

Reflective project: Student guide

For use from June 2013



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IB Career-related Certificate

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To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

IB learner profile

The aim of all IB programmes is to develop internationally minded people who, recognizing their common humanity and shared guardianship of the planet, help to create a better and more peaceful world.

IB learners strive to be:

Inquirers	They develop their natural curiosity. They acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research and show independence in learning. They actively enjoy learning and this love of learning will be sustained throughout their lives.
Knowledgeable	They explore concepts, ideas and issues that have local and global significance. In so doing, they acquire in-depth knowledge and develop understanding across a broad and balanced range of disciplines.
Thinkers	They exercise initiative in applying thinking skills critically and creatively to recognize and approach complex problems, and make reasoned, ethical decisions.
Communicators	They understand and express ideas and information confidently and creatively in more than one language and in a variety of modes of communication. They work effectively and willingly in collaboration with others.
Principled	They act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities. They take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.
Open-minded	They understand and appreciate their own cultures and personal histories, and are open to the perspectives, values and traditions of other individuals and communities. They are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view, and are willing to grow from the experience.
Caring	They show empathy, compassion and respect towards the needs and feelings of others. They have a personal commitment to service, and act to make a positive difference to the lives of others and to the environment.
Risk-takers	They approach unfamiliar situations and uncertainty with courage and forethought, and have the independence of spirit to explore new roles, ideas and strategies. They are brave and articulate in defending their beliefs.
Balanced	They understand the importance of intellectual, physical and emotional balance to achieve personal well-being for themselves and others.
Reflective	They give thoughtful consideration to their own learning and experience. They are able to assess and understand their strengths and limitations in order to support their learning and personal development.

Contents

Introduction	1
Overview	2
Frequently asked questions	3
Formats	8
The research process	11
Developing a good research question	12
The assessment criteria explained	14
Selecting a good topic	20
Ethical guidelines	22
Checklist	23
Self-evaluation	24
Appendix A: Sample initial plan	27
Appendix B: Sample timeline	28
Appendix C: Assessment criteria	30

Introduction

This guide is intended to help you to understand the International Baccalaureate Career-related Certificate (IBCC) reflective project—what it is and how to approach it.

The reflective project is an in-depth body of work produced over an extended period and submitted towards the end of the IBCC. It is a product of your own initiative and should reflect your experience of the IBCC. The reflective project is designed to draw together key elements of your wider scheme of study, specifically the career-related study, community and service and the approaches to learning course.

You are required to identify and explore an ethical dilemma associated with an issue that arises from your career-related studies and then develop a well-reasoned argument based on appropriate supporting evidence.

The aims of the reflective project are to allow you to:

- produce an extended piece of work
- engage in personal inquiry, action and reflection on a specific ethical issue
- develop research and communication skills
- develop the skills of critical and creative thinking.

The reflective project is intended to promote high-level research and communication skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. It provides you with an opportunity to engage in personal research under the guidance of a supervisor.

You can choose to present your reflective project in a number of different formats, including an essay, a web page, a PowerPoint® (or other) presentation, a dialogue, a play, a film, a storyboard or a series of photographs.

You should be thinking about and working on your reflective project throughout the IBCC programme.

Overview

Here are some important details about the reflective project including what it is and what its requirements are.

- It is an in-depth body of work.
The reflective project requires both breadth and depth in your approach to an issue and its ethical dilemma.
- It requires a minimum of 40 hours in and out of class time.
It is up to you and your teacher/supervisor to decide how much time you might allocate in class and out of class on your reflective project. However, the IB recommends that you plan for approximately 40 hours on your reflective project.
- It is produced over an extended period of time (submitted towards the end of the IBCC).
You should work on the reflective project over the course of your IBCC. It would be helpful to decide on a timeline with your teacher/supervisor on when you begin and finish the reflective project.
- It is initiated, planned, researched and created by the student.
The reflective project must be all your own work.
- It draws together all parts of the IBCC.
The reflective project uses:
 - your career-related studies as a focus for the chosen issue
 - the skills you develop in approaches to learning such as the ability to create a reasoned argument (critical thinking), to understand ethical dilemmas (ethical thinking) and to prepare the structure and format of the project itself (communication)
 - the skills and knowledge you develop in community and serviceFor instance, the four key domains of community and service (knowledge development, personal development, social development and civic development) improve:
 - cognitive and intellectual skills
 - confidence, self-awareness, self-direction and resilience
 - the ability to interact and work with others
 - increased awareness of community connections, community problems, citizenship and social responsibility.

IB Diploma Programme courses may also contribute towards your reflective project. Resources used for Diploma Programme courses, for example, could be used for the reflective project. However, you cannot use any of your Diploma Programme coursework in your reflective project.

Tip: In your approaches to learning course, look for ways to support your reflective project. Ask yourself what might be helpful when creating your reflective project. What skills will you need to develop?

Frequently asked questions

Why is the reflective project a requirement for the IBCC?

The reflective project is at the heart of the IBCC—it is what makes IBCC unique. It brings together your career-related studies and the elements of the IBCC core.

What does the reflective project require?

- Investigation on an issue related to your career-related studies and an associated ethical dilemma
- Personal reflection on your attitudes, values and views
- Critical thinking
- Communication skills

What are ethics and an ethical dimension?

Ethics is based on a set of moral principles of a society or culture that helps to guide behaviours, actions and choices. The ethical dimension refers to the range of ethical aspects related to an identified topic.

What is an ethical dilemma?

Within an ethical dimension there are ethical dilemmas. An ethical dilemma is a choice between two (or more) conflicting moral perspectives where neither choice provides a perfect solution.

In the context of the reflective project, you are required to examine an ethical dilemma by examining the advantages and disadvantages of each moral perspective.

What does the word count not include?

The maximum word limit for the reflective project is between 750 words and 3,000 words depending on the format of the reflective project. Remember that the examiners will not read beyond the appropriate word limit when assessing the reflective project.

