

EE HANDBOOK

All the information you need about the Extended Essay

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“ Write like it matters and it will.”

Libra Bray

Dear IB DP student,

You have a challenging yet rewarding task ahead of you – to write your extended essay. It is a wonderful opportunity to explore, research and write about a topic close to you.

Your supervisor will be there for you every step of the way.

This handbook aims to guide you through the process, give you all necessary information or point you in the right direction. However, this handbook is only a general guidance through the process and therefore does not include subject-specific information. Subject-specific material will be provided by your supervisor.

Monika Saganová, EE coordinator

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1. Schedule of the Extended Essay

| Date | Task |
|---------------------------------|---|
| September – December 2023 (DP1) | EE sessions: 1. Introduction to EE 2. How to choose a topic? 3. Academic writing (planning and organisation) 4. Q&A session |
| January 2024 (DP1) | Students choose their subject and supervisor First consultation session with a supervisor |
| February-April 2024 (DP1) | Students choose a topic First research discussions with supervisors Academic writing session (research and citations) First outline of research question First reflection |
| May-June 2024 (DP1) | Research outline Finalise research question First 500 words (start writing) with follow up discussion with a supervisor Second reflection |
| July - September 2024 (DP2) | Writing time End of September – 2000/2500 words due Reflection and feedback session with the supervisor |
| October 2024 (DP2) | First draft due |
| November 2024 (DP2) | Feedback session with supervisor Reflection 3 |
| December 2024 (DP2) | Final draft Final reflection |
| January 2025 (DP2) | Final submission deadline |

2. Introduction to Extended Essay

The extended essay (EE) is an in-depth study of a focused topic chosen from the available Diploma Programme subjects at our school. This is normally **one of the student's six chosen subjects** for those taking the IB diploma, or a subject that a course student has a background in. It is intended to promote **academic research** and **writing skills**, providing students with an opportunity to engage in **personal research** in a topic of their own choice, **under the guidance of a supervisor** (an appropriately qualified member of staff within the school). This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject chosen. It is **mandatory** that all students undertake three reflection sessions with their supervisor, which includes a short, concluding interview, or viva voce, with their supervisor following the completion of the extended essay. An assessment of this reflection process is made under criterion E (Engagement) using the Reflections on planning and progress form.

The extended essay is assessed against common criteria, interpreted in ways appropriate to each subject.

2.1 Aims

The aims of the extended essay are for students to:

- engage in independent research with intellectual initiative and rigour
- develop research, thinking, self-management and communication skills
- reflect on what has been learned throughout the research and writing process.

2.2 Assessment

Extended essay is externally assessed. The supervisor might give the student some formative feedback throughout the process. The maximum number of marks to achieve is 34. Student is then awarded a grade A-E where A is the best and E is a fail. Grade boundaries change each year.

2.2.1 Assessment Objectives

| Assessment objectives | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Knowledge and understanding | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topic chosen and the research question posed.• To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject specific terminology and/or concepts.• To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant and/or appropriate research sources and/or methods used to gather information. |
| Application and analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To select and apply research that is relevant and appropriate to the research question.• To analyse the research effectively and focus on the research question. |
| Synthesis and evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be able to discuss the research in terms of a clear and coherent reasoned argument in relation to the research question.• To be able to critically evaluate the arguments presented in the essay.• To be able to reflect on and evaluate the research process. |
| A variety of (research) skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• To be able to present information in an appropriate academic format.• To understand and demonstrate academic integrity. |

2.2.3 Overview of the assessment criteria

| Criterion A: focus and method | Criterion B: knowledge and understanding | Criterion C: critical thinking | Criterion D: presentation | Criterion E: engagement |
|---|--|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Topic • Research question • Methodology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Context • Subject-specific terminology and concepts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research • Analysis • Discussion and evaluation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structure • Layout | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Process • Research focus |
| Marks | Marks | Marks | Marks | Marks |
| 6 | 6 | 12 | 4 | 6 |

