Leaving Cert Economics

Research Project 2023/24

6th yearLorraine Clancy

Deadline Date: 15th of December 2023

Word Count: 1,500 words

Student Name:

Research Brief SEC:

The study of economics explains how income is generated, how income is used, how resources are employed.

Economics Curriculum Specification, NCCA

RESEARCH THEME

Over the last 50 years, Ireland has transformed into a highly globalised economy, reporting record export numbers in 2022 across all sectors (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, 2023) whilst there are over 1,600 foreign owned companies in operation in Ireland (Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment, 2023).

'We will deliver on our ambition of a vibrant, resilient, regionally balanced and sustainable economy, made up of a diversified mix of leading global companies, internationally competitive Irish enterprises and thriving local businesses'

Simon Coveney, Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Employment, May 2023, Dáil Éireann, 2023

Each candidate is required to complete a Research Study and Report on one of the following research topics in the context of the research theme.

Research Topic 1

Candidates are required to pursue an individual line of inquiry discussing and evaluating the impact of **Foreign Direct Investment** into Ireland, on **two** of the following areas:

- Employment
- Government Finances
- Ireland's Balance of Payments
- Balanced Regional Development

OR

Research Topic 2

Candidates are required to pursue an individual line of inquiry discussing and evaluating the impact of **Irish exports** on **two** of the following areas:

- Employment
- Government Finances
- Ireland's Balance of Payments
- Balanced Regional Development

Feedback From SEC from previous years:

The following good practices were observed, with varying degrees of frequency, in the coursework submitted by candidates. Where they occurred, they assisted candidates in scoring well.

- Research reports were generally well presented and followed the indicative content, word count and structure as outlined in the research report documentation.
- A high degree of originality and innovation was evident in the majority of reports and it was clear that candidates researched their lines of inquiry. The individual lines of inquiry were varied, relevant and up to date.
- Candidates who focused their individual line of inquiry into one distinct, discrete area were generally awarded higher marks. The focused nature of their research facilitated candidates in having clear and specific achievable aims. It provided a structure and focus to the research process which in turn facilitated candidates to draw valid and relevant conclusions.
- Relevant theories and concepts were appropriately linked to the candidate's individual line of inquiry.
- The data used was valid, and applicable to the line of inquiry and spanned a range of different relevant and up to date sources.

In the main, candidates used both qualitative and quantitative data as required and set out in the indicative content section of the student research brief.

- In a significant majority of cases the quality of presentation was of a high standard with candidates using a range of types of presentation including graphs, curves, and tables which were presented clearly and labelled accurately and appropriately.
- In some instances, in the conclusion section, a new line of inquiry for further research was presented, which emerged as a result of the analysis of the research. This demonstrated candidate's comprehensive engagement with their research findings.
- Candidate engagement with the brief was evident through the range of appropriate references and relevant data, resulting in a more comprehensive report.
- Candidates generally presented concise bibliographies that were correctly referenced.

Advice on engaging with the coursework

The following advice will assist with ensuring that candidates demonstrate their level of achievement fully when completing, and reporting on, their coursework.

- Candidates should ensure that their research is based on a clear and focused line of inquiry which provides opportunities for comprehensive analysis, development of arguments and judgments, evaluation and conclusions. This will also assist candidates in maintaining a structure to their report.
- Candidates should clearly set out the aims of the individual line of inquiry, how these aims will be achieved, and what it is they intend to research. The use of bullet points may assist with structure, focus and clarity.
- Consideration should be given to creating a question from the line of inquiry. Care should be taken not to present the conclusion in the introduction. Turning the line of inquiry into a question assists in maintaining focus, structure and coherence throughout the report.
- The analysis needs to be in-depth. Reporting research findings requires more than a summary or interpretation. Critical evaluation of data is required so that candidates can then form an argument or a judgement.
- Using prompt questions could scaffold the research process and assist candidates to maintain focus, structure and coherence when formulating their response.
- Judgements or arguments should be presented in the research process. In this regard candidates may also interrogate an alternative argument, or judgement, commenting on whether they agree or disagree and why.

Ensure all tables, images, graphs and curves are clearly numbered and referenced correctly. Data should be presented clearly so that it is readable and legible, in particular data with figures – quality prevails over quantity.

