



PQ BACC STUDENT GUIDE

YEARS 10-11



MILLFIELD

DISCOVER BRILLIANCE

PEARSON PILOT PROGRAMME

Millfield is one of around 20 forward-thinking schools that are taking part in the PQ Bacc Qualification Pilot Programme with Pearson Edexcel.

We may provide information relating to the course and its progress to Pearson, however, any information relating to student work and experience will be anonymised and students will be notified. Given that this is a pilot programme, we reserve the right to adapt the information given in this booklet if necessary.



INTRODUCTION



WHY THIS COURSE?

This course responds to a growing consensus globally that students need a set of skills for the future that are not adequately developed by taking only knowledge-based exams at the end of Key Stage 4.

Instead, through project-based learning students acquire both in-depth knowledge and develop valuable skills which are considered fundamental for future study and future employment.

Students will develop the Essential Employment Skills (EES) which, in research conducted by the National Foundation of Educational Research (NFER), are projected to be in greatest demand in the labour market by 2035:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Creative thinking
- Problem solving and decision making
- Organising, planning and prioritising
- Information literacy

In the PQ Baccalaureate students learn by actively engaging in real-world projects that have personal resonance. Working both independently and collaboratively, they conduct detailed research into questions, problems, or challenges and use creative thinking and problem solving to find solutions.

Due to the course focus on creativity and collaboration, students often work across disciplines. Throughout the course, students develop the key project management skills of organisation, planning and prioritising. Students are taught to use digital tools and AI to produce high-quality outcomes.

Students improve their communication skills by discussing and refining their ideas based on feedback from peers, teachers and/or experts. They learn to write-up their research in a formal dissertation-style essay with footnotes and bibliography, but also communicate their findings in a viva voce-style presentation.

In addition, this course also rewards 'intangible assets' such as drive, passion, innovation, empathy, and resilience. These cannot be taught from a textbook, but must be learnt through experience.

Dr Beatrice Priest
Head of Academic Culture

MILLFIELD PROJECT QUALIFICATION BACCALAUREATE

INTRODUCTION

The PQ Bacc is a course about curiosity and enquiry. The aim of this course is for you to develop your own ideas, whether in an analytical or creative form, and turn them into a reality. You will have the opportunity to explore new areas that may not normally form part of the curriculum or to explore areas you have touched on in your studies in more depth. We have developed a course that allows you to have as much freedom and agency as possible within in a well-structured programme. You will benefit from the support and guidance of expert teachers and researchers.

WHAT IS IT?

You will produce 6 mini-projects (assignments) and two long projects known as Higher Project Qualifications (HPQs). Together these will form the Millfield Project Qualification Baccalaureate. At the end of the course, you will be awarded a full GCSE for completing the two HPQ projects. For each HPQ project, you can decide to produce either: a dissertation, an investigation, an artefact or a performance. You will be required to produce: either, one long essay (dissertation or investigation) and one creative project (artefact or performance); or two long essays.

WHAT WILL I LEARN?

Through completing the mini-projects you will learn and develop skills considered essential for the future. You will learn: project management skills, research skills, how to develop and realise a project, and how to evaluate your project. This will involve you doing primary and secondary research, analysing data, developing your thoughts, developing your writing and creative skills, as well as ensuring that your work is properly documented and referenced. You will then use these valuable skills to complete your longer HPQ projects.

You will also learn about wide range of topics of your choice, which will belong to the 6 main academic disciplines (Arts, Maths, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Humanities, Languages). When deciding on your topics, you will be encouraged to pursue your own personal interests and aspirations. However, there should be no overlap with the other courses you take for GCSE.

HOW WILL I BE ASSESSED?

The course follows the model of continuous assessment through assignments and coursework. You will be assessed on your mini projects in Autumn and Spring Terms of Year 10. You will then be assessed for each HPQ you complete: in Autumn Term of Year 11 for your first HPQ project; and then in Spring Term of Year 11 for your second HPQ project. Around 60% of your marks are for project management, research skills and evaluation; around 40% are for the project itself. This is a 'process' qualification, with more weighting given to the development of the skills than the final 'product' or outcome. There are no exams.



