

# Preparation for the first reflection session

As preparation for their first reflection session, students should do the following.

1. Think about subjects and areas of particular personal interest and do some initial background reading into a subject and topic of their choice.
2. Using this as a starting point, explore a variety of possible research topics.
3. Read the subject-specific section of the *Extended essay guide* for the subject they are interested in, paying particular attention to the nature of the subject and the treatment of the topic.
4. Undertake further background reading and begin to gather information around their area of interest. This exploration should give rise to a variety of topics and questions that students can consider for further research. At this stage it is important that students consider the availability of reliable and valid sources for the topic under consideration. All of this should be recorded in their Researcher's reflection space.
5. Begin developing a research proposal which might include a MindMap<sup>®</sup> of ideas, an annotated article or preliminary bibliography. Additionally, students must already be thinking in terms of the following questions.
  - Is my topic appropriate for the subject I am considering?
  - Why am I interested in this area and why is it important?
  - What possible questions have emerged from my initial reading?
  - Are there any ethical issues that I need to consider?
  - What possible methods or approaches might be used for research in this area and why?

It is recommended at this point that the student–supervisor relationship is formalized and the student can consider himself or herself prepared for the first formal reflection session.