TAURAGĖ "VERSMĖ" GYMNASIUM PERSONAL PROJECT STUDENT HANDOUT

WHAT IS THE PERSONAL PROJECT?

The MYP Personal Project is a long-term, independent, and student-driven project that takes place in Year 5 of the MYP. It gives students the freedom to dive deep into a topic, idea, or skill that truly interests them—something they're curious about, excited by, or have always wanted to explore further.

Students are in control—they choose the goal, decide how to achieve it, and determine how success will look for them. It's a chance to personalize learning and show what students can do when they're leading the process.

IT IS DESIGNED TO ENCOURAGE STUDENTS TO:

- **Explore a personal passion**

Students choose a topic, idea, or area of interest that genuinely excites them—this might involve developing a new skill, creating something original, researching a topic in depth, or addressing a real-world issue that matters to them.

- **Develop ATL (Approaches to Learning) skills**

Throughout the project, students strengthen key learning skills such as research, self-management, critical and creative thinking, communication, and reflection. These skills support success in school and lifelong learning beyond it.

- **Create something meaningful**

Each student produces a product or outcome that reflects their learning journey and has a personal or social relevance. This product could be artistic, technical, written, action-based, or anything else that fits the project's goal.

- **Reflect on their growth**

Students analyze and document the process of their learning, considering the challenges they faced, how they responded, and the personal growth they experienced.

PROJECT STRUCTURE

The personal project consists of three main stages: planning, taking action, and reflecting. Each stage helps students stay organized and focused as they work toward creating something meaningful.

PLANNING

- At the beginning, students choose a goal that's connected to something they care about or are curious to explore. This goal becomes the heart of their project.
- Next, they decide on a final product or outcome—something they'll create or do by the end of the project. It could be anything from writing a story, building something, learning a new skill, or helping others in the community.
- To stay on track, students also set clear criteria for what success will look like. What do they want the final product to be? How will they know they've done a good job?
- Then comes the plan—a step-by-step outline of what needs to be done, when, and how.

TAKING ACTION

- This is when students roll up their sleeves and get to work. They put their plan into action—researching, creating, experimenting, problem-solving, and staying organized.
- Throughout this stage, they use important ATL skills like time management, communication, and critical thinking. They also keep notes in a process journal to track progress and reflect on what they're doing and learning.

REFLECTING

- Once the product is finished, students look back at everything they've done. They think about what they've learned, how they've grown, and what challenges they overcame.
- They check how well their final product matches the success criteria they set at the start. Did it turn out the way they hoped? What worked? What didn't?
- Finally, they write a final report that pulls everything together—the goal, the process, what they learned, and what the experience meant to them.

The personal project isn't something that happens overnight—it's meant to take place over several weeks or months. Students are expected to spend at least 25 hours working on their project, though many will naturally invest more time as they dive into something they care about. **Here's what that journey typically looks like:**

1. Brainstorming & choosing a topic – students reflect on what they enjoy, what they're curious about, or something they've always wanted to learn or create.

2. Students are assigned supervisors who will guide and support them throughout the project.

3. Keeping a process journal throughout the project where students reflect, record ideas, track progress, note obstacles, collect inspiration, and document how they're applying learning skills. <u>The journal becomes a key piece of evidence and is often quoted or referenced in the final report.</u>

4. Completing the final product – students create their final product or outcome.

5. Writing the final report – when the product is done, students write a structured report that tells the story of their project: the goal, the process, the skills they used, what went well, what was hard, and how they've grown. <u>The report is the only part that is officially assessed</u>, but it captures the whole learning experience.

6. Sharing the project with others – many schools organize a way for students to share their projects—like a showcase, exhibition, or presentation. This is a chance to celebrate the work, explain what they did and why, and feel proud of the journey. It's also a great opportunity to inspire others—teachers, parents, peers—and show what real, student-led learning looks like.

PERSONAL PROJECT REPORT (1)

The final report is the one part of the personal project that is officially assessed by the school and the IB. While the process and product are incredibly important for students' learning, it's the report that communicates the entire journey—and it's where students bring it all together in their own voice. The report is where students explain what they set out to do, how they did it, what they created, and what they learned along the way.