MILLFIELD PQ BACC COURSE STRUCTURE

PROJECTS

In Autumn and Spring Terms of Year 10 you will have four mini-projects to complete and in the Summer Term, the first long HPQ project. These assignments will equip you with the necessary planning, research, writing and reflection skills that you will need for undertaking your first full project.

KEY THEMES

You will have free choice of the topic for your assignments, however, they must related to one of the key themes: Disruptors, Innovations, Environments, Revolutions, Cultures, Global Issues and Environments.

ACADEMIC FIELDS

You will be able to pick which academic field your assignment relates to: Arts, Maths, Life Sciences, Physical Sciences, Humanities or Languages. We encourage you to pick different fields for your assignments, however, you can pick the same field(s), if you wish.



ASSIGNMENT FORM

Initially you will be instructed what form your Project will be: Dissertation, Artefact, Investigation, or Performance. However, as the course progresses, you will be given more freedom regarding the form of your product. We encourage you to be courageous and explore different forms. Remember, there are more marks available for the project management than the project itself.

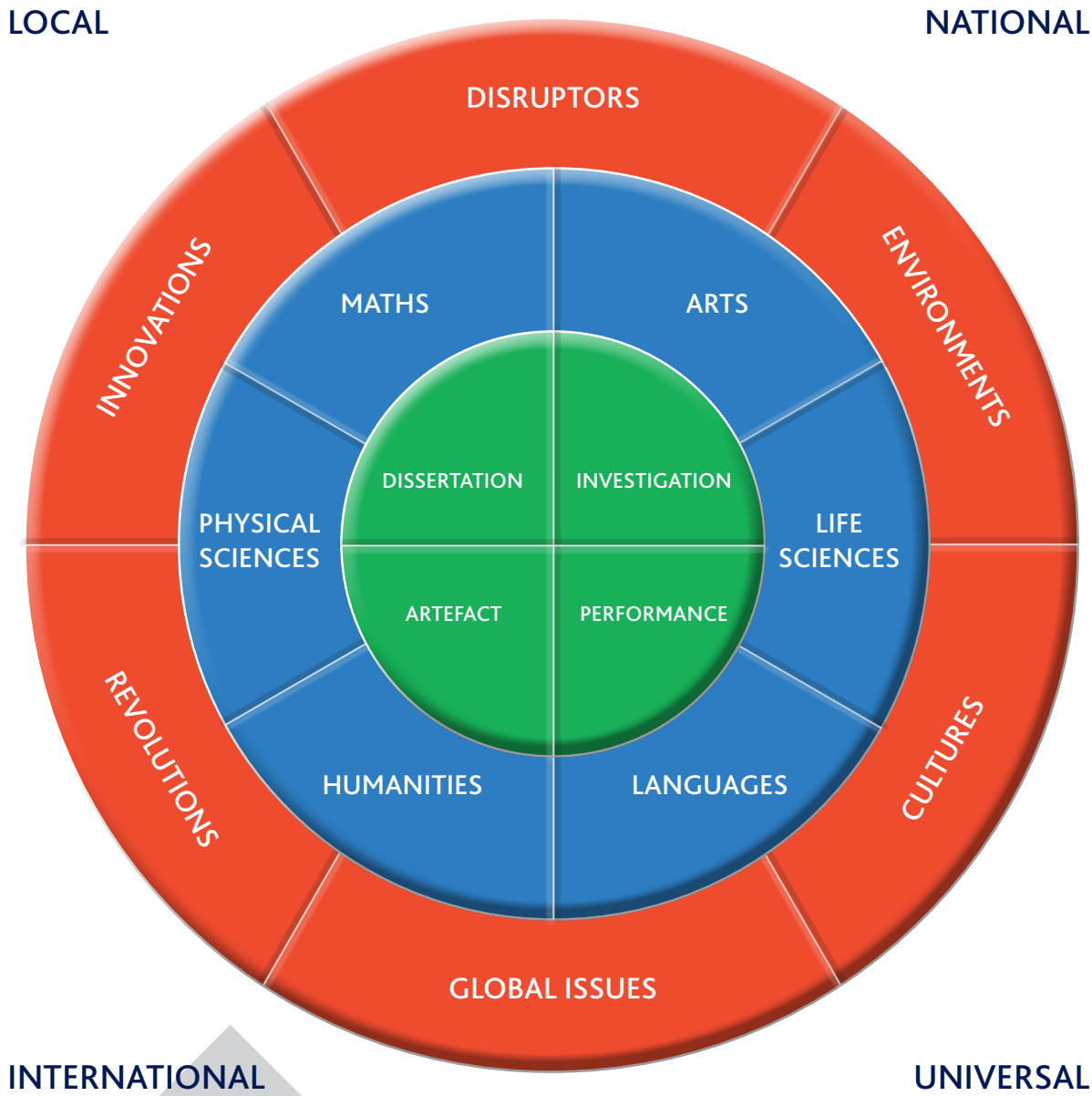
SCOPE OF REFERENCE

We would also like you to consider topics that have different scopes of reference: local, national, international and universal.

MILLFIELD PQ BACC

Completion of the 6 assignments is compulsory to gain the Millfield PQ Bac award.

COURSE THEMES & OUTCOMES



THEMES

DISRUPTORS

What is a disruptor? In this mini-project, students examine what it means to be a disruptor. What qualities and traits define someone who challenges the norm and drives change? We will explore examples of positive disruptors who have made an impact at local, national, and global levels. From scientific pioneers and social activists to inventors and artists, students will have the opportunity to research figures such as Leonardo da Vinci, Christopher Columbus, Nikola Tesla, and Rosa Parks to understand how positive disruptors have shaped our world today.

INNOVATIONS

What is an innovation? In this mini-project, we examine the difference between an invention and an innovation. We look at examples of innovations where a change has been introduced to improve an existing idea or object. The modification may enhance the efficiency or purpose of the creation, or tailor it to a different target audience. Students will research groundbreaking advancements in different fields from technology and medicine to sustainability. They will use problem-solving and creative skills to design their own innovation or 'artefact'. Past student projects have included redesigning a cane for the blind, improving the environmental efficiency of the boarding house, remodelling a water purification straw and creating an EpiPen patch.