- Conclusions should be drawn by referring to the intended aims in the introduction. Refer to each of the intended aims individually. The use of bullet points may help. If the intended aims, at the outset, lack structure, and focus and clarity, then this adversely impacts on the conclusion. Ensure that all points in the conclusion have been proven during the research process.
- Recommendations should be based on the findings from the research. Consideration should also be given to the impact of the recommendations for example, is there a potential opportunity cost involved? Are there other implications associated with the recommendations?
- Candidates should ensure that they critically reflect on new knowledge or understanding gained, how their thinking, behaviour or opinions have changed or developed since the beginning of the process, and the importance of this.

Tick List	To do:	Student Tick	Teacher Tick
Before I	I have chosen one topic from research brief		
begin	I have chosen an <u>individual line of inquiry</u> based on the research theme (and phrased as a question)		
	3. I have written 2/3 aims that will help answer my research question		
	I have ticked two or more relevant / correct economic concepts and linked them to each of my aims		
	5. I have read multiple sources and selected at least 2 appropriate ones that will help answer my line of inquiry. One of my sources is a quantitative source		
	6. I have submitted this section for approval and feedback from teacher.		
Writing the	7. I have included a title AND individual line of inquiry as a question in intro.		
introducti on	 I have stated my 3 aims to answer my line of inquiry (that relate to research question and I have linked to economic concepts) 		
	I stated and explained my 2 or more reliable sources of information, one of my sources has quantitative data.		
	10. I have submitted this section for approval and feedback from teacher.		
Writing the	11. Throughout my research I have applied economic concepts to my line of inquiry		
Research	 I have analysed, interpreted and evaluated my sources of information and data to make relevant informed arguments and judgements 		
	13. I have presented relevant data may in tabular and graphical format.		
	14. I have submitted this section for approval and feedback from teacher.		
Conclusio	15. I have presented my conclusions as they relate to the stated line of inquiry		
"	 I have concluded each of the three aims and economic concepts and economic theory underpinning line of inquiry 		
Reflection	14. I have reflected on the insights gained from engagement with the research study.		
	17. I have demonstrated how thinking has evolved and/or how attitudes, or opinions or behaviour may or may not be influenced as a result of the research study		
	18. I have submitted this section for approval and feedback from teacher.		
Presentati on	19. I have organised, presented and there is overall cohesion		
Oil	 I have referenced all secondary sources (books, journals, websites) using the harvard referencing system 		
	21. I have labelled and referenced diagrams and graphs (figure 1, figure 2, etc)		
	22. I have not exceeded 1,500 words		
	23. I have used arial font 12		
	24. I have identified at least 2 relevant economic concepts		
	25. I have made detailed conclusions based on sources		
	26. I have reread my word to make sure that there are no mistakes		

Research Project Criteria

The Research Study is worth 100 marks, which is 20% of the overall marks for Leaving Certificate Economics.

Section	Marks
Introduction	15 Marks
Research Process	40 Marks
Conclusion	20 Marks
Reflection	10 Marks
Communication, Presentation and overall coherence	15 Marks
Total	100 Marks

 Provide title for the research study State the individual line of inquiry as an economic question, problem or issue which is to be addressed Outline the aims of this line of inquiry, in the context of the learning outcomes in the specification Select relevant and reliable sources of information and data. A minimum of two sources are required and one 	15
	 State the individual line of inquiry as an economic question, problem or issue which is to be addressed Outline the aims of this line of inquiry, in the context of the learning outcomes in the specification Select relevant and reliable sources of information and

15 Marks

Make sure your line of inquiry is:

- An actual question, i.e., it ends with a question mark.
- Easy to understand
- Focused

Introduction

- You are able to answer is with secondary research
- Manageable in 1,500 words

To do: Come up with a line of enquiry but it must link to the course and show me evidence of data or ideas on how to gather data before they begin.

I am studying the impact of FDI / Irish exports (pick industry / firm) on ____employment/government finance/BOP/balanced regional development_____ because I want to examine how it relates to economics, social and environmental sustainability.

