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**Extended Essay**

**Guide**

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Extended essay Moodle Course

Please consult the [Extended Essay Moodle Course](http://moodle.intst.net/moodle/course/index.php?categoryid=62) for further information and weblinks to useful material.

INTRODUCTION

Grade 11, beginning your extended essay can be both exciting and daunting. For most of you, this will be the first time you will be in charge of your own learning to such an extent. Many of our students have explained that they found completing their extended essay one of the most rewarding parts of the whole IBDP experience. Some added that they also found it very challenging and that they learnt a tremendous deal about themselves. What is certain is that employers and universities think very highly of this task and indeed it is not uncommon for IBDP students to secure places on very competitive university courses because they have successfully completed an extended essay in a relevant area. On another note, however, I should add that this task is extremely important because, if you do not secure at least a grade D (with E being the lowest possible grade), then this automatically results in a failing condition for the Diploma.

The extended essay is certainly one part of the IB Core that helps IBDP students stand out from the rest of the crowd. I’m sure that, if you embrace this task and approach it in the spirit of the IST learner profile, you will get a lot out of the experience and ultimately be successful. Remember though that you’re never really on your own: you always have your supervisor, librarian, tutors and parents at hand to help you through these coming months. Finally,

my door is always open too if you feel I can offer any help or advice. I wish you all the very best as you embark on your unique EE experience!

THE IBO AIMS & EXPECTATIONS OF THE EXTENDED ESSAY PROJECT

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| The **aims** of this task are for you to: | You are **expected** to: |
| pursue independent research on a focused topic | plan and pursue a research project with intellectual initiative and insight |
| develop your research and communication skills | formulate a precise and clear research question |
| develop skills of creative and critical thinking | gather and interpret material from a range of appropriate sources |
| engage in a systematic process of research appropriate to the subject | structure a reasoned argument in response to your research question |
| experience the excitement of intellectual discovery | present your extended essay in a format appropriate to the subject, using an established system to acknowledge your sources |
|  | confidently use appropriate terminology and language |
|  | apply analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject, with an understanding of the implications and the context of your research. |

***Adapted from the official IBO Guide***

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO:

1. Give the IBDP Coordinator a detailed extended essay proposal sheet outlining two possible essays after initial brief discussions with possible supervisors
2. Meet with your supervisor (between 3-5 hours in total) and complete the first two parts of the Reflections on Planning and Progress (RPP) form and have this signed and dated by your supervisor. See the last part of this booklet for the link to the RPP form
3. Respond appropriately to advice and guidance given by your supervisor
4. Meet all deadlines set. This includes the school deadlines (see IBDP calendar) and any other interim deadlines you agree on with your supervisor
5. Systematically record all your sources so these can be properly referenced in the actual essay
6. Organise a suitable place (ManageBac has a dedicated Researcher’s Reflection space but you could use a blog, art book, ring binder, etc.) to record all your work in progress (research, reflections, questions, challenges, discoveries, annotations, drafts, etc.) and bring this along to every meeting you have with your supervisor
7. Organise and plan effectively how to use the 40 hours expected by the IBO to successfully complete your essay (including carefully planning your time during Extended Essay Day in June)
8. Upload a complete draft by the second Friday of September and the final version of your essay (max. 4,000 words) by the last Friday in November directly onto Moodle. You must ensure that your essay complies with the IBO rules as outlined below. Actual dates can be found on ManageBac
9. Prepare for and attend a viva voce (short interview) with your supervisor once they have read through your final extended essay and complete the last part of the RPP form. You will arrange a suitable day and time

directly with your supervisor but this must be done at some point in the 3 weeks after you submit your final essay (and before the Christmas holidays at the very latest)

1. Complete, sign and date the IBO cover form declaring that the essay is your own work. Also hand to your supervisor your completed RPP form so it can be stored safely in school

YOUR SUPERVISOR WILL:

