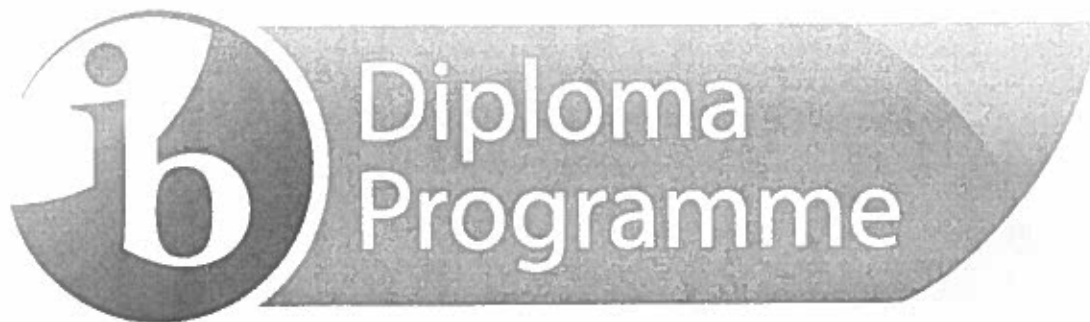


The Henry Wise Wood

Extended Essay Guide:

**To the formulation,
assessment, and other
important tips for success on
writing the EE!**



Section 1: Some Background

1.1 What is the Extended Essay? And what is the point?

The extended essay is an in-depth study of a focused topic chosen from the list of available Diploma Programme subjects for the session in question. 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 critterion 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.

An important aim of the extended essay, as part of the Diploma Programme core is to support and be supported by the academic disciplines. Whichever subject is chosen, the extended essay is concerned with exploring a specific research question through interpreting and evaluating evidence, and constructing reasoned arguments. In undertaking the extended essay students model many of the elements of academic research by locating their topic within a broader disciplinary context, or issue in the case of a world studies extended essay, justifying the relevance of their research and critically evaluating the overall strength of the arguments made and sources used. Guided through this process by a supervisor, students are encouraged to reflect on insights gained, evaluate decisions, and respond to challenges encountered during the research.

1.2 Some Basic Information about the Extended Essay

- The extended essay is compulsory for all students taking the Diploma Programme and is an option for course students.
- A student must achieve a D grade or higher to be awarded the Diploma.
- The extended essay is externally assessed and, in combination with the grade for theory of knowledge, contributes up to three points to the total score for the IB Diploma.
- The extended essay process helps prepare students for success at university and in other pathways beyond the Diploma Programme.
- The extended essay is a piece of independent research on a topic chosen by the student in consultation with a supervisor in the school.
- It is presented as a formal piece of sustained academic writing containing no more than 4,000 words accompanied by a reflection form of no more than 500 words.
- It is the result of approximately 40 hours of work by the student.
- Students are supported by a supervision process recommended to be 3–5 hours, which includes three mandatory reflection sessions.
- The third and final mandatory reflection session is the *viva voce*, which is a concluding interview with the supervising teacher.

Section 2: *Doing the Extended Essay*

2.1 How do I do it!?!?!?

The Process in a nutshell: (Your teachers will help you with this)

1. Decide on a subject area **That interests you** (English, History, Chemistry etc.)
2. Find an advisor
3. Choose a general topic in the discipline that you have chosen (A certain author, a certain leader or historical event, a certain philosophical issue) **and do some background reading**
4. **Narrow your focus:** 4000 words is long, but not that long, so in order to be successful you must have a **focused topic**
5. Formulate a **research question:** Your EE provides an answer to this question
6. Engage in more **specific research:** ensure you use a variety of sources of information (your advisor will be helpful here)
7. Work with your advisor to plan a **structure, Thesis and Arguments** for your essay
8. Write it!!
9. Edit and revise
10. Be done with it☺

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

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

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



2.2 The Research Question

Having a clear, concise, and focused research question is of the utmost importance for a successful EE. So here is some extra information:

Developing a research question

All students, regardless of the subject chosen, must frame their research question as a question. A hypothesis or statement of intent is not acceptable. The reason for this is that a question helps students to retain focus throughout the essay.

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.

Sometimes students may need to revise their research question; therefore, a research question should always be considered provisional until they have enough research data to make a reasoned argument.

Sample research questions

The following table gives guidance on the difference between unclear and unfocused research questions and those that are appropriately clear and focused, lending themselves to in-depth research.

| Unclear, unfocused and unarguable research questions | Clear, focused, narrow research questions lending themselves to in-depth research |
|---|---|
| What was the impact of Ho Chi Minh's allegiance to Lenin? | To what extent was nationalism the guiding factor in Ho Chi Minh's adoption of Leninism in 1920? |
| What is the history of Chinese theatre? | How does the legacy of Mei Lan Fang contribute to modern Jingju? |
| How important is chlorophyll to plant life? | What is the effect of different concentrations of kinetin on leaves aging and the biosynthesis of chlorophyll? |
| How can the US government's spending policy be reformed? | To what extent did the rising COE prices affect the demand for new and used cars by the consumer population and hence affect the revenue generated by the Singaporean economy for the period 2012–16? |

Section 3: 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 general formatting is suggested by IB.