ENVIRONMENTS

The environments investigation takes the Somerset Levels as its starting point. Students explore the local area on field trips and by conducting primary research. We will look at how flooding has changed the topography of the landscape and how human activity has both adapted to sought to combat the changing environment. We will begin by looking at some of Britain's earliest archaeological sites including the Sweet Track used by Mesolithic people from 3807 BC to traverse the marshes and the Iron Age Lake Villages 300BC-100AD built on the water. Passing by the myths and legends associated with the Avalon marshes, we will bring our study into the contemporary period looking at topics such as the evolution of the peat industry, the protection and conservation of birds and efforts to mitigate the threat of flooding posed by climate change. Students will gain a deeper understanding of the challenges facing our world in a local context.

REVOLUTIONS

What sparks a revolution? Who are its main actors? How do they change societies? In this mini-project, students will explore turning points in history through the lens of revolutions. We will examine political, social, cultural, industrial and technological revolutions, from prehistory to the events that have shaped the modern world. Students will create a performance based on the theme of revolution. Students could take as their inspiration key moments from starting from the Neolithic revolution, through the French and American Revolutions, the Industrial Revolution to the present digital age with AI.

CULTURES

What defines a culture? In this mini-project, students will explore the diverse elements that shape cultures around the world, from traditions and languages to art, music, and beliefs. We will examine how cultures evolve, influence one another, and adapt in an interconnected world. Through case studies on indigenous traditions, globalization, and cultural innovation, students will gain insight into the richness and complexity of human societies. Examples of past student projects include exploring cultural fusion in food, analysing the impact of social media on traditions, and creating exhibits celebrating diverse heritage.

GLOBAL ISSUES

What are the biggest challenges facing our world today? In this mini-project, students will explore pressing global issues such as climate change, poverty, human rights, and conflict. We will examine the causes and consequences of these issues, as well as the efforts being made to address them at local, national, and international levels. Through case studies and discussions, students will develop a deeper understanding of the interconnected nature of these challenges and explore potential solutions. Past student projects have included awareness campaigns on fast fashion, research on renewable energy solutions, and initiatives to support healthcare in developing nations.

