

Project Guide: Business Alive Investigative Study

What is the Business Alive Investigative Study?

The Business Alive Investigative Study is the Additional Assessment Component (AAC) for Senior Cycle Business. It will be worth 40% of your final grade.

It will allow students to demonstrate their ability to plan, conduct, analyse and evaluate research on a particular topic. Students will be required to use a variety of sources of information to show that they can consider a variety of opinions and perspectives before making an informed conclusion and/or recommendations at the end of their study.

Students will be required to:

- ▶ plan their investigative study, apply demonstrate project management skills and their capacity to monitor and evaluate progress
- ▶ investigate an aspect of business and apply the skills developed primarily through their engagement with the Unifying Strand to reach informed conclusion(s), recommendation(s) and/or perspective(s)
- ▶ apply the relevant cross-cutting theme(s) within the Leaving Certificate Business Specification to their Investigative Study, and relate the study to the world of business
- ▶ communicate their findings.

(NCCA Guidelines for AAC)

When will I get the brief for the Business Alive Investigative Study?

The brief for the investigative study will be issued in Term TWO of fifth year.

The brief will include:

- ▶ the theme of investigation
- ▶ instructions to students and schools regarding submission protocols (including word count, file size, file type, etc.)
- ▶ instructions to students and schools regarding authenticity of work and the authentication process
- ▶ a general description of the investigative process
- ▶ a broad outline of mark allocations for the report.

(NCCA Guidelines for AAC)

What do I do once I get the brief for the Business Alive Investigative Study?

Once you get the brief, students will need to develop their own research question that is based or centred around a theme that has been identified. Good project management skills will be important. Students will need to prepare a project plan, carry out research, analyse and evaluate research and then present conclusions based on their evidence.

This investigative study will give students the opportunity to apply their learning from the four strands of the specification and the four cross cutting themes. You will be improving and developing your key competencies such as being creative, critical thinking, problem solving and communication to name a few!

When will I submit my Business Alive Investigative Study?

Student must produce an individual report, based on the brief. This will be submitted digitally in term one of sixth year. It is envisaged that the investigative study will take you about 20 hours of work.

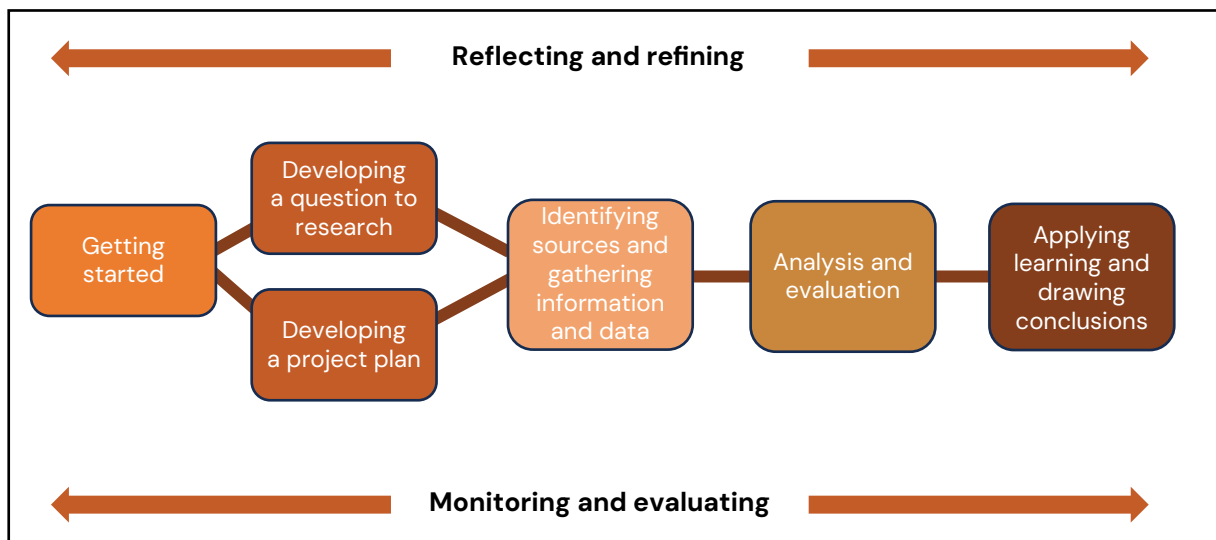


Figure 1: Overview of the main stages of activity in the Business Alive Investigative Study

Source: AAC Guidelines, (NCCA Guidelines for AAC)



Exam Tip!