The word count does **not** include:

- acknowledgments
- the contents page
- maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations and tables
- equations, formulas and calculations
- citations or references (whether parenthetical or numbered)
- footnotes or endnotes
- the bibliography
- appendices.

What must be included in the reflective project?

The following must be included.

1. The issue
Explain the issue and place it in context. It is important to realize that the issue itself is not the primary focus of the reflective project.

2. The ethical dimension

Examine an ethical dilemma associated with the issue and examine two (or more) perspectives in a fair and equal manner. This is the primary focus of the reflective project.

3. The research

Provide evidence of research that supports the differing viewpoints on the issue and its ethical dilemma.

4. An evaluation

Evaluate the viewpoints on the ethical dilemma and then articulate your own point of view based on reasoned argument.

5. References, citations and a bibliography

The project is an academic piece of work and should be presented as such. References, citations and a bibliography ensure intellectual honesty and allow the readers to source the evidence themselves. You should use a consistent style of referencing throughout the project. Appendices, footnotes and endnotes are not necessary but if used should be done so appropriately.

How do I structure the written part of the reflective project?

Here is an example of how you could structure your project.

- Introduction

The introduction identifies the issue, places it in context, and shows an awareness of the ethical dilemma of the issue.

- Body

The body can contain the results of research (primary or secondary); it should be a critical discussion of the ethical dilemma and the different perspectives, the impact of the issue on local and global communities, and a concluding argument with reasons. Subheadings or different sections within the body can help keep a clear focus for both the writer and the reader.

- Illustrations

Graphs, charts, tables, cartoons, photos, or other images can be used. However, they must be related to the project and acknowledged correctly.

- Conclusion

The conclusion should provide a summary and could also include a reflection on the ethical dilemma of the issue.

- References, citations and bibliography

This project is an academic piece of work and should be presented as such. All information obtained for the reflective project needs to be acknowledged.

- Appendices

Any information that is important to the reflective project should not be included in appendices. The examiner is not bound to read appendices, so a reflective project that is not complete in itself will lose marks. Make sure you do not address any of the assessment criteria in the appendices.

How do I start the reflective project?

Before starting the reflective project, you should:

- start thinking about the issue at the beginning of the IBCC
- read the assessment criteria (see "Appendix C: Assessment criteria")

- read previous reflective projects to identify strengths and possible pitfalls
- spend time working out the research question
- plan how, when and where you will find material for the reflective project
- have a clear structure in mind for the reflective project (see “Appendix A: Sample initial plan”).

During your reflective project, you should:

- plan a schedule for researching and producing the project, including time for delays and unforeseen problems (see “Appendix B: Sample timeline”)
- start work early and adhere to deadlines
- maintain a good working relationship with your supervisor
- use the library and consult librarians for advice
- record sources as you go along (rather than trying to reconstruct a list at the end)
- choose a new topic and a research question that **can** be answered if there is a problem with the original topic
- use appropriate language
- let your interest and enthusiasm show.

After completing the reflective project, you should:

- check and proofread the final version carefully.

What are my responsibilities?

You are required to:

- choose an issue with an ethical dilemma that is related to your career-related study
- consult with your supervisor about the issue chosen before beginning research
- plan a schedule for researching and producing the project
- meet deadlines
- acknowledge all sources of information and ideas in an approved academic manner
- make sure you carefully address the assessment criteria for the reflective project
- carefully proofread all aspects of the project prior to submitting.

What are the responsibilities of my supervisor?

Your supervisor is required to:

- read recent reflective project assessment reports
- discuss the choice of topic with you
- provide you with advice and guidance in the skills of undertaking research including:
 - access to appropriate resources (such as people, a library, a computer)
 - techniques of information/evidence/data-gathering and analysis
 - documenting sources
- encourage and support you throughout the research and creation of the project (by spending between three and five hours with you)
- read and comment on the first draft only of the project (but does **not** edit the drafts)

- monitor your progress to offer guidance
- ensure the work is your own
- read the final version to confirm its authenticity.

How is the reflective project assessed or graded?

- The reflective project is graded on 10 criteria (see “Appendix C: Assessment criteria”).
- Where your reflective project comprises two formats (for example, a radio play with accompanying written report), the assessment criteria will be applied to the overall project.
- The levels attainable are 0, 1, 2 or 3 depending on your performance against the criterion in question. There are a total of 30 marks possible.
- Grades correspond with the total number of marks achieved across all criteria. Grade boundaries for a given session can be found on the respective session’s reflective project subject report.
- Assessment is completed by a teacher/supervisor at your school.
- Samples of student projects are sent to an IB nominated moderator outside of the school to confirm marking.
- Examiners will not read beyond the appropriate word limit when assessing the reflective project.
- The IB will award a grade based on the mark.
- Any student awarded a grade of E for the reflective project will not be awarded the IBCC.

What do I need to know about academic honesty?

Academic honesty is a set of values and behaviours informed by the attributes of the IB learner profile. In teaching, learning and assessment, academic honesty serves to promote personal integrity, engender respect for the integrity of others and their work, and ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies.

All coursework—including work submitted for assessment—is to be authentic, based on your individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged.

For further information on academic honesty in the IB, please consult the following IB publications.

- *Academic honesty* (first published August 2009, updated July 2011)
- *General regulations: IB Career-related Certificate* (October 2012)

How do I acknowledge the ideas or work of another person?

You must acknowledge all sources used in your reflective project using a standard style of referencing in a consistent manner.

Some further points:

- The IB does not prescribe which style of referencing or in-text citation should be used.
- Regardless of the reference style you do use, the minimum information must include: name of author, date of publication, title of source, and page numbers as applicable.
- Use your style of referencing consistently so that credit is given to all sources used, including sources that have been paraphrased or summarized.
- Clearly distinguish between your words and those of others by the use of quotation marks (or other methods like indentation) followed by an appropriate citation that denotes an entry in the bibliography.

- If an electronic source is cited, the date of access must be indicated.
- Make sure all sources have been acknowledged, including all audio/visual material, text, graphs, images and/or data published in print or in electronic sources.