Sample lines of inquiry

- 1. What is the impact of FDI by the pharmaceutical industry on employment and government tax revenue? (could look at pfizer, Novartis, MSD, Eli Lilly, GSK, Astra Zeneca).
- 2. What is the impact of recent redundancies by MNCs in the tech industry on employment and government finances.
- 3. How has FDI in the aviation industry impacted the level of employment and balanced regional development. (Data employment stats CSO, location statistics)
- 4. MNCs: pharmaceuticals / medical / software / aviation
- 5. Exports: Food (beef) / drinks / pharmaceuticals / medical / technology and software / aviation / agricultural exports..
- 6. How does the performance of the Irish pharmaceutical industry in international exports influence employment, government finances, Ireland's balance of payments, and the pursuit of balanced regional development within the country?

Write three aims to answer the line of inquiry. Each aim should focus on some part of the economics specification. Choose from the following.

STRAND 2	STRAND 3
The Price Mechanism Demand & Supply Rational Consumer PED YED Profit Maximisation Marginal Analysis Economies/Diseconomies of Scale Govt Intervention/Regulation Other	Market Structures Market Power & Concentration Regulation of Market Concentrations Factors of Production MPP & MRP Market Failure Externalities Imperfect Information Other
STRAND 4	STRAND 5
Circular Flow of Income The Multiplier Measures of National Income Hidden Economies Business Cycles	STRAND 5 Economic Development & Growth Gloabalistaion Multinationals FDI flows
Circular Flow of Income The Multiplier Measures of National Income Hidden Economies	Economic Development & Growth Gloabalistaion Multinationals FDI flows International Trade Balance of Payments Comparative Advantage Protectionism v Free Trade Fair Trade
Circular Flow of Income The Multiplier Measures of National Income Hidden Economies Business Cycles Govt Revenue & Expenditure Fiscal Policy Purpose & Impact of Taxation Inflation/Deflation	Economic Development & Growth Gloabalistaion Multinationals FDI flows International Trade Balance of Payments Comparative Advantage Protectionism v Free Trade Fair Trade Exchange Rates Trade Agreements & Global Institutions
Circular Flow of Income The Multiplier Measures of National Income Hidden Economies Business Cycles Govt Revenue & Expenditure Fiscal Policy Purpose & Impact of Taxation Inflation/Deflation Monetary Policy Money Market Credit Creation	Economic Development & Growth Gloabalistaion Multinationals FDI flows International Trade Balance of Payments Comparative Advantage Protectionism v Free Trade Fair Trade Exchange Rates

When writing the introduction, make sure it has the following:

- Line of inquiry as a question
- Write between 200-250 words
- Give a very short background to your line of inquiry
- Outline 3 (2 at a minimum) aims that answers your line of inquiry
- Link each aim to specification
- Outline methodology to line of inquiry (these are your sources). Examples could include:
 - o Central Bank of Ireland: https://centralbank.ie/
 - o Central Statistics Office: https://www.cso.ie/
 - Department of Finance
 - o RTE news / Irish times / Irish Examiner
 - o ERSI
 - Trading Economics:
 - o IDA
 - o Enterprise Ireland
 - o Statistica

Sample introduction

Introduction

Maximum 250 words

<u>Title:</u> The impact of Covid-19 on the Irish art market.

<u>Line of inquiry:</u> This research aims to investigate the impact of Covid-19 restrictions on the Irish art market, the income elasticity of demand, the impact of technology with virtual exhibitions and an international comparison of government policies in this sector.

Aims:

- I aim to explore the relationship between income and the demand for Irish art, during a downturn in the business cycle as a result of Covid-19. (LO: 2.1, 2.2, 4.1)
- The second aim is to investigate the impact of technology, with the increase of virtual auctions showcasing art and how this may influence the future market structure. (LO: 2.3, 3.1)
- The third aim will draw a comparison between government support received by the Irish art market and abroad; France. How have their art markets been affected by the pandemic; how have their interventions differed from Ireland (LO:1.2, 2.4, 4.1, 4.2, 4.3)

Methodology:

In order to pursue my line of inquiry, I investigated the following secondary sources:

1. Central Statistics Office

The Statistical Yearbook papers issued by the CSO provides quantitative data on Covid-19s impact on Irish businesses.

2. The Arts Council and The Arts Newspaper

The arts council reports and journals analyse the impact and outcome of the Irish art market's response to Covid-19.

I conducted primary research by interviewing Adams Auction House on the impact of Covid-19 on the Irish art market in accordance with my aims.

