Extended Investigation

VCE Units 3 and 4

Are you a curious and self-motivated student? This subject develops students’ understanding of what constitutes a good research question. They develop an ethical, a robust, a disciplined and a rational approach to gathering, interpreting and evaluating evidence in order to answer the research question. In this study, the student considers how research questions are developed and refined to enable the researcher to address the key issues proposed by the research within the limits that time and resources impose. Students conduct a review of relevant literature and develop research project management knowledge and skills and ways of effectively presenting and communicating research findings. The investigation may be an extension of an area of curriculum already undertaken by the student or it may be completely independent of any other study in the student’s VCE program.

Skills

- use key research concepts and terms and compare research methods
- identify the characteristics of a good research question
- identify and assemble literature and/or other resources to inform an investigation
- organise and analyse ideas and information
- formulate, refine and justify a research question
- apply skills of research project management
- analyse and evaluate evidence and argument
- synthesise data and findings
- use conventions of academic writing
- communicate and explain research
- evaluate research methods reflect on outcomes of the investigation

Content

Unit 3

- elements, features and terminology of critical thinking
- concepts of opinion, evidence and truth
- characteristics of strong and weak reasoning
- techniques to construct arguments and techniques to analyse and evaluate the soundness and validity of arguments
- socio-cultural influences in argument
- methods for organising and analysing ideas and information
- ways of summarising readings and research materials

Unit 4

- body of knowledge specific to the area of investigation and its significance
- evidence and argument relevant to the area of investigation
- methods of evaluation of research findings
- structure and organisation of oral presentation
- evaluation of research methods

Students submit a 4000 word research report and give an oral presentation on this as their major assessment item.