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

3.1 Specific Formatting:

Your Extended Essay Must Include:

1. A title page that states the research question
2. A Table of Contents
3. Your Essay!
4. Bibliography*
5. Reflection form (This is from IB)

* **Note on Bibliography:** Your Bibliography and in-text citations must be consistently formatted. IB does not require any specific citation method, but your advisers will. Likely formatting options are MLA, APA and Chicago

Section 4: Assessment

All Extended Essay are assessed using the same rubric. However, different disciplines will have different specific requirements based on this Rubric. Your Advisor will be able to assist you with this.

4.1: Grade Boundaries

The EE is graded out of a total of **34** and this is turned into a letter grade according to the following boundaries:

- A:** 29-34
- B:** 23-28
- C:** 16-22
- D:** 8-15
- E:** 0-7

4.2 Specific Assessment Criteria

The EE is assessed based on 5 criteria, each of which contribute to the total grade of 34. Categories are not weighted equally as some criteria are more important to a successful critical essay than others; students should be aware of this.

Criterion A: Focus and Method: /6

- Communication and Focus of research topic, question, Thesis and Arguments
- Methodology: appropriate use of relevant sources and methods

Criterion B: Knowledge and Understanding /6

- Specific Knowledge of research topic and subject area. Evidence of strong and varied research

Criterion C: Critical Thinking /12

- In depth Research
- Strong and consistent critical analysis, argumentation and evaluation of research materials

Criterion D: Presentation /4

- Appropriate structure, formatting, referencing

Criterion E: Engagement /4

- Use of reflection in the planning and process of writing the EE

Extended Essay (E.E) Rubric

Criterion A - Focus and method:

This criterion focusses on the topic, the research question, and the methodology used. It assesses the explanation of the focus of the research (this addresses the topic and the research question), how the research will be undertaken, and how the focus is maintained throughout the essay.

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 given for this criterion.

| 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 of the subject for which it is registered. <p>The research question is stated but not clearly expressed or is 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, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation of 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 in 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 the research question. • There is limited evidence that the selection of sources 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 the selection of sources was informed. |
| 5-6 | <p>The topic is communicated clearly and effectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the research topic is effectively communicated; the purpose and the 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 of 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. |

Extended Essay (E.E) Rubric

Criterion B - Knowledge and understanding:

This criterion assess the extent to which the research relates to the subject area/discipline used to explore the research question, or in the case of the world studies E.E., the issue addressed and the two disciplinary perspectives applied, and additionally the way in which the knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate terminology and concepts.

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

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|--|
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 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 but 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 is mostly accurate, demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding. |
| 5-6 | <p>Knowledge and understanding is excellent:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of source material 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. |

Extended Essay (E.E) Rubric

Criterion C - Critical thinking:

This criterion assesses the extent to which critical-thinking skills have been used to analyse and evaluate the research undertaken.

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

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|---|
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 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 research question. <p>Analysis is limited:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is limited analysis. • Where there are conclusions to the individuals 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. |
| 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 the 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 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, coherent, and supported by a final or summative conclusion; minor inconsistencies may hinder the strength of the overall argument. <p>The research has been evaluated, and this is partially critical</p> |
| 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 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; and minor inconsistencies do not hinder the strength of the overall argument or the final or summative conclusion. <p>The research has been critically evaluated.</p> |

Extended Essay (E.E) Rubric

Criterion D – Presentation:

This criterion assesses the extent to which the presentation follows the standard format expected for academic writing and the extent to which this aids effective communication.

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|---|
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1-2 | Presentation is acceptable: <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 conventions may be missing or applied incorrectly. • Weaknesses in the structure and/or layout do not significantly impact the reading, understanding, or evaluation of the E.E. |
| 3-4 | Presentation is good: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the essay 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 E.E. |

Criterion E – Engagement:

This criterion assesses the student’s engagement with their research focus and the research process. It will be applied by the examiner at the end of the assessment of the essay, and is based solely on the candidate’s reflections as detailed on the RPPF, with supervisory comments and the E.E. itself as context.

| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
|-------|--|
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below or a RPPF has not been submitted. |
| 1-2 | Engagement is limited: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive. • The reflections communicate a limited degree of personal engagement with the research focus and/or research process. |
| 3-4 | Engagement is good: <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 the process of research, demonstrating some intellectual initiative. |
| Level | Descriptor of strands and indicators |
| 5-6 | Engagement is excellent: <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 the process of research, demonstrating authenticity, intellectual initiative and/or creative approach in the student’s voice. |

Total score: ___ out of 34

Comments:

Extended Essay Predicted Grade Calculation

Student Name: _____

Supervisor Name: _____

Subject Area: _____

Title of Extended

Essay: _____

****The aim is to find, for each criterion, the descriptor that conveys most adequately the achievement level attained by the student. In the light of any one criterion, a student's work may contain features denoted by a high achievement level descriptor combined with features appropriate to a lower one.**

****Only whole numbers should be used, no partial points as fractions or decimals are awarded.**

****The highest descriptors do not imply a faultless performance, and teachers should not hesitate to use the extremes of the markbands, including zero, if they are appropriate descriptions of the work being assessed.**

| Criteria & Description | Points |
|---------------------------|--------|
| Focus & Method | /6 |
| Knowledge & Understanding | /6 |

| | |
|-------------------|-----|
| Critical Thinking | /12 |
| Presentation | /4 |
| Engagement | /6 |
| Total | /34 |

Markband scheme:

A 29-34

B 23-28

C 16-22

D 8-15

E 0-7