

# Guide to the Writing of the New PIP in 2010

By Kevin Steed, Head Teacher Commercial Studies, St Marys Senior High School

## Template for the Introduction

### First paragraph:

- What is your PIP about and why did you choose the area of enquiry?

### Second paragraph:

- What is your central hypothesis? That is, what are you setting out to prove in this research?

### Third paragraph:

- What methodologies have you employed in this research and why?
- Justify your selection of research tools – what are their advantages and why are they best suited to your research topic?

### Fourth paragraph:

- Explain how your PIP investigation will address the cross-cultural component. Bear in mind that this can **no longer be “time” or “generations”** as was the case in the HSC examination prior to 2010.
- You no longer have to explain the cross-cultural component in the Introduction, **but I would suggest that you do so.**
- Explain how this cross-cultural perspective will allow you (the researcher), to empathise with the “other”.
- Explain how this cross-cultural study presents you with a view that is beyond your normal realm of experience.

### Fifth paragraph:

- From the 2010 HSC onwards, it is compulsory for all PIPs to have a **“continuity” and/or change** focus throughout them which is different from the stated cross-cultural component. You don't have to mention this in the introduction, **but I would suggest that you do so that it is clear in the marker's mind from the outset.**

### Sixth paragraph:

- This paragraph should allow you to round off the introduction.
- It should also explain how this PIP “journey” will enhance both your investigative skills and your socio-cultural literacy.

## Template for the Central Material (CM)

1. Create around six (more if that is appropriate to your topic) focus questions that you would like your hypothesis/research to answer. Use these as major headings or chapter titles throughout the CM.
2. Go through the syllabus systematically and select all of the relevant course themes that relate to your PIP. Ensure that you “weave” these into the sentences and paragraphs that eventually make up your CM — remember that your PIP should “read” like Society and Culture!
3. Always try to blend (synthesize) both primary and secondary data throughout each section of your CM. Where possible, try to support your primary findings with the work of other researchers (secondary sources). Synthesis is the hallmark of a band 5/6 student!
4. Ensure that you source **all** information via footnote or Harvard style, even if it is from your research. Source all **your** primary research to your appendix items. Remember to include the exact appendix page number via your footnote. Note that the use of appendices is discouraged because the syllabus does not make reference to them. However, if you decide to **incorporate one, try to limit its size to only a few items.**
5. Place all quotations from questionnaires, focus groups, interviews etc in italics and source them.
6. Do not insert photos, graphs or diagrams unless you intend **explaining** and **analysing** them. (Otherwise place these into the appendix and simply refer to them via footnote).
7. When you quote your statistical findings in the CM, always try to explain what social and cultural forces were at work to produce that data. Remember, the examiner is looking to see if you are attempting to analyse (making a judgment of) this data.
8. If you attempt to “analyse” your findings throughout the PIP, your mark starts to trend upwards into the Band 5 range (i.e. 25–30 marks). If you simply “describe” your findings, your mark will never move out of the Band 3 mark range (i.e. 17–24 marks) because of its descriptive nature.
9. Always have a copy of the HSC PIP [marking guidelines](#) beside you as you write the CM. This is available from the [NSW Board of Studies](#). Focus specifically on the 33–40 (Band 6) mark range. There are no secrets to the marking process. If you adhere to these guidelines, you should score in that mark range, assuming of course, that you express yourself clearly, concisely and utilise the relevant course themes and concepts.
10. Always show your work to your teacher to obtain constructive feedback. It’s also a good idea to get others to read your work (Mum, Dad & friends). They will pick up spelling errors or poor grammar and will also provide a litmus test for how clearly you have expressed your ideas.
11. Be prepared to rework your CM many times. Every sentence and paragraph should be crafted to ensure that it delivers a powerful socio-cultural message.
12. As you write, constantly ask yourself, “Is this section helping me to prove my hypothesis?” If the answer is no, then what you are writing is just meaningless padding. It helps you to meet the word limit, but does nothing for your research.