Total marks available: 34

2.2.4 Assessment Criteria

Criterion A: Focus and method

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|---|
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1–2 | <p>The topic is communicated unclearly and incompletely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the topic is limited; the purpose and focus of the research is unclear, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation in the subject for which it is registered. <p>The research question is stated but not clearly expressed or too broad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research question is too broad in scope to be treated effectively within the word limit and requirements of the task, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation in the subject for which it is registered. • The intent of the research question is understood but has not been clearly expressed and/or the discussion of the essay is not focused on the research question. <p>Methodology of the research is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The source(s) and/or method(s) to be used are limited in range given the topic and research question. • There is limited evidence that their selection was informed. |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 3-4 | <p>The topic is communicated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the research topic is communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is adequately clear, but only partially appropriate. <p>The research question is clearly stated but only partially focused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research question is clear but the discussion in the essay is only partially focused and connected to the research question. <p>Methodology of the research is mostly complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source(s) and/or method(s) to be used are generally relevant and appropriate given the topic and research question. • There is some evidence that their selection(s) was informed. <p>If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion.</p> |
| 5-6 | <p>The topic is communicated accurately and effectively.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the research topic is effectively communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is clear and appropriate. <p>The research question is clearly stated and focused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research question is clear and addresses an issue of research that is appropriately connected to the discussion in the essay. <p>Methodology of the research is complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An appropriate range of relevant source(s) and/or method(s) have been applied in relation to the topic and research question. • There is evidence of effective and informed selection of sources and/or methods. |

Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|---|
| 0 | <p>The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.</p> |
| 1-2 | <p>Knowledge and understanding is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of source material has limited relevance and is only partially appropriate to the research question. • Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is anecdotal, unstructured and mostly descriptive with sources not effectively being used. <p>Use of terminology and concepts is unclear and limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject-specific terminology and/or concepts are either missing or inaccurate, demonstrating limited knowledge and understanding. |

| | |
|-----|--|
| 3-4 | <p>Knowledge and understanding is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of source material is mostly relevant and appropriate to the research question. • Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is clear; there is an understanding of the sources used but their application is only partially effective. <p>Use of terminology and concepts is adequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is mostly accurate, demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding. <p>If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion.</p> |
|-----|--|

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|---|
| 5-6 | <p>Knowledge and understanding is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of source materials is clearly relevant and appropriate to the research question. • Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is clear and coherent and sources are used effectively and with understanding. <p>Use of terminology and concepts is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding. |

Criterion C: Critical thinking

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|---|
| 0 | <p>The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.</p> |
| 1-3 | <p>The research is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research presented is limited and its application is not clearly relevant to the RQ. <p>Analysis is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is limited analysis. • Where there are conclusions to individual points of analysis these are limited and not consistent with the evidence. |

| | |
|-----|--|
| | <p>Discussion/evaluation is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An argument is outlined but this is limited, incomplete, descriptive or narrative in nature. • The construction of an argument is unclear and/or incoherent in structure hindering understanding. • Where there is a final conclusion, it is limited and not consistent with the arguments/evidence presented. • There is an attempt to evaluate the research, but this is superficial. <p>If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than three marks can be awarded for this criterion.</p> |
| 4-6 | <p>The research is adequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some research presented is appropriate and its application is partially relevant to the Research question. <p>Analysis is adequate.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is analysis but this is only partially relevant to the research question; the inclusion of irrelevant research detracts from the quality of the argument. • Any conclusions to individual points of analysis are only partially supported by the evidence. <p>Discussion/evaluation is adequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An argument explains the research but the reasoning contains inconsistencies. • The argument may lack clarity and coherence but this does not significantly hinder understanding. • Where there is a final or summative conclusion, this is only partially consistent with the arguments/evidence presented. • The research has been evaluated but not critically. |
| 7-9 | <p>The research is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the research is appropriate and its application is clearly relevant to the research question. <p>Analysis is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research is analysed in a way that is clearly relevant to the research question; the inclusion of less relevant research rarely detracts from the quality of the overall analysis. • Conclusions to individual points of analysis are supported by the evidence but there are some minor inconsistencies. |

| | |
|-------|---|
| | <p>Discussion/evaluation is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective reasoned argument is developed from the research, with a conclusion supported by the evidence presented. • This reasoned argument is clearly structured and coherent and supported by a final or summative conclusion; minor inconsistencies may hinder the strength of the overall argument. • The research has been evaluated, and this is partially critical. |
| 10–12 | <p>The research is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research is appropriate to the research question and its application is consistently relevant. <p>Analysis is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research is analysed effectively and clearly focused on the research question; the inclusion of less relevant research does not significantly detract from the quality of the overall analysis. • Conclusions to individual points of analysis are effectively supported by the evidence. <p>Discussion/evaluation is excellent.</p> |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective and focused reasoned argument is developed from the research with a conclusion reflective of the evidence presented. • This reasoned argument is well structured and coherent; any minor inconsistencies do not hinder the strength of the overall argument or the final or summative conclusion. • The research has been critically evaluated. |

