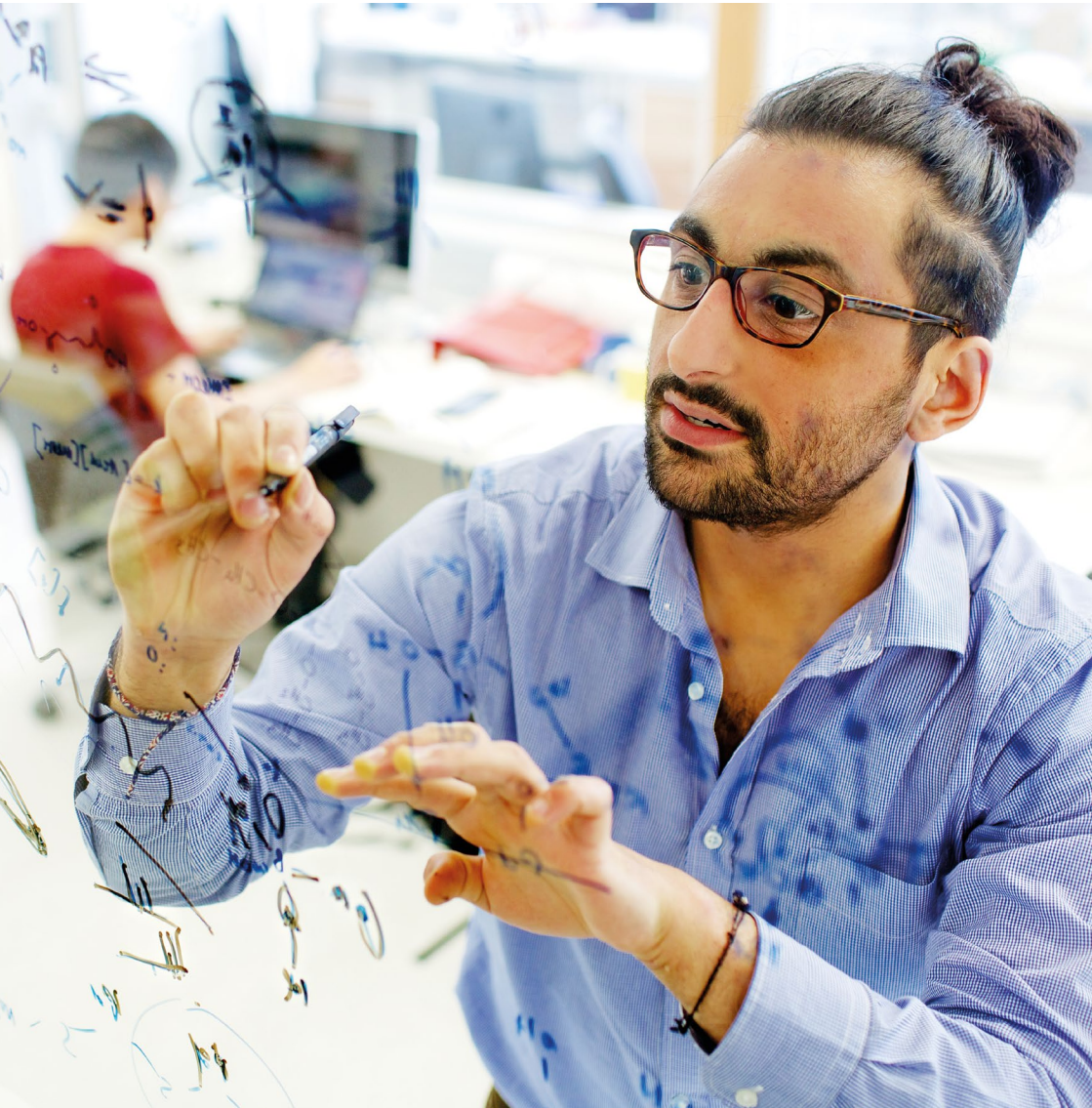


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## **RESEARCH PROJECT GUIDE**



# FLINDERS' RESEARCH IMPACT

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Research is a fundamental cornerstone of our mission as a University. Through research, and research-led teaching, we build and develop the knowledge and capabilities that improve lives and enhance society as a whole.



## 90% OF FLINDERS RESEARCH RATED WORLD-STANDARD OR ABOVE\*

\*Flinders rating 89.7%, rounded up to 90%. Excellence in Research for Australia, 2018.

