

Level 3 Extended Project (9990) Candidate record form, production log and assessment record

| | |
|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Centre number | Centre name |
| 12430 | Featherstone High School |
| Candidate's full name | Candidate number |
| Candidate 1 | 0 |

Notice to candidate The work you submit for assessment must be your own. If you copy from someone else or allow another candidate to copy from you, or if you cheat in any other way, you may be disqualified.

To be completed by the candidate

1. Have you received any help or information from anyone other than your teacher(s) in the production of this work?

Yes No

2. If you have answered yes, give details below and on a separate sheet if necessary.

3. Any books, leaflets or other materials (eg DVDs, software packages, Internet information) used to help you complete this work and not clearly acknowledged in the work itself must be listed below. Presenting materials copied from books or other sources without acknowledgement will be regarded as deliberate deception.

Candidate declaration I have read and understood the above and can confirm that I have produced the attached work without assistance other than that which is acceptable under the scheme of assessment.

As part of AQA's commitment to assist students, AQA may make your coursework available on a strictly anonymous basis to teachers, examining staff and students in paper form or electronically, through the Internet or other means, for the purpose of indicating a typical mark or for other educational purposes. In the unlikely event that your coursework is made available for the purposes stated above, you may object to this at any time and we will remove the work on reasonable notice. If you have any concerns, please contact AQA.

| | |
|---------------------|------------|
| Candidate signature | Date _____ |
|---------------------|------------|

Supervisor declaration I confirm that the candidate's work was conducted under the conditions laid out by the specification. I have authenticated the candidate's work and am satisfied that to the best of my knowledge the work produced is solely that of the candidate.

| | |
|----------------------|------------|
| Supervisor signature | Date _____ |
|----------------------|------------|

This form should be attached to the candidate's work and retained at the centre or sent to the moderator as required

Record of marks

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the supervisor

Marks must be awarded in accordance with the instructions and criteria in section 2.5.2 of the specification.

Summary information to show how the marks have been awarded should be given in the spaces below in addition to comments in other pages of this document and any supporting information in the form of annotations on the candidate's work.

| Skill area | Maximum mark | Mark awarded | Supervisor's supporting statement |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--|
| A01 Manage | 10 | 9 | He shows clear and concise planning there is evidence of regularly reviewing his progress. The objectives set at the start were refined after some initial research, the final aim and project title was sufficient for him to conduct appropriate search and successfully complete his project. His plan for his final project matches the final project, apart from in one area where he has included a section on clinical trails procedure, but from reading his project this section was essential to support the later discussion on clinical trials. |
| A02 Use resources | 10 | 9 | He has used a wide range of resources, including books, scientific journals, documentaries and interviews. His project shows that he has used the information effectively to reach his objective. He has analysed the effectiveness of clinical trials and used them to support different theories on the placebo effect. I feel that he could have used more resources to explore what pain is, as he found this an abstract area, and a more in depth study of this could have provided him with more insight. He has discussed the effectiveness of his resources. |
| A03 Develop and realise | 20 | 18 | Appropriate data has been collected from a wide range of resources and it has been analysed to extract the supporting information. He has successfully answered his objective and the project fulfils the aims and answers the set question. The candidate clearly tracks and records and changes and progress that he has made throughout the project, and gives reasons for his changes. The final project is very clearly laid out according to the plan shown in the mid project review. It is very well structured, and successfully comes to a well considered conclusion. |
| A04 Review | 10 | 8 | He has reviewed his projects looking at both strengths and weaknesses. He has highlighted the fact that his initial idea was carried through as he chose well, and managed to narrow down effectively. I do feel that he could have evaluated the skills that he gained from the project more and discussed how these evolved. |
| | Total | 50 | 45 |

Concluding comments

The candidate has demonstrated excellent planning and self management skills to successfully complete his project, It fully meets his aims, and he has clearly monitored his progress throughout and adapted his plan accordingly. The project is very well written and provides a very interesting insight into the use of placebos for the treatment of pain.

