



Research & Skills Studio 1: What Research Is (and Isn't)

Purpose

To give learners a shared understanding of what research means in the context of an Independent Project.

Key focus

- Research as enquiry, not information gathering
- Different types of sources
- Research across practical, creative, academic, and skills-based projects
- Academic Integrity: Setting clear boundaries on plagiarism and the ethical use of Generative AI from the outset

Workshop activities

- Group discussion: "What counts as research?"
- Examples of research across different project types
- Identifying appropriate sources for different purposes
- Short guided task: matching project types to research approaches

Learner outputs

- Annotated examples of relevant research sources
- Notes on how research might support their own project

Assessment focus:

Understanding research as enquiry and selecting appropriate sources.

Contributes evidence towards:

- **Research record**
Learners demonstrate awareness of different types of sources and their relevance to their project.
- **Bibliography**
Initial identification of suitable sources across at least two curriculum areas.
- **Journal / reflective log**
Reflection on what counts as research for their specific project and how it may support decision-making.

Assessment language supported:

- Selecting information from a range of sources
 - Understanding relevance and purpose of research
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Research & Skills Studio 2: Comparing, Evaluating & Referencing Sources

Purpose

To support learners to evaluate information and record it responsibly.

Key focus

- Reliability and relevance
- Comparing sources
- Simple, consistent referencing

Workshop activities

- Side-by-side comparison of different sources
- Discussion of bias, purpose, and audience
- Modelling simple referencing formats
- Guided practice using example materials

Learner outputs

- Source comparison notes
- Referenced research examples
- Bibliography entries started or refined

Assessment focus:

Evaluating information and recording research responsibly.

Contributes evidence towards:

- **Research record**
Evidence of comparing sources and making judgements about reliability, bias, and usefulness.
- **Bibliography**
Correctly recorded and consistently formatted references.
- **Written work / presentation / artefact**
Appropriate use of researched material within learner outcomes.
- **Journal / reflective log**
Reflection on why particular sources were chosen over others.

Assessment language supported:

- Comparing information from different sources
 - Selecting and justifying use of resources
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Research & Skills Studio 3: Using Technology & Digital Tools Well

Purpose

To help learners use technology thoughtfully and appropriately to support their projects.

Key focus

- Digital organisation
- Choosing the right tools for the task
- Ethical and appropriate use of technology (including AI)

Workshop activities

- Demonstration of digital tools for research, organisation, and presentation
- Discussion of strengths and limitations of different tools
- Clear guidance on ethical use of AI as a support, not a replacement
- Practical task using a digital tool relevant to multiple project types

Learner outputs

- Digital artefacts or organised files
- Notes on tool choice and purpose
- Reflection prompt on responsible use of technology

Assessment focus:

Appropriate and purposeful use of technology in project work.

Contributes evidence towards:

- **Research record**
Evidence of digital tools used to gather, organise, or analyse information.
- **Written work / presentation / artefact**
Use of digital formats where appropriate (documents, slides, media, design tools, etc.).
- **Journal / reflective log**
Reflection on choice of tools and ethical use, including AI where relevant.
- **Project plan / timeline**
Digital organisation of planning or time management tools.

Assessment language supported:

- Using appropriate technologies to support learning
 - Applying tools effectively to meet project objectives
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Research & Skills Studio 4: Reflective Writing, Evaluation & Communication

Purpose

To develop learners' ability to reflect clearly and evaluate their learning.

Key focus

- Reflective writing vs description
- Evaluation of learning and outcomes
- Effective Communication

Workshop activities

- Exploring examples of weak vs strong reflection
- Identifying language of reflection and evaluation
- Guided practice rewriting descriptive statements into reflective ones
- Discussion of how reflection supports assessment and learning

Learner outputs

- Improved reflective writing samples
- Clear evaluation statements
- Notes to apply to journals and final reflections

Assessment focus:

Reflection, evaluation, and clear communication of learning.

Contributes evidence towards:

- **Journal / reflective log**
Higher-quality reflective entries showing evaluation rather than description.
- **Mid- and end-of-project reviews**
Clear reflection on learning, challenges, decisions, and outcomes.
- **Final reflection**
Personal conclusions drawn from the project journey.
- **Presentation or written submission**
Clear communication of thinking, learning, and conclusions.

Assessment language supported:

- Reflecting on learning and progress
 - Evaluating outcomes and drawing conclusions
 - Communicating ideas clearly and appropriately
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