Students and Families

Frequently Asked Questions
Stage 2 Research Project A and Research Project B

The following frequently asked questions are based on feedback from students and families.

General Information

What is the Research Project?
The Research Project is an opportunity to:
• research something you are interested in
• decide how you carry out your research
• decide on the way you produce your findings
• make judgements about how successful you've been.

Throughout the project, you are in control of your own learning. For a quick visual overview of the assessment required, see the Assessment types.

Why the Research Project?
Many of the skills you develop in the Research Project are transferable, and may help you be successful in jobs and further study. These skills include:
• researching and presenting the results of your research
• working independently
• communicating clearly
• planning effectively
• being able to deal with problems and setbacks.

What can I research?
You can research anything that interests you. Your Research Project, for example, could be scientific, artistic, sporting or historical. It could be a subject-based, discipline-based, or community-based project, or any number of other options.

You can find examples of the sorts of questions students research on the Student Stories page.

As your learning is central to this subject, it is important to choose your research question carefully and seek advice from your teacher.
What do I need to know before I start?

You need to understand the research framework
There are 4 parts to the research framework (which you can find in the subject outlines):

- initiating and planning the research
- developing the research
- producing and substantiating the Research Outcome (synthesis)
- reviewing the research (Research Project A) or evaluating the research (Research Project B).

You will also need an understanding of the performance standards
These are also in the subject outline. Read them carefully as the performance standards tell you how your work will be assessed.

How is the ATAR calculated using the Research Project?
The scaled scores from your best subjects (full-year equivalent subjects) will be used by the South Australian Tertiary Admissions Centre (SATAC) to determine your Australian Tertiary Admission Rank (ATAR).

A result in Research Project B can be included in your best scaled scores as part of your 'flexible option'.

Success in the Research Project

What do I have to get for the Research Project to gain my SACE?
You need a C– grade or better.

What if I don't get a C- grade for my Research Project?
You can either undertake a completely new Research Project, or resubmit improvements and revisions to your original Research Project at the next assessment opportunity. These assessment opportunities happen at the end of each semester.

Are the capabilities part of the Research Project?
Yes. There are seven capabilities that relate to the Research Project. They are designed to help you develop knowledge and skills for further study, work, training, and community life. A list of the capabilities and examples of how these could be developed can be found in the subject outlines.

Choose one or more of the capabilities as a focus early in your project, and then you can either confirm or change your decision as your research develops. You will need to show your understanding and development of one or more capabilities in the evidence you present in your Folio.
Do I have a choice in the way I present my research?
Yes. Evidence of your research can be presented in a number of different ways. These include written, oral, and/or multimodally. The only exception is the Evaluation for Research Project B, which needs to be written.

How can I be successful in this subject?
Success in the Research Project comes from:
• carefully identifying a research question that you are interested in
• using relevant research processes
• paying attention to your understanding and development of one or more of the capabilities with respect to your research project
• maintaining a record of your research as you progress, not only recording what you do or find but also problems, solutions, and changes in direction
• keeping a focus upon what you want to achieve and by being aware of the main ideas that develop from your research.
• becoming familiar with the assessment requirements and how your work will be assessed using the performance standards.

Starting the Research Project

How do I start the Research Project?
Think about something that you are interested in and how it could lead to a research question.

Planning your research processes is also important. It does not matter if you change your plans later but you need to show your thinking about these processes.

Your proposal, which is part of your Folio, is an opportunity to outline what you are going to research and how you are going to go about it. Examples of how you could present your proposals may help you.

Advice on designing your research question and planning your research processes can be found under Support Materials on the minisite.

Do I need to reference my work?
Yes. You must reference your research by identifying the sources (e.g. people, articles, web pages, books) that you have used.

Referencing is used to acknowledge the contribution of other people's words and ideas towards your own research. You should record your references in your Folio as your research develops and then formally list them in the Research Outcome. Guidelines for how to reference your sources can be found under Support Materials, Research Advice on the Research Project minisite.
Is there any difference between a list of references and a bibliography?

Yes.

A list of references is a list of the sources that you actually quote or use in your research.

A bibliography is a list of all the sources that you have consulted during your research.

In the Research Project, either or both of these are appropriate. The important thing is that you acknowledge the sources you used and that you acknowledge the sources in particular ways. Refer to Research Advice on the Research Project minisite for advice on how to present your references and/or bibliography.

Doing the Research

What is involved in ‘doing the research’?

This is where you begin collecting your information and developing your ideas. Because researchers keep records of what they do, you will need to create a way of maintaining a record of your research as it develops. This includes recording ideas, conversations, and feedback. You can use a variety of methods such as notes, sketches, diagrams, or audio or visual recordings.

Make sure that you keep a careful record of your sources so that you can reference your research properly.

You are required to provide evidence of the development of your research.

Is it a problem if my research goes wrong?

