



HECKMONDWIKE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

PDR/JDN

June 2022

Dear Year 11 Students/Parents

Extended Project Qualification – Fast Track Year 11

I'm sure you are aware, in year 12 we offer the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) as an elective, extra to our A level provision. Indeed, many of our year 11 students have already indicated they would like to take up the course, next year. Like last year, we are offering the opportunity to commence the EPQ course during the final half term of year 11. Last year many students took up this offer and have now completed the course with A*/A grades.

Please do understand that this is entirely voluntary, and you may wish to enjoy the extended break before school starts in September and there will be a further opportunity to start the course next term. The difference being that the Fast Track students will complete it earlier. The EPQ is a highly respected qualification that is equivalent to half an A level and therefore carries equivalent UCAS points and is graded A*-E just like other A levels. It is sought after by universities who make offers to students based on this along with their A level results. Many universities rate it so highly that they will make reduced offers to students who have completed the EPQ. Doing the EPQ will enhance a student's personal statement and give them something unique to talk about at university interviews.

Comments from some universities are below:

- *"In some cases admissions tutors may wish to make an alternative offer to applicants, one of which involves successful completion of the Extended Project, eg AAA at A level or AAB plus the Extended Project."* (University of Leeds)
- *"We encourage students to undertake an Extended Project to help them develop independent study and research skills valuable for higher education."* (University of Cambridge)
- *"Durham University sees the EPQ as a valuable addition to A-Levels or alternative post-16 qualifications. As a research intensive University, Durham supports the skills that the Extended Project Qualification helps to develop and sees them as beneficial to improving transition from year 13 to Higher Education."*

We work closely with a number of universities including Durham, Sheffield and Leeds and have arrangements whereby our students have access to many of their facilities, both physical and online, when completing their EPQ.

Students are required to write a 5000 word report on a topic of their choice, which they will research, or create an artefact. Examples of an artefact include carrying out a scientific experiment, or composing a piece of music, but the list is endless. Whatever they choose to do, it must be based on independent research and they must show they can plan and manage their project. They will be guided throughout the process by a specialist supervisor who will give them individual support.

Below are some comments from some of our year 12 students who took part in the Fast track scheme last summer:

- *"I learnt plenty of new skills which have been useful throughout all of my A-level studies." - Tom Barber*
- *"It was my first taste of university style work, delving deep into a subject I genuinely cared about. Plus, there was the satisfaction of actually finishing and printing a work of real substance" - Leo Beevers*
- *"A chance to really explore a topic that I love and get the chance to actually make something." - Reuben Price*
- *"A great opportunity to develop essential project planning skills as well a chance to explore a subject I am considering for university! I enjoyed expressing my creativity to produce something I am really proud of." - Sara Ameen*

If you wish to participate on this Fast Track course you will start it formally on 6th July. Students will be supported and taught remotely in the main, with the option for face to face sessions in school on the 6th, 13th and 20th July. From September, students will have one face-to-face lesson on their timetable each week. This is a fantastic opportunity for students to gain a qualification within the first half of their year 12 studies.

As there are a limited number of places, we anticipate that we will be oversubscribed and so ask you to write an expression of interest by Friday 1st July and email to Mrs Whitelaw jwhitelaw@heckgrammar.co.uk who coordinates the course. Students should indicate why they would like to do the EPQ and why they feel they are a strong candidate and deserve a place on the course. The outcomes of the applications will be communicated at the beginning of the week commencing 4th July. If your application is successful, you must ensure you will be fully committed to the programme.

If you are interested, I wish you every success.

Yours faithfully,



Peter Roberts

Headteacher