

GOLD CREEK SCHOOL IB MYP PERSONAL PROJECT STUDENT GUIDE



2021





WELCOME TO THE PERSONAL PROJECT!

The Personal Project is an individual project that you will begin in Year 9 and complete during Year 10 and it follows the inquiry cycle.

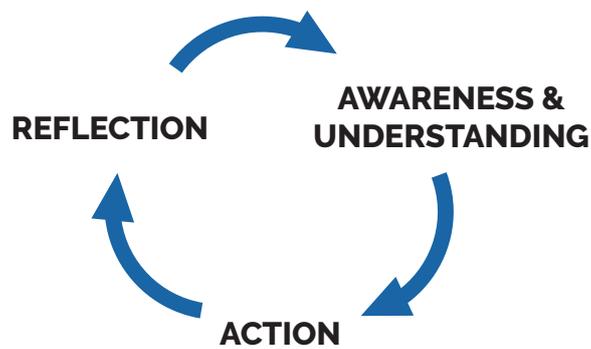


Fig 1: The Inquiry Cycle

The Personal Project basically consists of four main parts:

1. Undertaking an investigation into an area that you want to know more about;
2. Writing about your progress, planning, concerns, queries, achievements in a journal;
3. Using your inquiry material to decide upon a course of action in the form of an outcome or product;
4. Writing a structured report in which you reflect on your learning throughout the process.

Whatever type of personal project you decide on, it should:

- have a clear and achievable goal
- be grounded in a global context
- be the result of your initiative, creativity, and ability to organize and plan
- reflect your special interests, hobbies, special abilities, or concerns about particular issues
- deal with a topic or area to which you are committed
- be entirely your own work—authenticity is very important and you will be required to sign a document stating that the project is your own work



PERSONAL PROJECT DEADLINES

Ideation & Investigation	Term 3-4 (previous year)
Planning - Criteria Due	Term 1, Week 10
Acting - Product & Process Journal Due	Term 2, Week 10
Draft Report Due	Term 3, Week 2
Final Report Due	Term 3, Week 6
Exhibition	Term 3, Week 9

THE PROCESS JOURNAL

The Process Journal is a written record of all that you do while completing the Personal Project. It is important that you keep an organised, accurate, and detailed Process Journal in order to support you when you write the Report which details what you have learnt over the course of the project.

You will write about:

- the process (what you did to complete the PP)
- your analysis (of your research and learning)
- your conclusion (what results you achieved; what impact the PP has had on you)

Your Process Journal should have:

- all your rough ideas (even if your ideas change over the duration of the project!)
- rough drawings, sketches, models, storyboards, schemes, blueprints etc.
- reflection on your ideas, achievements, obstacles, etc.
- goals
- timelines
- successes/failures
- how you would do things better
- resources and an evaluation of their usefulness
- reflection on how well you are meeting your goals
- reflection on how well you are developing your approaches to learning



STAGE 1: INVESTIGATING (TERM 1)

1. define a clear and highly challenging goal and context for the project, based on personal interests
2. identify prior learning and subject-specific knowledge that is consistently highly relevant to the project
3. demonstrate excellent research skills

- 1.** (i) The first stage of your project requires you to **define a challenging goal and appropriate global context** (with a focus in a specific strand).
(ii) Once you have developed a **goal** and identified a **global context**, you will meet with your supervisor to discuss, refine, and eventually sign off on an agreed upon goal on your Goal Proposal Form (which will then be recorded in your Process Journal).

Keep a record of your emails & conversations with your supervisor (and others) in your Process Journal as an example of your ATL skills (communication, research, thinking, social skills, and self management).

- 2.** The second stage of your investigation is to **determine your prior knowledge**.
In your Process Journal record:
 - What you already know about your chosen topic.
 - What you will need to learn more about.
 - What skills you may already have that will help you complete your project.
 - What skills you think you might need to develop further to complete your project.

This is an important task because it will allow you to determine whether your goal is **suitably challenging**. If you already know everything about your topic and already possess all the necessary skills and knowledge to produce your product and outcome, your project is not going to challenge you, nor teach you anything new.

- 3.** Once you have defined your goal and global context, you will begin the **process of researching your topic**. During this stage, you will need to demonstrate excellent research skills.

Excellent research skills include:

- Using a varied range of sources e.g. books, documentaries, internet articles, magazines, interviews with experts, surveys, experiments etc.
- Critical analysis of a source's accuracy, audience, authority, bias, currency & relevance.
- A bibliography appropriately detailing each source used and using the APA referencing system



RESOURCE EVALUATION

ACCURACY

- Is the information precise, can it be proven and verified?
- What you are looking for: Is the information correct? Can we check the accuracy of information through links, footnotes or bibliography?

