

What is the Personal Project?

Have *you* ever wanted to build a better mousetrap? Have *you* ever wanted to build a musical instrument? Do *you* have questions about a topic that *you* have wanted to research on your own? Do *you* have a secret passion to write a play? **Now is your chance!** The Personal Project is **your** project to do what **you** want to do, to show the skills *you* have developed over the years in your subjects focusing on a particular lens, and applying them to a goal.

The Personal Project is an individual project which can be completed at home. It consists of three main components: a project, a process journal, and a report. You have the opportunity to choose your topic and enjoy learning about it as you research and develop your chosen product.

Through this project, students:

- Demonstrate the personal abilities and skills required to produce and present an extended piece of work;
- Engage in personal inquiry, action and reflection on specific topics and issues;
- Focus on, and demonstrate an understanding of, global contexts;
- Reflect on learning and share knowledge, views, and opinions with the broader community.

What it is, what it is not

It should have a clear and achievable goal, be focused through one global context, be personal & original, entirely your own work, and **most importantly... be something that interests YOU!**

It should not be part of any assessed school course work, be linked too closely with any specific subject, or take over your whole personal and social life.

What are some examples of what I can do?

- ❖ an invention, or specially designed object or system;
- ❖ a fitness program;
- ❖ original piece of writing/art/music/drama;
- ❖ a survey and report on a pressing school issue;
- ❖ exploring family histories or personal stories;
- ❖ original science experiment;
- ❖ the presentation of a developed business, management, or organisational plan;
- ❖ create a sport or game;
- ❖ research an idea (i.e. how colours affect our moods).

The final product can be written, a creation, presentation, product, project, or any other culmination of your effort and work.

It must be well recorded in your process journal as it develops. The process is just as important as the final product!

Your final product may involve others, but remember that your own contribution **must be central** to the event, and **clearly visible**. Use your process journal and report to show what you specifically contributed to the product's success.

What are some examples?

- ❖ Creating a YouTube series;
- ❖ Developing a fundraiser;
- ❖ Building a computer;
- ❖ Creating of a video game;
- ❖ Producing fashion photo-shoot;
- ❖ Penning of an investigative essay on the viewpoints of private and public school students;
- ❖ Taking up a new instrument;
- ❖ Writing a short story;
- ❖ Composing songs for an album;
- ❖ Penning an investigative essay;
- ❖ Collecting money for cancer research;
- ❖ Learning and doing statistics;
- ❖ Performing a play;
- ❖ Teaching at football training.

*I have not failed. I've just found
10,000 ways that won't work'*
- Thomas Edison



What will the final Personal Project look like?

It must include three elements: the project itself, the report (minimum 1,500 words) and the process journal

1. The Product

The actual product from the project itself will be submitted. It may take a variety of physical forms, such as a tangible product or design. If it is an activity or an event, it should be recorded and available for review. This is what you've been working so hard to bring about!

2. The Report

Besides the actual outcome of your goal, the report is the most important part of the Personal Project process. The report is your detailed analysis of your entire project and the process of development. It explains how, why, and what you did, in a well-structured and organised manner. The report should be completed with the following sections:

1. Investigating;
2. Planning;
3. Taking Action;
4. Reflecting.

Your report may be written (1,500-3,500 words) or recorded orally or visually (13-15 minutes). More information is provided in Appendix 3.

3. Process Journal

You are required to maintain a process journal of your Personal Project. Your process journal should have all your rough ideas (even if your ideas change over the duration of the project), rough drawings, ideas, etc. It is a practical workbook. Record your progress in the journal, and use your notes/drawings to reflect on your ideas, achievements, obstacles, etc.

Suggested Format

Here are some headings you could use to help provide a structure to your journal, ensuring you make the best use of the journaling process.

- ❖ **Work Completed this Week**—this section should detail all aspects of work completed on the Personal Project in the week
 - **Resources Consulted:** record bibliographical details in this section. You should also record details of any conversations that took place with sources relating to the project;
 - **Challenges/Difficulties Faced:** detail obstacles and indicate how you did or intend to deal with them;
 - **Evaluation of Progress:** this is where you should refer to your initial goals and indicate whether or not you are achieving them. You may also identify any areas that need improvement at this stage.

Project Objectives

The objectives of the personal project state the specific targets that are set for learning. They define what the student will accomplish as a result of completing the personal project. These objectives relate directly to the assessment criteria found in the “personal project assessment criteria” section.