Tip: Most word processors have the means to help you with referencing.

Formats

There are a variety of formats you can choose from to present your reflective project. Formats allowed are listed below and the following explanations are designed to give you a broad understanding of the formats.

Where the table of formats indicates a written report, you may also write an essay instead of a report. The written report/essay should aim to cover the assessment criteria not addressed by the format used. Where more than one format is submitted for the reflective project (for example, a film and report or a play and an essay), these are marked together. The format you choose must be able to be sent electronically to the IB for moderation and it must be presented in English, French or Spanish.

Format	Maximum length
Essay/dialogue/short play	3,000 words
Short film	10 minutes in length accompanied by a 750-word written report
Radio play/interview	10 minutes in length accompanied by a 1,500-word written report
Web page	5 single images accompanied by 2,500 words of written material
Microsoft PowerPoint® presentation	10 single slides accompanied by a 1,500-word written report
Storyboard/ photographic presentation	15 single images accompanied by a 1,500-word written report

Essay

An essay is a piece of formal writing organized in a number of sections or as a number of paragraphs linked together. Although you can choose the style of essay you wish to use, the expository essay may prove to be the most suitable for some reflective projects. Make sure the essay is no more than 3,000 words. If you choose an alternative format, an accompanying essay is between 750 words and 1,500 words depending on the format chosen.

Report

A written report is an extended piece of writing describing and analysing your research and findings. It is usually structured with a number of subheadings and can include graphs, tables, illustrations, diagrams, bullet points and so on. Depending on the format you choose for your reflective project, the written report is between 750 words and 1,500 words.

Dialogue

A dialogue is a written conversation between two or more people, or characters in a play/novel/film and so on. For example, you could create a dialogue where two characters discuss an issue, an ethical dilemma and through their dialogue, address all the assessment criteria. You would need to make sure that you do not go over 3,000 words. You may also write a shorter dialogue and then explore the ideas raised within the dialogue in an accompanying report/essay.

Play

The play should have a narrative, two or more characters and written in a manner that clearly identifies it as a play. You do not need to perform your play. The play could form part of, or the entire, 3,000 word limit. If the play is 3,000 words long, in it you should seek to encapsulate the intention and focus of the reflective project, which clearly outlines an issue, an ethical dilemma, and the discussion of all its relevant parts. You could also write a shorter play and then explore ideas raised within the play in an accompanying report/essay.

Short film

A film of no more than 10 minutes in length can be presented in any number of ways. It could be a documentary, a drama, a news report and so on. There are few, if any, restrictions on what constitutes a short film; you are free to create what you believe will be a valuable component of your reflective project. Remember that the film and the written report/essay are marked together.

Radio play

A radio play is a drama that is based on audio only. It is usually made up of three elements: dialogue, music and sound effects. It would have one or more characters performing a spoken drama exploring your issue, an ethical dilemma and related criteria. It may only be up to 10 minutes in length and must be recorded as an audio presentation. A 1,500-word report or essay must accompany it. This approach provides you with the opportunity to address or emphasize in the report/essay any criteria that may not have been covered in the radio play.

Interview

An interview allows you to be creative by imagining and developing a discussion between two or more people. As with the radio play, you are required to make an audio recording of up to 10 minutes in length. However, you may also create a video of the interview. You should address the criteria of the reflective project through the interview. The interview is then supplemented by a report/essay of 1,500 words.

Web page

The creation of a web page allows those who enjoy information technology (IT) to create a platform on which to address the reflective project and its criteria. This format requires a minimum of five images and 2,500 words.

There are two options:

- creating a web page that covers the reflective project in its entirety
The web page could be structured as a series of images and written sections.
- creating a web page and a report/essay to go with it
The web page could be a number of images and descriptive text with an accompanying report/essay.

PowerPoint presentation

You are not restricted to PowerPoint and may use other types of presentation software. When creating up to 10 slides, try to follow some simple guidelines (for example, use images to convey information, only use three bullet points per slide, and avoid placing paragraphs of text on a slide). Make sure that the presentation adds to your reflective project and addresses some of the criteria of the reflective project. Criteria not addressed in the presentation must be addressed in the accompanying written report/essay.

Storyboard

This is particularly suited to artistic students who enjoy drawing and telling stories through their art. A storyboard usually is a linear structure of narrative told through imagery. It provides the reader with an overview of your reflective project and should create points of discussion or ideas using up to 15 images, which are then addressed in the accompanying 1,500-word written report/essay.

Photo essay

The photo essay is like a storyboard except that instead of drawing the pictures, you take up to 15 photographs. It could tell a story and/or provide points of discussion and/or give further emphasis to your written report/essay of 1,500 words. You should decide just what it is that your photographs will accomplish and how they will contribute to the reflective project overall.

Tip: Always make sure that any format you use will contribute towards the assessment criteria.

The research process

When researching for the reflective project, you should do the following.

1. Read the assessment criteria.
2. Select an issue that interests you.
3. Undertake sufficient preparatory reading on your chosen issue. Read a selection of articles, newspapers, magazines, books and websites that will help you determine the significance of your issue and formulate a good reflective project question. As you read, underline or note down key words, phrases and ideas that can be used to further your search for information. Keep in mind the reflective project guidelines.
4. Formulate a well-focused research question on an issue. If you discover that it will not be possible to obtain the evidence needed in the time available, the question should be changed. This should be done sooner rather than later. You should not lose time waiting and hoping that something will turn up. Rather, start the research process over again and develop a new question.
5. Plan your investigation and production/writing process.
 - Identify how and from which sources you will gather material.
 - Identify which system of academic referencing you will use.
 - Set deadlines for each stage of your reflective project.
6. Plan a structure that is based on your research and logically supports your research question. The structure of your reflective project may change as you conduct more research, but it is useful to have a sense of direction.
7. Carry out the research.
 - Access, read and gather information from a wide variety of sources: journals, books, databases, and other secondary source documents when appropriate. You should not rely on internet search engines as your sole access point for locating information.
 - Undertake primary research within your chosen community if that is what you have decided to do.
 - The material gathered should be assembled in a logical order, linked to the structure of the reflective project. Only then will you know whether you have enough evidence for each stage of the argument so that you can proceed to the next.
 - Be prepared to handle different perspectives. Your thoughtful analysis and commentary on different viewpoints serve to strengthen your reflective project.
8. Collate all the research sources that you have used in your reflective project and place them in a bibliography to be included in your final submission.

