



# Student Extended Essay Guide

International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme  
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*“Research is to see what everybody else has seen, and to think what nobody else has thought.”*

Albert Szent-Gyorgyi, Hungarian scientist, 1893 – 1986

## 1 Purpose of this Guide

This guide is an aid for writing the Extended Essay, which is also accepted as Matura paper. Students are advised to read this guide to gain an overview of the process and the requirements. This guide does not claim to be able to provide answers to all questions that may be raised. For students and supervisors, the [IB Extended Essay website](#)<sup>1</sup> provides a source of further and more in-depth information.

## 2 About the Extended Essay

### 2.1 What is the Extended Essay?

The extended essay (EE) is a mandatory in-depth study of a topic chosen from the list of approved Diploma Programme subjects, preferably one of the six DP subjects (see chapter 3). As part of the IB core, it promotes academic research and writing skills, intellectual curiosity and creativity. It provides students with an opportunity to pursue a topic of their personal interest under the guidance of a supervisor, i.e. a teacher at the school. The extended essay results in a formally presented piece of writing, followed by a short interview with the supervisor. It is maximum 4,000 words long and externally assessed. It is the result of approximately 40 hours of work.

Together with TOK, it can contribute up to 3 bonus points and failing it is a failing condition for the whole IB diploma.

### 2.2 Why is the Extended Essay important?

As part of the student profile, the EE is a great opportunity to prepare for academic work at university, an invaluable personal experience, an investigation of the student’s predilection in a subject enabling them to develop their analytical and evaluation skills, their creative thinking and reasoning.

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<sup>1</sup> If asked to enter your login credentials you just leave the spaces blank and click "OK" or "Abbrechen".

### 3 Subjects and topics

The IBO defines the available Diploma Programme subjects for the EE for the session in question. Actually, the subjects are defined as following:

Group 1: German

Group 2: English or French

Groups 3 to 6: Biology; Business management; Chemistry; Computer science; Dance; Design technology; Economics; Environmental systems and societies; Film; Geography; Global politics; History; Information technology in a global society; Literature and performance; Mathematics; Music; Philosophy; Physics; Psychology; Social and cultural anthropology; Sports, exercise and health science; Theatre; Visual arts; World religions; World studies (containing the following themes: Science, technology and society; Culture, language and identity; Conflict, peace and security; Equality and inequality; Health and development; Environmental and/or economic sustainability)

The EE as "piece of research" has the consequence that there is only a limited possibility of a Matura paper of the type "creative production" (e.g. dance, film, music). The type "organization of an event" named in the Matura paper brochure cannot be chosen as an EE subject.

For more detailed and important subject-specific information, see the references on the [EE webpage](#) > Subject-specific guidance.

### 4 Expectations and requirements for students and supervisors

Students writing an EE are expected to:

- choose a topic they are enthusiastic about
- work independently in order to produce an authentic piece of research
- acknowledge all sources and quotes in one citation style
- follow the rules and regulations for the EE
- meet all deadlines
- not spend more than the recommended 40 hours in total

For more information see the [EE webpage](#).

Supervisors of EEs are required to:

- advise and guide students in the skills of undertaking research
- offer encouragement and support
- be familiar with EE regulations and assessment criteria and make them known to students
- read and comment on one completed draft without, however, editing it
- read the final version to confirm its authenticity
- submit a predicted grade to the IBO
- write a report for the school's DP coordinator in case of suspected plagiarism

For a complete description of requirements, see the [EE webpage](#).



## 7 Research, planning and writing

When elaborating your EE, you are advised to do the following:

1. Choose an approved subject (see chapter 2) for your EE. Make sure that you read the assessment criteria and the relevant subject guidance (see EE webpage or EE guide). It might be helpful to review past EEs for ideas and guidance. A collection of assessed student work is accessible [here](#).
2. Choose a topic that is reasonably restricted and provides you with the opportunity to conduct an in-depth analysis or to cover a topic with an appropriate degree of intensity.
3. Work out a proposal of your EE. This piece of writing should contain:
  - a working title
  - a description of the chosen topic and how you have restricted it, as well as your motivations to choose this topic
  - a description about what you already know about the topic
  - resources you have already read (e.g. literature, books, internet sources) or you are going to read in order to obtain further insight into the topic (it is important to undertake preparatory reading at this very early state if you still want to change your EE topic)
  - aims of your research
  - well-focused research question(s) and/or hypotheses you are going to test
  - a description of the methods you are going to apply
  - a provisional structure (outline headings) for the essay
  - a schedule with deadlines
4. Carry out the investigation.
  - Pay attention that the material you gather will be assembled in a logical order, linked to the structure of your EE.
  - You might think about testing your method first and adjusting it if necessary before you start the data collection. If things do not work or go wrong, your plans need to be revised.
  - Make sure that you thoroughly document your investigation and/or results you get (e.g. protocol of you data collection).
5. Write your EE.
  - You might start writing the introduction or the material and method chapter. The discussion is written after you have compiled the results. The abstract is normally written last.
  - Be aware that you will re-read and reformulate your first written draft. This will allow your writing to become more profound.

## 8 Formal requirements

### 8.1 For submitting the EE to the IBO

- All extended essays must be submitted with the required completed coversheet EE. The EE coversheet must be completed in the same language as the extended essay. This includes all languages for extended essays in group 1 and group 2.
- The candidate name or number should not appear on any of the pages of the extended essay including the title page.
- The word count should be stated clearly on the title page of the extended essay. It includes the introduction, the main body, the conclusion, quotations, and footnotes and/or endnotes that are not references. Not included are the contents page, maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations, tables, equations, formulas and calculations, citations/references (whether parenthetical, numbered, footnotes or endnotes), the bibliography, the RPPF, headers.

