***Exploration Criterion***

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| **Exploration – 6 marks**  This criterion assesses the extent to which the student establishes the scientific context for the work, states a clear and focused research question and uses concepts and techniques appropriate to the Diploma Programme level. Where appropriate, this criterion also assesses awareness of safety, environmental, and ethical considerations. | |
| **Mark** | **Descriptor** |
| 0 | The student’s report does not reach a standard described by the descriptors below. |
| 1-2 | The topic of the investigation is identified and a research question of some relevance is **stated but it is not focused**.  The background information provided for the investigation is **superficial** or of limited relevance and does not aid the understanding of the context of the investigation.  The methodology of the investigation is only appropriate to address the research question to a very limited extent since it takes into consideration few of the significant factors that may influence the relevance, reliability and sufficiency of the collected data.  The report shows evidence of limited awareness of the significant safety, ethical or environmental issues that are **relevant to the methodology of the investigation\***. |
| 3-4 | The topic of the investigation is identified and a relevant but not fully focused research question is described.  The background information provided for the investigation is mainly appropriate and relevant and aids the understanding of the context of the investigation.  The methodology of the investigation is mainly appropriate to address the research question but has limitations since it takes into consideration only some of the significant factors that may influence the relevance, reliability and sufficiency of the collected data.  The report shows evidence of some awareness of the significant safety, ethical or environmental issues that are **relevant to the methodology of the investigation\***. |
| 5-6 | The topic of the investigation is identified and a relevant and fully focused research question is clearly described.  The background information provided for the investigation is entirely appropriate and relevant and enhances the understanding of the context of the investigation.  The methodology of the investigation is highly appropriate to address the research question because it takes into consideration all, or nearly all, of the significant factors that may influence the relevance, reliability and sufficiency of the collected data.  The report shows evidence of full awareness of the significant safety, ethical or environmental issues that are **relevant to the methodology of the investigation**.\* |
| \* This indicator should only be applied when appropriate to the investigation. See exemplars in teacher support material. | |