Criterion D: Presentation

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|--|
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1–2 | <p>Presentation is acceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the essay is generally appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, argument and subject in which the essay is registered. • Some layout considerations may be missing or applied incorrectly. • Weaknesses in the structure and/or layout do not significantly impact the reading, understanding or evaluation of the extended essay. |

| | |
|-----|---|
| 3-4 | <p>Presentation is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the essay clearly is appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, the argument and subject in which the essay is registered. • Layout considerations are present and applied correctly. • The structure and layout support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the extended essay. |
|-----|---|

Criterion E: Engagement

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|--|
| 0 | <p>The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors or a RPPF has not been submitted.</p> |
| 1-2 | <p>Engagement is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive. |

| | |
|-----|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These reflections communicate a limited degree of personal engagement with the research focus and/or research process. |
| 3-4 | <p>Engagement is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on decision-making and planning are analytical and include reference to conceptual understanding and skill development. • These reflections communicate a moderate degree of personal engagement with the research focus and process of research, demonstrating some intellectual initiative. |
| 5-6 | <p>Engagement is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on decision-making and planning are evaluative and include reference to the student's capacity to consider actions and ideas in response to challenges experienced in the research process. • These reflections communicate a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement with the research focus and process of research, demonstrating authenticity, intellectual initiative and/or creative approach in the student voice. |

2.3 Reflection

Student reflection in the extended essay is a critical evaluation of the decision-making process. It demonstrates the evolution and discovery of conceptual understandings as they relate to the research question and sources. Reflection demonstrates the rationale for decisions made and the skills and understandings developed, as well as the authenticity and intellectual initiative of the student voice. Effective reflection highlights the journey the student has taken to engage in an intellectual and personal process as well as how it has changed him or her as a learner and affected the final essay. As a part of the extended essay, students will be expected to show evidence of intellectual growth, critical and personal development, intellectual initiative and creativity. This should be facilitated by the use of the Researcher's reflection space. The most successful students will be able to show an appreciation that learning is complex and that they are able to consider their actions and ideas in response to challenges that they may experience during the research process.

The depth of reflection will demonstrate that the student has constructively engaged with the learning process. Such engagement provides evidence that the student has grown as a learner as a result of his or her experience. More importantly, it demonstrates the skills that have been learned.

These skills may include:

- critical thinking
- decision-making
- general research
- planning
- referencing and citations
- specific research methodology
- time management.

Reflection must be documented on the **Reflections on planning and progress form** and is explicitly assessed under assessment criterion E (engagement).

3 Roles

3.1 Extended Essay Coordinator

EE coordinator must ensure that students are thought the necessary skills such as research and academic writing during their scheduled sessions. The coordinator needs to help to introduce the Reflection as a crucial part of the EE and research process. Coordinator oversees the allocation of supervisors and makes sure to limit the number of mentees allocated to each supervisor. Coordinator provides an ongoing support to supervisors.

3.2 Supervisor

Supervisor needs to have enough background knowledge of the subject they are supervising. Supervisors are responsible for undertaking the three mandatory reflection sessions with their mentees. Supervisor need to oversee that each student completes the Reflections on planning and progress form. Supervisors are required to provide meaningful feedback.

What supervisors can do

Comments can be added that indicate that the essay could be improved. These comments should be open-ended and not involve editing the text, for example:

- Issue: the research question is expressed differently in three places (the title page, the introduction and the conclusion).

Comment: is your research question consistent through the essay, including on the title page?

- Issue: the essay rambles and the argument is not clear.

Comment: your essay lacks clarity here. How might you make it clearer?

- Issue: the student has made a mistake in their calculations.

Comment: check this page carefully.

- Issue: the student has left out a section of the essay.

Comment: you are missing something here. What is it? Check the essay against the requirements.

- Issue: the essay places something in the appendix that should be in the body of the essay.