Outline details of taught skills (specification 2.3 The Taught element of the Extended Project qualification) Record here details of relevant skills taught in a class/group and details of relevant skills taught individually to this candidate as described in the specification. Continue on a separate sheet if necessary.

Supervisor declaration I confirm that no work assessed for the award of the marks above is also to be submitted, or has been submitted, for any other accredited qualification(s).

Supervisor signature

Date

Contents

Candidate's full name

Candidate 1

Candidate number

0

To be completed by the candidate

Extended Project working title

Planned form of project

Either written report

Or

and accompanying written report

This document consists of the pages listed below. Additional journal material, planning evidence, research evidence, presentation evidence and review material may be added.

| Page | Title | Date completed |
|---------|--|----------------|
| 1 | Candidate declaration | |
| 2 | Record of marks | |
| 3 | Contents | |
| 4 | Record of initial planning | |
| 5 - 7 | Project proposal and approval (Parts A, B and C) | |
| 8 | Planning review | |
| 9 | Mid-project review | |
| 10 | End-of-project review | |
| 11 | Summary | |
| 12 - 13 | Presentation record (Parts A and B) | |
| 14 | Reflection | |

Is this extended project part of a group project?

No

Yes

If 'Yes', give brief details

Extended Project final title

Record of initial planning

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the candidate. This page records initial meeting(s) with your supervisor to agree your project proposal.

Your first idea for topic/title

To what extent is the placebo effect able to cure illness compared to medicine and how?

Your first ideas for research and development of your project

DEVELOPMENT OF PROJECT

1) After having heard of the law of attraction, and the power of positive thoughts, I looked into the medical side of the healing power of the mind which was the placebo effect. Books such as "The Secret" fired up my interest in the topic, with testimonials from people (including doctors) who had witnessed illnesses that had been cured by maintaining positive thoughts. I wasn't sure how much stock you could put into that, so I decided to research further on the internet to find some background on the subject, especially in the areas that specified what the placebos could cure and more importantly, how?

2) Upon reading a fairly reliable article, (written by skeptics), I discovered the placebo effect is a psychological phenomenon, which cannot directly improve physical conditions, but can cause symptoms to appear less severe. Also from a skeptic blog, I read that the definition of the placebo effect is surrounded by many misconceptions, however it is in fact defined during clinical trials as, "any and all effects to a treatment, minus the physiological effects of the treatment itself." This is to say the placebo effect is any physical effects caused by believing in the treatment and not including the chemical effects of a drug on the body. This bit of research gives me a working definition of the placebo effect to use when carrying out further research and throughout the project.

IDEAS FOR RESEARCH

Regarding where I want to take the project from here, I would like to explore many areas of the placebo effect.

Objectives I would like to achieve throughout the project:

- Types of conditions the placebo effect can have an effect on
- How it works in conjunction with medicine (as a side effect of medication)
- What the body does in response to psychological belief in treatment
- Whether it is an effective method of treatment for patients in terms of curing illness and ethics surrounding the deception used.
- If it was viable/ethical, conduct my own experiment on the psychological effects placebos can induce compared to medicine.

Your supervisor's main comments and advice

1) Look into ethics of experiments I can conduct in school - (talk to Ms Maclean). For example, if I was looking into a placebo response from students with depression or stress, it may not be fair to disclose this kind of information, compared to if they were dealing with a cold. Also, it is unlikely that I will be able to test placebos against medicinal drugs at school, so i could consider testing placebos against no treatment and just monitor how the test subjects are doing.

2) Research into a particular area of the placebo effect I want to look at - e.g. medicinal.

3) Where to go to find a range of information to help narrow down my project to a specific area? -Use the library, browse on facebook forums, documentaries.

4) Look at clinical trials of medicines against placebos, if possible, talk to someone involved in this.

Changes, clarifications or additions you have made as a result of your discussion with your supervisor

After the discussion with my supervisor and my initial research, I realised my project title was too broad and it would be wise to research a specific placebo response and how effective it is compared to medicine as a form of treatment. The placebo response I chose to look at was one which combats the symptom of pain, as there was a great depth of information available, as this was a common study. This led to a new set of aims based on the initial objectives I wished to achieve throughout the project as mentioned before. Also I had to adapt my project title.

