Curriculum Statement - HPQ/EPQ

Our Intent:	
What is the vision (big picture) for your subject?	The vision for the Level 2 Higher Project Qualification (HPQ) and Level 3 Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is to empower students with the skills, confidence, and intellectual curiosity to take ownership of their learning through independent research and critical enquiry. These qualifications are designed to foster a love of learning beyond the classroom, enabling students to explore topics of personal interest, develop academic rigour, and gain transferable skills such as project planning, research methodology, analysis, and communication. Both HPQ and EPQ aim to prepare learners for the demands of further education, training, or employment by cultivating resilience, initiative, and the ability to think independently and reflectively. Through guided support and self-directed study, students are encouraged to become proactive, thoughtful contributors to academic and professional communities.
What are the key concepts that underpin your subject?	**Independent Learning** – Developing autonomy in selecting, researching, and managing a project from conception to completion. **Critical Thinking** – Evaluating sources, forming balanced arguments, questioning assumptions, and making informed judgments. **Research Skills** – Identifying credible sources, using appropriate methodologies, referencing correctly, and synthesizing information effectively. **Project Management** – Planning, organizing, and meeting deadlines; monitoring progress; and adapting to challenges along the way. **Reflection and Evaluation** – Engaging in self-assessment, learning from feedback, and understanding the strengths and limitations of one's work and process. **Communication** – Presenting ideas clearly and confidently, both in written and spoken formats, to a range of audiences.
Which key themes are repeated over time?	**Personal Ownership and Choice** – Students consistently revisit the theme of autonomy, from choosing their topic to making decisions about research direction and presentation formats. **Inquiry and Curiosity** – A sustained emphasis on questioning, investigating, and exploring topics of genuine interest encourages deep engagement throughout the project. **Process Over Product** – While the final outcome is important, there is repeated focus on the learning journey, including planning, reflection, and problem-solving at each stage. **Evaluation and Reflection –** Self-evaluation is embedded at every phase, requiring learners to reflect on progress, adapt strategies, and critically assess their work and decisions. **Evidence-Based Thinking** – The use of research to support arguments, justify decisions, and build credibility is a recurring theme, highlighting academic integrity and rigour. **Skill Development and Transferability** – The continual development of transferable skills—such as time management, critical analysis, and communication—is emphasized as students refine and apply these throughout their project work.
What knowledge and skills will students have at the end of each key stage?	KS3: Creator Space - By the end of Key Stage 3, students will have developed a strong creator mindset, confidently collaborating to apply creative problem-solving across STEAM subjects—science, technology, engineering, arts, and maths. They will have gained hands-on experience working on interdisciplinary projects that nurture innovation and curiosity, while building essential power skills including teamwork, communication, and critical thinking.
	KS4: By the end of Key Stage 4, students will have developed foundational skills in independent learning, including basic project planning, time management, and introductory research techniques. They will be able to select a topic of interest, formulate a simple research question, gather and organize information from a range of sources, and present their findings in a structured format. Students will also gain early experience in evaluating their own learning process through reflection and will build confidence in communicating their ideas to an audience.
	KS5: By the end of Key Stage 5, students will demonstrate advanced research and project management skills, including critical analysis of sources, detailed project planning, and sophisticated written and verbal communication. They will be able to construct and sustain a reasoned argument, apply appropriate research methodologies, and present their findings clearly and persuasively. Students will also show mature self-reflection, evaluating both the strengths and limitations of their project and their personal development as learners. These skills prepare them effectively for higher education, apprenticeships, or professional environments.
Does your curriculum intent match or exceed the breadth of the National Curriculum/Subject specification?	The curriculum intent for both the Level 2 HPQ and Level 3 EPQ meets and exceeds the breadth of the subject specifications. While it aligns with the core requirements set out by the awarding bodies—such as independent research, project planning, and evaluation—it goes further by placing a strong emphasis on personal growth, intellectual curiosity, and the development of transferable skills. The curriculum encourages students to pursue topics that are personally meaningful and academically challenging, fostering a deeper engagement with learning than traditional subject-based study often allows. It also promotes cross-curricular thinking, academic rigour, and real-world application, thereby exceeding the basic framework through enriched opportunities for independence, creativity, and critical inquiry.
How do you ensure that learning is sequenced effectively over time in your subject?	Learning in the HPQ and EPQ is sequenced carefully and deliberately to support students' progression from guided exploration to independent mastery. The curriculum is structured around the key stages of the project lifecycle—planning, research, development, presentation, and evaluation—with each phase building on the skills and understanding developed in the previous one. Early sessions focus on foundational skills such as topic selection, question formulation, and time management. These are followed by more complex tasks, including source evaluation, data analysis, and academic referencing. Later stages emphasize synthesis of ideas, producing a coherent final product, and reflective evaluation. This clear progression allows students to develop confidence and competence gradually, with frequent opportunities to revisit, apply, and deepen their skills. Formative feedback is embedded throughout to guide development and ensure readiness for each successive stage.