Students have some freedom to choose the format that best suits their style and the nature of their project. The report can be:
- A written document
- A video or audio recording
- Or a combination of both (for example, a video with a short written reflection or captions)

No matter the format, every report needs to include these essential parts:
- **Goal**

Students clearly state their personal project goal and explain why they chose it. What personal interest inspired the project? What made this topic or product meaningful to them?
- **Description of the process**

Students walk the reader (or viewer) through their process—how they planned, researched, created, made decisions, and overcame challenges. They show how the project evolved over time.
- **Application of ATL Skills**

Students reflect on the specific Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills they used—like research, time management, organization, communication, and creative thinking. They explain how these skills helped them throughout the project.
- **Reflections on Learning and Success**

This is students' chance to think deeply about their personal growth. What did they learn about themselves, their topic, or the world around them? How do they evaluate their success, based on the criteria they set?

- **Bibliography & Academic honesty form**

If students used information, interviews, or other sources, they need to include a bibliography showing where that information came from. They also submit an academic honesty form, confirming that the work is their own and meets IB standards of integrity.

The report is about telling the story of the learning journey. It allows students to illustrate their effort, show their thinking, and demonstrate growth.

The maximum length of student submissions

Document File types: .doc, .docx, .pdf (non-editable), .rtf		Recording File types: .mp3, .m4a, .mp4, .mov (codec H264), .m4v
15 pages	and	no recording
14 pages	and	1 minute
13 pages	and	2 minutes
12 pages	and	3 minutes
11 pages	and	4 minutes
10 pages	and	5 minutes
9 pages	and	6 minutes
8 pages	and	7 minutes
7 pages	and	8 minutes
6 pages	and	9 minutes
5 pages	and	10 minutes

When preparing documents and recordings, the following specifications should be noted:

1. To ensure that the written part of the report is clearly legible, each page must have a minimum:
    - 11-point font size
    - 2 cm margins.

SOURCE: Personal project guide p. 29

Although **the personal project is an independent journey, students are not alone.** There is a strong support system in place to guide, encourage, and assist throughout the process—from choosing a topic to submitting the final report.

Here's what students can expect:

- **A supervisor to guide the journey** – each student is assigned a supervisor, a teacher or staff member who supports them during the entire project. The supervisor is there to: help clarify the project's expectations and timeline; offer advice on planning, research, and reflection; check that the topic meets health, safety, and ethical standards; provide formative feedback on progress; discuss ideas and challenges; ensure academic integrity is maintained; assess the final report using the official IB criteria.

- **Access to the library and digital tools** – the school's library, media center, or digital resources play an important role in supporting the project. Librarians and tech specialists can help students learn how to find reliable sources; improve their research and referencing skills; build bibliographies and cite information properly; use digital tools for creating and presenting their product.

- **Timelines, templates & examples** – students are given a clear timeline with key deadlines to help them manage their time and break the project into manageable steps. Schools also provide: a student handbook explaining expectations and procedures; templates and forms; examples of past projects.

- **Feedback and guidance on ATL skills** – ATL (Approaches to Learning) skills—like research, time management, collaboration, and self-reflection—are a big part of the personal project. Students receive support in: identifying which ATL skills they need to use; practicing and improving those skills as they work; reflecting on how those skills helped them reach their goal.

ASSESSMENT CRITERIA (OBJECTIVES A–C)

The personal project is assessed using three criteria, each focusing on a different part of the student's learning journey: planning, applying skills, and reflecting. Each criterion is evaluated using descriptors from levels 0 to 8. The final report is the only part that is assessed, but it must clearly show evidence of all three criteria through the student's process, product, and reflections.

- **Criterion A: planning** – this criterion focuses on how well students plan their project. It includes: defining a clear learning goal connected to a personal interest; describing the product/outcome they intend to create; creating success criteria to measure that product; presenting a detailed plan for how they will complete the project; a strong plan shows that students have a clear direction and know what steps they'll need to take to reach their goal.

- **Criterion B: Applying Skills** – this criterion looks at how well students use ATL (Approaches to Learning) skills during the project to reach their goal and create the product; students need to: explain how they applied ATL skills (like research, time management, thinking, communication, etc.); show how those skills helped them during both the learning process and the creation of their final product; the emphasis is on how intentionally and effectively students used these skills to carry out their project.

- **Criterion C: Reflecting –** this criterion focuses on students' ability to reflect on their experience and evaluate their success. It includes: explaining the impact of the project on themselves or their learning; evaluating the quality of their final product using the success criteria they created during the planning stage.

The personal project is meant to reflect students' interests, passions, and creativity. It can take many forms—written, visual, technical, action-based, and more. Below are real examples of students projects taken directly from IB-assessed work in the Teacher Support Material (TSM). These show the wide range of possibilities when students choose something meaningful to them.

EXAMPLE 1

EXAMPLE 2

EXAMPLE 3

EXAMPLE 4

EXAMPLE 5

EXAMPLE 6

EXAMPLE 7

EXAMPLE 8