My new set of aims for the project are:

- To conclude whether the use of placebos for pain management is ethical
- To outline what a placebo is and the response/effect it causes
- To find how the body responds to placebos and affects pain
- To conclude whether placebos are an effective method of treatment for pain
- To conduct an experiment to assess the effectiveness of placebos on pain thresholds

My new project title will be:

To what extent are placebos an effective method of treatment for pain?

Supervisor signature

Date

Project proposal part A

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the candidate

Title of the Extended Project

Present the topic to be researched in the form of a short statement/question/hypothesis with clear focus.

To what extent are placebos an effective treatment for pain.

Provide a brief outline, based upon page 4 of this document, of

- the researched or activity/task to be carried out and sources to be consulted

-Research ethical concerns of using placebos for pain and evaluate pros and cons that contribute to its effectiveness as a treatment. (Using the "Society of Pain Management Nursing's" stance as a basis. They are an organisation who has produced an ethical report, meaning their views would have been considered and assessed by many people before being put in place as policies. These views can therefore be given a great deal of consideration.) Also I could consider some opinions on whether placebo analgesia treatment should be used by sufferers and non-sufferers of pain as it is very subjective.

-Look for scientific evidence to explain how the placebo effect works to reduce pain and the brain's response to placebos. (Using internet resources as a starting point, such as Wikipedia, leading onto looking at some journals through the website Pubmed, which is a database of published medical research articles. The reliability of such articles can be determined by whether they have been peer-assessed and by how many times they have been cited as evidence, however I will have to be wary to double check information found on Wikipedia).

-Perhaps conduct a simple experiment to test change in pain thresholds with/without placebo. Analyse data to get an idea of how well it works. Ethics and school policies have to be considered, so it is best to run this by head of sixth form.

-Perhaps talk to someone involved in clinical trials of pain medication to see the effectiveness of placebos against medication. Companies that I could approach include GlaxoSmithKline.

- the courses of study or area(s) of personal interest to which the topic relates

The topic relates to the study of Psychology mainly, but perhaps also Biology and Chemistry as you look further into the mechanisms of the placebo effect. This means it is not something I would be able to explore through my chosen set of subjects, however it does supplement and tie in with my academic interests. It also relates to my personal interest in the power of the mind, but in a healing context.

- your proposed action

- Gather all my research on placebos triggering biological effects and ethics on using placebos when people are in pain using the internet, articles, forums, primary research and any relevant documentaries.

- Check whether an experiment is viable for me to conduct. If not, conduct secondary research to find similar proof of the effectiveness of placebos on pain.

- Arrange an interview/talk with somebody involved in clinical trials.

Provide details of the courses that you are currently studying

| Qualification Type | Subject |
|--|--|
| <i>e.g. GCE AS/A, Applied GCE AS/A, Diploma L3, VRQ, Modern Apprenticeship, BTEC</i> | <i>e.g. Mathematics, English, Health, Spanish, ICT</i> |
| GCE AS/A | Biology |
| GCE AS/A | Chemistry |
| GCE AS/A | Maths |
| GCE AS/A | Economics |

| | |
|--|--|
| | |
|--|--|

Candidate declaration I certify that I have read and understood AQA's Regulations relating to unfair practice as set out in the notice to candidates below.

Notice to candidate You must not take part in any unfair practice in the preparation of project work required for assessment and you must understand that to present material copied directly from book or any other sources without acknowledgment will be regarded as deliberate deception. If you use or attempt to use any unfair practice you will be reported to AQA. If AQA is satisfied that you have committed an offence you may be disqualified from all subjects.