Tip: A library is the best place to find research materials. If you are having difficulty, ask the librarian for assistance on how to locate research materials.

Developing a good research question

A good research question focuses your reflective project and so it is essential you spend time developing a clear and focused research question that above everything else allows for an ethical discussion.

Examiners have identified the following two possible problem areas with regard to the reflective project.

1. Confusion between descriptive and interrogative projects
2. A good question on a controversial issue with no ethical dilemma

Confusion between descriptive and interrogative projects

Although descriptive projects can be very interesting, they do not fit the requirements of the reflective project. The problem here is that descriptive projects lead to a single answer or an explanation of why a situation has arisen. These projects simply describe a social phenomenon or situation. Interrogative projects, on the other hand, provide a discussion and debate on differing points of view related to an issue that has an ethical dilemma.

Students must consciously develop a research question that will lead to an interrogative project not a descriptive project.

The following three examples will demonstrate how to avoid a descriptive project.

1. A student has developed the following research question: "Why are so few women in the UK involved in business?"

This question leads to a descriptive project about what is happening in a specific context and requires some research on statistics to justify the explanation given. A better-formulated question leading to an interrogative project would have been: "Should positive discrimination in the workplace be promoted if it leads to more women in senior company positions?"

2. A student has developed the following research question: "Is the practice of hotels being exclusively for adult-only, as opposed to child-friendly, widespread?"

Again, this is a question that leads to a simple yes or no answer following a description of the data that has been researched. A better-formulated question would have been: "Are adult-only hotels and resorts discriminatory?"

3. A student has developed the following research question: "Why do teenagers use cyberbullying to harass others? What are its effects on the victim and what can be done about it?"

This question initially asks simply for the reasons behind a phenomenon and then the consequences of this. It then requires solutions to the situation. A better-formulated question would have been: "Would it be acceptable for school authorities to insist on access to the internet accounts of their students in order to prevent cyberbullying?"

A good question on a controversial issue with no ethical dilemma

It is possible to design a question on a controversial issue that has no ethical dilemma. For example: “Would the introduction of video refereeing improve the modern game of football?”

This is an open question that would encourage different points of view and would lead to a good discussion and debate. However, it does not involve an ethical dilemma and, therefore, cannot be used in a reflective project. Make sure that any question you create on an issue does have an ethical dilemma.

Good research questions

Here are some examples of good research questions in different career-related areas. Each of them allows an ethical dilemma of an issue related to a career-related area to be explored. A good question encourages different viewpoints on a socially significant topic.

Tourism

Your issue could be tourism associated with fragile ecosystems. An appropriate research question could be: “Should tourism be restricted in fragile coastal areas?”

Business and marketing

Your issue could be the impact of advertising on young children. An appropriate research question could be: “Should advertising be banned on children’s television programmes?”

Media studies

Your issue could be the public interest. An appropriate research question could be: “Should the media publish stories that are in the public interest, even if it affects the private life of an individual?”

Police studies

Your issue could be crime prevention. An appropriate research question could be: “Should governments install cameras in all public areas, which may impact on freedom and privacy?”

Sport/outdoor education

Your issue could be the education of elite athletes. An appropriate research question could be: “Is it appropriate that elite athletes are offered scholarships to attend particular universities?”

Banking

Your issue could be bonuses for executives in government-supported banks. An appropriate research question could be: “Is it fair and just to pay bank executives big bonuses?”

Tip: A useful step-by-step guide to ensuring you have developed a good research question for the reflective project is found in the section ‘Selecting a good topic’.

The assessment criteria explained

The following section examines each assessment criterion and provides an explanation.

Criterion A: The issue in context

This criterion assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of the issue as well as the ability to analyse diverse perspectives on the issue. Also, this criterion assesses the student's ability to contextualize the issue, which could be in terms of, for example, education, technology, politics, economics, the environment or the workplace.

The process of developing a reflective project begins by selecting an issue that you would like to explore in detail. The issue you choose must be related to your career-related studies. You should be thinking about interesting issues from the very beginning of your IBCC journey. You are bound to come across a number of issues but do not necessarily choose the first one that interests you because it may not be a good issue for the reflective project. Also, you might come across better issues during your studies.

At some point you will have to decide on the issue you are going to explore. You will need to:

- clearly state/identify the issue in your reflective project
- provide some background to the issue, that is, show the examiner how the particular issue relates to your career-related studies and why it is important to discuss the issue
- view the issue from different perspectives. Identify for example, how the issue might affect different people in different ways
- place the issue in context

This means briefly explaining where the impact of the issue will be most felt. This might be, for example, in the workplace or in the environment or in the local community or in the economy or in the health field or in popular culture.

- ensure that the issue you choose has an ethical dilemma.

The ethical dilemma of your issue is the thread that runs through your entire reflective project and so is the single most important element of the reflective project. We will return to the meaning of the ethical dilemma of your issue when we discuss criterion C.

Your next step is crucial: develop a research question based around the issue. The question must clearly highlight the ethical dilemma of the issue referred to above. The rest of your project is about answering that particular question.

When you have chosen your issue and your research question, it is time to find out what your community thinks about the issue and its associated ethical dilemma.

Criterion B: Community awareness

This criterion assesses the student's awareness and understanding of the impact of the issue on the community. The community could be local or global.

Criterion B assesses the research you have undertaken on the chosen issue. You are required to find out how the community feels about the issue and how they will be impacted by the issue. This can be done through either primary and/or secondary research.

Primary research is collecting data and information first-hand that is by you, through the use of questionnaires, surveys and interviews. Secondary research is collecting data and information that already exists, that is by reading reports, publications and other literature. Your research question, determined in criterion A, will help you focus your research. You should know what data/information you want to get, so make sure your question promotes research.

