

**Preamble:** The “guide-on-the-side”: how often is it, actually, for real? This is an ambitious presentation, spanning the number of undertakings that it does, (**the SACE Research Project, the International Baccalaureate Diploma (IB) Extended Essay, the IB Middle Years Program (MYP) Personal Project.**) We are covering a lot. Each of these are whole-cohort activities – every student does them and thus the die is cast for the students. The die is cast for their good or not so good inquiry task methodology in subsequent subject work, school and beyond. Critical undertakings that will set a lasting standard for independent learning for the boys in our care.

This is a collation of our processes and what we have learnt across a decade of delivering these programs to boys at Prince Alfred College in South Australia

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Further, across these tasks there is variety in the design rationale and student choice: some of these undertakings are in-Discipline, some of these open choice, some delivered in class time, some under a mentor model – with mentor sometimes a discipline expert, sometimes not. And the delivery models and timing vary from school to school. The assessment foci differ and quite alarmingly so.

Yet one thing is in common, students are expected to research and make meaning from what they assemble. And remember, these are children. (i-gen)

### **Project management, CMC**

**Overall Strategy: inertia is your enemy, final deadlines don't move (they only compress) and how to move all along together**

- What are the marks for?; .....everything else Teachers do. **Cognitive Load**
- Clarity as to when the students are driving the bus; and be prepared to take the keys away.
- Reporting cycles: Milestones yes, interim grades no. [WWW.ESPROGRESS.COM](http://WWW.ESPROGRESS.COM)
- Research is never linear; but you must close the door, once you are through it.
- Hide your safety nets, or students will leap towards them from the start.

### **Topic choice NRA**

**Overall strategy – inquiry, like most things, is not really about making something from nothing.**

- Typical advice given: choose something you're interested in. A weak starting point - there are others.
- What do I know? What do I know that I do not know?
- Knowledge begets further learning – the velcro effect.
- Size does matter, especially in question refinement.
- When is a question not a question? Fact versus debate, and hypothesis.

## Higher-order thinking templates **NRA**

**Overall strategy – *critical thinking is highly contextual, but not necessarily unteachable***

- ‘Doubt’ is not only expected – it is opportunity.
- Uncertainty, disagreement, contradiction, contention – these are fuel for research processes.
- You *won’t* remember challenges and opportunities, or decisions made about them, in retrospect.
- Thinking and decisions made *in situ*.
- How to template critical thinking for 20 different projects? Generic skill, or something else?

## Assessment Behaviours (teachers and students) **CMC**

**Overall Strategy: *Project/Inquiry learning is nothing different than one, big long “Test”***

- The dual power of “the Panel”
- Exam conditions - Doing the numbers:
- Every professional teacher needs to be coached on improving their judgement
- Assessment as Prof. Development – in-house recruitment of the next crop
- **Assessment is about Teacher wellbeing, not student wellbeing.**

## Glossary of Terms

**SACE – South Australian Certificate of Education** – Secondary school completion certificate 2years Stage 1 and Stage 2 – final two years of secondary schooling.

**SACE Research Project.** –open-choice (Stage 2) research undertaking, equal to a ½ Subject. Compulsory pass for SACE completion (15,000 candidates annually) can count for university entry score ATAR.

**ATAR – Australian Tertiary Admissions Rank.** – University (College) entry score (rank 0 – 99.95 (best)) in Australia

**Discipline:** as in Academic Discipline, Subjects such as Biology, Economics, English Literature et al.

**Mentor** – as in not teacher, a supervisor that guides student(s) in their respective research journey with no **instructional time**

**Instructional time** – class time; regular, timetabled lessons

**IB MYP Personal Project:** 2500-3500 word Reflective Report on Inquiry Project – Project Goal, Inquiry Question and Product. Undertaken at end of Middle Years Program 15-16 year olds.

**IB DP Extended Essay:** 4000 Word, in-discipline Research Essay mentor model. Compulsory pass for Diploma completion – awarded (paired with other Diploma Core element) bonus points- Up to 3 points to count toward Diploma maximum of 45. Submitted in Final year of Schooling – 17-18 year olds

**Criterion Referenced Assessment:** Student work is assessed against a set of specified criteria. Each criterion has written performance descriptors that are the basis for judgment for each achievement level against that criterion.