



Beyond the noise. Into the DNA.

FREE SHEET

The 5-C Topic Scorecard

score any thesis or dissertation topic in five minutes

Five questions, five scores, one number you can actually compare. Includes the anchors that stop you inflating your own favourite, a worked example where the exciting topic loses, and a blank scorecard for eight candidates.

WHO WE ARE

CRUX makes practical toolkits for architecture and design students. We take the parts of studio work nobody teaches directly – choosing, deciding, defending, finishing – and turn them into methods you can actually follow.

No theory for its own sake. No filler. Tools you fill in, not essays you read.

VISIT THE WEBSITE

cruxlabstools.com

WHAT WE MAKE

- Decision kits – for the choices that stall a project
- Method guides – for the skills studio assumes you have
- Completion standards – what finished actually looks like
- Review and defence toolkits
- Fill-in worksheets, scorecards and worked examples

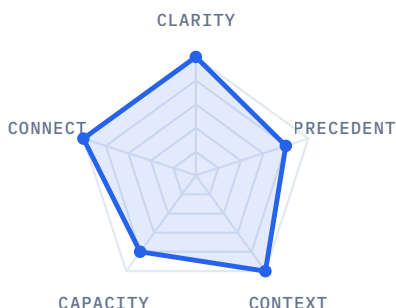
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Five questions that rank a topic

You cannot compare two topics by feel. Score each candidate 1–5 on all five C's. The number matters less than being forced to say **why**, five separate times — which is what a review panel asks anyway.

What a strong topic looks like



23/25

READ THE SHAPE, NOT THE TOTAL

Two topics can both score 18 and be completely different propositions. One is flat at 4 — safe, approvable, unremarkable. One spikes at 5 on connection and dips to 2 on precedents — exciting, and at real risk of collapsing when you cannot find anything to analyse. **The shape tells you what to fix. The total only tells you what to rank.**

	SCORE 1	SCORE 3	SCORE 5
C1 Clarity say it in one sentence	You cannot finish it without adding a second sentence.	Clear to architects, confusing to everyone else.	One sentence. A non-architect repeats it back correctly.
C2 Precedents real ones, today	None found. You have not looked.	One or two, loosely related.	Three named projects, two lines each.
C3 Context real place, real people	Invented problem, no site, no group.	Real issue, generic site, users are 'the public'.	Named site, named group, something you saw yourself.
C4 Capacity-fit skills and calendar	Needs a skill you rated 1–2, or an undocumentable scale.	Doable, but you will be stretched on one front.	Leans on a strength; the workload fits.
C5 Connection when nobody grades	Chosen because it looked safe or impressive.	Interested, not invested.	You already read about this for free.

20+ **Strong.** Reality-check it, then commit.

15–19 **Fixable.** One weak C. Repair, re-score once.

<15 **Let it go.** Two weak C's is structural.

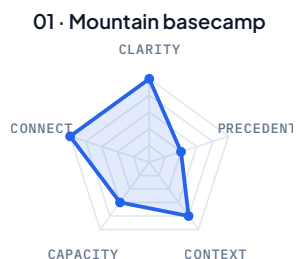
THE ONE RULE THAT MAKES THIS WORK

Score your favourite last

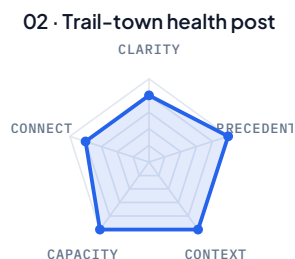
You are cheating when you justify a 4 that should be a 2 — usually on precedents. Calibrate on the others first, and let the numbers be allowed to disappoint you.

Watch the favourite lose

Three candidates from one student. The first is the one they were most excited about.



19/25



23/25



15/25

	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	TOTAL	WHAT THE SHAPE SAYS
01 Basecamp	5	2	4	3	5	19	Loved it, no precedents, site two days away. Real excitement, real risk.
02 Health post	4	5	5	5	4	23	Less romantic, entirely deliverable. Uses their strongest skill.
03 Museum	3	4	3	2	3	15	Nothing wrong, nothing right. Flat scores mean a topic chosen from outside.

NOW SCORE YOURS · SIX ROWS HERE, EIGHT IN THE FULL TOOLKIT

#	CANDIDATE LABEL	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	/25
01							
02							
03							
04							
05							
06							

THIS IS ONE TOOL OUT OF TWENTY-FOUR

The full toolkit takes you from a blank page to one topic you can defend in a sentence — eight stations, twenty-four fill-in tools, thirty-six worked topic statements, four reality-check gates and a decision grid.

FOR THE FULL VERSION, CLICK THE LINK BELOW

cruxlabstools.com/toolkit/thesis-dissertation-topic-scoring-toolkit