

CHECKLIST: Personal Project Paper Format Requirements and Guiding Questions

Jump to Criterion: [Criterion A Planning](#), [Criterion B: Skills](#), [Criterion C: Reflecting](#)

Please Note Specifications for Final Draft

- ☐ No more than 15 pages. Target 10-15 pages. IB doesn't require a specific word count, but you can anticipate between 3,000-5,000 words.
- ☐ **Bibliography doesn't count in page count and should be a separate document. Use MLA 9 to cite your sources.**
- ☐ **Optional Appendix:** You may have an appendix with pictures, charts, and evidence, up to 10 pages. Clearly label it, APPENDIX.
 - ☐ If you have a writing goal, include the first 10 pages of the written work as an appendix.
- ☐ Written work should be **11 point font size Arial** .78 inch or 2 cm margins
- ☐ DO NOT include a title page; if included, it will count towards the page limit.
- ☐ Use the subheadings to organize your paper.

CRITERION A: PLANNING

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Consider these guiding questions to help you with writing your report and possible subheadings.

PERSONAL INTEREST & GOALS

Write one to two paragraphs addressing these questions:

- ☐ What were your initial ideas and how did you narrow them down to a specific goal?
- ☐ How is your goal motivated by your personal interest? What are the reasons for doing this goal or what caused you to do it? What parts of your goal are highly challenging and how is it a measurable goal?
- ☐ What is your learning and product goal? (detail it in the chart)
- ☐ Inquiry Questions: What guiding questions can help you focus your learning and product goal? Write 3-5 questions that will help guide your research. (detail in the chart)

GLOBAL CONTEXT

- ☐ **Write one paragraph exploring the Global Context that connects to your project.**
 - ☐ How can you focus your project through the lens of the global context that is most appropriate? How does your project relate to a specific Global Context? Please see my website for ideas. Be specific.
<https://www.mrsmacfarland.com/personal-project/global-contexts>

INTENDED PRODUCT

- ☐ **Write a paragraph before your success criteria chart.**
 - ☐ What is your intended product? Why did you choose this product? What is its purpose and function (to educate, to entertain, to inform, to persuade, etc.)?

SUCCESS CRITERIA

- ☐ What are your success criteria for your product/outcome and how will this help you measure your success? What are the reasons for these criteria? Explain each criterion and why you chose it. See <https://www.mrsmacfarland.com/personal-project/success-criteria> for more information.
- ☐ How are your success criteria appropriate and suitable for your product? What information helped you decide on the criteria? Be specific.
- ☐ How will you use these criteria to self-assess your progress through the development of your product?
- ☐ **Include your success criteria chart.**

DETAILED PLAN FOR PERSONAL PROJECT

- ☐ **Write a paragraph answering the guiding questions before your timeline chart.**
 - ☐ What is your timeline for completing short- and long-term tasks? What series of steps will lead to the completion of the product?
 - ☐ How does your detailed plan address your success criteria? Connect your series of steps to the associated success criteria that is appropriate. How does the success criteria guide your plan?
 - ☐ What is your approach to planning and recording the development process of your project, including your deadlines? How will you document your progress?
- ☐ **Include your timeline chart by copying and pasting.**

CRITERION B: TAKING ACTION AND APPLYING ATL SKILLS

Prior Knowledge & Research Consulted

- ☐ **Write a paragraph or two answering the questions below.**
 - ☐ What prior knowledge and skills helped you be successful in achieving your goal? What did you already know about your topic?
 - ☐ What knowledge did you gain from your research? What types of sources did you consult? How did you pick your sources, and how did you know they were credible or reliable? Check out some guiding questions when evaluating sources at <https://www.mrsmacfarland.com/personal-project/research>.
 - ☐ Include part of your research chart or all of your research chart depending on how detailed it is. IB wants to see your methodology and how you went about your research.

Product Development & Planning Documents

- ☐ **Write a paragraph or two answering the questions below.**
 - ☐ What will your product be exactly? How did you decide what elements to include in your

product? What factors influenced your choices?

