***Introduction to the Investigation – lesson recap***

**Negotiating your topic/question design**

* Current issue
* Controversy – in the news
* Avoid “stale” issues
* Local issues work well
* If it’s a global issue, there must be an Australian angle
* Area of interest from another subject OK – can’t write about same topic for more than one Investigation. Must have social/cultural angle.
* *Issues in Society* books
* Primary and secondary sources
* Must have consistent in-text referencing – footnotes recommended
* Recommended focus question starters: To what extent…? Should…?
* Read the Chief Assessor’s report (PTO)

**Break it down:**

Title of Report = Focus Question

2000 words max. No less than 1,800.

Introduction 10% 200 words Checkpoint 1

Body 80% 1600 words

Use guiding questions as sub-headings

Guiding question 1 400 words (2 paragraphs) Checkpoint 2

Guiding question 2 400 words (2 paragraphs)

Guiding question 3 400 words (2 paragraphs) Checkpoint 3

Guiding question 4 400 words (2 paragraphs)

Conclusion 10% 200 words Checkpoint 4

Bibliography Not included in word count

**EXTRACT FROM CHIEF ASSESSOR’S REPORT**

The overall standard of investigations in 2016 was very good, with students clearly enjoying the opportunity to research a wide-ranging variety of contemporary social issues.

**The more successful responses**

* focused on current and controversial social issues, and topics that were clearly defined and recently in public debate, such as:
* social media and its impact on academic performance, social relationships, body shaming, etc.
* illicit drug use, especially the so-called ice epidemic
* the legalisation of medical marijuana
* depression and anxiety
* domestic violence
* multiculturalism or migration issues
* gay marriage
* online gambling and video games
* analysed and evaluated evidence from a range of sources and perspectives
* followed the structure suggested in the course outline, choosing a clearly worded guiding question or hypothesis and presenting their investigation as a critical analysis in answer to three (or four, at most) focus questions
* used expert primary sources and synthesised information from both primary and secondary sources
* incorporated survey results into the body of their text, rather than as an appendix
* found additional ways to present evidence, such as photographs, graphs, flow charts, etc., and included these as part of the analysis, not as mere illustration
* showed a clear understanding of social change and both its causes and implications, and analysis of the connection and interdependence of societies and cultures
* addressed bias in sources and limitations of the research
* were carefully drafted and edited to ensure the effective communication of ideas, knowledge, analysis, and conclusions
* used a consistent referencing system and attached a bibliography or reference list.

**The less successful responses**

* did not adhere to the specified word-limit of 2000 words
* relied on a teacher-generated formula
* featured ‘closed’ focus questions which elicited definitions rather than leading to analysis
* relied on outdated data
* used data in a very superficial way, often from only one source, to simply create a narrative or to recount findings, rather than to synthesise and evaluate information from a variety of voices or sources
* were based on secondary sources only
* used their own experiences as the sole basis of an ‘investigation’
* provided no or very limited options for bringing about social change
* addressed topics outside the scope of the subject
* did not use a consistent referencing system.

**General information**

Most students included a range of sources in their research; although teachers are reminded that over-reliance on easily accessible sources limits students in achieving at the highest levels. Guiding students to choose appropriate and expert interview subjects will allow them to gain authoritative evidence from which to draw insightful conclusions.