Candidate signature

Date _____

Project proposal part B

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

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To be completed by the supervisor. Please comment below on the validity and feasibility of the proposal (project proposal Part A) as an Extended Project (specification 2.4).

| | Supervisor's comments |
|---|---|
| Comment on the clarity and focus of the title chosen | Title has a clear focus and is suitable, it allows a good deal of research but it is focused enough to produce a good conclusion. |
| Indicate the relation to, and development/extension outside of, the main course(s) of study or interest (specification 1.2) | The candidate does not study Psychology, so this project will not overlap. He will study some parts of the brain in A2 Biology, but it will allow him to extend and develop his knowledge. |
| Comment on the suitability of the proposed initial sources and research base | Good start points, with an appreciation for the broad start in order to focus more at a later date, after he has gathered more information. He has referenced specific books and articles. The use of PubMed will allow him to access up to date and peer reviewed articles. He will need to find out very early on if an experiment is viable, and seek consent from participants. |
| Confirm that the project is feasible in the proposed timescale and/or indicate any potential difficulties | The project is feasible and he will be able to complete the essay in the given time, he will need to contact any primary people for primary information early on to ensure he can meet with them. |
| Outline the scope to produce a project that meets the assessment objectives (specification 2.5.3) | The project will meet the criteria, as a wide range of skills will be used, along with multiple resources allowing him to meet the assessment objectives |
| Indicate proposed form and date of the presentation | Essay, due October 2012 |

Indicate the expected format of the project product that will be submitted for assessment

- Long written report
 Live performance (e.g. music, drama, theatre, substantial presentation) plus written report
 Electronic format (e.g. CD, DVD, video, program) plus written report
 Artefact (e.g. prototype, model, artwork) plus written report

Is the project a contribution to a group exercise? YES NO

If Yes, confirm that there is a defined individual contribution by the candidate (specification 2.5.1 **Group Work**) YES NO

List other group members below.

Candidate No. Candidate Name

Candidate No. Candidate Name

Candidate No. Candidate Name

Supervisor signature

Date

Project approval part C

Candidate's full name

Candidate 1

Candidate number

0

Supervisor's full name

Robyn Seward

To be completed by the centre coordinator

Comment below on the feasibility and acceptability of the proposal (project proposal parts A & B) as an Extended Project (specification 1.4)

Centre coordinator's comments

Providing the candidate is aware of the ethical issues with investigating this first hand this promises to be an exciting project. The candidate has also made it clear that he will consider the reliability of the sources he is examining, which again is an important element of maintaining credibility in what he is writing and coming to a justifiable conclusion.

Approved



Approved subject to the implementation of the centre coordinator's recommendations



Resubmission required



Coordinator's full name

Amy MacLean

Coordinator signature

Date

09-07-12

Planning review

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the candidate. This page records your outline plan at the start of your work.

Outline the next steps in your planned research/initial development

Research - At this stage of the project, I have followed up the possibilities of conducting an experiment to test a placebo for pain, which is not possible on the school site. This was largely a result of ethical issues raised with the experiment, which interestingly enough led me back to some of my original questions. Is it unethical to deceive people with placebos, if they are prescribed in the best interest of the patient? How would medical advances occur if certain research was held back due to ethics?

Development - This is clearly open to opinion, which is why I would like to gather some primary research on whether people think that placebos should be used. Opinions which would be very relevant to my project could come from those suffering from long term pain, so I have decided to talk to those in such situations.

Research - Since last talking to my supervisor, we highlighted the issue of whether data on the effectiveness of analgesic drugs against placebos from drug companies would be available to me. If not, I would have to find these figures elsewhere, making sure they are reliable. Through my research I have seen lots of mention that placebos are becoming more effective against drugs and complicating clinical trial.

Development - I have proposed to call GlaxoSmithKline and enquire about their statistical data to use as secondary data since I could not conduct my experiment to obtain primary statistics on the effectiveness of placebos.

Research - Whilst researching, I came across a documentary which demystified the concept of pain, helping me to make links between the information I have gathered on the placebo effect and pain. This partially helped me to achieve my aim of finding how placebos worked neurologically to stop or reduce pain.

Development - From here I would like to find some more in depth scientific reasoning behind the occurrence of the placebo effect.