- ☐ How are you referring to your success criteria to improve your product/outcome throughout the process?
- ☐ How have you had to adjust your planning process as new deadlines or challenges emerge?
- ☐ What obstacles have you encountered? How have you overcome them using problem-solving skills?
- ☐ How are you demonstrating self-management skills? What planning documents did you use to capture your progress when developing your product? Include an example in your paper.

Consider adding evidence such as...

- ☐ a list and/or diagram of interests and related learning goals
- ☐ a list of possible strategies to achieve personal and academic goals
- ☐ a diagram showing the connections between the learning goal and the product
- ☐ a series of steps leading to the completion of the product
- ☐ a budget
- ☐ a list of materials
- ☐ a blueprint

Pictures of Product Development

- ☐ Include pictures or screenshots of your product development and explain with notes what you are showing the reader.

Application of ATL Skills for the LEARNING. See [ATL Handout](#) for Descriptions of the ATL Skills

- ☐ **Write an introductory paragraph before your ATL Chart (#7 document in your Personal Project Folder)**
 - ☐ How did you demonstrate the ATL skills for your learning goal? What **evidence** can you include to show proof of the skill?
 - ☐ What skills were developed and which ones did you already have? How has the personal project enhanced those existing skills?
- ☐ **Copy and paste your ATL Chart for Learning Goal**

Application of the ATL Skills for the PRODUCT. See [ATL Handout](#) for Descriptions of the ATL Skills

- ☐ **Write an introductory paragraph before your ATL Chart. (#7 document in your Personal Project Folder)**
 - ☐ How did you **demonstrate** the ATL skills for your product goal? What **skills** were developed and which ones did you already have?
 - ☐ To demonstrate, you must include specific **examples** & **evidence** to show application of the skill.
 - ☐ Be sure to include **detailed examples/evidence** to show the application of the skill. For instance, a student could include sample correspondence between a supervisor or professional, screenshots of daily reminders, reflection after accomplishing a step in the process, research notes that includes connections to the action plan, ways you organize your

budget and materials, pictures of process, blueprints, charts, screenshots of progress or notes, self/peer assessment feedback, illustrations, lists, notes, etc.

- ☐ **Copy and paste your ATL Chart for Product Goal**

CRITERION C: REFLECTION

Product Evaluation of Success Criteria

- ☐ Write a paragraph or two where you evaluate your product against your success criteria:
 - ☐ First, state explicitly whether the product was achieved or not and to what extent. In other words, to what extent was your product achieved?
 - ☐ Include specific pictures of the final product.
 - ☐ How do you evaluate your product/outcome against the criteria you established? Copy and paste your rubric of your Success Criteria. Indicate by bolding or underlining where you fell on the rubric. Then, write a paragraph and justify your score by giving a detailed account for the reasons and causes for your score. Use specific examples. Explain how you were effective.
 - ☐ What were your strengths and areas for improvement to your product/outcome? What were you proud of? What do you believe to be the strengths and limitations of the product?
 - ☐ What challenges did you encounter and how did you deal with them? If you made changes to your goal during the project, what were they and why did you make them?
 - ☐ Examples of supporting evidence
 - ☐ evaluation of the product against the success criteria
 - ☐ images showing key features of the product
 - ☐ analysis of the causes for success and/or failure

Pictures of Final Product

- ☐ Include pictures or screenshots of your final product and explain with notes what you are showing the reader.

Development as an IB Learner through the Project

- ☐ **Write a paragraph or two where you reflect on what you learned throughout the entire project:**
 - ☐ How has completing the project extended your development as an IB Learner (refer to [learner profile](#))?

- ☐ How did you move through the design/inquiry [cycle](#)? How has reflecting throughout the inquiry [cycle](#) informed your next steps? Would you do anything differently in retrospect?

Extension of Knowledge and Understanding

- ☐ **Write a paragraph or two where you reflect on what you learned throughout the entire project:**
 - ☐ How has completing the project extended your knowledge and understanding of your topic? Summarize the new knowledge and insights related to the learning and product goal.
 - ☐ Do you plan to further your interest in the topic in the future?