A community is a group of people with common interests such as where they live, religion and ethnicity. A community has its own set of attitudes and way of life. Those attitudes and way of life make the members of the community see the world around them in a certain way. You need to be aware of what those attitudes are and the way in which they influence the community.

There is a common misunderstanding about the term “community”. It is tempting to see the community as simply those around you, for instance at your school, at home or on work placement. But this is a limited definition of the word. You need to think about the wider sense of the term. It could be your local neighbourhood, your town, your city, even your country or it could be your religious community or your ethnic community.

For logistical reasons you may choose to engage with your local neighbourhood or town, particularly if you want to undertake primary research. Secondary research is probably more appropriate if you want to take a broader view of community. More information on collecting data is found in criterion F.

Criterion C: The ethical dimension of the issue

This criterion assesses the student’s ability to explore the ethical dimension of the issue using a balanced approach.

In the context of the reflective project, the ethical dimension is specifically related to an ethical dilemma. An ethical dilemma is a choice between two (or more) conflicting moral perspectives where neither choice provides a perfect solution. You need to evaluate these perspectives and then come to your own conclusion based on reasoned argument.

It is very important to show and analyse different perspectives in your reflective project. It is not enough to describe different perspectives; you must explain why the perspectives are different.

When looking at the different perspectives of the ethical dilemma in your reflective project, make sure you adopt a balanced approach. Also make sure you examine the “for and against” of each perspective.

Criterion D: Cultural awareness

This criterion assesses the student’s awareness of cultural influences on the ethical dimension of the issue.

This criterion asks you to demonstrate an awareness of how culture can influence perspectives on the ethical dilemma of the issue. This criterion is broadly interpreted to allow students to explore social and cultural differences based on cultural identity and how these differences may lead to different perspectives. This, therefore, allows you to look for differences related to, for example:

- age
- ethnicity

- gender
- history
- language
- location
- nationality
- religious beliefs
- socio-economic background.

It would be a good idea when consulting the community on the issue to obtain data related to some of the categories above.

Criterion E: Reasoning

This criterion assesses the student's reasoning processes, ability to evaluate material and ability to think logically.

This criterion is interrelated with criterion G in that your reasoning (assessed using criterion E) helps you express a personal view (assessed using criterion G). Once you have examined the opposing viewpoints on an ethical dilemma, you have to argue your point of view. When doing so you should use both deductive and inductive reasoning to support your argument.

Deductive reasoning moves from the general to the specific (from premises to a conclusion).

For example:

Premise 1: Abraham Lincoln is either dead or alive.

Premise 2: Abraham Lincoln is not alive.

Conclusion: Abraham Lincoln is dead.

This type of deductive argument is known as a syllogism, basing a conclusion on two premises.

When using deductive reasoning make sure that any conclusions you make are based on premises that have been explicitly identified in your project and are true, or at least believed to be true or accepted as reliable.

Unlike deductive reasoning that goes from the general to the specific, inductive reasoning goes from the specific to the general. We call this inductive inference (from the observed to the unobserved). We do not know for certain but we are fairly sure.

For example:

Mary, John and Lina, all IBCC students, now understand the difference between deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning after reading the information on criterion E in this guide.

Conclusion: If IBCC students read the information on criterion E in this guide, they will understand the difference between deductive reasoning and inductive reasoning.

The conclusion is a generalization based on specific evidence.

Tip: To check your reasoning, explain your position to your supervisor/friend for constructive feedback.

Criterion F: Supporting evidence

This criterion assesses the student's ability to collect and use relevant information from a variety of sources.

You are to collect evidence related to the issue and the related ethical dilemma. The grade you get for your reflective projects is, to a large degree, dependent on the quality of the research done and the information gathered to support your arguments and points of view. That is why it is crucial that you search for data relevant to the issue of your reflective project. You also need to show critical judgment when using sources—the first source of information that you come across may not be the best one. Be prepared to seek out multiple sources of information.

Although it is necessary to have a significant amount of data to inform and support your project, there is no need for pages of annexes and appendices. Remember, any material included in an appendix or annex is not part of the word count of the reflective project, and so does not have to be read by the examiner. If the information is important enough, it should be in the body of your project.

You must take care when using all sources and ensure that you have double-checked that the information is valid and not just take it at face value.

What is relevant data?

You are required to find a range of evidence from a variety of sources, which provide contrasting views of the issue and the associated ethical dilemma. The evidence should be referred to all the way through your project and not simply something that is put together at the end of your project.

Where could you find relevant data?

This could and should come from multiple sources, such as:

- statistics from reputable sources (for example, those provided by government organizations, professional organizations and non-governmental organizations)
- an interview conducted with an authority or an expert on the issue in question
This could be conducted by yourself or be an interview that has been published elsewhere.
- an essay, article or book on the subject
- documentaries
- credible internet sites (for example, those provided by universities, museums, non-governmental organizations and the like).

However, you must exercise some critical judgment when using websites to ensure that the information you use is relevant and credible.

What are unacceptable practices?

- Surveys carried out with your friends, teachers, colleagues from your work placement or your parents
Although these sources might have ideas or opinions on the issue, for a survey to have scientific validity it has to be conducted on a larger scale and to be socially representative.
- Source material that is not fully synthesized
Examiners do not have to read pages of appendices of statistics so you must summarize the data that you use and ensure it is part of the main body of your argument. This will also make your arguments more effective.
- Use yourself as a source

You cannot use yourself as your principal source.

- Long passages copied from the internet or books or journals, which are not analysed in any way
If you cite a source, explain how it contributes to the issue under discussion.
- Using other people's work or thoughts without citing the source

You must not take credit for someone else's work. This is plagiarism. Always cite your sources and use an appropriate referencing system. Talk to your teacher or librarian about using an appropriate referencing system.

Tip: More information on academic honesty can be found in the section "What do I need to know about academic honesty?".