AUDIENCE

- Who is the information intended for?
- What you are looking for: Who has the author targeted? Is the language written for field experts? Is the information for the general public or a specific group?

AUTHORITY

- Who is responsible for presenting the information ?
- What you are looking for: Who has written the information and can we check their qualifications? Is the information from an 'expert' in this field?

BIAS

- Is the information based on facts, things we can observe or based more on opinions, emotions? Is it from just one point-of-view?
- What you are looking for: Personal Bias. Facts, statistics, and links to sources so we can verify them to be accurate and truthful. More than one point of view.

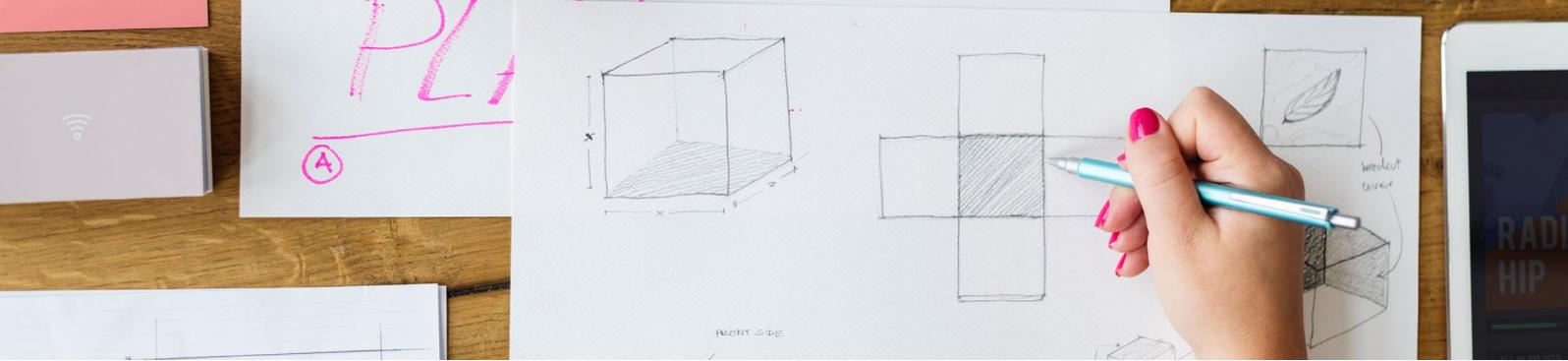
CURRENCY

- How old is this information and is this important?
- What you are looking for: Dates the information was written. Has the information been revised or updated and if so, when?

RELEVANCE

- Is the information relevant to your project or task?
- What you are looking for: Does the information directly relate to your task? Does the information help you complete your task?

Before claiming a source is trustworthy and valuable check the above qualities to determine its reliability and usefulness. The ability to effectively analyse sources is an important ATL skill (Critical Thinking). Reflect on how you are developing this skill in your Process Journal.



STAGE 2A: PLANNING (TERM 1)

1. develop rigorous criteria for the product/outcome
2. present a detailed and accurate plan and record of the development process of the project
3. demonstrate excellent self-management skills

Develop an action plan. This action plan will be used as a guide to keep you on track throughout your project. An action plan outlines the necessary stages or steps you need to achieve your goal. In your Process Journal specifically record the “Action/Step” required, give the step a timeframe or due date and record how you will complete the step and who or what may assist you in completing that step. *Below is an example of an action plan.*

ACTION/STEP	WHEN?	HOW?
Locate sources in books and magazines on the topic of Medieval armour.	By the end of Week 2, Term 1	Go to the library to search for specific books & magazine articles.
Contact Universities for possible interviews with experts in the field	Week 3, Term 1	Phone university asking for the best way to contact people - either phone or email.
Arrange online interview with Professor Jane Doe at ANU	Week 4, Term 1	Email Prof. Doe to arrange a suitable time to conduct the interview.
Create questions for interview	Week 4, Term 1	Reflect on my goal and global context and what I really want/need to know about my topic. Ensure my questions are succinct and clear. Write my questions up on a word document.
Interview Professor about Medieval armour	Week 5, Term 1	Conduct phone interview.
Meet with supervisor	Week 6, Term 1	Email to confirm suitable time

An action plan is never set in concrete. Events out of your control may get in the way of your progress or you may discover new information that takes you on another path, adding to your plan and time frame. For these reasons, **it is important to reflect on your progress and continually update your plan**, to make sure you are moving forward towards your end goal.

The Action Plan is a requirement of your report. It demonstrates how you have used your self-management skills. You must have one!