Check out some of our current research initiatives at [flinders.edu.au/research](https://flinders.edu.au/research)

# ADVICE FROM THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN THERE

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In this brochure you'll find tips from the following Flinders students who recently completed Research Project, plus insight from practicing academics.

You can also contact our team of friendly Prospective Student Advisors via [askflinders@flinders.edu.au](mailto:askflinders@flinders.edu.au)



### CLARRIE

Bachelor of Health Sciences/  
Master of Occupational  
Therapy student

#### Research Project:

*What is an effective fitness program specific to teenage fast bowlers in cricket?*



### SARAH

Bachelor of Medical Science/  
Master of Speech  
Pathology student

#### Research Project:

*How can I organise a charity fundraising event for a cause?*

# WHAT IS THE SACE RESEARCH PROJECT?

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Research Project is a 10 credit subject which you are required to complete to pass your SACE. There are two different versions (A or B). Check with your teachers to confirm which you are enrolled in. Your performance in the Research Project may influence your ATAR at the end of Year 12. There are 3 components - folio, outcome and review or evaluation.

# HOW WILL RESEARCH PROJECT BENEFIT YOU?

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- Opportunity for you to study a topic not offered in SACE or at your school
- Develop independent research skills
- Showcase your skills in an area you're passionate about



## **MILLY**

Bachelor of Psychology (Honours)

### **Research Project:**

*How does body image influence our self esteem and our societal interactions?*



## **PROFESSOR MARTIN WESTWELL**

Director of Flinders Centre for Science Education in the 21st Century

### **Research Area:**

*The science of learning.*



## **MS JENNIFER FANE**

PhD candidate and associate lecturer in Health and Early Childhood Education

### **Research Area:**

*How emojis can be used to elicit young children's experiences and understandings of their own wellbeing.*

## GETTING STARTED...

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Finding the right topic and question for your Research Project can be challenging but not impossible. Being interested and passionate about your topic is the key to success and will help you to develop skills transferable to your other SACE subjects.

Conducting some preliminary research before confirming your topic is a great way to decide whether that research focus is for you. Not only can this rule out topics that are not as appealing as you first thought, but also can ensure there's substantial information available, and accessible, for your research.

## LOOKING FOR SOME INSPIRATION?

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### 3MT

Take a look at Flinders' 3MT (3 Minute Thesis) Competition. The 3MT page includes a collection of videos from current PhD candidates. The best part; they're only 3 minutes long! These videos can be used as inspiration for your own Research Project and are fantastic tools for learning how research impacts the community.

[flinders.edu.au/3mt](https://flinders.edu.au/3mt)

### FLINDERS RESEARCH NEWS

Flinders Research News is a great way for you to find out what's currently being researched in a potential area of interest.

[flinders.edu.au/news](https://flinders.edu.au/news)

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# LOOKING FOR TOP ACADEMIC SOURCES?

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Flinders University Library invites SACE students to register as users to access services and an expansive collection of resources to assist with your project (plus it's FREE!). Be sure to complete a registration form and have it signed by both yourself and your Research Project teacher.

[flinders.edu.au/schools-borrowing](http://flinders.edu.au/schools-borrowing)

## WANT TO GAIN INFORMATION FROM A FIELD EXPERT?

Allow plenty of time.

*Ask a Flinders Expert* is a site which gives you access to academic staff from a wide range of research areas – whether it be cancer research to tourism, psychology, film, sleep and plenty more. Once you've located your expert, you can view their area(s) of research, publications they have written, plus their contact details.

[flinders.edu.au/research-supervisor](http://flinders.edu.au/research-supervisor)

## QUICK TIPS FOR CONTACTING EXPERTS IN THE FIELD:

- Write from your school email address using formal language (e.g. Dear, Yours sincerely... etc.), and sign-off using your full name.
- Let the expert know what school you're from and that you're undertaking the SACE Research Project.
- Briefly outline your project and question. The expert won't be able to answer your whole question in one response, so identify 2-3 clear points/sub-questions you want to seek their advice on.
- Let the expert know what other sources you're investigating (e.g. peer reviewed articles).
- Have a back-up plan in case the expert you contact is unable to assist with your specific topic and questions. Are there other experts in this field? Are there other sources available?