Criterion G: Student voice

This criterion assesses the student's ability to express a personal view on the issue using a range of relevant evidence.

This criterion asks you to give your opinion. This could include a personal view on the issue itself but most definitely you should give your view on the ethical dilemma that underpins your research question. You must draw on your research and evidence to support your personal view and also present a well-reasoned argument to justify your personal view. You are trying to persuade the reader to accept your position. Make sure the reader clearly understands your viewpoint—be explicit.

Tip: Always try to be objective, avoid emotion.

Criterion H: Reflection

This criterion assesses the student's ability to reflect on the insights gained through exploration of the issue.

Student voice and reflection are not the same thing. Criterion G assesses how you **express** and **explain** your personal view on the ethical dilemma associated with your issue. You must formulate personal ideas **and** explain how you reached them, why they are relevant, why you prefer a particular solution. In a way criterion G assesses how you think for yourself.

Criterion H assesses how you reflect on your attitudes and views. You may find that after researching and exploring the issue you have changed or strengthened your original opinion or that you have arrived at an unexpected conclusion. This is because your reflective project has led you down new paths. This means that you **are reflecting** while you are writing your reflective project.

It might be helpful to see this in terms of a journey. At the beginning of the journey you decide on the issue you want to explore. You then develop a research question leading to an ethical dilemma related to your issue. At this point you may have an initial personal reaction to this. You are likely to have your own perspective on the issue and the associated ethical dilemma. However, you are then going to explore this issue from different perspectives and maybe discover new insights—aspects of the issue that you did not expect at the start and that might even surprise you.

For example, your reflective project might focus on homeless people and whether society has a duty to look after them. Your first reaction based on instinct or on brief encounters with people begging on the streets, may be a negative one. You may initially feel that homeless people are on the streets by choice, that they are doing nothing to help themselves and that they are probably homeless as a result of their own actions. However, possibly by spending time with them as part of community service or talking to social care workers dealing with the homeless or researching causes and consequences of homelessness, you might dramatically change your point of view. You might discover that the reasons that lie behind a person becoming homeless are much more complex than you initially thought.

At the start of your reflective project identify your initial point of view. Then later in your reflective project, maybe in your conclusion, discuss whether your initial viewpoint has been confirmed or whether it is completely different as a result of your reflective project journey.

Criterion I: Communication

This criterion assesses the effectiveness of the language used in the project and the ability to communicate important terms, concepts, ideas and their application.

This criterion requires you to communicate clearly and effectively.

Tip: A good resource on clear and effective use of language can be found at: <http://faculty.washington.edu/ezent/el.htm>.

Criterion J: Presentation

This criterion assesses the ability to organize the project in terms of coherence and structure. Documentation style is also assessed.

The reflective project should have a logical structure. Your project should have a clear beginning, middle and end. You could, for example, write an introduction that outlines the issue, identifies a research question and outlines the ethical dilemma. The middle section of your reflective project could explore the ethical dilemma in detail including different perspectives, as well as your own reasoned point of view supported by research and other evidence. Your conclusion could include a reflection on your personal views.

Criterion J also assesses your use of an appropriate citing and referencing style.

Tip: More information on this can be found in the section "How do I acknowledge the ideas or work of another person?"

Selecting a good topic

The following is a step-by-step guide using the following table to ensure you have a good topic.

Step 1

Start at the top of the table and find an issue related to your IBCC course.

Step 2

Formulate a non-ethical question that simply asks you to describe what you know about the issue.

Step 3

Redraft your question so that it just asks for one solution to the problem or issue.

Step 4

Try to think of the ethical dilemma associated with the issue and open up the question so it leads to multiple answers.

Step 5

Now focus on the ethical dilemma and enlarge it so that the question now goes far beyond the limits of the original observation. Your question should have more than one right answer and require the use of argument.

	Level	Descriptors	Example A	Example B	Example C
Step 1	Real-life situation in the context of your IBCC	Observation from the workplace, class discussion, something read in a newspaper, etc.	Video refereeing	Deforestation	Child labour
Step 2	Non ethical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Simple description • Does not involve an ethical dilemma • Yes or no answer 	Would the introduction of video refereeing improve the modern game of football?	Does deforestation have an impact?	Is child labour common in some countries?
Step 3	Poor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed question • Descriptive answer 	What would improve the game of football?	Why human needs can lead to deforestation?	How does child labour affect both the children and the economy in a country and what is being done to prevent it?
Step 4	Average	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open question • Touches partially on an ethical dilemma 	Should a club be concerned with behaviour on and off the pitch?	Should we be concerned with the origin of the wood that we use?	How concerned should we be with child labour?
Step 5	Good	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open question • Clear ethical dilemma • More than one right answer 	Should a club be excluded from competitions because of the behaviour of its fans?	Knowing that many communities rely on woodcutting, should we forbid the use of wood that is not from sustainable forests?	Knowing that many poor communities rely on income from all family members, should child labour be entirely illegal?

Ethical guidelines

You need to be aware of these guidelines as they will help you conduct your research appropriately.

- Any research that creates anxiety, stress, pain or discomfort for participants is not permitted.
- Any research that involves unjustified deception, involuntary participation or invasion of privacy, including inappropriate use of IT, email and the internet, is prohibited.
- All participants in research activities must be informed before commencing the research that they have the right to withdraw at any time. Pressure must not be placed on any individual participant to continue with the investigation beyond this point.
- Each participant must be informed of the aims and objectives of the research and must be shown the results of the research.
- Research involving children needs the written consent of parent(s) or guardian(s). You must ensure that parents are fully informed about the implications for children who take part in such research. Where research is conducted with children in a school setting, the written consent of the teachers concerned must also be obtained.
- Participants must be debriefed and given the right to withdraw their own personal data and responses. Anonymity for each participant must be guaranteed.
- When working on the reflective project you must exercise the greatest sensitivity to local and international cultures.
- When working on the reflective project you must avoid conducting research with any adult who is not in a fit state of mind and cannot respond freely and independently.
- If any participant shows stress and/or pain at any stage of the research, the research must finish immediately, and the participant must be allowed to withdraw.
- All data collected must be kept in a confidential and responsible manner and not divulged to any other person.
- Research that is conducted online, using electronic and internet sources, is subject to the same guidelines. Any data collected online must be deleted once the research is complete. Such data must not be used for any purpose other than the conduct of the research.