Comment: are you sure this belongs here?

- Issue: the conclusion is weak.

Comment: what is it that you are trying to say here? Have you included all your relevant findings? Have you looked at unanswered questions?

- Issue: the essay has an incomplete citation.

Comment: you need to check this page for accuracy of referencing.

What supervisors cannot do:

- Correct spelling and punctuation.
- Correct experimental work or mathematics.
- Re-write any of the essay.
- Indicate where whole sections of the essay would be better placed.
- Proofread the essay for errors.
- Correct bibliographies or citations.

3.3 Students

Students need to understand the amount of time and work that needs to go into the research and extended essay writing. Students should ensure that they have a plan in place in order to meet all the deadlines. Students are responsible for completing the Researcher's reflection.

4. The supervision process

4.1 Check-in sessions

Students are encouraged to meet with their supervisor in between (and in addition to) the formal reflection sessions. Supervision time should meet the needs of the individual student; therefore, the frequency and duration of these meetings will depend on the needs of the student and the supervisor's requirements. Supervision time may consist of an occasional 10-minute check-in to discuss a timeline or clarification of a comment made by the supervisor. It may also include a more lengthy discussion about particular issues, for example, regarding access to resources. These supervision sessions do not form part of the formal reflection process and do not, therefore, need to be reported on the Reflections on planning and progress form. However, they nevertheless form an important part of the supervision process.

4.2 Formal Reflection Sessions

These are the mandatory sessions that must be recorded on the Reflections on planning and progress form. It is recommended that these sessions last 20–30 minutes. During these sessions students should share excerpts from their Researcher's reflection space with their supervisor. These sessions should focus on progress made so far and set clear objectives for moving forward in the research process. Students should be prepared for these sessions and the meetings should be a dialogue guided by questions posed by the supervisor. Examples of these are given in the document Guiding student reflection.

4.2.1 Preparation for the first reflection session

As preparation for their first reflection session, students should do the following.

1. Think about subjects and areas of particular personal interest and do some initial background reading into a subject and topic of their choice.
2. Using this as a starting point, explore a variety of possible research topics.
3. Read the subject-specific section of the Extended essay guide for the subject they are interested in, paying particular attention to the nature of the subject and the treatment of the topic.
4. Undertake further background reading and begin to gather information around their area of interest. This exploration should give rise to a variety of topics and questions that students can consider for further research. At this stage it is important that students consider the availability of reliable and valid sources for the topic under consideration. All of this should be recorded in their Researcher's reflection space.
5. Begin developing a research proposal which might include a MindMap® of ideas, an annotated article or preliminary bibliography.

Additionally, students must already be thinking in terms of the following questions:

- Is my topic appropriate for the subject I am considering?
- Why am I interested in this area and why is it important?

- What possible questions have emerged from my initial reading?
- Are there any ethical issues that I need to consider?
- What possible methods or approaches might be used for research in this area and why?

4.2.2 First formal reflection session

This initial reflection session should be a dialogue between the student and the supervisor based on the student's initial explorations. It is recommended that the student sends their supervisor an outline of their research proposal ahead of the meeting in order to give the supervisor the opportunity to review their work. This will ensure that the reflection session is focused and productive.

Topics of discussion that should arise during this session include:

- a review of the requirements and assessment criteria for the subject
- a review of ethical and legal implications, if applicable
- a dialogue about possible approaches and any potential problems that might arise
- a discussion of strategies for developing the student's ideas for the essay and expanding the research so that the essay starts to take form
- probing and challenging questions that will help the student focus their thinking; this should lead to the development of the student's working research question
- an outline of the next steps that the student should undertake in order to refine their question; this should take the form of a research and writing timeline

4.2.3 Preparation for the interim reflection session

Between the first and second reflection session, students can engage in informal conversations with other people, such as subject teachers, the extended essay coordinator, the librarian or their supervisor. They must also ensure that they are progressing with their research plan.

In preparation for the interim reflection session, students should have:

- attempted to refine a focused and appropriate research question
- significantly deepened their research and recorded pertinent evidence, information or data in the Researcher's reflection space
- reviewed and consolidated the methodologies they are using
- formulated arguments based on the evidence that they have collected
- added to the working bibliography for their research.