Personal Project Paper Rubric

Criterion A: Planning							
Strand i: State a learning goal for the project and explain how a personal interest led to that goal							
Presents a brief account of a plan that is superficial or that is not focused on a product. Goal may be simple or easily-achievable.		States a learning goal and outlines (summarizes) the connection between personal interests and that goal without a full explanation with detail.		States a learning goal and describes (a detailed account) the connection between personal interests & that goal, elaborating on how the goal is challenging		States a learning goal & explains (a detailed account including reasons/causes) the connection between personal interests and that goal, elaborating on how the goal is highly challenging	
Strand ii: state an intended product and develop appropriate success criteria for the product							
Briefly states the intended product although may be unrealistic/ vague in the description and may not have a clear connection to personal interests or a stated global context, with success criteria that is basic		States their intended product and presents basic success criteria for the product and starts to consider the qualitative elements of the product/outcome and how success may be observed.		States their intended product and presents multiple appropriate success criteria for the product that is realistic and relevant, qualitative and/or quantitative as appropriate		States their intended product and presents multiple appropriate, detailed success criteria for the product offering valid reasons and relevant, qualitative and/or quantitative as appropriate that is clearly defined with specific characteristics	
Strand iii: present a clear, detailed plan for achieving the product and its associated success criteria							
Presents a brief plan that is superficial or that is not focused on a product, a minimal outline of the development process		Presents a plan for achieving the product and some of its associated success criteria although dates and tasks may be too general		Presents a detailed plan for achieving the product and most of its associated success criteria with specific dates and deadlines with an explanation of the process and connections to how the student will achieve the associated success criteria		Presents a detailed plan for achieving the product and all of its associated success criteria with specific dates and deadlines with an explanation of the process and connections to how the student will achieve the associated success criteria with short and long term planning broken down into detailed logical steps	
Overall Level Criterion A							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Criterion B: Applying Skills							
Strand i: explain how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal							
States (names) the specific ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal Possible ATLs: <i>communication, collaboration, organization, affective, reflection, information literacy, media literacy, critical thinking, creative thinking, transfer.</i>		Outlines (summarizes) which ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal		Describes (a detailed account) which ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their learning goal and provides substantial evidence (<i>Include examples of evidence such as pictures, blueprints, charts, bulleted examples, materials in production, visual diagrams, annotated research, notes, screenshots, annotated illustrations, etc.</i>)		Explains (a detailed account including reasons or causes) how the ATL skills were applied to achieve their learning goal, supported with detailed examples or evidence (<i>Include examples of evidence such as pictures, blueprints, charts, bulleted examples, materials in production, visual diagrams, annotated research, notes, screenshots, annotated illustrations, etc.</i>)	
Strand ii: explain how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product							

States which ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product		Outlines how the ATL skills were applied to help achieve their product, supported with superficial examples or evidence		Describes how the ATL skills were applied to help achieve their product, supported with reference to examples or evidence		Explains how the ATL skill(s) was/were applied to help achieve their product, supported with detailed examples or evidence	
Overall Level Criterion B							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Criterion C: Reflecting							
Strand i: explain the impact of the project on their learning							
States briefly the impact of the project on themselves or their learning with no specific examples		Outlines (summarizes) the impact of the project on themselves or their learning using some examples		Describes (a detailed account) the impact of the project on themselves or their learning, <i>using specific and well-chosen examples.</i>		Explains (a detailed account with reasons or causes) the impact of the project on themselves or their learning <i>using specific and well-chosen examples.</i>	
Strand ii: evaluate the product based on the success criteria							
Briefly states whether the product was achieved and the quality of the product/outcome against some of the stated criteria but with limited judgment and detail.		States whether the product was achieved & the quality of the product, partially supported with evidence or examples, adequately making an appraisal by weighing the strengths and limitations.		Evaluates (makes an appraisal) the product based on the success criteria, supported with specific, well-chosen evidence or examples, substantially making an appraisal of the work by weighing the strengths and limitations.		Evaluates (makes an appraisal) the product based on the success criteria, fully supported with specific evidence or detailed examples weighing the strengths and limitations	
Overall Level Criterion C							
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

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