No, this is where your problem solving skills will be put to good use. You will be able to show how you turned things around and how you learnt from mistakes.

What is the Folio?

The Folio is made up of three parts:

1. The Proposal is where you present your preliminary ideas regarding your question, research processes and capabilities.

2. Research Development involves gathering and maintaining a record of your research.

3. The Discussion(s) with your teacher provide you with an opportunity to discuss the progress of your research and receive feedback.
The Research Outcome

What is the Research Outcome?

This is where you show your key findings and substantiate them with evidence and examples from your research. You can choose the way you wish to show these findings, in either written, oral or multimodal forms. For example, if you researched the art of a famous artist, you might present your Research Outcome as:

- an essay or report about how the artist has influenced art
- an artwork in the artist's style
- an informative booklet about the artist's life
- an interactive website showing how the paintings reflect the artist's life
- a children's book about the artist
- a film documentary about people's reaction to the artist's works.

Some of the above examples may incorporate your substantiation of the key findings, whereas other formats may need an accompanying substantiation.

Substantiation means being able to show someone else where the ideas have come from, and to prove to someone else how the research outcome can be reproduced. Being able to reference your information, ideas, and material is really important. It is very important that you reference your research properly. Speak to your teacher about how to do this well.

There is a 1500 word limit (or 10 minutes multi-modal equivalent) for the Research Outcome for Research Project A, and a 2000 word limit (or 12 minutes multi-modal equivalent) for Research Project B. You need to understand how this work/time limit works.

External Assessment: The Review in Research Project A and the Evaluation in Research Project B

What is the Review or Evaluation?

This is the task for external assessment. Your Review or Evaluation is worth 30% of your final subject grade.

If you are studying Research Project A, you will be undertaking a Review. For this external assessment task you should:

- review the knowledge and skills you have developed in response to the your research question
- discuss the decisions you made in response to challenges and opportunities
- reflect on the quality of your Research Outcome
- organise your information coherently and communicate ideas accurately and appropriately.

Prepare a summary of the research question and Research Outcome, in a maximum of 150 words if written or 1 minute if oral. This summary is assessed.

The review is a maximum of 1500 words if written or a maximum of 10 minutes for an oral presentation, or the equivalent in multimodal form (excluding the written summary).
If you are studying **Research Project B**, you will be undertaking an Evaluation. For this external assessment task you should:

- explain your choice of research processes and evaluate their usefulness
- evaluate the decisions you have made in response to challenges and opportunities
- evaluate the quality of the Research Outcome
- organise your information coherently and communicate ideas accurately and appropriately.

Prepare a written summary of the research question and Research Outcome, in a maximum of 150 words. This summary is assessed.

The Evaluation is in written form to a maximum of 1500 words (excluding the written summary).

**What is the written summary (150 words) of the Evaluation/Review?**

The purpose of the written summary is to provide background information for the external assessor to help them mark your work.

The summary includes information about the research question and the Research Outcome.

**Submitting Materials for Moderation and Marking**

**What work is sent to the SACE Board for moderation and marking?**

Your Folio and your Research Outcome is part of the school assessment component and are marked by your teacher and checked by moderators who are appointed by the SACE Board.

Your Evaluation or Review is part of the external assessment component and is marked by your teacher, and a marker appointed by the SACE Board.

**What evidence of my learning do I need to present for moderation and marking?**

The portfolio of work you present consists of:

1. **Assessment Type 1: Folio**
   
   Evidence selected may include materials from the proposal, the research development, and/or the discussion. You select evidence of the development of the research for the Folio. The evidence should comprise ten A4 pages of size 10 font or above or a maximum of 20 minutes oral or the equivalent in multimodal form. You can submit a combination of written and oral evidence. One A4 page is equivalent to 2 minutes of oral evidence. For example you can submit eight A4 pages and 4 minutes of digitally recorded evidence or five A4 pages and 10 minutes of digitally recorded evidence.
2. **Assessment Type 2: Research Outcome**
   The Research Outcome consists of a maximum 1,500 words (written) or 10 minutes (oral or multimodal), or an equivalent combination for Research Project A or 2000 words (written) or 12 minutes (oral or multimodal) for Research Project B.

3. **Assessment Type 3: Review – Research Project A**
   - a summary (150 words if written or 1 minute if oral or multimodal), and
   - A review of a maximum 1500 words (written) or 10 minutes (oral or multimodal).

   **Assessment Type 3: Evaluation – Research Project B**
   - a written summary of 150 words and
   - an evaluation of a maximum 1500 words (written)

**Can the presentation of my Folio be a combination of hard copy/paper and digital evidence?**

Yes. You can submit part of your Folio evidence as A4 pages and other parts digitally on a CD/DVD/USB. Where materials consist of a combination of paper and digital evidence, the limitation of 10 pages or 10 minutes applies. One-A4 page is the equivalent of 2 minutes of digital evidence.