The DESCRIPTORS OF QUALITY should be your guide when completing your investigative study. Refer to them as you complete each stage. You will find a copy of them at the end of this template!

Let's examine each of the stages involved in an investigative study.

Investigative study

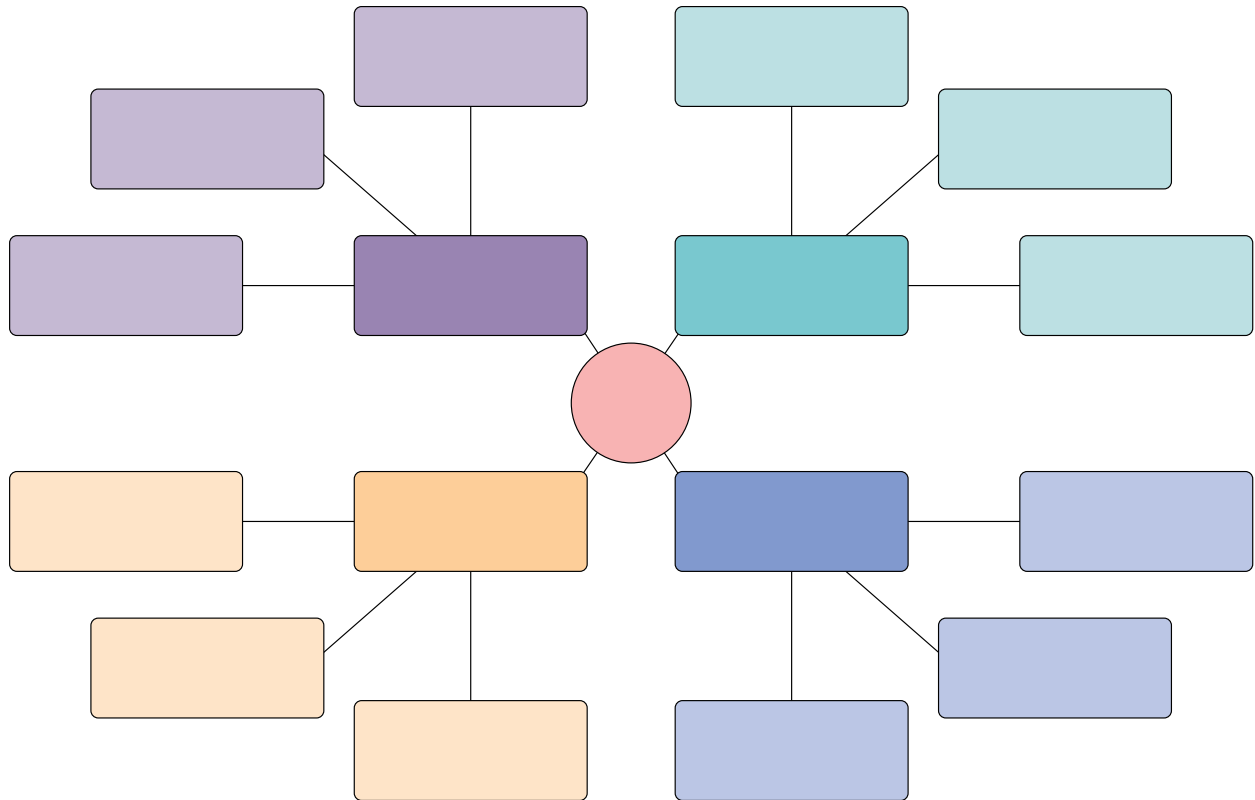
The template that follows is a useful step-by-step guide to help you navigate the process of completing an investigative study. You may also find it useful when completing other class projects.

Write the theme or brief in this box.

Theme/brief:

1. Initial understanding

You may want to complete a **mind map** or **concept map** in your copy to start your research and get a better understanding of the theme/project brief.



