

Information types for different topics

When considering which topic you want to study for your Research and Analysis Project, you may want to consider what type of information you might need so you can decide whether you have access to that information.

This guide will help you identify what type of information you need to gather for each topic. This guide focuses on three types of data:

1. **Secondary data** is data that has been collected by others for their own purposes, but which may be used by a researcher for his or her different purposes. Examples may include annual reports and accounts, journal, press or trade articles, analyst reports, corporate information published on publicly available websites and so forth. All topics will require the use of some secondary data.
2. **Primary data** is original data that has been collected by a researcher by whatever means appropriate in the answer of a specific research question. i.e. it has been collected specifically for the Research Report. Examples of primary data include questionnaires, interviews and surveys. **If you collect primary data, you need to have written permission from a senior person in the organisation and this authorisation is included as an appendix in your Research Report.**
3. **Internal Corporate Documentation.** This relates to corporate information that is not publicly available. The specific information source may vary according to topic selected but will usually relate to the management accounts of the organization. **If you include this data in your report, you must ask permission of a senior person in the organisation.**

Depending on the topic selected primary research and the use of internal corporate documentation may be:

- **Highly Recommended:** Advisable to have
- **Desirable.** Advantageous to have
- **Not Essential.** Not required but may be relevant

The table below shows the type of research you might undertake and what information may be needed for different topics. **Remember all topics will require the use of some secondary data.**

Topic	Primary Research			Internal Corporate Documentation		
	Highly Recommended	Desirable	Not Essential	Highly Recommended	Desirable	Not Essential
1) An analysis and evaluation of an organisation's budgetary control system and its links with performance management and decision making.		✓		✓		
2) An evaluation of how the introduction of a new technology can assist an organisation in achieving its business objectives.		✓			✓	
3) An assessment of the potential impact of an aspect of impending legislation on the operations and financial position of an organisation.			✓			✓
4) A review of the business management and accounting issues of environmental costs of an organisation.		✓			✓	
5) An evaluation of the use of short term and long term Islamic financial instruments and their impact on the financial statements of an organisation.			✓			✓
6) A critical review of key factors or indicators in the motivation of employees in an organisation.	✓				✓	
7) A critical evaluation of the restructuring of an organisation's operational activities and the effect on the organisation's financial performance.		✓			✓	
8) An analysis and evaluation of the business and financial performance of an organisation over a three year period.			✓			✓
9) A critical evaluation of the planning and implementation of an information system in an organisation.		✓		✓		
10) A review of the effectiveness of the use of costing techniques within an organisation.		✓		✓		
11) An investigation into the financial and operational costs and benefits of the internal audit / internal review activities within an organisation.		✓		✓		
12) An investigation into the possible effects of a proposed accounting standard on the financial statements and business activities of an organisation.			✓			✓
13) An evaluation of the contribution made by human resource activities to the attainment of business and financial objectives.		✓		✓		
14) An appraisal of the business and financial objectives of a strategic investment decision made by an organisation and its impact on key stakeholders.		✓			✓	

Topic	Primary Research			Internal Corporate Documentation		
	Highly Recommended	Desirable	Not Essential	Highly Recommended	Desirable	Not Essential
15) An analysis and evaluation of the management of an organisation's working capital over a three year period and its impact on the organisation's funding strategies.		✓		✓		
16) A critical evaluation of the financial and operational risk management within an organisation.		✓			✓	
17) An assessment of the quality of the corporate governance within an organisation and the impact on an organisation's key stakeholders.			✓			✓
18) A review of the marketing strategy of an organisation and its effectiveness.			✓			✓
19) An analysis and evaluation of the financial and operational consequences of a merger between two organisations or of the acquisition of one organisation by another.			✓			✓
20) An assessment of an organisation's corporate social responsibility policies, including business ethics, and their impact on business practice and key stakeholders.			✓			✓

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