4.2.4 The interim reflection session

This session is a continuation of the dialogue between supervisor and student in which the student must demonstrate the progress they have made in their research. They must also be able to discuss any challenges they have encountered, offer their own potential solutions and seek advice as necessary.

During this session the supervisor might discuss:

- a completed piece of sustained writing from the student in order to ensure that they understand the academic writing requirements, including referencing formats
- whether an appropriate range of sources has been accessed and how the student is critically evaluating the origin of those sources
- what the student now has to do in order to produce the full draft of their essay, and ways and means of breaking down the task into manageable steps.

By the end of the interim reflection session both student and supervisor should feel satisfied that there is:

- a clear and refined research question
- a viable argument on which to base the essay
- a sufficient range of appropriate sources
- a clear vision for the final steps in the writing process.

Between the interim session and the completion of the extended essay, students should continue to see their supervisor as appropriate to their needs, although the third and final reflection session should not take place until after the extended essay has been completed and uploaded for submission.

4.2.5 Preparation for the final reflection session (viva voce)

Supervisors must have already read the final version of the essay, sent to them by the candidate, before this session takes place.

Students should bring the following to this session:

- extracts from their RRS that illustrate how they have grown as learners through the process of reflection
- a willingness to share their personal experience and to discuss the skills and development of conceptual understandings that they have acquired through the completion of the extended essay.

Final reflection session (viva voce)

The viva voce is a short interview between the student and the supervisor, and is the mandatory conclusion to the extended essay process. Students who do not attend the viva voce will be disadvantaged under criterion E (engagement) as the Reflections on planning and progress form will be incomplete.

The viva voce is conducted once the student has uploaded the final version of their extended essay to the IB for assessment. At this point in the process no further changes can be made to the essay. The viva voce is a celebration of the completion of the essay and a reflection on what the student has learned from the process.

The viva voce is:

- an opportunity to ask the student a variety of open-ended questions to elicit holistic evidence of the student's learning experience.
- an opportunity for the supervisor to confirm the authenticity of the student's ideas and sources
- an opportunity to reflect on successes and difficulties encountered in the research process

- an aid to the supervisor's comments on the Reflections on planning and progress form.

The viva voce should last 20–30 minutes. This is included in the recommended amount of time a supervisor should spend with the student. In conducting the viva voce and writing their comments on the

Reflections on planning and progress form, supervisors should bear in mind the following:

- The form is an assessed part of the extended essay. The form must include: comments made by the supervisor that are reflective of the discussions undertaken with the student during their supervision/ reflection sessions; the student's comments; and the supervisor's overall impression of the student's engagement with the research process.
- An incomplete form resulting from supervisors not holding reflection sessions, or students not attending them, could lead to criterion E (engagement) being compromised.
- In assessing criterion E (engagement), examiners will take into account any information given on the form about unusual intellectual inventiveness. This is especially the case if the student is able to demonstrate what has been learned as a result of this process or the skills developed.
- Examiners want to know that students understand any material (which must be properly referenced) that they have included in their essays. If the way the material is used in context in the essay does not clearly establish this, the supervisor can check the student's understanding in the viva voce and comment on this on the Reflections on planning and progress form.
- If there appear to be major shortcomings in citations or referencing, the supervisor should investigate thoroughly. No essay should be authenticated if the supervisor believes the student may be guilty of plagiarism or some other form of academic misconduct.
- The comment made by the supervisor should not attempt to do the examiner's job. It should refer to things, largely process-related, that may not be obvious in the essay itself.
- Unless there are particular problems, the viva voce should begin and end positively. Completion of a major piece of work such as the extended essay is a great achievement for students.

5. Research and Writing Process

Supervisors are recommended to advise their students on how to conduct research and write the extended essay, paying particular attention to the following key areas.

When researching the extended essay, students should follow the steps below.

1

Choose an available Diploma Programme subject for the extended essay for the session in question (subject to any restrictions imposed by the school).

2

Read the following materials: the assessment criteria, relevant subject-specific chapter of the *Extended essay guide*, the IB's ethical guidelines and other associated policies where relevant, such as those relating to animal experiments.

3

Set up the Researcher's reflection space (RRS) and use this as the key planning and reflection tool for the extended essay process.

4

Choose a topic and undertake some background reading on it.

5

Formulate a preliminary research question. Try to incorporate an IB command term in the research question if possible.