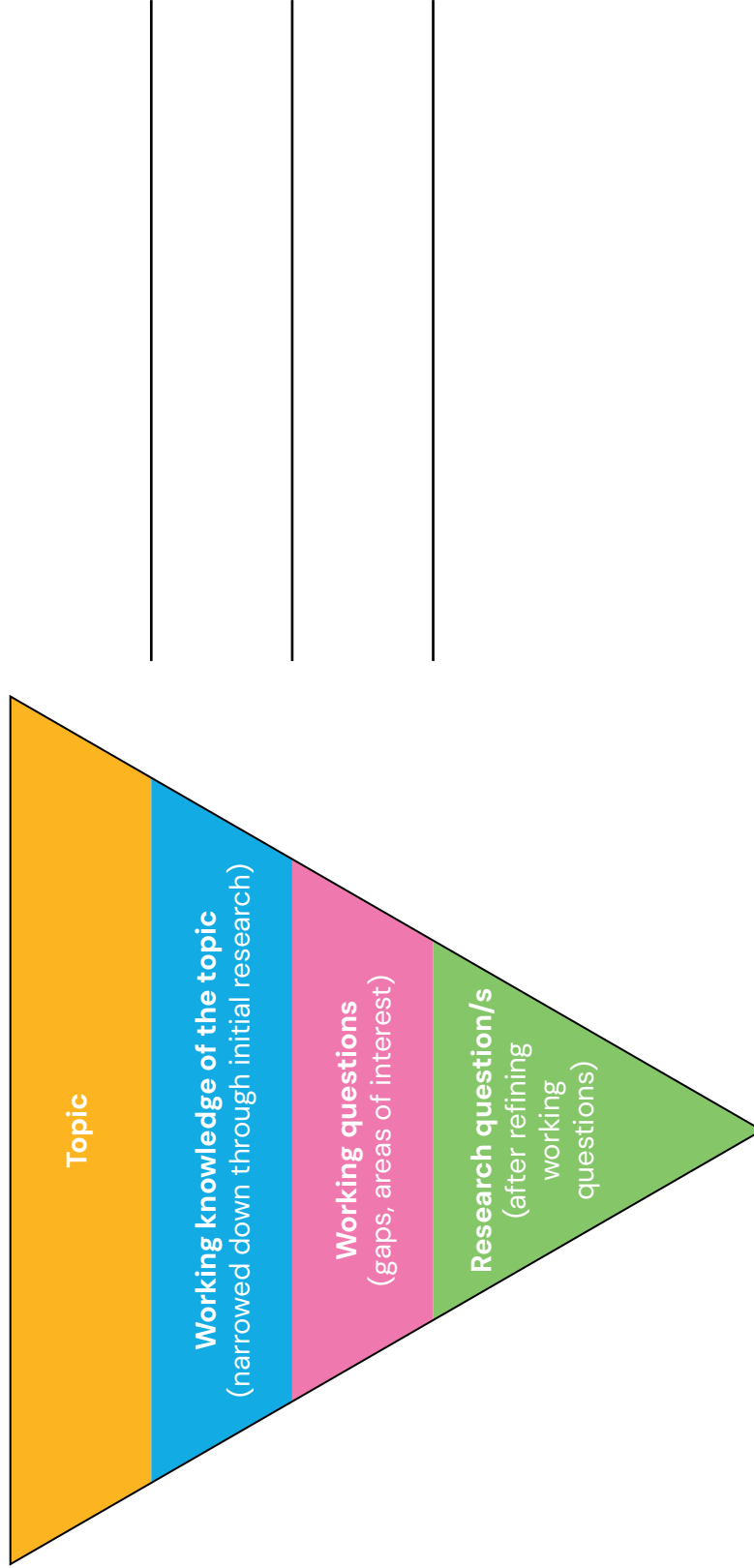
Have a class discussion on the brief, perhaps completely a brainstorming or brain dumping exercise, to help you get started and identify the main topics or focus.

What do I already know about this topic?	What do I want to know about this topic?	Can I identify any examples in my local area, nationally or internationally?	How can I find out more about this topic?

This stage might take you 2–3 hours!

2. Research question

Once you have an initial understanding of the brief/theme, it will be time to develop a research question for your investigative study.



Specific

Measurable

Achievable

Relevant

Timebound



Tip!