1. Meet with you during the process (5 hours max – including the viva voce) to provide you with advice, guidance, feedback, support and encouragement (e.g. advice on how to access resources, techniques of analysis, writing an abstract, documenting sources, etc.)
2. Discuss the choice of topic with you and, in particular, help you formulate a well-focused research question (and also ensure this question satisfies appropriate legal and ethical standards with regard to health and safety, confidentiality, human rights, animal welfare and environmental issues). They can refer to previous/other successful extended essays to help you understand the task better
3. Be familiar with IBO regulations governing the extended essay and the assessment criteria, and make sure you also have copies of these to regularly refer to. They should also refer to appropriate resources, for example the Extended essay section of My IB to ensure they are fully up to date with recent developments and formal feedback
4. Monitor the progress of your extended essay to offer guidance and to ensure that the essay is your own work. They will want to see parts of your work in progress and will, when appropriate, ask you to run your work through Turnitin and discuss the results of this check with you and (if necessary) the IBDP Coordinator
5. Set you personal deadlines to help you break the process down into suitable sections and check that you are making satisfactory progress. They will ensure the IBDP Coordinator is informed of any issues regarding your progress and/or any difficulties as they arrive during the process and not only as you approach the final deadline
6. Read and comment on **one** completed draft only of the essay. They should use the IBO assessment criteria to offer advice on areas to improve
7. Read the final version to confirm its authenticity and prepare for the viva voce
8. Submit predicted grades (for example supervisors are asked to use your first draft to generate predicted grades for UCAS/university applications by the end of the first week in October of Y13). Supervisors should share your EE UCAS/university predicted grade directly with you
9. Complete, sign and date the supervisor’s report and declare that the work to the best of their knowledge is yours, conduct the viva voce and write comments relating to criteria K (holistic judgment)
10. Hand all completed paperwork, including your fully completed RPP form, along with (if appropriate) one hard copy of your final essay to the IBDP Coordinator so he can forward to the IBO

# YOUR SCHOOL WILL HELP YOU BY:

1. Organising one or more assembly to outline the demands of the task, particularly in the context of the IB Diploma as a whole and how the draft will impact your UCAS/university predicted grades. We will also prompt you to consider how to plan your 40 hours
2. Allocating an appropriately qualified supervisor
3. Ensuring you have adequate access to our library and helping you access other useful libraries by providing you a letter of introduction if necessary
4. Over the course of the process, running three library sessions to teach you essential key skills such as creating and focussing research questions, researching, evaluating the value of various primary and secondary sources, showing you how to use a recognised referencing system to create footnotes and bibliographies, etc.
5. Providing you with all necessary IBO paperwork (such as the marking criteria, RPP forms, etc.)
6. Giving you the key deadlines early in the process so you know exactly when you are expected to submit the completed first draft and the final draft
7. Running the Extended Essay Day in the summer term to help ensure you are set up and thoroughly prepared to make full use of your long summer holiday to get the first draft completed
8. Asking teachers to refer closely to your IBDP calendar when they plan and set key deadlines to ensure you are able to meet all deadlines set
9. Helping supervisors stay up to date with developments concerning the extended essay through running IB meetings and, where appropriate, providing training on the extended essay
10. Liaising with parents when appropriate or necessary. The UCAS/university predicted grade for the extended essay will be communicated to families (along with all other final predicted grades) at the beginning of October. Parents will be contacted during the task if any issues arise that prevent you successfully completing this essential component of the Diploma programme. Finally, if a student fails to meet the final deadline the IBDP Coordinator will take time to discuss options with families (transferring onto IB Course or having a period of fixed exclusion from lessons)

# ADVICE FROM EXAMINERS

Here is some extremely useful advice from the extended essay examiners themselves:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **DO** | **DON’T** |
| **BEFORE STARTING WORK ON YOUR QUESTION:** | choose a research question that is too broad |
| choose to write the essay in one of your (HL) IB subjects | choose a research question that you cannot find sources or evidence to work with |
| read the assessment criteria properly | choose a research question that is too narrow |
| read previous essays to identify strengths and possible pitfalls | forget you need to complete the task in 40 hours and 4,000 words |
| spend time working out your research question (imagine how the finished essay will look) | forget to analyse the research question |
| work out a structure for the essay | ignore the assessment criteria |
| **DURING THE RESEARCH PROCESS:** | plagiarize |
| start work early and stick to deadlines | collect material that is irrelevant to the research question |
| maintain a good working relationship with your supervisor | merely describe or report (evidence must be used to support the argument) |
| construct an argument that relates to the research question | repeat the introduction in the conclusion |
| use the library and consult librarians for advice | cite sources that are not used |
| record sources as you go along (rather than trying to reconstruct a list at the end) |  |
| choose a new topic and a research question that can be answered if there is a problem with the original topic |  |
| use appropriate language for the subject |  |
| let your interest and enthusiasm show |  |
| **AFTER COMPLETING THE ESSAY** |  |
| check and proofread the final version very carefully |  |

# LINKS TO EVEN MORE HELP AND ADVICE

There is plenty of detailed information available on the school Moodle site and elsewhere online.