Your report should illustrate how you have accomplished all of the following learned objectives (criteria).

Criterion A: Investigating

- i. define a clear goal and global context for the project, based on personal interests;
- ii. Identify prior learning and subject-specific knowledge relevant to the project;
- iii. demonstrate research skills.

Criterion B: Planning

- i. develop criteria for the product/outcome;
- ii. plan and record the development process of the project;
- iii. demonstrate self-management skills.

Criterion C: Taking Action

- i. create a product/outcome in response to the goal, global context and criteria;
- ii. demonstrate thinking skills;
- iii. demonstrate communication and social skills.

Criterion D: Reflecting

- i. evaluate the quality of the product/outcome against their criteria;
- ii. reflect on how completing the project has extended their knowledge and understanding of the topic and the global context;
- iii. reflect on their development through the project.

**THE ODDS OF
HITTING YOUR
TARGET GO UP
DRAMATICALLY
WHEN YOU AIM AT
IT.**

- MAL PANCOAST

Developing your project through Global Contexts

One topic can be explored through many contexts, or lenses. The lens you select will determine the direction of your project. Review each of the lenses below, and look to the next page to see how each lens can put a different spin on the same topic.

The Global Context (Lenses)

There are several “lenses” through which we view our learning called “Global Context.” Below each of the lenses are some guiding questions to clarify what each lens means.

Identities and Relationships

- Students will explore identity; beliefs and values; personal, physical, mental, social and spiritual health; human relationships including families, friends, communities and cultures; what it means to be human.
- Examples of projects influenced by this global context:
 - Two sides of social networking; an awareness campaign about digital citizenship and cyber bullying;
 - How online identities impact offline relationships; a research essay;
 - Keeping culinary traditions; a video series following family recipes with historical relevance;
 - The effect of mass media on teenage identity; a short film.

Orientation in Space and Time

- Students will explore personal histories; homes and journeys; turning points in humankind; discoveries; explorations and migrations of humankind; the relationships between and the interconnectedness of individuals and civilizations from personal, local and global perspectives.
- Examples of projects influenced by this global context:
 - Explorers in search of a new world; immigration over the ages through visual texts;
 - The Mayflower and the dream of religious freedom; a personal family history;
 - Charting a family history through archives and a representational statue.

Personal and Cultural Expression

- Students will explore the ways in which we discover and express ideas, feelings, nature, culture, beliefs and values; the ways in which we reflect on, extend and enjoy our creativity; our appreciation of the aesthetic.
- Examples of projects influenced by this global context:
 - Video games as a form of cultural expression; a short film using five video games that shows how they are an expression of our culture;
 - The art of Manga in Japanese culture; a Japanese anime and a survey of the understanding of my peers;
 - Culture and self-expression through dance at the local community arts centre; a performance.

Scientific and Technical Innovation

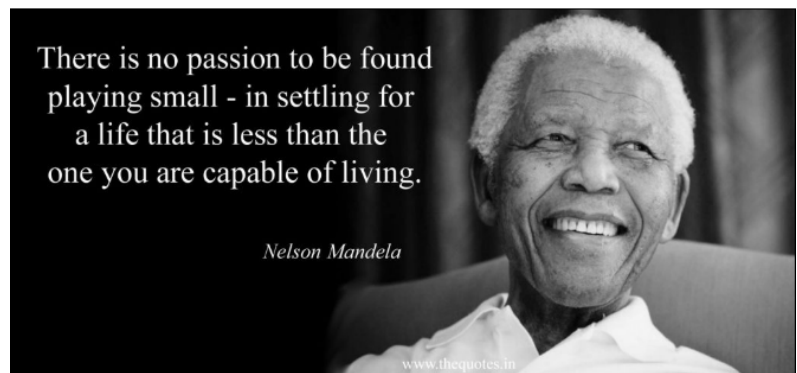
- Students will explore the natural world and its laws; the interaction between people and the natural world; how humans use their understanding of scientific principles; the impact of scientific and technological advances on communities and environments; the impact of environments on human activity; how humans adapt environments to their needs.
- Examples of projects influenced by this global context:
 - What's the matter with the anti-matter?; an informational talk;
 - Why are genetics and genomics important to my health?; a media presentation;
 - Can stem cells replace organ transplants?; an investigative report.