Remember your SMART goals. The research question should be detailed and clear, something that is measurable. You will be able to find information on it, information that will help you get a better understanding of the theme or brief. You should have a project plan to help you stick to a timeline.

This stage might take you 1–2 hours!

3. Project plan

A plan is important to help keep you on track and make sure you complete all necessary tasks. Make a list of everything you will need to do and set a time schedule for each task. Make sure you identify any resources you will need to complete the task and any potential risks (and how you will manage them!). Start by identifying the **objectives** for your investigative study.

Objectives:

- ▶ _____
- ▶ _____
- ▶ _____

Task	Time	Resources needed	Risk assessment

This stage might take you 1–2 hours!



Tip!

Remember, this plan will require constant monitoring. You may need to re-evaluate the plan and adjust it as your work progresses.

You will need to gather information, evidence and data to help you further explore your research question.



Source of information	Date accessed	Key information

- ▶ Be safe online.
- ▶ Use key words.
- ▶ Gather information from a variety of sources.
- ▶ Make sure your sources of information are reliable and trustworthy. Ask yourself:
 1. Is this source credible?
 2. Is this source reliable?
 3. Could this source be biased?
 4. Do I need to get more information?
 5. When was this written?
- ▶ Record your data.

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5. Analysis

Now is the time to review, summarise, analyse and evaluate the data and information you have gathered. The tips on page 14 of your textbook will help you here. Remember:

- ▶ Analyse ▶ Appraise
- ▶ Evaluate ▶ Synthesise

Trends	Alternative explanations	Conclusions Remember, each objective should have a clear conclusion



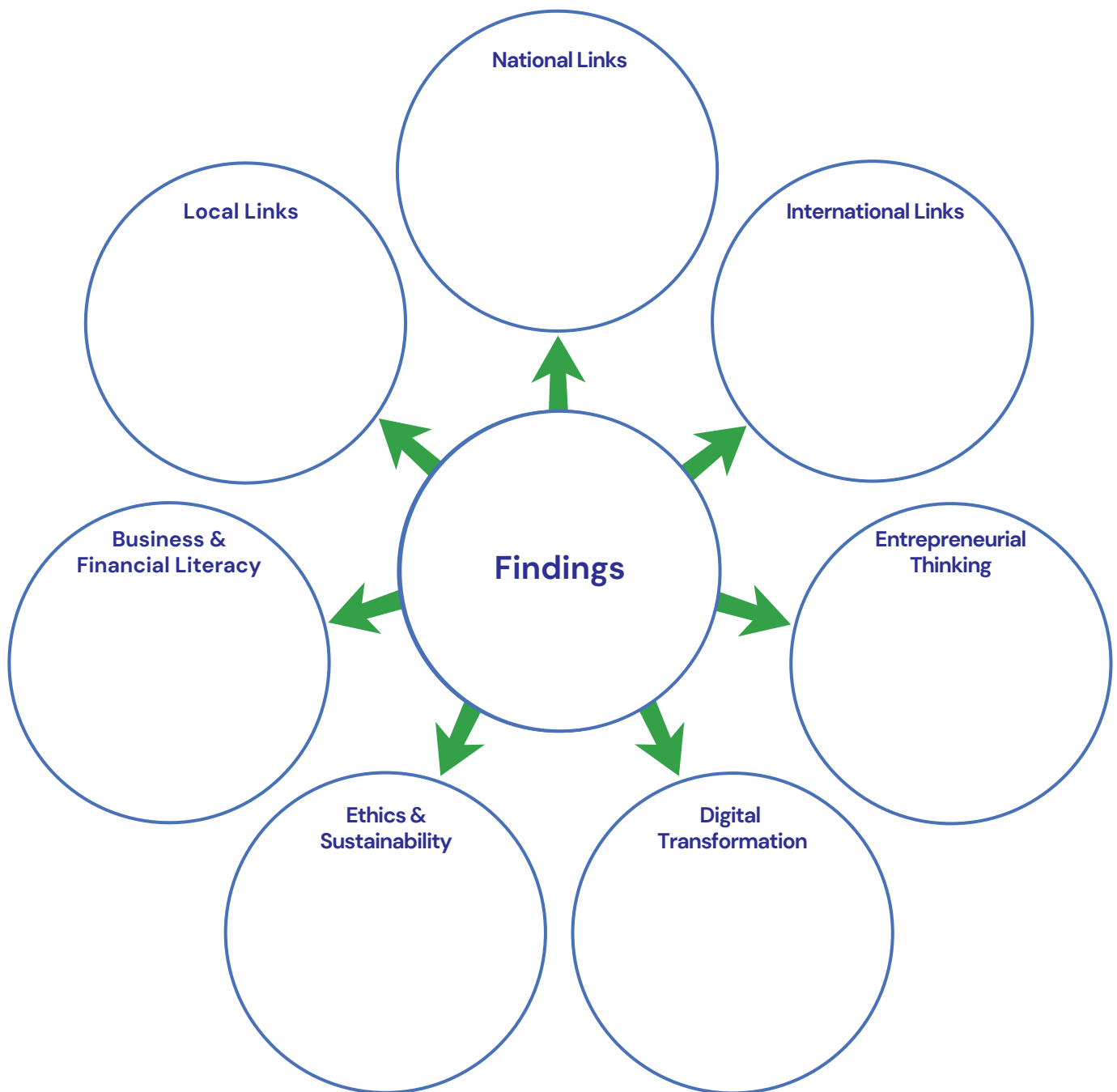
Tip!