YEAR 10 OVERVIEW

Autumn 1	Disruptors	Mini-project 1: Dissertation
Autumn 2	Innovations	Mini-project 2: Artefact
Spring 1	Environments	Mini-project 3: Investigation
Spring 2	Revolutions	Mini-project 4: Performance
Summer 1	Project 1	HPQ 1
Summer 2		
Holidays		
Deadline for HPQ 1 = September (Year 11)		

YEAR 11 OVERVIEW

Autumn 1	Global Issues	Mini-project 5: Free Choice
Autumn 2	Cultures	Mini-project 6: Free Choice
Spring 1	Project 2	HPQ 2
Spring 2		
Summer	External Competitions (TBC)	
Deadline for HPQ 2 = March (Year 11)		

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA FOR ASSIGNMENTS

ASSESSMENT OF ASSIGNMENTS

For each mini project, you will be assessed on each of the following skills:

- Manage (AO1)
- Use Resources (AO2)
- Develop and Realise (AO3)
- Review (AO4)

For each category, there is 1 mark available for agency/independence.

The completion of the 6 assignments contributes to the Millfield PQ Bacc qualification.

	Learning Outcome You will:	Assessment You will be able to:
AO1 Manage	Be able to choose, plan and manage a project	• Describe why you have chosen the project and skills and knowledge you want to improve. • Identify objectives for the project. • Plan activities and agree deadlines during the project. • Identify possible risks and how to overcome them. • Keep records of activities undertaken, using the original project plan.
AO2 Resources	Be able to research information and apply it to a project	• Research information from a range of sources and different types of source. • Evaluate the reliability of sources. • Keep records of the relevant information.
AO3 Develop and Realise	Be able to select and apply skills to complete a project	• Use a range of skills, including appropriate technologies, working with others and problem solving to complete a project. • Meet project objectives
AO4 Review	Be able to review a project and own performance, and analyse the project outcomes	• Analyse results. • Draw own conclusions. • Review the results of the project. • Review their own performance. • Share the review and evaluation of learning and performance.

STUDENT TESTIMONIALS

'I love having the freedom to research whatever you want and then being able to do it in groups. I've improved my researching skills, as well as my writing skills such as knowing how to set it out more formally.'

- Stephanie D.



'The best thing about PQ Bacc? Research Trips, and group work! It's fun to engage with other people and discuss ideas.'

- Alex K.

'I thought that there would be more restriction on the projects- it's a great surprise it's so open. The course structure works well, we are taught skills and then we use those skills independently. We get lots of notes on drafts and then we work at improving them. The level of work is manageable.'

- Charlie M.

'I've enjoyed the artefact project most so far because it's hands on. It allows me to visualise what I want to show to people.'

- Frederick H.



'I have learnt a lot about time-management and how to write a long essay'.

- Jack G.

'I'm really happy I chose the course. I've developed an interest in Architecture and Classics that I didn't have before. It's very interesting and great preparation for A level and university.'

- Cosima H.

'My advice? Do a topic you are passionate about!'

- Toby W.

PAST PROJECT TOPICS

DISRUPTORS

Leonardo da Vinci: From Brush strokes to Battlements

Rosa Parks V Racism: What was Rosa Parks' role in the Montgomery bus boycott?

INNOVATIONS

Designing an Eco Boarding House.

Re-designing a stick for the blind.

REVOLUTIONS

Man vs Machine: The ultimate showdown.

Marie Antoinette and the French revolution.

CULTURES

How have modern novels given women a stronger presence in Greek mythology?

ENVIRONMENTS

What will the effect of climate change be on the flooding of the Somerset Levels?

What impact does the peat extraction industry have on the Somerset Levels, and the world?

GLOBAL ISSUES

How best can we tackle climate change?

Can we aim to eliminate poverty?



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Millfield
Street, Somerset
BA16 0YD
+44 (0) 1458 442291
millfieldschool.com