1. Under the ‘IB Core’ area on Moodle you have more detail about what the essay must have in it and there are direct links to where you need to upload both your complete 1st draft and your final essay. Click [here](http://moodle.intst.net/moodle/course/index.php?categoryid=62) for the link. This area also has a links to the official IBO guide to the extended essay, a short article on what IB graduates said they got from the task and other useful forms (such as the IBO’s RPP form). Lastly, there are some previous examples of extended essays done at the IST.
2. On the front page of Moodle’s library section there is a [direct link](http://moodle.intst.net/moodle/course/view.php?id=1122) to ‘IB Research and the Extended Essay’. Here there are copies of all the librarian’s hand outs on, for example, planning your essay, guide to the extended essay, bibliography and citation help, how to write an abstract and the final checklist for the essay (this includes a breakdown of the mark scheme).
3. The plagiarism checking tool that the school subscribes too is Turnitin (<http://turnitin.com/en_us/home>)
4. On Youtube there is a full playlist with videos (of varying quality) about the extended essay, some are worth watching if you need some more inspiration see [here.](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I3lv-y-5IIU&list=PL9-hPYjNiapR258bdiTcZTDjmvBYIElOc)

# HOW YOUR EXTENDED ESSAY WILL BE GRADED

The essays are actually marked by outside examiners and they ultimately decide the final grade of your essay. Similarly to TOK the extended essays are grades A-E and here are the descriptors for each grade:

A = Work of an excellent standard

B = Work of a good standard

C = Work of a satisfactory standard

D = Work of a mediocre standard

E = Work of an elementary standard **(This is a failing condition for the Diploma)**

# THE OFFICIAL IBO ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

### A: Focus and method

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| level | Descriptor |
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1–2 | The topic is communicated unclearly and incompletely.   * 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.   The research question is stated but not clearly expressed or too broad.   * 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.   Methodology of the research is limited.   * 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 | The topic is communicated.   * Identification and explanation of the research topic is communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is adequately clear, but only partially appropriate.   The research question is clearly stated but only partially focused.   * The research question is clear but the discussion in the essay is only partially focused and connected to the research question.   Methodology of the research is mostly complete.   * 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.   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. |
| 5–6 | The topic is communicated accurately and effectively.   * Identification and explanation of the research topic is effectively communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is clear and appropriate.   The research question is clearly stated and focused.   * The research question is clear and addresses an issue of research that is appropriately connected to the discussion in the essay.   Methodology of the research is complete.   * 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 |

### B: Knowledge and understanding

This criterion assesses 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 extended essay, the issue addressed and the two disciplinary perspectives applied, and additionally the way in which this knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate terminology and concepts.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Achievement level | Descriptor |
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1–2 | Knowledge and understanding is limited.   * 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.   Use of terminology and concepts is unclear and limited.   * Subject-specific terminology and/or concepts are either missing or inaccurate, demonstrating limited knowledge and understanding. |
| 3–4 | Knowledge and understanding is good.   * 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.   Use of terminology and concepts is adequate.   * The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is mostly accurate, demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding.   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. |
| 5–6 | Knowledge and understanding is excellent.   * 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.   Use of terminology and concepts is good.   * The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding. |

### C: Critical thinking

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

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Achievement level | Descriptor |
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1–3 | The research is limited.   * The research presented is limited and its application is not clearly relevant to the RQ.   Analysis is limited.   * There is limited analysis. * Where there are conclusions to individual points of analysis these are limited and not consistent with the evidence.   Discussion/evaluation is limited.   * 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.   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. |
| 4–6 | The research is adequate.   * Some research presented is appropriate and its application is partially relevant to the Research question.   Analysis is adequate.   * 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.   Discussion/evaluation is adequate.   * 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 | The research is good.   * The majority of the research is appropriate and its application is clearly relevant to the research question.   Analysis is good.   * 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.   Discussion/evaluation is good.   * 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 | The research is excellent.   * The research is appropriate to the research question and its application is consistently relevant.   Analysis is excellent.   * 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.   Discussion/evaluation is excellent.   * 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. |