STAGE 2B: PLANNING (TERM 1)

1. develop rigorous criteria for the product/outcome
2. present a detailed and accurate plan and record of the development process of the project
3. demonstrate excellent self-management skills

CREATE DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS FOR YOUR PRODUCT/OUTCOME

POSSIBLE CRITERIA	YOUR CRITERIA	TESTING METHOD
<p>AESTHETICS Consider, appearance, style, colour, shape/form, texture, pattern, finish, layout.</p>		
<p>COST Is there a maximum cost? Is this a material cost, time cost, selling cost?</p>		
<p>AUDIENCE Who is it for? What is the target user's age, gender, socio-economic background?</p>		
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS Where will the solution be used? How will the design directly or indirectly affect the environment?</p>		
<p>FUNCTION What must it do? What is its purpose? Where will the product be stored? How easily can it be used/maintained?</p>		



CREATE DESIGN SPECIFICATIONS FOR YOUR PRODUCT/OUTCOME CONTINUED

POSSIBLE CRITERIA	YOUR CRITERIA	TESTING METHOD
<p>MANUFACTURING</p> <p>What resources are available? Are there limitations as to how this can be created?) How much time is needed to create the design?</p>		
<p>MATERIALS</p> <p>What materials are available? What properties do the materials need to have?</p>		
<p>SAFETY</p> <p>What safety factors need to be incorporated into the design?</p>		
<p>SIZE</p> <p>Are there any specific sizes that need to be considered? What "human factors" need to be considered?</p>		

IMPORTANT: You do NOT need to have one criteria for each heading. Not all headings will be appropriate to your project and for some areas you may have more than one criterion. It is recommended to use a maximum of 6 design criteria.



AN EXAMPLE OF A COMPLETED SPECIFICATION RUBRIC FOR A COOKBOOK

Goal: To create either a vegetarian or vegan cookbook that provides educational information and easy to create recipes suitable for all ages.

Global Context: identities and relationships

YOUR GOAL:		To create either a vegetarian or vegan cookbook that provides educational information and easy to create recipes suitable for all ages.			
YOUR GLOBAL CONTEXT:		An inquiry into identities and relationships			
	Aesthetics	Cost	User/Audience	Function	Size / Content
	Appearance, style, colour, shape, pattern, form, texture, finish, layout.	Is there a maximum cost? Is this a material cost/time cost?	Who it is for? Consider age, gender, socioeconomic background.	What is its purpose? What will it do? How easily can it be used / maintained?	Are there any specific sizes that need to be considered? Is there a particular amount of content required?
1 - 2 Limited	Loose pages of different recipes. A few pictures.	Not sure if the book would cost anything.	Anybody.	Create a cookbook of a couple of snacks.	Less than five recipes. No particular size.
3 - 4 Adequate	A booklet containing the recipes. A few colour photos.	Each book to cost between \$5-\$25.	People who already know how to cook.	Create a cookbook of snacks and treats. The recipes have different levels.	At least five recipes. The size of a regular cookbook.
5 - 6 Substantial	A booklet with gloss pages. Colour photos to accompany most of the recipes.	Each book to cost between \$5-\$16.	Teenagers and up.	Create a vegetarian cookbook of numerous amounts of snacks and treats. The recipes have levels of easy to medium.	At least ten recipes. The size of a medium-sized cookbook.
7 - 8 Rigorous	A hardback book with glossy pages. Colour photos to accompany each recipe.	Each book to cost no more than \$10.	Teenagers and up. They need to have some experience of cooking.	Create a vegetarian/vegan cookbook with a wide a variety of healthy snacks and treats. The recipes have levels of easy, medium and hard.	At least fifteen recipes. 30cm by 20cm in size.



STAGE 2C: PLANNING (TERM 1)

1. develop rigorous criteria for the product/outcome
2. present a detailed and accurate plan and record of the development process of the project
3. **demonstrate excellent self-management skills**

In your Process Journal continually reflect on how you are developing your **organisational skills and self-management skill**.