Checklist

The following is a checklist you can use before, during and after your reflective project.

- Is the title of the reflective project in the form of a question rather than a statement or hypothesis?
- Is your question interrogative rather than descriptive?
- Is there more than one right answer to the question?
- Have you planned your answer carefully?
- Have you explained the issue at the start of your project?
- Have you clearly identified an ethical dilemma?
- Have you clearly shown different community/cultural perspectives with respect to the ethical dilemma of the issue?
- Does your project show that you have explored different perspectives on the issue?
- Have you supported your arguments with relevant, credible and well-chosen facts, data and examples?
- Is your own viewpoint clear?
- Have you arrived at a reflective answer?
- Does the research project respond to the title question in a clear, logical and coherent manner?
- Have you carried out a self-evaluation on your project (see the section "Self-evaluation" in this guide) based on the 10 assessment criteria?
- Have you cited all of your sources?

Self-evaluation

As you work through your reflective project and on its completion, it is worth taking the time to ask yourself a series of questions relating to the assessment criteria.

The following questions can be adapted for personal use.

Criterion A: The issue in context	
<p>This criterion assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of the issue as well as the ability to analyse diverse perspectives on the issue. Also, this criterion assesses the student's ability to contextualize the issue, which could be in terms of, for example, education, technology, politics, economics, the environment or the workplace.</p>	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysed the central issue from different perspectives? shown good knowledge and understanding of the issue with a clear sense of scope and context(s)?
Criterion B: Community awareness	
<p>This criterion assesses the student's awareness and understanding of the impact of the issue on the community. The community could be local or global.</p>	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engaged with a community? ensured that engagement supports an analysis of the impact of the issue on that community? ensured your engagement with the community formed an integral part of your inquiry?
Criterion C: The ethical dimension of the issue	
<p>This criterion assesses the student's ability to explore the ethical dimension of the issue using a balanced approach.</p>	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated the ethical dilemma of the issue? justified the validity of both sides of the dilemma? shown balance in your approach to both sides of the dilemma in your conclusion?
Criterion D: Cultural awareness	
<p>This criterion assesses the student's awareness of cultural influences on the ethical dimension of the issue.</p>	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> analysed how cultural perspectives can influence the ethical dimension (that is ethical dilemma) of the issue? developed and integrated this analysis into your project?

Criterion E: Reasoning	
This criterion assesses the student's reasoning processes, ability to evaluate material and ability to think logically.	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluated the issue in a clear and convincing manner? used, where appropriate, deductive and inductive reasoning to develop ideas and support conclusions? created a logical, perceptive and concise conclusion?
Criterion F: Supporting evidence	
This criterion assesses the student's ability to collect and use relevant information from a variety of sources.	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> sourced a wide range of evidence providing contrasting views of the issue? critically examined the views presented? ensured your evidence form an integral part of an in-depth analysis of the issue?
Criterion G: Student voice	
This criterion assesses the student's ability to express a personal view on the issue using a range of relevant evidence.	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> been precise, considered and, where appropriate, persuasive in your point of view? drawn on a range of evidence to justify your position?
Criterion H: Reflection	
This criterion assesses the student's ability to reflect on the insights gained through exploration of the issue.	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> made reflective statements analysing and evaluating the insights you have gained through exploring your issue?
Criterion I : Communication	
This criterion assesses the effectiveness of the language used in the project and the ability to communicate important terms, concepts, ideas and their application.	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ensured your language is clear, concise, and supports and develops meaning? explained key terms, concepts and ideas clearly and precisely? shown understanding of the key terms through using them?

Criterion J: Presentation	
<p>This criterion assesses the ability to organize the project in terms of coherence and structure. Documentation style is also assessed.</p>	<p>Have you:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• ensured your project is organized to give clarity and cohesion to the ideas presented?• ensured the sections of your project link together to present a coherent and convincing whole?• provided references, citations and a bibliography correctly?

Appendix A: Sample initial plan

Reflective project: My plan

Date: _____

Issue: Explain what is going to be the issue of your project. Remember to tie it to your career-related studies.

Ethical dilemma: What is the ethical dilemma you will be addressing in your project?

Perspectives: What are the two (or more) sides to this ethical dilemma of the issue that you will be researching?

A:

B:

Others?

Type: What type of format will you use? Will you be writing an essay? Creating a website? Writing a play? Describe what you are planning to do.

Research/Resources: What are your primary sources? Have you organized a system to keep track of your sources?

When: Your project needs to be completed by_____.

Create calendar/timeline/goals to accomplish this deadline. This is not a project that can be done in a day, a week or overnight!

Appendix B: Sample timeline

Due Date	Task	Comments	Notes
	Identify your topic or issue to be explored.	Your issue is related to your career-related studies, has an ethical dilemma and will promote higher level thinking, creativity, research, writing and is intellectually challenging.	
	Create a plan that will help you get your thoughts together about your reflective project.	More than one perspective to this issue is identified. What type of format are you thinking of using—write an essay, write a play, create a website etc?	
	Research is completed: notes taken and sources identified.	Keep a record of your research sources.	
	Re-evaluate plan.	As you conduct research, you may modify your original plan—this is fine as long as you are following the IBCC criteria for the reflective project.	
	Project outline is written.	This will put your ideas in a logical order, and make sure you are not missing any important elements.	
	Reflective project draft is completed.	Use the assessment criteria for reference as you are writing.	
	Reflective project self-evaluation is completed.	Do this well—if you cannot answer a question, then your project is missing an important component.	
	Reflective project draft is read and discussed.	Hand your reflective project to your supervisor to read and comment on. Your supervisor does not edit your draft.	
	Complete final reflective project.	Taking into account your supervisor’s comments, make any changes you believe necessary and complete the reflective project. Use the “checklist” before submitting your reflective project.	