# NEED SOME HELP RESEARCHING AND WRITING?

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The Flinders University Student Learning Centre provides supports to Flinders University students. They have a number of online guides that anyone can access and you may find these useful for your project. There are guides on effective research, note taking, academic writing, referencing, and many more.

[students.flinders.edu.au/study-support/slc](https://students.flinders.edu.au/study-support/slc)

## CONSTRUCTING YOUR FOLIO

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Developing your research is an essential element of your project and something we believe is a great skill to have. To help you out we've developed a few tips as examples of how to successfully annotate and reflect your sources in producing your folio.

Go further than simply highlighting key words – **annotate your sources** to show in-depth thinking.

### Ways to do this include:

- › writing or creating electronic notes on your sources;
- › colour coding aspects of your research that relate to your chosen capabilities;
- › expressing why the information is useful and how it could extend your research.

### Produce tables to summarise your research.

This can be a fantastic way to start thinking about what direction you would like your outcome to go and demonstrates that you can think critically about your sources.

*What I found to be incredibly useful when completing the research project was, in order to keep track of the main sources and articles utilised, creating and maintaining a table where I summarised the content and judged its relevance to my own project. This helped me immensely in figuring out how to make my project as significant as possible to my overall question - Milly*



An example of source annotations.

7. As a teacher, do you think that it is easy to identify when anxiety is impacting a student's academic performance?

Teachers cannot help if they are not aware of the issue. Students who have anxiety need to let their teachers know what's going on as their teachers are usually able to help them more than they know.

To be honest, no I don't think it is easy to identify when someone experiences anxiety. People with anxiety often try to mask it and they are usually pretty good at doing this! The vast majority (but not all) of anxiety symptoms are invisible (heart racing, feelings of fear etc) and for this reason it can be difficult to detect.

8. Based on your experience, what impact do you consider school stresses have on student's mental and physical wellbeing?

Key point that I hadn't even considered. People with anxiety suffer in silence & may also fear to ask for help based on the fear that others won't believe them.

*Year 12 is a key trigger of anxiety.*

Anxiety is an illness that can be triggered by stress – and Year 12 is a particularly stressful period of a young adult's life, so it is not entirely surprising that the stresses of school are enough to trigger an anxiety episode. Unfortunately when someone becomes particularly stressed for an extended period of time, then this can adversely impact their physical health – I recommend that you research the General Adaption Syndrome for further information.

Anxiety may only be an issue for a person during senior schooling.

RESEARCH THIS! Start by looking in the Stage 2 Psych textbook.

9. Do you feel that school adequately provides services and provisions for the needs of students suffering from anxiety?

*The issue needs to be brought to their attention.*

I would say that if the school is aware, then yes they are more than happy to make accommodations for the students suffering from anxiety – such as extensions for assignments, and extra time in examinations. The problem is though, that schools are not always made aware of the situation – and if they don't know, then they can't help!

These provisions could relieve anxiety even if they are not used. The knowledge that they have it could provide as a safety net.

*Could include this in brochure to students but could students lie about anxiety to misuse these provisions?*

10. What advice or strategies would you give teenagers completing year 12 in regards to managing their anxiety?

*Organisation is key to reducing stress!*

Time management to minimise stress! This can be achieved by putting together a study planner which outlines what needs to be done and when. It is important to pencil in times for breaks and also recreational activities such as exercise, hanging out with friends and relaxation.

Key tip: People need to reward themselves so they do not get bogged down.

Use class time wisely – the more you get done at school, the less you need to do at home!

Be open and honest with your teachers – they are more than happy to help you but can only do so if they know what's going on.

Positive student-teacher relationships are key to help students achieve with minimal stress.

An example of a research summary table .