Research Process 40 Marks

The research process	The research process must be based on the application of economic concepts and economic lines of inquiry	
Minimum of 650 words. Max of 750	 Analyse, interpret and evaluate the selected sources of information and data to make relevant informed arguments and judgements Relevant data may be presented in tabular and graphical format 	40

Use each aim as a heading

- Each aim should approximately be 250 words in length
- Analyse and interpret sources for each aim:
 - For each aim make sure to link the data / sources to economic theory and concepts
 - Use statements such as
 - "As seen in the table above, FDI has contributed to the Irish economy. According to economist theory, this creates a multiplier effect, as it acts as injection into the circular flow of income. In turn, this creates an increase in both direct and indirect employment....
 - My economic analysis is....
- Evaluate selected sources for each aim:
 - Evaluate each aim does it follow economic theory or could it be questioned
 - Useful phrases to show evaluation:
 - On the other hand,
 - However, in the long run....
 - In reality, economic theory may not hold true....
 - The idea is often criticised...
 - Ways to evaluate sources:
- 1. What are the advantages and disadvantages? See example:

Eg. According to the ESRI, there are many advantages of pharmaceutical exports to the Irish economy. However, it may lead to an over reliance on a narrow range of foreign owned firms for a significant portion of export revenue. If these foreign owned pharmaceutical companies were to face economic downturns, regulatory changes or decided to relocate elsewhere, Ireland's economy could be negatively impacted. In turn, leading to unemployment and reduced tax revenue.

2. Compare short run to long run impacts. See example:

In the short run, attracting ICT MNCs like Apple to Ireland can yield significant fiscal benefits through increased corporation tax and employee income tax revenues, increasing national income. However, in the long term, this strategy raises concerns regarding economic

diversification and resilience. Overreliance on a particular sector or a few major corporations can render the economy vulnerable to global industry fluctuations and potential shifts in international tax regulations. Additionally, the allure of high-paying tech jobs offered by these giants may lead to a brain drain, syphoning talent away from local startups and industries, potentially hindering innovation and long-term economic diversification.

3. Evaluate impact on different stakeholders. See example:

As can be seen in the diagram, the presence of ICT) firms in Ireland may increase employment opportunities for highly skilled labour in the tech sector (source). However, the benefits of this job creation are not uniformly distributed across the country. A significant concentration of ICT firms and their employment opportunities are centred in and around major urban areas like Dublin. While this concentration fuels economic growth in these urban hubs, it exacerbates regional disparities, leaving other parts of the country comparatively underserved. As highlighted by (state source) this regional disparity in job distribution remains a vital challenge for Ireland's policymakers to ensure a more equitable and sustainable employment landscape.

Sample Aim:

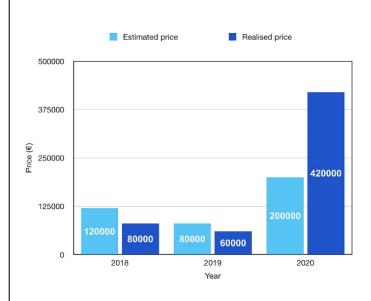
Aim 1 research:

Economic theory of demand would expect that as income falls or uncertainty about economic performance, then demand would also fall for art (a luxury good), as there is a positive relationship between art and income. (Pettinger, T. 2019). The art market tends to behave in a pro-cyclical way, with total sales rising in the upswings, and declining in the downturns of the business cycle. (Elsworth, P. 1990.)

Despite Covid-19 resulting in widespread business closures throughout Ireland, average weekly earnings increased in 2021 by 3.9% to €849.69 in Q2 compared to €817.55 the previous year, including those supported by the employment wage subsidy scheme. (Central Statistics Office, 2021)

This increase in disposable income had a positive impact on the Irish art market, with spending redirected to material goods, such as artwork.

Figure 1: Paul Henry Art Sales 2018 to 2020



Source: (Whyte's Auction House. 2020)

A drive to support local artists resulted in an increase in demand for Irish art that had previously been low due to globalisation. During Covid-19 domestic sales increased for many Irish artists e.g. Tracey Sweeny prior to Covid-19 exported the majority of her work, post-Covid her domestic sales increased (Kelly, M.2021). Pre-covid, Irish modernist painter Paul Henry's artwork sold for €60,000-€80,000, in 2020 at Whyte's auction his painting 'Sunny Day, Connemara' reached €420,000(O'Sullivan, D. 2020).