6

Draw up an outline plan for the research and writing process. This should include a timeline.

7

Begin to identify how and where they will gather source material for their research.

8

Identify which system of academic referencing they will use, ensuring that this meets the minimum requirements for the IB.

9

Set deadlines for themselves that are realistic and take into consideration the school's own internal deadlines.

10

Plan a structure for the essay. This may change as the research develops but it is useful to have a sense of direction from the start.

11

Undertake some preparatory reading in light of the proposed research question. *If students discover that it will not be possible to obtain the evidence needed in the time available, the research question should be changed. This should be done sooner rather than later: students should not lose time waiting and hoping that something will turn up. Students should go back to stage 3, 2 or 1, and choose a new research question that can be answered.*

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Carry out the research. *The material collected should be assembled in a logical order, linked to the structure of the essay and clearly focused on the research question posed. Only then will students know whether they have enough evidence for each stage of the argument so that they can proceed to the next. Students should be prepared for things to go wrong. Sometimes they may discover something later in the research that undermines what they thought had been established earlier. If that happens, the research plan needs to be revised.*

5.1 Research Question

A research question is a clear and focused question centred on a research topic. Research questions usually emerge when questions are asked about a particular issue that a student is interested in or curious about. A research question helps to focus the research, providing a path through which students will undertake the research and writing process. A clear and well-focused research question, which has a specific aim, will allow a student to work towards developing a reasoned argument within the scope of the task, rather than the kind of “all about” essay that an unfocused research question can lead to.

5.1.1 Steps to developing a research question

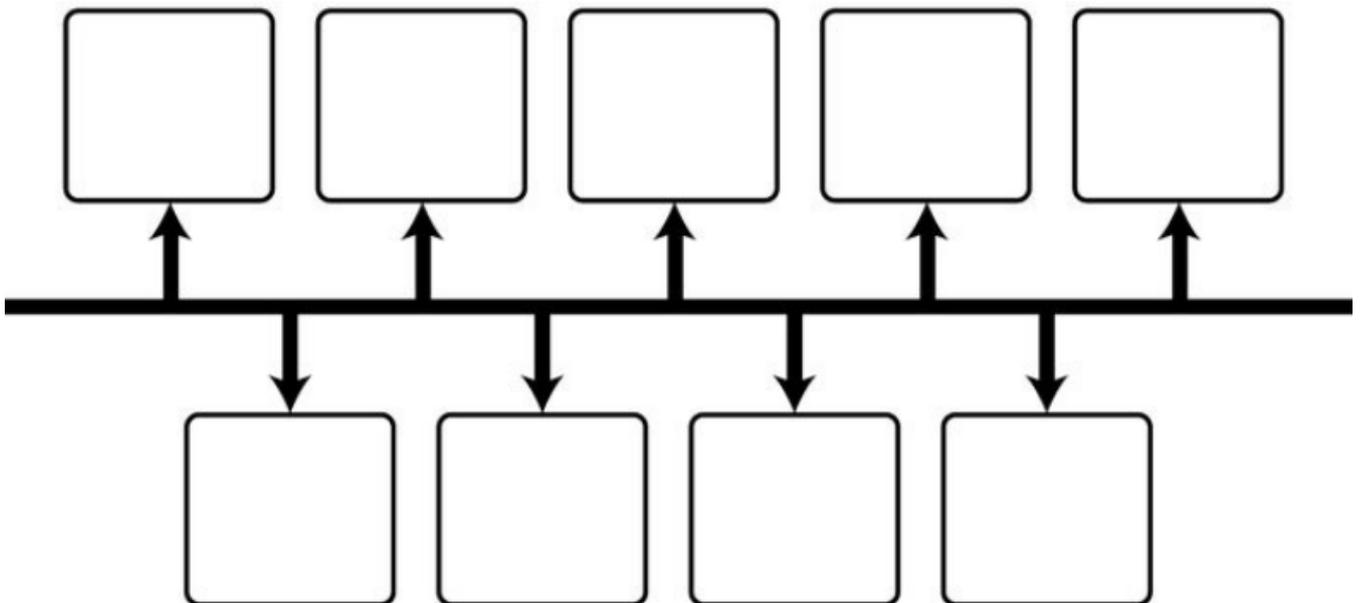
| | |
|--|---|
| Step 1. Choose your subject area | <i>Which subject area is of most personal interest to you? Is there something you are especially curious about in one of your IB courses? Did one of your ERP's from an earlier grade spark an idea that can be researched?</i> |
| Step 2. Choose a topic that interests you | <i>Describe your work in one sentence.</i> I want to learn about _____. Example: I want to learn about public funding for the arts. |
| Step 3. Suggest a question | <i>Try to describe your research by developing a question that specifies something about your topic.</i> I am studying _____ because I want to find out (who, what, when, where, whether, why or how) _____. Example: I am studying public funding for the arts because I want to find out how accessible the arts are to those people who are on low incomes. Direct question: To what extent are the arts accessible to people who belong to the class of the working poor? Include a command term from your subject area to help form the research question. Will you be able to argue a specific position? What are some possible issues or arguments? |
| Step 4. Evaluate your question | <i>Answer the questions:</i> Is there a range of perspectives on this topic? Does the research question allow for analysis, evaluation and the development of a reasoned argument? I am studying _____ because I want to find out _____ in order to understand (how, why or whether) _____. Example: I am studying public funding for the arts because I want to find out how accessible the arts are to the working poor so I can determine whether tax |