Globalisation and Sustainability

- Students will explore the interconnectedness of human-made systems and communities; the relationship between local and global processes; how local experiences mediate the global; the opportunities and tensions provided by world-interconnectedness; the impact of decision-making on humankind and the environment.
- Examples of projects influenced by this global context:
 - The struggle for water in developing countries; an awareness campaign;
 - The impact of the financial crises of Europe and the European Economic Community on the UK; a visual presentation;
 - The role of the developing countries in protecting the tropical rain forest; a collection of slides.

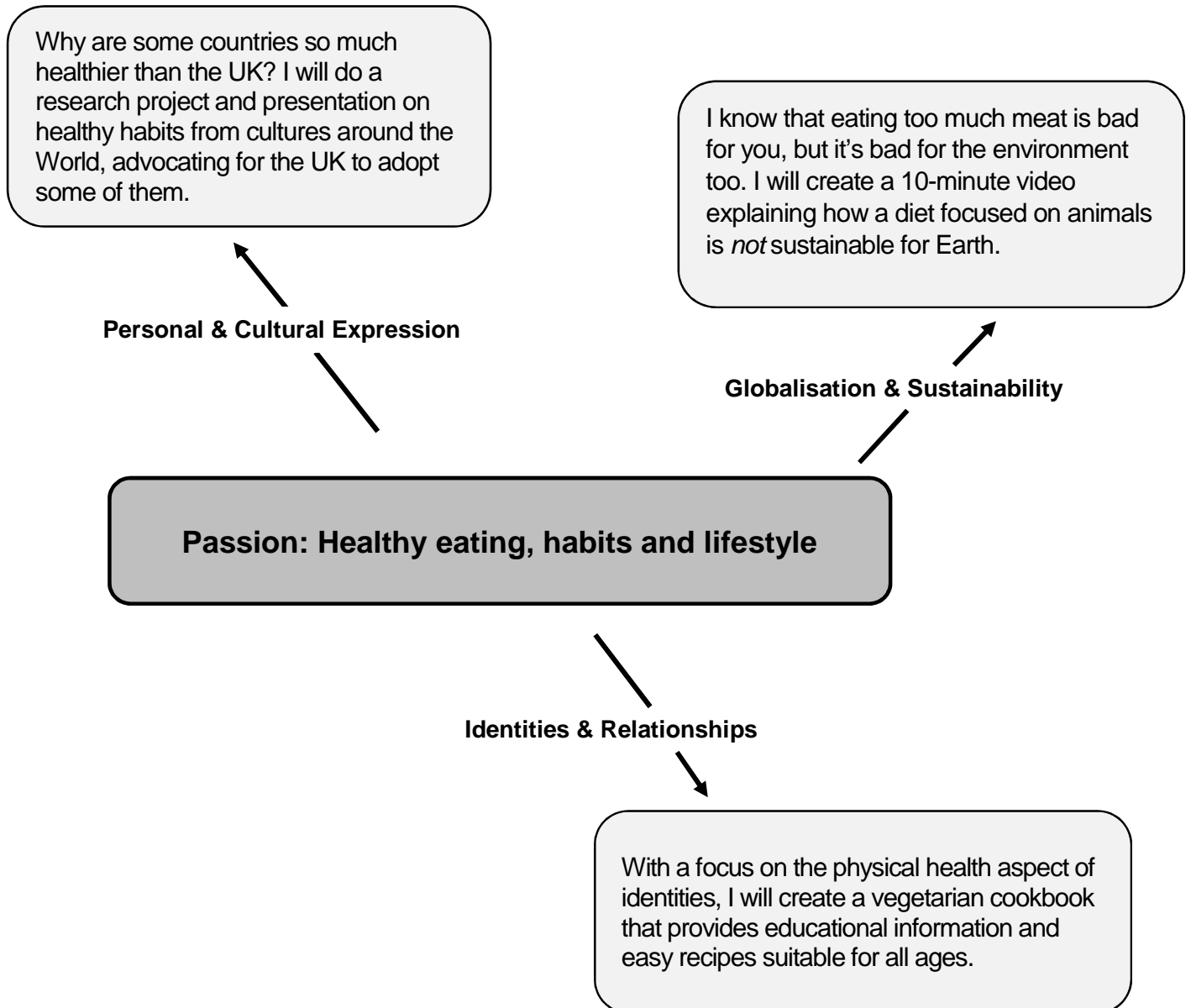
Fairness and Development

- Students will explore rights and responsibilities; the relationship between communities; sharing finite resources with other people and with other living things; access to equal opportunities; peace and conflict resolution.
- Examples of projects influenced by this global context:
 - Supporting fair trade: Cocoa trade in Ghana; an awareness campaign for our school canteen to promote fair trade;
 - Open-market economies and their role in fair trade; a talk for students;
 - Exploring the intersections of race and inequality; a radio broadcast;
 - Asylum seekers and their right to live like us; a painting.



