



**B O A R D O F S T U D I E S**  
NEW SOUTH WALES

## **HSC Agriculture Marking Guidelines — Optional Research Project**

## Optional Research Project

### ***Task: Optional Research Project (30 marks)***

The research project enables students to study a particular agricultural issue or problem. The scope of the issue or problem open to students includes those that arise from production, the economic environment, marketing and the social environment.

The material submitted by students for the research project consists of a report and process journal. The report communicates the research methodology, data analysis and evaluation of the research project. It must consist of at least 3000, and no more than 5000, words. The process journal details the student's progress throughout the research project, and is verified by the student's teacher.

The balance between various segments of the report may alter, depending on the specific nature of the research project undertaken and the resources available to the student.

Assessment of the project will be based on the extent to which the research project fulfils the outcomes and content specified in the syllabus.

The report must include:

- a research question
- synopsis or abstract
- literature review
- research methodology
- results
- data analysis
- conclusions
- ethical and welfare issues
- recommendations
- referencing and acknowledgments

### ***Assessment criteria***

- Presentation of a cohesive, well-reasoned and detailed report on an appropriate independent investigation
- Inclusion of appropriate supporting material, such as graphs, figures, tables, slides and photographs
- Identification of an appropriate research question in an agricultural situation
- Provision of an accurate synopsis or abstract of the investigation
- Evidence of a comprehensive literature review
- Application of appropriate research methodology and technologies
- Presentation of results, appropriate data analysis and drawing of accurate and relevant conclusions from this investigation
- Identification and evaluation of ethical and welfare issues relevant to this research and the wider field of agricultural research
- Presentation of detailed and appropriate recommendations drawn from this research and supported by the data and/or research
- Inclusion of accurate referencing and acknowledgments

*Outcomes assessed: H3.4, H4.1, H5.1*

### MARKING GUIDELINES

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a cohesive, well-reasoned and detailed research report, supplemented by a variety of appropriate additional material, such as graphs, figures, tables, slides and photographs</li> <li>• Provides an accurate synopsis or abstract and a comprehensive and relevant literature review of a range of different types of literature</li> <li>• Selects and applies appropriate technologies and extensive research methods for this investigation, collects and presents all relevant data in an appropriate way, thoroughly and correctly analyses the data and draws accurate and relevant conclusions</li> <li>• Identifies and evaluates a range of ethical and welfare issues relevant to the design of this research and the wider field of agricultural research</li> <li>• Makes a comprehensive, detailed and appropriate set of recommendations drawn from this research and supported by the data and/or research</li> <li>• Includes accurate referencing and suitable acknowledgments</li> </ul>	25–30
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a cohesive and well-reasoned research report that is supplemented by appropriate additional material, such as graphs, figures, tables, slides and photographs</li> <li>• Provides an accurate synopsis or abstract and a relevant literature review of different sources</li> <li>• Selects and applies appropriate technologies and research methods for this investigation, collects and presents most relevant data in an appropriate way, correctly analyses this data and draws accurate and relevant conclusions</li> <li>• Identifies and discusses a range of ethical and welfare issues relevant to the design of this research and the wider field of agricultural research</li> <li>• Makes several appropriate recommendations drawn from this research and supported by the data and/or research</li> <li>• Includes accurate referencing and a set of acknowledgments</li> </ul>	19–24
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a sound research report, supplemented by appropriate additional material, such as graphs, figures, tables, slides and photographs</li> <li>• Provides an incomplete synopsis or abstract and a limited literature review</li> <li>• Selects and applies most appropriate technologies and steps in the research methods for this investigation, collects and presents some relevant data in an appropriate way, correctly analyses this data and draws accurate and relevant conclusions</li> <li>• Identifies and describes some ethical and welfare issues relevant to the design of this research and the wider field of agricultural research</li> <li>• Makes few appropriate recommendations drawn from this research and supported by the data and/or research</li> <li>• Includes incomplete referencing and several acknowledgments</li> </ul>	13–18

Criteria	Marks
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a basic research report, supplemented by some additional appropriate material, such as graphs, figures, tables, slides and photographs</li> <li>• Provides a limited synopsis or abstract and a limited literature review</li> <li>• Selects and applies several appropriate steps in the research methods and technologies for this investigation, collects and presents some relevant data, attempts to analyse this data and draw conclusions</li> <li>• Identifies some ethical and welfare issues relevant to the design of this research and the wider field of agricultural research</li> <li>• Makes recommendations that may not be appropriate or supported by the data and/or research</li> <li>• Includes references and acknowledgments that may be incomplete or inaccurate</li> </ul>	7–12
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presents a limited research report, supplemented by few, or inappropriate, additional materials</li> <li>• Provides a basic literature review</li> <li>• Selects and applies several steps in the research methods and technologies for this investigation, collects and presents some data with inappropriate analysis</li> <li>• Identifies one or two ethical and welfare issues relevant to the design of this research and the wider field of agricultural research</li> <li>• Includes references and acknowledgments that are inadequate</li> </ul>	1–6