Chief Assessor’s Report

Specific Features: Planning

P1: Consideration and refinement of a research question

The best responses provided evidence of the refinement of the research question in either the proposal or, even more successfully, in documentation of the changes undergone. Other effective evidence included that in which the refinement of the question was referred to and explained in the analysis of sources, including how their research was leading to the refinement or modification or validation of the focus of their question. Moderators further noted that thoroughly refined research questions that were succinct and resolvable were more likely to lead to higher grade levels in other specific features, such as D2 and D3. Successful responses also provided question-appropriate and targeted planning of research methods and development, which showed progression throughout the 10 pages.

Less successful evidence was provided when the refinement of the question was limited to the change of the research question from one topic to another.

P2: Planning of research processes appropriate to the research question

Stronger responses produced evidence of the planning being ongoing and included evidence of experimentation, field trips, or face-to-face interviews. Stronger responses also included thorough and in-depth timelines that delivered a clear outline of what exactly was done, as well as lotus diagrams and brainstorms which became working documents that the student added to, colour-coded, or adapted as the process evolved.

Weaker evidence included that where planning was only evident in a sparse mind-map or outline in the proposal.