What is a learning project and what is its purpose?

A learning project is an independent program of learning that gives a learner the flexibility to pursue interests and enrich their learning outside of the school.

A learning project allows the learner to design and undertake a unique short program of learning that is separate from any established school, training or other educational program. Through a self-selected context—whether that be in the community, self-directed or workplace—a learner demonstrates a particular set of employability and lifelong learning skills. This skill set are defined on the following page.

Why would I complete a learning project?

Undertaking a learning project enables you to gain recognition for non-school learning. It allows the learner to choose the learning activity and experience to pursue further learning in an area of interest or skill that is not provided in the school curriculum.

A learning project is recognised as enrichment learning for the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE). Enrichment means more highly developed knowledge and skills. On the successful completion of a learning project, one credit contributes towards the learner’s QCE.

Where do I undertake a learning project?

A learning project can be undertaken in one of the following contexts.

Community learning project

To undertake a community learning project you need to be a member or volunteer of the community group that will provide the context for your project. Community groups include clubs, churches, associations and service organisations.

Self-directed learning project

A self-directed learning project has no specific location, although your main learning provider (e.g. school) would most likely be your base. Your study could be inspired by a challenging interest or hobby, or a topic from a school subject that you want to explore in more detail.

Workplace learning project

To undertake a workplace and community project, you will need to be employed in the workplace that will provide the context for your project.

How much time will it take?

A learning project will take between 60 and 80 hours, which includes the initial 20 hours of planning, the implementation, completing the self-assessment response and the final collation of evidence for approval.
What are the employability and lifelong learning skills and what do they mean?

These skills are outlined below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Employability and lifelong learning skills</th>
<th>Community</th>
<th>Self-directed</th>
<th>Workplace</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capacity to work and learn independently</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✗</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Initiative and enterprise</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and organising</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Self-management</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Teamwork</td>
<td>✓</td>
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<tr>
<td>Technology</td>
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When planning your project, ensure it will provide you with the opportunity to show these skills. If you don’t think that they can be demonstrated, adjust your project so that it will allow you to cover all the skills for the particular context of your learning project. As you progress through your project, record in your learning log evidence of these skills and how you demonstrated them.
Can I get someone to help me?

Yes.

You can obtain help from a mentor and a sponsor and if your project is community or workplace based your employer or community representative can take on one of these roles. A mentor is a person who assists, supports, advises and encourages you and acts as a ‘critical friend’ throughout your learning project.

What is a sponsor?

A sponsor is a recognised learning provider such as the school, learning or youth support agency or appropriate learning or training provider. The role of the sponsor may be found in the guide, *Learning projects: Guide for the sponsor* found on the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) website at [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3182.html](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3182.html).

What is a mentor?

A mentor provides assistance, support advice and encouragement to the learner throughout the learning project.

Who can be a mentor?

A mentor:

- can be a teacher, school guidance officer, school officer, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander education worker, community representative, nominee of the employer in the workplace, community education counsellor, youth worker or a relative
- does not need to be an expert in a particular field, but must be prepared to become familiar with the nature of the learning project
- must be at least 18 years of age and hold a valid blue card (Commission for Children and Young People and Child Guardian), as the nature of the project involves working with minors. Teachers, adults with parental responsibilities for the applicant, the employer and fellow workers (in the workplace context) are exempt from this requirement.
- The role of the mentor may be found in the guide, *Learning projects: Guide for the mentor* found on the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority (QCAA) website at [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3182.html](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3182.html).

What is the role of the employer and community organisation?

The role of the employer, community organisation or school representative may be found in the guide, *Learning projects: Guide for the employer, community or school representative* found on the QCAA website at [www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3182.html](http://www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/3182.html).
Who is a QCE delegate and what do they do?

A delegate is a trained QCAA employee who appraises your proposal and validates the evidence of learning.

What is a planning log?

The planning log is a section of the learning project proposal form. It is a record of your project planning. It is completed and submitted when you have investigated your proposed project, had discussions with your sponsor and mentor and thought about, organised and finalised your planning in preparation for beginning your project. 20 hours of the total 60–80 project hours must be spent planning and this is detailed in the planning log on your application form.

Do I need evidence of my learning for the project?

Yes.

Your evidence is the record of your learning from the project and in particular, the demonstrated employability and lifelong learning skills throughout the project.

Evidence is a record of:

- the accomplishments across the project
- how you demonstrated the employability and lifelong learning skills.

All evidence is submitted along with all required forms at the completion of the learning project.

Where is this evidence recorded?

Your evidence is recorded in Part B of the Evidence of learning form. Even though this form is text-based, you can capture and present your learning log in a range of ways. However the learning log evidence is documented; it must be available and accessible to the sponsor and the QCAA for validation.

How do I collect my evidence?

The learning log can be recorded in one or a range of ways and forms. It could be:

- in electronic form
- hand-written
- shown by annotated images
- as an audio recording of your explanations.

Evidence in the learning log could be documented, collected or recorded through a range of media. As an example, some of the evidence could be photographs that record the progress of a project, working partners or places, the environment or surroundings of the workplace or project (before and after a project that changed the environment) or any travels due to the project.

Photos can be put into a journal with comments or descriptions to explain each photo including details of time, place and why it is included. This evidence is about how your learning demonstrated the lifelong and employability skills.
What is a self-assessment response and when do I do it?

A self-assessment response is your reflection on what you have learned during the project with particular reference to the employability and lifelong learning skills. The self-assessment response is the final piece of evidence that you complete at the completion of your project and is submitted with the other required evidence.

You can record your self-assessment in electronic, handwritten or audio format. There are a set of questions relating to each of the employability and lifelong learning skills on the QCAA website. These may be helpful when completing this response. Your mentor may help you to complete this part of the project.

Where can I go to find the forms for a learning project?

The forms and guides are available on the QCAA website at:


Who can I contact to ask any questions?

As well as your sponsor and mentor, you can contact the QCAA by email: learningprojects@qcaa.qld.edu.au or phone: (07) 3864 0375.