| | |
|---|--|
| | dollars support cultural enrichment for all citizens regardless of their socio-economic status. |
| Step 5. Restate your question using a different command term | <p><i>Asking the question in a different way might help you view your topic in a different way.</i></p> <p><i>How does analyzing ...</i></p> <p><i>To what extent ...</i></p> |
| Step 6. Review with your supervisor | <p><i>Is your supervisor able to understand the nature of your research?</i></p> <p><i>Is it clear to your supervisor how and why your topic is relevant in your subject area?</i></p> |
| Step 7. Reflection | <i>If you can adequately respond to the “so what?” question, you may be on your way to a clear and focused research question using your initial topic idea.</i> |

5.2 Timeline

Student should spend around 40 hours on the whole process of extended essay writing and research.

Create a personal timeline to help you stay organized.



5.3 Formal side of the Extended Essay

5.3.1 Structure

The structure of the essay is very important. It helps students to organize the argument, making the best use of the evidence collected. There are six required elements of the final work to be submitted. More details about each element are given in the “Presentation” section. Please note that the order in which these elements are presented here is not necessarily the order in which they should be written.

Six required elements of the extended essay:

1. Title page
2. Contents page
3. Introduction
4. Body of the essay
5. Conclusion
6. References and bibliography

5.3.2 Presentation

The extended essay should be written in a clear, correct and formal academic style, appropriate to the subject from which the topic is drawn. Given that the extended essay is a formally written research paper, it should strive to maintain a professional, academic look.

To help achieve this, the following formatting is required:

- the use of 12-point, readable font
- double spacing
- page numbering
- no candidate or school name on the title page or page headers.

Submitting the extended essay in the required format will help set the tone of the essay and will aid readability for on-screen assessment by examiners.

Word counts

The upper limit is 4,000 words for all extended essays

|  Included in the word count |  Not included in the word count |
|--|--|
| The introduction | The contents page |
| The main body | Maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations |
| The conclusion | Tables |
| Quotations | Equations, formulas and calculations |
| Footnotes and/or endnotes that are not references | Citations/references (whether parenthetical, numbered, footnotes or endnotes) |
| | The bibliography |
| | The <i>Reflections on planning and progress form</i> |

5.4 Academic Honesty

Research practices when working on an extended essay must reflect the principles of academic honesty. The essay must provide the reader with the precise sources of quotations, ideas and points of view through accurate citations, which may be in-text or footnotes, and full references listed in the bibliography, which, regardless of the system used, must ensure the minimum requirements. Please use MLA system as outlined in the Academic honesty policy Spojena Skola Pankuchova 6, Bratislava.

5.5 Subject Specific Guidance

This will be provided as a separate document to the supervisor and the student after the subject is selected.

6. References

This handbook was created mainly from the IB Extended Essay Guide with some minor alterations.

Extended Essay Guide. International Baccalaureate Organization, 2016,
https://xmltwo.ibo.org/publications/DP/Group0/d_0_eeyyy_gui_1602_1/files/Guide_Extended_essay_en.pdf, Accessed 19 May 2022.