I have cleared up the main obstructions I was faced with throughout my project and have proposed actions by which I can overcome them as mentioned above. From here I will be free to collate this with my existing research and be able to achieve the aims I set at the beginning of the project. I have yet to broaden my sources that I am consulting, but I have been carefully so far to ensure that all sources are reliable.

Your supervisor's main comments and advice

Since the experiment is not viable, it is a good idea to contact the pharmaceutical company (GSK), but I should be wary to know exactly what I am after when approaching them to be successful in gaining the data.

In terms of sources, we established it was difficult to find relevant literature on the topic I chose, so I should try to find documentaries and conduct my primary research as planned at the beginning of the project before writing the report, rather than relying on solely internet information and medical journals.

Changes, clarifications or additions you have made as a result of your discussion with your supervisor and/or the comments from your centre coordinator

As a result of my meeting with my supervisor, I compiled a set of questions before approaching GSK, in order to obtain the statistical evidence I needed. I also found a documentary to watch on the concept of pain and conducted my primary research. I decided to do my primary research on a sufferer of chronic pain and interviewed them on their opinion on the use of placebos as a treatment for pain.

Supervisor signature

Date

Mid-project review

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

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To be completed by the candidate. This page records your outline plan about half-way through your work.

Outline the successes, failures, additions and/or changes you made as you followed your plan at start of project

Changes from start of project:

Initially I wanted to look into the placebo effect in general and how it compared to medicine when used to treat the condition of a patient. There were far too many conditions that instigated a placebo effect once treatment had begun so I decided to look at placebos for pain. My aims throughout the project therefore became more refined and adapted to a specific area concerning placebos.

Successes:

- Primary research - interviewing a sufferer of scoliosis, which causes the person to be in chronic pain (persistent, incurable pain) and collecting their stance on the administration of placebos as a treatment and whether they believed it to be ethical.
- Finding statistics from GSK after being redirected to some of the clinical trials completed by the company. Among the array of medical conditions for which drugs had undergone clinical trials on <http://www.gsk-clinicalstudyregister.com>. I decided to find a common, very painful and inconvenient condition and study the statistics for that trial. I looked at patients with rheumatoid arthritis to gather some evidence of placebos being used to treat an illness while up against a drug that was being developed.
- Learning about the scientific explanations for the placebo effect which enables me to compare it to the effects of drugs on the body.

Failures:

- I was unable to conduct an experiment due to ethical concerns
- Despite my efforts I was unable to discuss any clinical trials when I approached the GSK medicinal enquiries telephone line.
- Pain is an abstract concept so it was difficult to measure it accurately.

Outline your planned steps to complete your project

At this point, I am ready to sift through all the resources I have to be able to obtain all the relevant information that will support my report. I need to make sure I do not go off topic by sticking to the aims of my project.

Your supervisor's main comments and advice at this stage

I need to construct an outline for my project with a set of questions I want to answers. These questions fall under the aims I set out at the start of my project.

Changes, clarifications or additions you have made as a result of your discussion with your supervisor at this stage

The aims of my project and the sub-sections I would like to address are:

- To outline what the placebo response/effect is and its causes
- * What the placebo response is and common misconceptions
- * Conditions affected by placebos
- * Factors influencing the placebo effect
- * The Nocebo Effect

- To find how the body responds to placebos and affects pain
- * What is pain
- * How placebo analgesia works neurologically

- To conclude whether the use of placebos for pain management is ethical
- * Case Studies
- * Interview of chronic pain sufferer
- * Whether placebos should be used in clinical care

- To conclude whether placebos are an effective method of treatment for pain
- * Impact on pharmaceutical companies

Supervisor signature

Date _____

End-of-project review

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the candidate. This page records the (near) completion of your project product.

Outline the successes, failures, additions and/or changes you made as you followed the plan in your mid-project review

Successes:

I managed to discuss all the points I set out to acknowledge in my midproject review in my report having formulated the questions based on the pieces of research I wanted to mention. Having found a website that produces citations for the sources I had used, my references were all correctly done in a uniform harvard style for easily accessing the information I had. My practice presentation provided good feedback for when I did it in front of the audience which went to plan.