13. Try to ensure that you carefully craft the concluding sentences of each sub-heading so that it “leads” into the next section of your PIP. By doing this, you create a smooth flow of thoughts and ideas throughout the entire PIP response. Remember, it’s all about continuity and integration!
14. Always be on the look out for information pertaining to your PIP topic. Read the newspaper every day. Place them on your favourites file on your home computer; visit the school library; browse quality book shops; check out [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) for book titles; read the weekly TV guides; watch and listen to the ABC; regularly check the [ABC web site](#) (especially ABC On-line and [Google Scholar](#). In short become even more socially literate!
15. Do not, under any circumstances, attempt to plagiarise information. Various internet searches are undertaken as a matter of course at the Marking Centre. This is especially true of work that reads/sounds as though it were produced from an academic source.
16. Finally, immerse yourself in your research. Enjoy the process, become expert, and grow as a person!

## Template for Writing a PIP Conclusion

### **First paragraph:**

What did you learn as a consequence of your chosen social investigation?

### **Second paragraph:**

Did your research prove the hypothesis that you established for your inquiry? If not, why not?

### **Third paragraph:**

How effective were your research tools? How appropriate were they with the advantage of hindsight? Did they work? Why?

### **Fourth paragraph:**

If you were to undertake this research again, what changes would you make to both your methodology and process? Why?

### **Fifth paragraph:**

How has this research enhanced your social literacy? How have you grown as an individual and researcher because of the PIP experience?

## Template for your Resource List

The bibliography is a *formal* piece of academic apparatus and is usually presented in the following standard fashion:

### A. Books

1. Name of the author (or editor) in alphabetical order, surname first, followed by initials;
2. The date of publication;
3. The title of the book, *in italics*. The volume number (if applicable);
4. The publisher & the place of publication, *in that order*.

### B. Articles

Articles in journals are treated differently:

1. Author's name (as for books);
2. The year of publication;
3. The title of the article in *inverted commas*;
4. The name of the journal *in italics*. The series number (if applicable), the volume number and the pages occupied by the article.

### C. Electronic Sources

Wherever possible, electronic references follow the same format as other types of references (author, date and publication information) but because the information can be accessed only on the internet, you must supply the web address (URL). The URL forms part of the retrieval statement which also contains the date you accessed the information.

- Author's surname followed by his/her initials;
- Year of publication;
- The title of the article;
- The title of the web site;
- The retrieval statement — the date should be presented in day, month year format;
- The URL on a separate line by itself (never put a full stop at the end of a web address).

## Please note

The current practice in academia is for all bibliographic data to be combined ie books, journals, URLs etc are all listed together in the bibliography. **Ensure that the author's surnames are set out alphabetical order** (as demonstrated below).

### Sample Bibliography:

- Aitkin, D. 1972, *The Country Party in New South Wales*, Australian National University Press, Canberra.
- Blainey, G. 1954, *The Tyranny of Distance*, Sun Books Melbourne.
- Clark, M. (Ed.) 1957, *Sources of Australian History*, OUP, London.
- Gollan, R. 1955, "Nationalism and Politics in Australia before 1851", *Australian Journal of Politics and History*, Vol. 1, No.1, pp.33-48.
- Hancock, W.K. 1961, *Australia*, Jacaranda Press, Brisbane.
- Singh, P.S. 2001, "New Studies from South Asia", *Asian Scholars' Forum*, Retrieved 13 May 2010 from <http://www.ASF.edu/newstudies.html>

### Template for Annotations

Under **every** bibliographic resource used for your research you must write around five lines evaluating the usefulness of the book, journal, URL, or documentary to your social enquiry. Things you could incorporate into your analysis may include:

- how this resource supported the proving of your hypothesis
- which section/chapter of your PIP benefited from this resource
- how you were able to synthesize this secondary data with your primary research
- whether the resource aided you in the development of your socio-cultural literacy.

**Good luck with your research!**