However, this increase in sales could be short lived; a survey by the Art Council found 48% of artists have considered abandoning their careers with lack of income being cited by 70% as the main reason. (Arts Council. 2020)

Conclusion	20 Marks

Conclusions
Minimum of 300 words
Max of 350

Present conclusions as they relate to the stated line of inquiry, the associated aims and economic concepts and economic theory underpinning line of inquiry

- Do not include any new information here
- Conclusion must focus on Line of Inquiry: explicitly answer it.
- Address each of the Aims seperately: Discuss how your research project has successfully achieved the aims you outlined at the beginning of your project. Evaluate whether you have met these aims effectively.
- Relate to Economic Concepts: Highlight the economic concepts, theories, and models that underpinned your research. Explain how these concepts were relevant and contributed to your understanding of the issue.
- Discuss Findings: Summarise the key findings of your research. What did you discover through your investigation? How do these findings relate to the economic concepts you explored?
- Consider Implications: Discuss the implications of your findings. How do they relate to real-world economic situations or policies? What can be learned from your research?
- Recommendations: Based on your research, provide any recommendations or suggestions for addressing the issue you investigated. These recommendations should be grounded in economic theory and concepts.
- Future Research: Suggest areas for future research or investigation related to the topic. Are there unanswered questions or aspects that could be explored further?

Reflection		10 Marks
Reflection Minimum of 125 words. Max of 150	 Reflect on the insights gained from engagement with the research study. Demonstrate how thinking has evolved and/or how attitudes, or opinions or behaviour may or may not be influenced as a result of the research study 	10

- Reflection should show your thinking, decision making and planning along the way.
- Show the examiner that you were creative in what kind of information you used to answer the line of inquiry (you didn't just google everything).
- Could you tell the examiner about any mistakes you made along the way? Could you have done things differently? How did you overcome this?
- Discuss Limitations: Be honest about the limitations of your study. What constraints or challenges did you face during your research, and how might they have affected your results?
- Reflect on Learning: Reflect briefly on what you have learned throughout the project,

both in terms of content and research skills.

- Some questions you could ask to help reflect:
 - What did you find interesting about this topic?
 - What did you find challenging about this topic?
 - Did your understanding of economics change? If so, how did it change?

Sample Reflection:

Reflection

Maximum 150 words

From engaging in this research project I gained insights into the attitudes that an economist must possess to have a clearly evaluated research project.

- I have a broader idea of how to adapt the research process to fit into the line of inquiry. The information was not clearly compiled for me therefore I had to collate | data into my own graphs.
- I thought there would be more government actions to counteract gambling but I found the actions to combat covid 19 had actually increased gambling.
- I thought there would be more information about the correlation of recession to gambling and betting such as the lottery in hope of winning money in economic decline.

New questions:

- 1. Does a recession have a correlation to an increase in gambling such as lottery?
- 2. Does the government's lack of government intervention for gambling have a social and economic impact on Ireland and the difference between other countries' regulations?



Communication,
Presentation and
Overall Coherence

 Organisation, presentation and overall cohesion of the report in respect of general evidence of preparation, planning, implementation and completion of the Research Study in the context of the Research Study and individual line of inquiry.

15

- Make sure you are always answering line of inquiry / aims (do not go off topic)
- Stay under the word count
- Economics terminology should be used throughout project Use headings and sub headings
- Graphs, tables and figures should all be labelled (Figure 1.,)
- Use arial 12 font
- Reference all sources using one referencing system style. See below.

Referencing

You must always cite your sources. The SEC says a minimum of two sources. I would say more.

https://www.citethisforme.com/?fbclid=IwAR02Eg8QtWCeKa9Y_LA6TN-Uxt2IVZokGOgXrmCSG0D0s2HtTQRzG2g5VE0

Harvard referencing:

Author Surname, Initials. (Publication Year) 'Article title', Newspaper/Magazine Name, Day Month Published, Page(s). Available at: URL or DOI (Accessed: date).