Consider the best way to present your findings. You may wish to use graphs or graphics to support your evaluation. The templates in Chapter 1 will be useful here!

This stage might take you 6–8 hours!

6. Applying your learning

In this section you will demonstrate how the findings of your investigative study connect with: your learning across the Business specification; the world of business (locally, nationally or internationally); the four cross-cutting themes; and your own perspective.



This stage might take you 1–2 hours!

Descriptors of Quality

Table 2: Descriptors of quality for the Business Alive Investigative Study

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate effective engagement with planning throughout their study and clearly reflect on and evaluate the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the effective completion of the study. ▶ develop a clear and probing research question that is underpinned by the relevance or importance of business locally, nationally and/ or internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate engagement with planning throughout their study and reflect on the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the completion of the study. ▶ develop a clear research question that is underpinned by the relevance or importance of business locally, nationally and/or internationally. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate limited engagement with planning throughout their study and present limited reflections on the extent to which the planning undertaken contributed to the completion of the study. ▶ develop some form of research question.
Investigating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ identify and evaluate the potential value of a wide range of appropriate sources related to the research question created based on the brief. ▶ complete an in-depth analysis and evaluation of data and information from a range of reliable sources justifying the choice of sources. ▶ present conclusions justified by the analysis and evaluation of the data and information, related to the research question developed. ▶ clearly identify limitations in the investigative study across the design of the research question, the research gathered and/or analysis conducted. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ identify and evaluate the potential value of a range of appropriate sources related to the research question created based on the brief. ▶ analyse and evaluate data and information from a range of reliable sources justifying the choice of sources. ▶ present conclusions related to the research question developed. ▶ identify some limitations in the study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ identify a limited range of sources related to the research question created based on the brief. ▶ present limited analysis and evaluation of data and information from a range of sources. ▶ present limited conclusions demonstrating engagement with the topic. ▶ do not identify limitations in the study.

	Students demonstrating a high level of achievement	Students demonstrating a moderate level of achievement	Students demonstrating a low level of achievement
Applying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business and business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. ▶ clearly and appropriately relate the findings of the investigation to the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate some capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business, business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. ▶ relate the findings of the investigation to the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ demonstrate limited capacity to reflect on how the findings relate to the world of business, business-related stories in the media where relevant, and how their perspectives have been influenced by the investigative study. ▶ make limited links between the findings of the investigation and the cross-cutting theme(s) within the specification.
Communicating	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ present clear and appropriate data and information and analysis using a range of relevant graphics as appropriate. ▶ use coherent and consistent language throughout the report with clearly acknowledged appropriate supporting references and reflections on the study. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ present adequate data and information and analysis; using relevant graphics as appropriate. ▶ use moderately coherent and consistent language throughout the report with some acknowledged supporting references and reflections on the research. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▶ present limited data and information and analysis, limited or no use of graphics. ▶ present a report where the language used demonstrates limited coherence and consistency with limited supporting references and reflections.