VCE Extended Investigation 2019–2024  
Advice for teachers

Resources

1. Sample timeline

| **Approximate time** | **Term 1** |  |  | |  | **Term 2** |  |  |  | **Term 3** |  |  |  | **Term 4** |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Teaching and learning** | Introduction to research | | | Writing and presenting for non-specialist audiences | | |  |  |  | Writing and presenting for non-specialist audiences | |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | Literature: research and reading | | | Methodology overview | |  |  | Data analysis strategies | |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | | Academic presentation skills | |  |  |  | Academic writing skills | | Academic presentation skills | | |  |
|  | General critical thinking skills | | | | | Applied critical thinking skills | | | | | | | | |  |
| **Student investigations** | General reading, literature review | | | | | | Selective and targeted reading | | | | |  |  |  |  |
|  | Formulating research question | |  | | Methodological development | | Collecting data | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | Analysing data | | |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  | Writing final report | | | | |  |  |
|  |  |  |  | |  |  |  |  |  |  | Constructing final presentation | | | |  |
| **School-based Assessment** |  |  | U3 AOS1 | |  |  | U3 AOS2 |  |  |  |  |  | U4 AOS1 | U4 AOS2 |  |
| **VCAA dates** |  |  | Lodge research question | |  |  |  |  |  |  | Critical Thinking Test |  |  | Submit EAT written report | EAT oral presentation |

2. Ethics summary table

If students have identified possible ethical issues in their investigation, this table may assist in summarising their considerations in managing these issues.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Name:** |  | |
| **Research area:** |  | |
| **Proposed research method:** |  | |
| **Ethical issues** | | **How could I overcome these ethical issues?** |
| **1.** | |  |
| **2.** | |  |
| **3.** | |  |

3. Literature evaluation

Students need to evaluate materials that they come across during the course of their research. An evaluation template such as this one may provide a useful structure for students to manage their research more effectively.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Author Title Year of publication Publisher** |  |
| **Field of research** |  |
| **Summary** |  |
| **Relevant findings** |  |
| **What ideas will I use and how will I acknowledge them?** |  |
| **Is this article reliable?** |  |
| **Does it contain any useful references?** |  |
| **Useful quotes** |  |
| **Additional information** |  |

4. Goldilocks exercise

Students use this table to test various research possibilities in the early stages of their thinking. They may use this to evaluate a range of generic topics before they refine one into their research question.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **CONTROVERSY** | | **SIZE** | | **COMPLEXITY** | |
| **Too cold** | **Too hot** | **Too small** | **Too large** | **Too soft** | **Too hard** |
|  | Is the topic of limited intellectual interest to anyone? | Is the topic too controversial or ethically challenging? | Is the topic too small to sustain an investigation over the timeframe? | Is the topic too large in scale to be completed in the timeframe? | Is the topic too simple to sustain detailed investigation? | Is the topic too complex for the student to investigate? |
| Topic 1: Chocolate | Which chocolate do I like best? | Does chocolate help depression? Or does chocolate make you fat? | Smith High students answer: which brand is better, Nestlé or Cadbury? | A longitudinal study of body change associated with per-capita chocolate consumption. | How is Nestlé chocolate made? | Comparative scans of the neurological and physiological changes caused by eating versus thinking about chocolate. |
| Commentary | Inherent bias; significance of an individual’s preferences to research is limited. Based on personal opinion. | Ethical issues: students do not have experience or qualifications to deal with such complex ideas or to support participants. Replace with: ‘Does chocolate affect emotions? A survey of students at Smith High.’ | Would probably consist of a simple statistical survey. Limited complexity. | A longitudinal study involves research over many years. This topic may also fail on ethical grounds due to invasion into sensitive issues such as health and body image. | Simple retelling of manufacturing process: limited critical thought. | Accurate collection of such data, and its interpretation, requires years of experience and training. Access to primary experimental equipment limited. |
| Topic 2: Fast food and adolescents |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Commentary |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Topic 3: Factors leading to increased availability of organic produce in Melbourne. |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Commentary |  |  |  |  |  |  |

5. SHEEP-T exercise example

|  | SOCIAL | HISTORICAL | ECONOMIC | ENVIRONMENTAL | POLITICAL | TECHNOLOGICAL |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| OBSERVATIONS |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| QUESTIONS |  |  |  |  |  |  |

6. Funnel method example