Ingle, S. (2020) 'Geraint Thomas insists he has nothing to prove at road world championships', The Guardian, 24 September. Available at:

https://www.theguardian.com/sprot/2020/sep/24/geraint-thomas-insists-he-has-nothing-to-prove-at-road-world-championships-cycling (Accessed: 11 October 2020).

Criteria in full

Section	Content to be included	Marks
Introduction Minimum of 200 words. Max of 250	 Provide title for the research study State the individual line of inquiry as an economic question, problem or issue which is to be addressed Outline the aims of this line of inquiry, in the context of the learning outcomes in the specification Select relevant and reliable sources of information and data. A minimum of two sources are required and one must be quantitative 	15
The research process Minimum of 650 words. Max of 750	 The research process must be based on the application of economic concepts and economic lines of inquiry Analyse, interpret and evaluate the selected sources of information and data to make relevant informed arguments and judgements Relevant data may be presented in tabular and graphical format 	40
Section B	Content to be included	30
Conclusions Minimum of 300 words.	Present conclusions as they relate to the stated line of inquiry, the associated aims and economic concepts and	
Max of 350	economic theory underpinning line of inquiry	
	 Reflect on the insights gained from engagement with the research study. Demonstrate how thinking has evolved and/or how attitudes, or opinions or behaviour may or may not be influenced as a result of the research study 	10

Understand topic:

Topic 1:

- Foreign Direct investment (impact on Ireland)
- Employment
- Government Finance
- Ireland's BOP https://docs.google.com/document/d/1KhWzoa3W5e9iUASWunoXVU_H5Bjtv1yl/edit
- Balanced regional development

Topic 2:

- Irish exports
- Employment
- Government Finance
- Ireland's BOP
- Balanced regional development

Line of inquiry: The impact of Foreign Direct Investment in the ICT Industry on Employment and Government Finances in Ireland"

To do: Create 2 or 3 aims:

1. Analyse the relationship between FDI and employment growth

- a. Research (ICT) direct and indirect employment in related sectors, EXAMPLES) *state link to syllabus*
- b. Examine the distribution of FDI
- c. Gender employment
- d. Regional employment disparities in Ireland state link to syllabus
- e. Focus on whether FDI has contributed to reducing unemployment rates in less economically developed areas and if any regional patterns exist

2. Examine job sustainability

- a. Are ICT jobs resilient during times of recession? Have jobs been lost during 2008 / pandemic in these MNC redundancies why? Inflation / demand falling
- b. Does Ireland have enough government investment and support in place for future employment need highly trained specialised staff? *state link to syllabus*

3. Quantify the fiscal contributions made by the pharmaceutical industry through FDI.

- a. Find corporate taxes, export revenues, and other financial benefits to the Irish government, and assess how these contributions have influenced the government's budget
- b. Evaluate the effectiveness of government incentives.

4. How sustainable is ICT - Ireland - Analyse the potential fiscal risks associated with Ireland's reliance on FDI in the ICT

- a. Exploring scenarios where changes in international tax regulations or shifts in global pharmaceutical markets could impact government revenues, and propose strategies for mitigating these risks and promoting fiscal resilience. (this could be a recommendation for the future research)
- b. Could national competitiveness impact attracting FDI

Research the topic

List websites you are going to use
2. What questions have arisen from your readings? You need to pose a question and then solve it for the reader.
Can you answer these questions using relative data? (this is ESSENTIAL) List the weblinks.
n idea: compare Ireland under the topic you have chosen to another EU country. Or ompare how Ireland was affected in this crisis compared to 2008 crisis, through the ens of your topic.

Step 5: Link your research topic to

1. Economic impact
2. Social impact
3. Environmental impact

Step 6: Linking to Economics

1. Here's the Economic Theory
2. Here are the Facts
3. This is my recommendation

Please indicate the title of your research project Type or paste into the space below the full text of the introduction to your research project.

-

Word count

Complete the following table only after you have finished your report.

Section	Number of words
	Click here to enter text.
	Click here to enter text.
	Click here to enter text.
Total	Click here to enter text.

