FPQ and HPQ Express: How to deliver and assess the Foundation and Higher Project in 3–6 months

Why carry out an express project?

We want to help Year 10/11 learners to carry out a Pearson FPQ (Foundation) or HPQ (Higher) Express project in a focused period of time so that they can:

- demonstrate their ability to **build on their current knowledge and understanding** of KS4-level content and/or do a deep dive into an interest area
- develop skills for future learning
- gain further qualification or use this project to develop new skills and knowledge
- have an opportunity to **develop as independent learners**.

What does an express project offer?

- Learners can undertake a small project of their choice that can be submitted in a variety of outcomes, which can be assessed at either Level 1 or Level 2.
- Outcomes include writing a report, carrying out an investigation, rehearsing and recording a performance or making an artefact.
- Both the *FPQ Express* and the *HPQ Express* comprise 60 recommended guided learning hours.
- Both levels of project allow development of a variety of skills, including those skills needed to support independent learning.

What does a Foundation/Higher project look like?

The *FPQ* and *HPQ Express* projects are different to other qualifications as they allow learners to choose a topic that interests them, and to research it in a way that suits their learning style.

- The project should be based on a topic that the learner is interested in and motivated by.
- This could be based on a topic from their studies or a hobby or area of interest.

- The topic should have sufficient depth to engage the learner across 60 GLH (the recommend GLH for each project).

What free support is Pearson offering?

- An **Online Toolkit** helps you to deliver the taught-course basis and mentor learners via an online platform.
- **A podcast and video series with educators** will give you guidance and support on project learning principles and ideas on how to mentor learners remotely and keep them motivated.
- **Online and on-demand training** for teachers covering the principles of project learning across the secondary curriculum, as well as practical guidance on how to deliver the *FPQ and HPQ Express* and how to mark projects. Existing on-demand training on how to deliver and assess the qualification is available here.
- **Student webinars** on key project skills to cover some of the teaching time.
- A **Project Support Guide** which acts as a one-stop shop for resources related to the Project Qualifications and includes all the support you need for Project teaching, learning and assessment.

Why do an FPQ or HPQ Express?

Year 10 learners

- The project will help learners develop ideas and extend their knowledge of information studied throughout their time in secondary school.
- The project will support learners in developing a range of useful skills, such as evaluating research sources, referencing, report writing and self-reflection; all of which will aid learners in their final year of GCSE study.
- Completing a project will allow learners to study in depth a topic of interest to them that will support their future studies.

Year 11 learners

- The project will help learners consolidate and extend the knowledge and understanding they have gained so far in their GCSE studies.

- By completing a project, learners will have the opportunity to develop a range of study skills that will support their future studies at Level 3.
- Learners will have opportunity to pursue an area of interest to them in greater depth, supporting their further study choices.

What does the learner need to do?

To begin carrying out the project learners should consider what topics or hobbies interest them, and then choose a subject that they would like to explore in greater depth.

The Foundation-level project is aimed at learners who are likely to attain Level 1 in their core GCSE studies. While the assessment objectives for both Level 1 and Level 2 projects are similar, the former appears to offer less depth of understanding.

The Level 2 Higher project is aimed at learners who are likely to attain at least a pass grade in their core GCSE subjects. In order to ensure that learners are completing the correct level of project the mentor/tutor assessor should view the assessment objectives for both levels before guiding their learners to the correct project.

How is the project assessed?

The assessment objectives for both levels can be found in the Pearson Edexcel specification for the Level 1/Level 2 project, which is available for download from the Pearson Edexcel project website.

In order to complete their project, learners need to complete the following.

- Learners should choose a topic that interests them.
- They need to decide which format the project outcome will take, which could include:
  - a written report,
  - an investigation,
  - carrying out a performance, or
  - making an artefact.
- Learners should carry out research into their topic area from sources that can be listed in a bibliography.

- At Level 1, learners would be expected to, at least, find information from a few sources. However, at Level 1 there is no requirement for independent research, what is required is 'obtaining information'. Reading lists, references etc. can be supplied by the mentor/tutor assessor.
  - At Level 2, the range of information sources found should be much wider.
- Learners need to keep a diary of work carried out on the project.
- And finally, learners should produce the outcome and evaluate their project.

Ideas and practical guidance

Written report

Learners who choose a written report as their outcome need to be supported in looking at a research question that is formulated around an area that is of interest to them. The question should be able to provide sufficient information sources to the learner so that they can write about the topic in a manner that provides a conclusion based on the information found. The strongest projects provide counterarguments and alternative views about the question before reaching a conclusion.

Several examples of possible research questions can be found on the project website, such as:

- 'Do video games have a positive or negative effect on family dynamics/children's behavior?'
- 'What effect does the media have on children's body image?'

Investigation

Learners who choose to undertake an investigation as their outcome need to provide a focus for their investigation. Their project title should point to a hypothesis that can be proved or disproved by the collection of primary data. For example, data could be collected by carrying out surveys, laboratory experiments or field studies. As these fast track projects will be accessed at home it is likely that the ability of learners to collect data for this outcome will be limited in the current circumstances.

Learners who choose to carry out a performance need to be able carry out their performance to an audience in their current environment. The audience can be virtual and should be captured in a format that is easily accessed and viewed.

Learners may choose to write and narrate a story, possibly one that raises awareness of an issue they are interested in; choreograph and perform a dance; or carry out a musical recital.

In all cases the outcome should be informed by rehearsals that have resulted in changes to the initial format and reasons for the changes made should be provided.

Artefacts

Many learners engage in this project outcome in order to 'make' something. The artefact can also be used to carry out a design or commission brief. This outcome provides an opportunity for learners to be both creative and innovative while in their home environment.

Learners can apply skills learned on a vocational programme, such as creating a book of modern hairstyles or composing various pieces of music for specific instruments.

Alternatively, learners may wish to pursue an academic area of interest, such as a history topic, in order to produce a poster, for example showing how people lived and worked in a particular period of history.

In all cases it is important that the learner shows evidence of the project process, materials used, techniques that were considered, how the final artefact was created and reasons for decisions made. Learners can accomplish this by jotting down the creative process in a notated sketch book, for example.

The strongest artefact projects are those that start with a focused design brief that is broken down into manageable sized project objectives. It is important to choose an outcome that is 'doable' in 60 GLH.