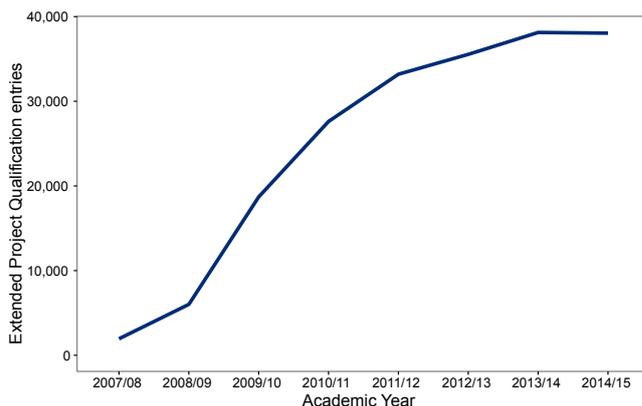


Key statistics on the Extended Project Qualification 2008-2015

Summary

The Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a Level 3 National Qualification taken by sixth form students. It involves undertaking a substantial project in an area of personal interest, where the outcome can range from writing a dissertation or report to putting on a performance or organising an event. In recent years the EPQ has seen substantial increases in entries, perhaps partly because it is seen as good preparation for university study and is now included in offers by some higher education institutions. This Data Byte presents some key statistics on the EPQ since the 2007/08 academic year.

Trend in EPQ entries



Of 2014/15 EPQ students:

82% attended an academy, comprehensive, sixth form college, or FE college.

3 A Levels
1 AS Level the most common combination of qualifications taken alongside an EPQ. 95% of EPQ students took at least one A Level.

Maths
Biology
History the most popular A Level subjects taken alongside an EPQ.

+1.8 difference in mean Key Stage 4 score between EPQ and other A Level students (A* = 58 pts, G = 16 pts). The difference is not statistically significant.

What does the chart show?

The chart highlights five features of the uptake of the Extended Project Qualification. First the number of students registering for the EPQ has grown substantially from just under 2,000 students in the 2007/08 academic year to over 38,000 in 2014/15. The selected statistics then provide more detail on the students who took the EPQ in 2014/15: what type of school they attended, what qualifications and subjects they took alongside the EPQ, and their prior attainment at Key Stage 4 (i.e. GCSEs).

The data for the analysis was taken from the National Pupil Database (NPD). This is a database held by the Department for Education, consisting of results for all students in all qualifications and subjects in schools and colleges in England. Students taking EPQ do so as part of their sixth form studies so the Key Stage 5 extract of the NPD was used.

Why is the chart interesting?

A Levels are part of a well-established route to university education. However the rapid growth of the EPQ suggests that it offers students an opportunity to develop unique and complementary skills, for example, in planning and undertaking a piece of independent work. Students can also investigate subjects of personal interest that may not be covered in more traditional qualifications. Research at Cambridge Assessment continues to investigate the EPQ and its effect on a student's performance in both secondary and post-secondary education.

For more information, please see:

Gill, Tim (2016) *Uptake and results in the Extended Project Qualification 2008–2015*. Statistics Report Series No. 101. Cambridge: Cambridge Assessment.
<http://cambridgeassessment.org.uk/our-research/all-published-resources/statistical-reports/>