

For a website:

- Authors (year), Title. [online] URL Accessed: date.
eg Goldacre, B. (2010), *The stigma gene*. [online] 2015
<http://www.badscience.net/2010/10/pride-and-prejudice> [Date Accessed: 4 April 2025]

Begin researching your area of interest and have read at least 10 sources by the start of the course. As you research, you must keep a note of useful articles, books, podcasts and websites. If using books, you must record page numbers where your information has come from and if using websites, you must record the date you visited it. This will form the backbone of your EPQ bibliography and your references in the essay.

You can find help online on how to lay out a bibliography. For example, see: [Citing references: a guide to NTU Library Harvard style - NOW Student Help - NTU Online Workspace](#)

Any issues, please email suchamberlain@highdown.reading.sch.uk