

## Year 11: Preparation for Sixth Form

### Summer 2020

#### **Welcome to the HPQ (Higher Project Qualification)**

#### **What is the HPQ?**

The HPQ is a Level 2 qualification that you can complete between now and November. The Project Qualifications require a great deal of independent work, which makes them perfect for working remotely. However there will still be support available from the JMF6 Team.

To complete the HPQ you have to design an investigation into a topic of your choice and complete research into that topic. You will present your findings in a written report of around 2000 words and a presentation to an audience of your teachers and peers. Alternatively it is possible to present a short written report (c500 words) and an “artefact”: an object such as a computer programme or a video documentary.

#### **Isn't that just a big essay?**

In some ways – but the HPQ is a lot more than that. Unlike an essay or piece of coursework, the majority of your marks for the HPQ do not come from the essay itself, but from how you manage the process of working independently. You will be assessed on your ability to:

- Use research to plan and refine a question.
- Create a plan of how to use your time to complete the research.
- Respond to feedback from your supervisor and adapt your plan as circumstances change.
- Find and select resources suitable to your area of interest.
- Adapt your plan as circumstances change around you.
- Evaluate the whole process: reflecting not just what you learned about the topic, but about research, writing, organisation and other key skills.

#### **Why Should I do the HPQ?**

Before I answer that, take a look at the video below (start the video at 0:19 for information relevant to you). Please note that this video is about the EPQ (the next level of qualification). However the students' comments about how they approached the EPQ and what they got out of doing the project largely apply for the HPQ as well, so it is worth watching.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hMBZrxtHzLA>

So the key benefits of the HPQ are:

- It gets you to start working in an independent way so it is great preparation for both Sixth Form! You will develop skills of planning, research, extended writing and evaluating your own study habits. All of these things are going to be vital to success in Sixth Form.

- Just like your GCSEs get you ready for A-levels, the HPQ will get you ready for the EPQ. This is an extra qualification we offer at JMF6 which has the same UCAS points as half an A-level. It is a very impressive qualification to have on your essay and can lead to a reduced offer from a number of universities, including many Russell Group universities.
- You will be able to study a subject or area of interest to you – either an A-level you are going to take, or one you are still not sure of, or something completely different that there is not the opportunity to study in Sixth Form.
- It will help bridge the gap between the suspension of your GCSEs on March 20<sup>th</sup> and the start of your A-levels. This will make sure your skills don't get rusty and you are not later disadvantaged in your A-level studies by the shutdown we have experienced.

### **What Support Will I have?**

To help guide you through the EPQ you will be allocated a supervisor who will meet with you regularly, advise you on how to develop your ideas and support you with tracking and monitoring your progress.

We will also be releasing lessons and activities over the next 2 months to get you up and running. We will be offering online video sessions on topics such as: refining your question, making a plan, conducting research, evaluating sources and many more to ensure that you are building the skills you need – for the HPQ and for Sixth Form.

We have subscribed to ProjectQ which is an online package that helps you track and evaluate your progress through your HPQ to ensure that you meet all the criteria and work on the right parts of the project in the correct order.

When you start Sixth Form in September, if you decide to complete the project and submit to an exam board for assessment, there will be lessons available to help you do this.

### **How Do I get Started?**

#### **Step 1: Getting ideas for your Project**

Your project can be on almost anything you want and are interested in. Some of you will already have a clear idea. Others will find this amount of choice a bit much! Either way, you should spend some time looking at this website. It will help you narrow down your choice and think about whether your idea is likely to work.



<https://explore.org/>

Explore is a website put together by Oxford University which contains all sorts of different topics and debates their students and academics are looking into. For each question it gives you a brief outline of the issues, information and video clips or other resources to help you understand the debate and open your mind to different answers. They also explain HOW different academics are investigating the issues: using science, philosophical questioning or archival research.

You do not need to select a topic from Explore but it may give you inspiration if struggling. Alternatively it will help you think about whether or not you have a topic that could be explored in this way: with debate and research leading to a really good discussion of the issues.

## Step 2: Narrow Your Interest Down to A Project that Best Suits You

For the HPQ and the EPQ you can choose either to pursue a project that will fit closely with your A-levels, thus extending your learning, or which gives you the chance to do something very different.

We are recommending that HPQ students select something that acts as preparation for one or more of the A-levels you want to take in September. To help you start thinking in this way, it can be helpful to consider other project case studies, before reaching your own decision.

Why not have a look at the table below, and see if you can work out what might make a good project for each student:

Students	Project
Grace wants to study English, History and Politics. She is a keen member of Amnesty International and is thinking about studying International Relations at university.	
Lydia studies Chemistry, Biology and Geography. She is very interested in animals and might like to become a vet later in life.	
Ben loves rugby and will be studying Biology, PE and Business Studies for A-level. He doesn't know what he wants to do after A-levels: he may take a gap year or may go to university, but he isn't sure what he'll study.	
Anna has opted for Sociology, Politics and Maths A-levels. She has never studied sociology before and so would like to do a sociological investigation for her HPQ to help her make a good start to that subject.	
Paul will be doing A-levels in Art, English Literature and History. He really like all these subjects and writes short stories in his spare time.	
Ethan loves technology and wants to study History, ICT and Art at A-level. He is also interest in fashion and is considered to have a "unique" fashion sense by his friends.	
Sarah is not sure what she wants to do for A-levels. She signed up for English, Biology and Art, but is now thinking she might want to change either biology or art for psychology.	

	Projects
1	Written project - An investigation into the transfer of diseases from animals to humans: how does this happen and how can it be prevented.
2	Artefact project - A project that involves researching the features of great children's book and then writing and illustrating a book for children.
3	Something to do with psychology – perhaps how it is shown in art or poetry? Not sure whether to do a written project or an artefact yet, but wants to explore psychology further.
4	Artefact project - A video documentary exploring the impact of feminism on women's lives by interviewing women from different generations online.
5	Written project - An investigation into the impact of the coronavirus on international sports called "Will sports ever be the same again?"
6	Written project – "How has technology changed the world of fashion?"
7	Written project - An investigation into the aid given to less economically developed countries by the richest countries in the world looking into whether the countries give enough money to help and whether the money they give is being used well.

You can see how vast the range of possible projects is. None of these projects will be **exactly** what the students end up doing: their supervisor will help them to shape their idea into a great HPQ and ensure that they succeed. Some of them might change just a little: for example, in project 5 "sports" might be a lot to handle and so that student might focus specifically on rugby. Some are a long way from being decided: for example, in project 3 the student has started to pick and come up with some ideas, but clearly need to talk to someone to work through them a bit further. However all them have picked an area of interest so that this process can begin.

### Step 3: Sign up by Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> May

Interesting in starting your HPQ? Sign up by emailing the following information to Mr Conway ([robin.conway@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:robin.conway@johnmason.oxon.sch.uk)):

- Your name
- Your A-level options
- A brief statement of what you might be interested in doing for your HPQ. This does not need to be fully decided yet – an idea or topic area would be fine.

This will help us to gauge numbers and allocate you the supervisor who will be best placed to help you develop your ideas into a successful HPQ.

### Step 4 and beyond...

Mr Conway will start emailing out videos and lesson activities to help you get started on your HPQ straight after the sign-up deadline. You also be informed who your supervisor is shortly after that date, and they will get in touch to arrange your first supervision "meeting".

**If you have any questions in the meanwhile then just email Mr Conway for more information.**