

Inquiry Based Learning

*The important thing is not to stop questioning.
Curiosity has its own reason for existing. — ALBERT EINSTEIN*

What is Inquiry Based Learning?

The educational environment has changed. Students no longer require teachers to simply focus on dispensing knowledge. Instead, teachers must guide students as they acquire the skills to efficiently and critically make meaning from the information that surrounds them.

At Eltham High School we follow an Inquiry Based Learning Process in order to support students to develop strong skills in critical thinking, collaboration, researching, reasoning and communication and information technologies. Students do this by connecting ideas across discipline areas.

Inquiry Specific Subjects

Integrated Studies (Compulsory)

Every student undertakes this program in Year 7 in the Inquiry Learning Centre (100s building). Within this program the students' Science, English and Humanities subjects are extended through in depth research into ideas.

The program has four units, approximately one per term. Each unit engages with a five stage research model that includes both shared and individual research tasks.

UNIT 1 – Focuses on introducing students to Integrated and Inquiry Based Learning. Similarly, we ensure students have a look at influential thinkers such as Shakespeare, Marie Curie and Malala Yousafzai who have shaped the world as we know it today.

UNIT 2 – Challenges students to critically engage with controversial issues that face our communities. Students use an inquiry approach to research, prepare and perform a debate with a team of classmates.

UNIT 3 - Whilst learning about Liveability, students embrace the wider community into our classroom by attending the 'City Experience Camp'. Students inquire into and challenge why Melbourne is consistently voted the world's 'Most Liveable City'.

UNIT 4 - Investigates the true meaning of Sustainability. Students evaluate the economic, cultural and environmental impact actions can have on our lives and the lives of others.

Cornerstone (Compulsory)

Cornerstone Studies are designed for Year 9 students to continue to develop their inquiry skills. These subjects are designed to allow students to engage with fundamental or 'cornerstone' ideas and concepts that will provide an important foundation and support for many areas and concepts that they will encounter in VCE. Cornerstone subjects are not limited to a particular discipline or learning area but instead cut across and make connections between and across disciplines.

Example subjects are:

- What is this thing call Art?
- Home and Place
- Why doesn't everyone speak English?
- Ideas That Changed the World
- ICT, The Final Frontier
- Big History



Middle School Extended Investigation (Elective)

This subject looks at the value of research in society and the manner in which it is conducted and communicated. It is a semester long elective offered to Years 9 and 10 students. Students select an area of research under the broad themes of our School Values. They are required to refine their question, develop a methodology, collect primary data, analyse and present the data in both a written 'thesis' and through a formal 'thesis defence'. This subject focuses on developing rigorous academic skills around writing, referencing and communicating. This course is a recommended prerequisite to the VCE Extended Investigation subject.

VCE Extended Investigation

Is a new Units 3/4 sequence subject that has undergone a two-year trial. The subject is assessed via a final research thesis, defence of work, coursework and critical thinking test. Students must develop and undertake a significant research question on a topic of their choice and interests.