Failures:

I was unable to discuss the full findings of my research and subsequent report during my presentation as it was very in depth and there were restrictions on time. For people who had a specific interest after my presentation, and wanted to know about my project in more depth, I could make my report open to them to read. Another failure I encountered was after having found the statistics off of GSK's website. I concluded there was too much specialist information on the document which was well above my understanding. After trying to decode the document with my supervisor and other science teachers I found that the statistics were not of much use to my project as they didn't show any data for placebo analgesia as I had hoped.

Additions:

I chose to add a section in my report where I mentioned how clinical trial studies take place to give a more well rounded idea of how the placebo response works. This gives an indication of whether the same principles would apply in a clinical setting making placebos an effective method of treatment.

Outline any additional advice or comment that you received from your supervisor during this final stage

My supervisor mentioned how I could additionally consider reflecting on the successes, failures, additions and changes I encountered from the beginning of the project. This would allow me to gain insight on the progress I made throughout the whole project, rather than just from my mid-project review.

Changes, clarifications or additions you made as a result of discussion with your supervisor in this final stage

After my meeting with my supervisor I added another failure I had encountered throughout my project which was the dead end I found with the statistics from GlaxoSmithKline. A way in which I could have remedied this (with a larger time scale) would have been to look at other clinical trial studies from GSK which showed the statistics I needed. However since they were very hard for me to interpret myself, it would have been difficult to find somebody to look through all the data with me.

In terms of successes from the beginning of the project, I think I was quite fortunate to have found a topic I was interested in the first time around, without having to change my topic area. I also managed to narrow down the broad topic into a specific area which I could explore in depth (placebo analgesia) which was one of the changes I made. The main failure was my inability to collect the experimental data that I aimed to at the start of the project. This would have increased my credibility when presenting my project as I would have had first hand research to talk about. On the whole I managed to answer the questions I set out to answer when I was planning making the project a success and a great learning experience.

Supervisor signature

Date

Summary

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

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To be completed by the candidate. This page records the nature of your project product (abstract).

Outline (50 – 150 words) the nature of your final product, its main content and your conclusion

My report was the product of my condensed research, which outlined the nature of placebos, the manner in which they worked and the factors they depended on when used to combat pain. I then considered the aspects in which placebos would be effective as a treatment for pain when used in clinical care. I concluded that there are too many factors holding placebos back from being used, primarily the way in which they must be used in order to be effective, such as the use of deception. In a case where all the factors are working together towards the placebo effect, it may not occur, meaning it cannot be used as a treatment, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

Presentation record part A

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

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To be completed by the candidate. This page records your presentation and its preparation.

Planned nature of your presentation (e.g. timing, audience, use of visual aids, slides, use of notes, etc.)

I plan to keep my presentation very simple so I am able to clearly explain my topic. I'd like to keep the attention on myself rather than having my audience distracted by a flashy presentation. From practice runs, my presentation lasts for around 10 minutes which is within the range it should be. I kept the slides to a minimum (around 10). While I used flashcards for my practice runs, I am now confident enough to do it without the use of them.

Briefly list the main content of your presentation

Slide 1 &2 – What are placebos
Slide 3 &4 – What is the placebo effect
Slide 5 &6 – Introduction to placebo analgesia
Slide 7 – Mechanism of placebo analgesia
Slide 8 – Ethics of placebo analgesia
Slide 9 – Effectiveness of placebos

Changes, clarifications or additions you made as a result of rehearsal and/or discussion with your supervisor

After my rehearsal, I was able to identify areas of my presentation that were not successful and fix them so that I was able to explain my project to the audience clearly on the actual day. For example when I was explaining the placebo effect, I used too many examples, which I was told caused the concept to seem unclear, which I was able to rectify by keeping my information concise. I also noticed that I was talking for long periods of time, in which people began to lose interest. I plan to change this by adding more humour and establishing my key points quicker.