	Submit your reflective project to your supervisor.	Your supervisor confirms its authenticity.	
	Your final reflective project is assessed by your supervisor.	Once assessed, the grade given for your reflective project is submitted to the IB.	
	Moderation by the IB.	The IB will provide a random list of candidate names to your school. Your school will then send the reflective projects of these candidates to an external moderator. The submission of sample work from candidates allows the IB to moderate the marking of supervisors in order to achieve a common standard across schools.	

Appendix C: Assessment criteria

Criterion A: The issue in context

This criterion assesses the student's knowledge and understanding of the issue as well as the ability to analyse diverse perspectives on the issue. Also, this criterion assesses the student's ability to contextualize the issue, which could be in terms of, for example, education, technology, politics, economics, the environment or the workplace.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	The central issue is identified and the student shows an awareness of the context(s) of the issue, though this may be largely implicit. Overall, the project demonstrates basic knowledge and understanding of the issue, but may be dominated by one view.
2	The central issue is analysed from more than one perspective, though coverage may be uneven. Overall, the work demonstrates sound knowledge and understanding of the issue and its context(s).
3	The central issue is analysed from different perspectives and evaluated in a balanced way. Overall, the work demonstrates good knowledge and understanding of the issue with a clear sense of scope and context(s).

Criterion B: Community awareness

This criterion assesses the student's awareness and understanding of the impact of the issue on the community. The community could be local or global.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	There is evidence of engagement with the community that shows an awareness of the relevance of the issue chosen to community members, though this may not always be well integrated into the overall inquiry.
2	The engagement with the community is relevant and sustained, showing an understanding of the impact of the issue on community members and supporting points made in the inquiry.
3	The engagement with the community supports an analysis of the impact of the issue on community members and forms an integral part of the inquiry.

Criterion C: The ethical dimension of the issue

This criterion assesses the student's ability to explore the ethical dimension of the issue using a balanced approach.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	The ethical dimension of the issue is identified and some of the implications explored, though this may be largely implicit. Different viewpoints are included though the presentation may be unbalanced.
2	The ethical dimension is explored explicitly, showing an understanding of the pros and cons of different viewpoints.
3	The ethical dimension of the issue is evaluated, showing an ability to justify the validity of both sides of the dilemma and balance them when drawing conclusions.

Criterion D: Cultural awareness

This criterion assesses the student's awareness of cultural influences on the ethical dimension of the issue.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	Some awareness of how cultural perspectives can influence the ethical dimension of the issue is demonstrated, though this may be largely implicit.
2	Understanding of how cultural perspectives can influence the ethical dimension of issue is demonstrated and supported, where appropriate, with relevant examples.
3	Analysis of how cultural perspectives can influence the ethical dimension of the issue is developed and integrated into the ideas presented.

Criterion E: Reasoning

This criterion assesses the student's reasoning processes, ability to evaluate material and ability to think logically.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	A basic argument is presented, but may not always be sustained, providing straightforward conclusions.
2	The argument is clear and reasoned with a consistent viewpoint maintained throughout. Where appropriate, the student is beginning to use deductive and inductive reasoning and demonstrates understanding of cause and effect. Conclusions made are logical and draw on the arguments and evidence presented.
3	The argument presents a clear and convincing evaluation of the issue, where appropriate using deductive and inductive reasoning to develop ideas and support conclusions. Conclusions made are logical, perceptive and concise.

Criterion F: Supporting evidence

This criterion assesses the student's ability to collect and use relevant information from a variety of sources.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	Supporting evidence from different sources is provided, but may not always be relevant. The evidence is used to support arguments, though its provenance or bias may not always be taken into account.
2	A range of relevant evidence presenting different viewpoints is provided to contribute to an analysis of the issue. The student is able to distinguish fact from opinion and take account of value judgments and bias when using sources.
3	A wide range of evidence from sources providing contrasting views of the issue is provided and the views presented critically examined. The evidence forms an integral part of an in-depth analysis of the issue.

Criterion G: Student voice

This criterion assesses the student's ability to express a personal view on the issue using a range of relevant evidence.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	The student is able to express a personal view of the issue, but this may not be developed.
2	The student is able to develop a personal view clearly, drawing on relevant evidence to support their position.
3	The student is able to express a precise, considered and, where appropriate, persuasive point of view drawing on a range of evidence to justify their position.

Criterion H: Reflection

This criterion assesses the student's ability to reflect on the insights gained through exploration of the issue.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	Reflective statements relevant to the issue are included, but may not be developed.
2	Reflective statements begin to show the ability to recognize and explain insights gained through exploring the issue.
3	Reflective statements show the ability to analyse and evaluate insights gained through exploring the issue.

Criterion I: Communication

This criterion assesses the effectiveness of the language used in the project and the ability to communicate important terms, concepts, ideas and their application.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	Language chosen is generally clear and rarely interferes with meaning. The student is able to use key terms, concepts and ideas, but these may not always be fully explained and there may be some evidence of misunderstanding.
2	Language chosen is appropriate and conveys meaning clearly. The student is able to explain key terms, concepts and ideas adequately.
3	Language chosen is clear and concise, supporting and developing meaning. The student explains key terms, concepts and ideas clearly and precisely and shows understanding through their application.

Criterion J: Presentation

This criterion assesses the ability to organize the project in terms of coherence and structure. Documentation style is also assessed.

Achievement level	Descriptor
0	The student has not met the requirements of the level 1 markband.
1	The project has a straightforward structure with sections organized by grouping together similar material, though the transitions between them may be awkward. References, citations and a bibliography are included, though these may be inconsistent and incomplete.
2	The project has a clear structure with sections connected to and leading on from each other. References, citations and a bibliography are included, though there may be the occasional inconsistencies and omissions.
3	The project is organized to give clarity and cohesion to the ideas presented, with sections linking to present a coherent and convincing whole. References, citations and a bibliography are included, with errors or omissions occurring only rarely.