KEY POINTS ESTABLISHED THROUGH THE RESEARCH PROCESS – STRESS AND ANXIETY IN YEAR 12					
Key factor:	What is known:	Outcomes and opportunities:	Sources:	Reference to SACE general capabilities:	
Identifying feelings of stress and anxiety by Year 12 students	People can sometimes try to mask feelings of stress and anxiety. Internal indicators, such as an increased heart rate, are ways that stress is recognised.	Remind students that their teachers, counsellors and school community want to support them. This, with hope, will reduce the fear or apprehension some students might feel.	Interview (Can also relate and include other relevant sources)	<i>Critical and creative thinking</i> – considering how school communities can promote strategies for speaking about stress in creative ways to engage a large cohort of people.	
Year 12 workloads can impact stress experienced by students	Year 12 can be a challenging year for students with increased workloads. Anxiety can also be linked to a person's physical health.	Having a safety net to relieve possible stress can help students during busy academic periods.	Interview and Case Study	<i>Literacy</i> – utilising skills in professional communication was central to constructing and conducting this interview to ensure that the research information directly responded to the Research Project question surrounding Year 12 academic workloads and stress.	
Time management is a critical strategy to reduce stress in Year 12	Time management and planning is essential for minimising stress in Year 12.	Providing access to planning tools as well as tips and tricks can help students to create good study habits. This includes finding a balance between study, sport, interests, family and social life.	Acknowledged by most sources	<i>Numeracy</i> – creating an exemplar study schedule requires skills in numeracy to identify time and estimate how long various activities would take.	





## PRESENTING YOUR OUTCOME

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The purpose of the outcome is to answer the research project question. Different modes of presentation are more suitable for certain questions, whether that be in written, oral or multimodal form. It is also important to ensure that you are concise and specific when presenting your findings using evidence and examples.

### HOW WILL YOU PRESENT YOUR INFORMATION TO YOUR AUDIENCE?

*Once you've compiled your folio, you'll be in a position to make a final decision about how you'll present your research as an outcome (report/essay, video, text, info graphics, graphs, or photographs).*

*My research involves asking young children about their understandings of wellbeing using emojis to illicit their responses. Because of the highly visual nature of my research, I use a significant amount of info-graphics which I create to present my findings. There is no one right or wrong way, but a clear and concise presentation of your outcome is essential for any successful research project. - Jennifer*

*Pay a lot of attention to referencing throughout your outcome, it is important it is done thoroughly and correctly. This means being consistent with your referencing method for the whole assignment, and making sure all your references are in alphabetical order in the bibliography.*

*If you choose to do an oral or multimodal presentation like I did, you still must reference! - Clarrie*

# DON'T FORGET YOUR EVALUATION OR REVIEW

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There's a danger that we think of an evaluation or review as something we do at the end of a project, but this isn't the case.

The evaluation or review is personal. It is about analysing, not re-telling, what you did for your research project and how certain situations enabled you to develop specific skills and capabilities.

Similarly to both the folio and outcome, being concise and specific is central to creating a strong evaluation or review.

*It's important to think about the review or evaluation all the way through. My rule is that whenever I have an emotional response, it's worth capturing it in a notebook or the journal. If something goes really well and makes me happy – I make a note of it. If I really struggle or I'm challenged by something and it makes me confused for a while – I make a note of it. If I get excited about an opportunity – I make a note of it. These notes I collect along the way really help me to look back and evaluate the process. - Martin*

*Be sure to acknowledge what went wrong during your research and how you addressed it in terms of coming up with a solution to the problem. Also acknowledge what went really well/surprised you during your research and how it greatly benefitted you in your research. - Sarah*

# OUR QUICK TIPS FOR THE RESEARCH PROJECT

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- 1** Always refer back to performance standards and make sure you are meeting assessment requirements.
- 2** Planning is key. Set yourself a timeline and stick to it.
- 3** Refer to the SACE Research Project Website to find support materials, such as exemplars, to get a feel for the standard of work expected for different grades.
- 4** Always back-up your work in multiple places (i.e. USB, Dropbox, Google Drive etc.) The more secure your work is the better.
- 5** Have an alternate plan in mind each step of the way in case something doesn't go to plan. For instance, have a few experts in mind so you can contact another if one doesn't get back to you.
- 6** Remember, if you score well in your Research Project, it can assist you in gaining an offer to Flinders University. Read more about our Research Project B pathway at [flinders.edu.au/study/pathways/year-12-entry](https://flinders.edu.au/study/pathways/year-12-entry)
- 7** Chat with us here at Flinders if we can be of any further assistance.

# STAY CONNECTED WITH US

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## FLINDERS EXPLORER SIGN UP

[flinders.edu.au/explorer](http://flinders.edu.au/explorer)

## CHAT WITH OUR PROSPECTIVE STUDENT ADVISORS

[askflinders@flinders.edu.au](mailto:askflinders@flinders.edu.au)

1300 354 633





Office of Student Recruitment

1300 354 633

**[flinders.edu.au/study](https://flinders.edu.au/study)**

All information correct as of February 2020.

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