Introduction



The Research Process

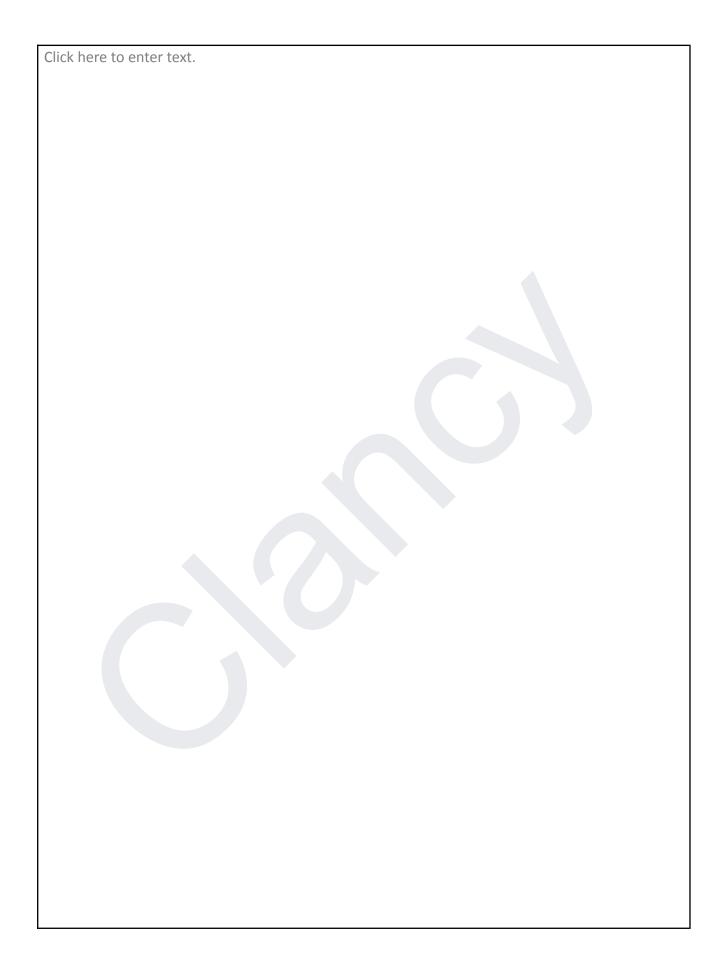
(minimum 650 words - maximum 750 words)

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Chek Here to effer text









Conclusions

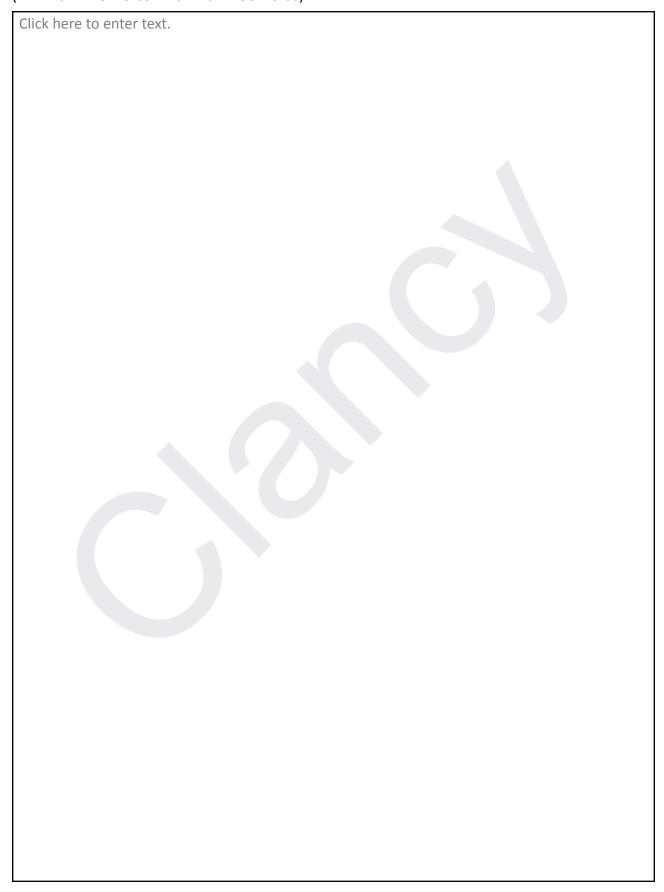
(minimum 300 words - maximum 350 words)





Reflection

(minimum 125 words - maximum 150 words)



References & Bibliography

Include full references for all sources cited in your report. You should also include details of additional sources of information that you consulted but have not cited in your report.



Click here to enter text.