When you write you could consider how well have you:

- met deadlines
- set goals that are challenging and realistic
- plan strategies and act to achieve personal and academic goals
- tried new ATL skills and evaluated their effectiveness
- brought necessary equipment and supplies to class
- kept an organized and logical system of information files/notebooks
- used appropriate strategies for organizing complex information
- selected and used technology effectively and productively
- practised focus and concentration
- developed mental focus and practised strategies to overcome distraction
- have demonstrated persistence and perseverance
- kept a journal to record reflections
- practised delaying gratification
- practised strategies to overcome impulsiveness and anger
- practised strategies to reduce stress and anxiety
- practised analysing and attributing causes for failure
- practised managing self-talk
- practised positive thinking
- practised “bouncing back” after adversity, mistakes, and failures
- practised “failing well”
- practised dealing with disappointment and unmet expectations
- practised dealing with change



STAGE 3: TAKING ACTION (TERM 2)

1. create an excellent product/outcome in response to the goal, global context and criteria
2. demonstrate excellent thinking skills
3. demonstrate excellent communication and social skills

At this stage of your project, you will begin the process of creating your final product or outcome. As you begin this phase, consider how your product/outcome is an excellent representation of your goal, global context, and design specifications. Use the table below to gauge how effectively your product/outcome will represent your goal, context, and specifications.

Give reasons or evidence as to how your project’s product/outcome is an excellent representation of your goal, global context, and criteria:

PRODUCT/OUTCOME:

EVIDENCE

GOAL:		
GLOBAL CONTEXT:		
CRITERIA:		

It is important to note that you may find you still need to conduct research in this phase of the Personal Project. You might also need to problem solve if you come across challenges or obstacles. Think creatively and seek help if necessary.

As you begin the process of creating your product you need to **record the learning that is taking place** in your Process Journal. You want to pay particular attention to your **thinking skills** (how are you problem-solving or how are you being creative?) and your social and communication skills (do you need to ask for help, are you seeking feedback on your product or are you using the advice of your mentor?).

Remember that while the product is an important part of your project, the learning that is occurring is what you will be reflecting on in your report.



STAGE 4: REFLECTION (TERM 3)

1. Presents an excellent evaluation of the quality of the product/outcome against his or her criteria
2. Presents excellent reflection on how completing the project has extended his or her knowledge and understanding of the topic and the global context
3. Presents excellent reflection on his or her development as an IB learner through the project

You're almost there! During Term 3 you will have an Immersion Day where the Personal Project supervisor will run you through how to write and structure your report. Make sure your Process Journal is up to date because this is where it becomes very useful.

You will reflect on how completing the project has extended your knowledge of your topic and the Global Context, and how you have developed as an IB learner (with reference to the Learner Profile).

Your report is a minimum of 1500 or a maximum of 3,500 words, or a 16 minute oral or visual presentation.

YOUR REPORT:

- Should have a title page with goal, global context, student and supervisor's name and word count.
- Be divided into clear sections for each objective:
 - A- Investigating
 - B- Planning
 - C- Taking Action
 - D- Reflecting
- Contain a maximum of 10 appendices from your Process Journal as evidence of your learning
- Have a bibliography and be referenced correctly
- Have a signed academic honesty form
- Provide evidence of your outcome
- Be word processed: size 12 standard font, 1.5 line spacing
- Can include captioned photographs, charts, tables, diagrams, lists, maps etc.

Once you have completed a draft of your report, your supervisor will mark it and provide feedback for you. You will then submit a final polished copy for assessment.

Once the report draft has been finished, you can begin to make plans for the Personal Project Exhibition night. You will get more information about this, but will need to consider the following:

- How will you display your information? How will it work in the allotted space? How might you do it in a creative manner?
- What will you do that allows an audience member to clearly understand your project? Do you need to create a poster that accompanies your booklet, web design, sculpture etc. explaining the process you went through?



Use the template below to record your meetings with your supervisor in your Process Journal.
You need to meet with your supervisor at least twice a year.

SUPERVISOR MEETINGS

Focus for this meeting: _____

Questions I have for my Supervisor:

Advice/guidance given to me:

Next meeting: _____

Tasks done: Yes No

Journal Seen: Yes



REMINDERS

- Keep everything- notes, diagrams, initial ideas that change, it should all go in your Process Journal for you to refer back to.
- Refer back to the criteria (located at the top of each section in this booklet) to ensure you are on track.
- Ask for help if you get stuck (and you've tried all your problem-solving skills). Your supervisor is the first port of call for any issues you need to discuss.
- Stay on target- set realistic goals so that you can achieve them. Don't punish yourself if you miss a deadline, instead reflect in your Process Journal about why you didn't meet the deadline and what you will need to alter to catch up.
- Remember this is a project about **learning**. You should be thinking about what you are learning, how you are learning it, the skills you are developing (ATLs) and what you are discovering about yourself as a learner. Use your Process Journal to record these reflections.
- Have fun! You are in control of how much you get out of your Personal Project. This is your opportunity to learn more about a topic that really interests you.

Acknowledgements

This Personal Project Student Guide has been adapted from the MYP Personal Project Guide, 2014 published by IBO. This content of this booklet is based on the previous hard work of teachers from Loreto College, Adelaide and Dili International School.

Images provided by Unsplash.