How have you decided what knowledge and skills you want students to learn in your subject?	**Qualification Criteria** – We align with the assessment objectives set by exam boards, ensuring students develop the core skills of project planning, independent research, analysis, presentation, and evaluation. **Student Readiness and Progression** – The curriculum is designed to support a clear developmental journey from foundational to advanced skills, ensuring students are equipped to handle increasing levels of independence and academic rigour. **Skills for the Future** – Emphasis is placed on transferable skills such as critical thinking, self-management, effective communication, and resilience, which are highly valued in higher education and the workplace. **Student Voice and Engagement** – Because students select their own topics, the curriculum prioritizes skills that enable autonomy and inquiry. This approach builds motivation, deepens learning, and fosters ownership. **Cross-Curricular Relevance** – The chosen skills and knowledge are applicable across a wide range of academic and vocational subjects, allowing students to make meaningful links with other areas of learning.
How do you plan to cater for cultural capital e.g. trips, visits, enrichment, careers, applied learning, real word application & power skills development?	**Applied Learning and Real-World Connections** – Students select projects linked to current issues or future goals, deepening their understanding of real-world applications. **Careers and Enrichment Opportunities** – Support includes aligning projects with career paths, plus access to guest speakers, visits, and cultural experiences to broaden perspectives. **Power Skills and Communication** – Students develop leadership, independent learning, and presentation skills, culminating in formal presentations that build confidence for future challenges.
What are your main instruments of the curriculum used to implement, deliver, and assess your curriculum effectively? (Materials should privilege thinking over task completion - memory is the residue of thought)	**Structured Planning and Critical Reflection** – Tools like project proposal forms, planning logs, research diaries, and reflective logs guide students to think deeply about their project purpose, progress, and learning journey, fostering thoughtful decision-making and metacognition. **Targeted Skills Development and Mentoring** – Guided workshops develop core academic and critical thinking skills, while regular one-to-one mentoring encourages reflection, justification of methods, and ongoing intellectual engagement. **Formative Feedback and Rigorous Assessment** – Milestone reviews and detailed feedback promote analysis and refinement throughout the process, with assessment criteria focused on planning, evaluation, and reasoning rather than just the final product.
How are you ensuring that each teacher has the requisite subject knowledge to teach effectively?	**Accredited Training and Internal Support** – All staff complete exam board training and receive structured internal induction, including mentoring and access to exemplars, to ensure a strong understanding of assessment criteria and consistent delivery. **Focus on Teaching Core Skills** – Professional development targets research methods, critical thinking, academic writing, and reflective practice, equipping teachers to support a wide range of student projects regardless of their subject background. **Collaborative Moderation and Continuous Improvement** – Regular standardisation meetings, peer review, and reflective practice help refine teacher expertise, ensure assessment consistency, and promote ongoing professional growth.
Our Implementation:	
What will we see when we drop into your subject lessons and why?	When you drop into our HPQ/EPQ subject lessons, you'll see students engaged in independent, inquiry-led learning - planning, researching, and presenting projects on topics they are passionate about. These sessions foster critical thinking, academic writing, and project management skills, equipping students with the tools they need for higher education and beyond.
How do you adapt or tailor your curriculum to meet the needs of students with different starting points (KS2 data)?	In the HPQ/EPQ curriculum, we tailor our approach by offering flexible guidance that meets each student at their individual starting point. We support less confident learners with structured frameworks, regular check-ins, and scaffolded resources, while encouraging more advanced students to take greater ownership and pursue ambitious, self-directed research. This personalised approach ensures all students develop the skills and confidence to succeed, regardless of their starting point.
How do you stretch students who are high prior attainment?	For students with high prior attainment, we stretch and challenge them by encouraging ambitious, complex project choices that demand critical analysis, synthesis of diverse sources, and original thinking. We guide them towards engaging with academic literature, developing nuanced arguments, and using advanced research methodologies. These students are also supported in refining their academic writing style and presentation skills, preparing them for university-level work and competitive post-16 pathways.
How do you support and scaffold (visual, verbal & written) for students who are SEND?	To support students with SEND in the HPQ/EPQ, we provide tailored scaffolding across visual, verbal, and written formats. Visually, we use structured templates, timelines, and graphic organisers to help with planning and sequencing. Verbally, we offer regular 1:1 discussions, check-ins, and the use of simplified language to clarify expectations. In written support, we provide sentence starters, exemplars, and step-by-step guides. All support is adapted to individual needs, ensuring students can access and succeed in the project while building independence and confidence over time.
