



Evaluation of the Space Education Quality Mark – April 2022

Schools and colleges across the UK who want to inspire and engage students in STEM subjects through the use of space as a context can apply for the Space Education Quality Mark. Applicants submit an action plan and build a portfolio of evidence which is marked against the awarding criteria by a SEQM assessor. Three levels of award can be achieved: Bronze, Silver or Gold.

The evaluation evidence demonstrates that achieving the SEQM has been beneficial for schools. The submission process and method of assessment provides schools with a cost-effective and accessible way to achieve a STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) quality mark. Evaluation feedback shows that the SEQM meets the expectations and aspirations of participating schools, and a range of impacts have been demonstrated common to all of the SEQM award levels:

- Engagement with the SEQM increases pupil enjoyment and engagement in science, and helps to raise their aspirations.
- Participating in the SEQM helps to raise the profile of science within schools.
- Applying for the SEQM can act as a catalyst to develop and enhance the science curriculum by providing a framework for development.
- Schools achieving the Silver and Gold awards appear to be better at sustaining the impact of the SEQM, due to more extensive embedding of space education across the curriculum, and links with other science education organisations.
- Impact is also sustained in the longer term through continued use of resources developed during the SEQM application process.

This evaluation identified several recommendations to further improve the SEQM, including:

- Enhance support for first-time Bronze SEQM applicants, including integration of space education in the longer term.
- Raise the profile of SEQM amongst schools less likely to engage (e.g. secondary schools).
- Consider how assessments could be reviewed/verified to ensure consistency.
- Review materials to ensure they align to changes in Ofsted and curriculum frameworks.
- Review assessment criteria to ensure they reward a positive mixture of quality and quantity of engagement.