Also after speaking to my supervisor, I was advised to add in a reflection at the end of my presentation to summarise how my project went, including the parts that went well and some of the obstacles I encountered. This allowed prospective EPQ students to get a glimpse behind the scenes, but also allowed me to realise what I gained from the project. I saw how I could improve when doing further research projects in the future, such as when I am university.

Presentation record part B

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the supervisor. Record and comment below on the delivery of the presentation (specification 2.5.1 presentation)

| | Supervisor's record / comments |
|---|---|
| The nature of the audience (include numbers of staff, students and others present) | The Audience was composed of year 12 students who were considering starting an EPQ next year, other year 13 students who had completed their EPQ, supervisors and the Head teacher. |
| The nature of the presentation (include use of notes, use of display items, and use of presentation software) | The presentation was supported by an accompanying PowerPoint, the presentation included diagrams from his project and summary of his main findings. The candidate did not have any notes; he used his slides as a prompt. |
| Comment on the content and delivery of the presentation | The presentation was an overview of his findings; it started with an introduction to what placebos were and why they were used. He then explained the various uses, and ethics associated with using placebos and prescribing them for pain. Finally he explained his summary. Also the successes and failures of his project. He delivered the presentation with confidence and spoke very clearly and knowledgably on the subject. |
| Comment on the response of the candidate to questions that demonstrated understanding and grasp of the project and/or its production (give examples where appropriate). | He was asked 'Do you believe that placebos are medically inactive drugs, after what you have found out?' He responded well, and answered that he did agree as any responses seen through the use of placebos was psychological, and might not be attributed to the drug itself, but the psychological association of taking the drug. Secondly he was asked 'How are placebos used in the pharmaceutical industry?' His response was that they were used to test the effectiveness of the test drug so that any changes seen in the patient could be proven to be down to the test drug and not due to the person taking any drug. |
| Outline the nature of any additional presentation evidence that the candidate might add (e.g. speaker notes, handouts, presentation slides, recording). | Slides from his presentation. |

Supervisor signature

Date

Reflection

Candidate's full name

Candidate number

Candidate 1

0

To be completed by the candidate. This page records your own evaluation when you have completed your project product and given your presentation.

Briefly summarise your main learning from completing this project. You might include new knowledge or expertise that you enjoy or find valuable, a consideration of your planning and organisation, changes you would make if you undertook such work again, advice you would give to others undertaking such a project.

What I gained from EPQ -

Throughout the project, it was interesting to delve into a topic with such breadth, giving me the option to focus on a specific area of the placebo effect – placebo analgesia. Having completed the project I find myself more aware of placebos in everyday life, such as how the placebo effect was instigated on some of my medical work experience trials. I found that taking on the project was a great opportunity to gain academic independence while meeting deadlines set by myself and my project supervisors. I initially tried conducting my research without planning beforehand and found a great deal of information on placebos. While this was fascinating, not all the information was of use to me, so I created a set of questions I wanted answers to and then found and compiled all my research. Keeping this information in sets that applied to the aims of my project it was available to me when I wanted to write my report. In terms of writing my report, I organised it in a similar way by writing about a set of topics that helped answer my project question.

Changes I would make if I did it again -

If I had to redo the project I think I would try and include more of my own case studies as I included two from a source I had found and one of my own. The advantage of conducting my own interviews is the freedom to find more of the information I need by asking relevant questions. There is also the extra reliability in the conclusions I form from my own research rather than from second hand resources.

Advice I would give to others -

I think to successfully complete the EPQ; prospective students need to find a topic they have a genuine interest in, giving them the desire to want to learn more. Special consideration needs to be taken when setting the project title. Although candidates may have an idea of the topic they want to do the project on, the question needs to be focussed on a specific area. I found this when choosing my topic of placebos and narrowing it down to placebo analgesia.

In terms of planning and research, it is always a good idea to start early to allow initial ideas to change and develop; there is nothing worse than changing your question or topic halfway through the project, which I fortunately didn't have to do. Going down that path means that a lot of time already invested is lost and there is a smaller amount of time left to start the project from scratch.