How do you support students who are disadvantaged?	We support disadvantaged students in the HPQ/EPQ by removing barriers to access and ensuring equity of opportunity. This includes providing additional time with supervisors, access to technology and resources, and structured support sessions to build research and writing skills. We also help students select meaningful project topics that connect with their interests and aspirations, boosting engagement and motivation. Our approach focuses on building confidence, academic resilience, and transferable skills to support long-term success.
Our Impact:	
How are you monitoring implementation in your subject area?	We monitor implementation in the HPQ/EPQ through regular supervisor meetings, progress tracking against project milestones, and structured review points such as proposal approvals, mid-point reviews, and draft submissions. Supervisors use checklists and reflective journals to assess engagement, research quality, and skill development. Additionally, internal moderation and student voice feedback ensure consistency, identify areas for improvement, and maintain high standards across all projects.
How do you check the rigour in planning and resourcing in your subject area?	We check the rigour in planning and resourcing in the HPQ/EPQ through a structured proposal and approval process, where students must clearly outline their research question, aims, methodology, and key sources. Supervisors review and challenge project plans to ensure they are focused, feasible, and sufficiently demanding. Throughout the process, we encourage students to use a wide range of credible sources, including academic texts and primary data where appropriate. Regular check-ins and milestone reviews help ensure that students maintain high standards of academic rigour and critical engagement.
How do you use assessment in your subject area?	Assessment in the HPQ/EPQ is used both formatively and summatively to support student progress and ensure high standards. Formative assessment takes place through regular supervisor feedback on planning, research logs, and drafts, helping students refine their thinking and develop key skills over time. Summative assessment follows the official criteria—managing a project, using resources, developing and realising, and reviewing the process—ensuring a fair, evidence-based judgment of each student's work. We also use peer assessment and self-reflection to build students' evaluative skills and ownership of learning.
How do assessments identify gaps in students' knowledge and their ability to apply that knowledge fluently and accurately?	Assessments in the HPQ/EPQ identify gaps in students' knowledge and their ability to apply it by focusing on both the process and the final product. Through regular formative assessments—such as proposal reviews, research logs, and draft evaluations—supervisors can pinpoint where students struggle with key skills like critical analysis, referencing, or structuring arguments. Feedback targets these areas, allowing for timely intervention and skill development. The summative assessment criteria also reveal whether students can apply their knowledge fluently and accurately in a sustained, independent piece of work, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement in their academic thinking.
How is knowledge remembered in your subject?	In the HPQ/EPQ, knowledge is remembered through regular reflection, application, and revisiting of key concepts over time. Students consolidate learning by applying research methods, synthesising information, and evaluating sources in a real-world context. The project logbook supports memory by encouraging students to document their thinking, decisions, and progress. Regular discussions with supervisors, milestone reviews, and peer feedback further reinforce understanding. Because students choose topics they are genuinely interested in, engagement is high, which enhances long-term retention and deeper learning.

BUDMOUTH ACADEMY WEYMOUTH

Curriculum Overview: HPQ/EPQ

		Autumn Term 1	Autumn Term 2	Spring Term 1	Spring Term 2	Summer Term 1	Summer Term 2
Level 2 HPQ	Year 10	**Power Skills** Session 1: HPQ Introduction Session 2: Communication Session 3: Collaboration Session 4: Critical Thinking & Problem Solving Session 5: Character Session 6: Creativity Session 7: Future Ready Mock Project	**Futures & Preparation for Work** (to end of November) Futures & Preparation for Work (to end of November) Session 1: What Makes a Good CV? Session 2: Tailoring your CV Session 3: UniFrog CV Session 4: WEX Preparation Session 5: Mock Interview Preparation **HPQ Case Study Launch and Applications** (start to end of September)	**HPQ Case Studies:** Event Management Funding & Finance Green Careers & Sustainability Social Justice & Community Sport & Wellbeing	**HPQ Project Completion** Session 1: What is the HPQ and what do I need to do to succeed? Session 2: What does a HPQ Project Look Like? Session 3: What makes a good research methodology and project title when working collaboratively? Session 4: What do we need to know about the paperwork and templates to succeed in our project? Session 5: Completing your Project Proposal Form Session 6: Completing your Project Introduction		
	Year 11	**HPQ Project:** Session 7: Completing your Research Session 8: Completing your Discussion Session 9: Completing your Conclusion/Evaluations Session 10: Completing your Bibliography		**Public Examination Preparation**			
Level 3 EPQ	Year 12	**Extended Project Qualification Initial Idea Generation and Proposal Development** (A01, AO2) Mindmap Production Log Initial ideas research sheet	**Extended Project Qualification** **Plan, research, and intial carry out the project** **Decision on working title (A01, A02, A03)** **The Production Log**	**Independent Project Completion & Supervision**			