### 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.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Achievement level | Descriptor |
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below. |
| 1–2 | Presentation is acceptable.   * 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 | Presentation is good.   * 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. |

### 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 the supervisory comments and extended essay itself as context.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Achievement level | Descriptor |
| 0 | The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors or a RPPF has not been submitted. |
| 1–2 | Engagement is limited.   * Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive. * These reflections communicate a limited degree of personal engagement with the research focus and/or research process. |
| 3–4 | Engagement is good.   * 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 | Engagement is excellent.   * 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. |

EXTRA RULES FOR DIGITAL SUBMISSION DIRECTLY TO THE IBO

From May 2017 all essays must be uploaded directly to the IBO and, therefore, you also need to ensure that:

1. Neither the candidate name or number should appear on any of the pages of the extended essay, including the title page.
2. The essay is formatted as follows:   
   o using Arial font  
   o font size 12  
   o double-spaced  
   o numbered pages
3. The extended essay is an acceptable file type:  
   o DOC  
   o DOCX  
   o PDF  
   o RTF
4. The extended essay is an acceptable file size of no more than 10MB, which still allows for high quality images.
5. All diagrams, maps, tables, must be digitally produced where possible to prevent excessive file sizes when included in as part of the essay.
6. The model for the extended essay is a paper in an academic journal. Students should not upload media other than the essay itself and accompanying images.
7. Appendices must be used sparingly. Examiners are not required to read appendices, so material essential to the essay must always be included in the body of the essay (including large images) and any material in the appendix should be minimal and selected with care.
8. Irrespective of the subject, the extended essay should be modelled on an academic journal/research paper which can exist and be understood on its own, without the need to access external links or accompanying material such as DVDs. There is no requirement for the examiner to refer to any material that is not included in the extended itself when assessing the work.
9. It is now easier for examiners to gauge at which point an essay has reached 4000 words. Candidates should be reminded of the penalty for exceeding the word count, or circumventing it using footnotes incorrectly (for anything other than referencing).

THE VIVA VOCE OR CONCLUDING INTERVIEW

All IBDP students at our school are required to complete a viva voce with their supervisor after they have submitted the final essay (so during the 3 weeks following the final essay deadline at the end of November).

The viva voce is:

1. An opportunity to reflect on successes and difficulties in the research process
2. An opportunity to reflect on what has been learned
3. An aid to the supervisor’s report
4. A check on plagiarism and malpractice in general

The interview is formal in nature and should last between 10 and 15 minutes (this is included in the recommended amount of time your supervisor is supposed to spend with you – i.e. 3-5 hours). The interview should end on a positive note unless, of course, any serious issues (such as plagiarism) have been discussed. Your supervisor will use their notes from this interview to complete the IBO cover sheet and this will then be used to allocate marks for criteria K.

Here are a few types of questions a supervisor might ask during your viva voce:

* “I am not clear what you mean on page XXX. You quote Y: could you explain a little more about what this tells us?”
* “On page \*\*\* you cite Z. I couldn’t find this reference (for example, website). Could you tell me more about it?”
* “What have been the high and low points of the research and writing processes?”
* “What were the most interesting aspects of the process? Did you discover anything that surprised you?”
* “What have you learned through writing this essay? Is there any advice you would want to pass on to someone just starting out on an extended essay?”
* “Is there anything else that you would particularly like me to mention in my report?”

COMPLETING THE REFLECTIONS ON PLANNING & PROGRESS (RPP) FORM

The ‘Reflections on Planning & Progress’ (RPP) form must be completed properly. The reflections should be completed on ManageBac. The first reflection should be completed after the first formal reflection meeting with the supervisor in March. The interim reflection should be completed after the interim reflection meeting in June. The final reflection should be completed after the viva voce in December. [Sample of the RPP form.](http://xmltwo.ibo.org/publications/Assess_pro/forms/2018/EERPPF_en.pdf)