Example: How can my Global Context shape my project?

To see how the global context you select may affect the product of your passion and goal, consider a topic of maintaining a healthy lifestyle. The global context chosen adds depth to the product of passion, helping to focus it into something that is achievable and significant to the self and others.



See how the Global Context can help to shape and add depth to your project? Play around with a few before committing to one, enhancing your brainstorming sessions. Which direction resonates best with your passion and goals?

Creating Criteria for Success

After you have selected your topic, researched it, and chosen a global context, you will then need to create criteria for success. What these criteria represent are the targets that you have given yourself to complete the project to an excellent degree. For example: if you are hosting an event, what would a strong criteria for success be? 20 people in attendance? 100? While your criteria should challenge you to push yourself, make them realistic and achievable.

I can accept failure...

I can't accept not trying.



Detailed Project Planning Guide

Project title		
Student		Date/Duration of Project

Goal: Formulate a statement that clearly shows your goal, based on your personal interests.

What is the purpose of the goal? What do you hope to achieve?

Global context: Identify the global context.

Identify which part of the global context you will focus on.

Explain why you have chosen it, justifying the relevance of your enquiry?

Product/outcome: What product/outcome will you create in response to the goal, global context and criteria?

Product:

Criteria: Which criteria will ensure my product/outcome is of excellent quality? How will I evaluate it?

Research: What do you have to research? Be specific and list how you will collect all the information you need	Media:	Surveys:
	Interviews:	Observations & experiences:

Process Journal: How will you record the significant findings and development of the process? Specify type of format.

Report: How will you report it? Written/digital format/mixed media/oral presentation

Criteria template

Students use the chart to develop the criteria for their product/outcome. They should select the categories that are appropriate.

They may also include other categories that fit their product/outcome.

Your goal:	
Your global context:	
Form What will it look like? What materials will I use? What tools will I use? What size will it be? How will it be assembled?	
Function What is its purpose? What will it do? How easily can it be used / maintained?	
User/Audience Who it is for? Consider age, gender, socioeconomic background.	
Cost Is there a maximum cost? Is this a material cost / time cost?	

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Suggested Outline for PP Report

1. Introduction

- a. Why did you choose this project?
- b. What is the goal of your project?
- c. What *IS* a personal project?

2. Investigating:

- a. Describe the global context for your project and explain why you chose it;
- b. Identify prior learning and subject-specific knowledge relevant to the project:
 - what content have you previously learned that will help you with the project?
- c. Describe how you researched your topic and selected your sources.

3. Planning

- a. How did you develop criteria for the product/outcome?
- b. How did the project “evolve” over time:
 - Note- your process journal should show its growth, this simply summarises it
- c. What self-management skills did you need / enhance through the process?

4. Taking Action

- a. Describe what and how you created your product/outcome;
- b. How does your project relate to the goal, global context and criteria?
- c. What thinking skills did you need / enhance through the project?
- d. What communication and social skills did you need / enhance through the project?

5. Reflection

- a. evaluate the quality of the product/outcome against the criteria for success you made:
 - Was the project too easy/too hard?
 - Consider what went well and what struggles you encountered;
 - How would you do the project differently next time?
- b. reflect on how completing the project has extended your knowledge and understanding of the topic and how it relates to the world (global context);
- c. reflect on your development as a learner through the project (e.g. learner profile).

6. Bibliography

- a. Cite all sources used to complete the project.

7. Appendix

- a. Pictures, surveys, graphs, etc.

Notes:

1. Label each of the above in your report;
2. Your report must be between 1,500 – 3,500 words if written, and 13-15 minutes if recorded orally or visually;
3. The report is different from the actual product:
 - If your product was an essay or book, it does not count as the report.