- Make sure that there are no personal identifiers within the essay (for example, candidate's name, candidate's session number, supervisor's name, school name).
- An abstract or summary is not required.
- The essay should be formatted using:
  - an appropriate font for academic work (for example Arial/Times New Roman)
  - font size 12
  - double spacing
  - numbered pages.
- The extended essay should be saved in an acceptable file type like Microsoft WORD (.docx) or PDF. 10 Mb should be the upper limit.
- All diagrams, maps and tables must be digitally produced where possible to prevent excessive file sizes when included as part of the essay.
- The extended essay is a paper in an academic journal. No provision is therefore planned for the upload of media other than the essay itself and accompanying images and external references will not be accessed for assessment. Irrespective of the subject, the extended essay should be modelled on an academic journal/research paper that can exist and be understood on its own, without the need to access external links or accompanying material.
- 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. World studies extended essay candidates are still encouraged to produce a researcher's reflection space (RSS), and this should be included as an appendix.
- The EE has to be written and presented in English. On request, a language of an IB subject can be chosen (e.g. German or French); applications for this must be submitted to the prorector responsible for the Matura paper.

## 8.2 Extended Essay vs. Matura Paper

The extended essay is accepted as Matura paper. However, there are certain differences that are pointed out here:

	<b>Extended Essay</b>	<b>Matura Paper</b>
Word count	Max. 4,000	A max. of 4,000 is accepted.
Title page	Only includes the following information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the title of the essay</li> <li>• the research question</li> <li>• the subject for which the essay is registered (if it is a language essay also state which category it falls into; if it is a world studies essay also state the theme and the two subjects utilized)</li> <li>• word count</li> </ul>	Requirements according to the <a href="#">brochure for the preparation of the Matura Paper</a>
Abstract / Summary	Not required	Eventually required by the supervisor
Formatting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the use of 12-point, readable font</li> <li>• double spacing</li> <li>• page numbering</li> </ul>	Requirements according to the <a href="#">brochure for the preparation of the Matura Paper</a>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no candidate, supervisor, or school name on the title page, page headers, appendices or acknowledgment pages</li> </ul>	
RPPF (Reflections on planning and progress form) / Work journal	Reflection ( <a href="#">RPPF form</a> ): totally max. 500 words for all 3 reflections	Eventually required by the supervisor
Declaration of Original Work	Not required	Requirements according to the <a href="#">brochure for the preparation of the Matura Paper</a>

## 9 Checklist

The following general criteria checklist (adapted from Mavergames, 2016) provides you with the possibility to improve your scores for your work. Check the box (☑) of each item you have verified in your extended essay.

Item	Action	Check
1	Is the essay within 4,000 words? The word count does not include the abstract, acknowledgments, contents page, maps, diagrams, tables, graphs and annotated ill, equations and formulas, in-text citations, foot- and endnotes, bibliography, and appendices.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Is the essay formatted in a clean, simple and consistent overall style: 2.5 cm margins, double-spaced, black and white, 11 or 12 point font, printed double-sided (paper only, no plastic covers or binders, not stapled)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Is there a contents page (table of contents)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Are all pages numbered?	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Are all diagrams, charts, graphs and images indexed and labelled and their sources reference where necessary?	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Are all necessary terms defined/explained?	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Is every reference in the text followed by an in-text citation?	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Are all your in-text citations formatted consistently and correctly (according to the citation style chosen)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Does your bibliography include all and only the works you have consulted?	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Are the sources in your bibliography cited consistently and correctly (according to the citation style chosen)?	<input type="checkbox"/>
11	Does your appendix include only relevant supplementary information? (Note: The examiner is not required to read appendices.)	<input type="checkbox"/>
12	If you have an appendix, are your references to the appendix clearly cross-referenced and labelled?	<input type="checkbox"/>
13	Is your research question stated on the title page?	<input type="checkbox"/>
14	Is your research question stated in the introduction?	<input type="checkbox"/>
15	Is your research question re-stated in the conclusion?	<input type="checkbox"/>



16	Does your conclusion address any new questions that might have emerged?	<input type="checkbox"/>
17	Are your introduction and conclusion titled?	<input type="checkbox"/>
18	Did you include why the topic was chosen and justify its importance in the introduction?	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 10 Academic honesty

The school's academic honesty policy is compulsory and any misconduct has its consequences. If the contents of the academic honesty policy is not familiar to you any more, please refer to the school's website.

Writing your EE demands that you correctly quote ideas or work of another author. If not, you plagiarize and might not pass your IB diploma.

You must ensure that you do not use material submitted for any other assessment component of your IB diploma as part of your EE submission. While resources can be shared between components, sometimes it is best to avoid this. Resources used for your internal assessment, for example, could be used as part of the EE, but no content can be duplicated at all. In order to prevent any cross-over, you would need to have a substantially different angle that you will investigate and there must be a complete shift in focus.

## 11 Assessment

Your EE is on the one hand assessed by your supervisor and on the other hand by an external examiner of the IBO.

### 11.1 Internal assessment by your supervisor

The internal assessment conducted by your supervisor is carried out on the basis of the criteria and weights agreed on in the declaration for the Matura paper. The mark will count as 13<sup>th</sup> grade of your Matura certificate.

### 11.2 External assessment by the IBO

Your supervisor will be asked to provide a predictive grade (A to E, see fig. 1) for your work. However, an external examiner of the IBO will assess your extended essay using the five general assessment criteria "Focus and method", "Knowledge and understanding", "Critical thinking", "Presentation", and "Engagement". Engagement comprises your research focus and research process that you will demonstrate on the candidate's reflection on planning and progress form (RPPF). Details about the general assessment criteria can be found on the IBO's EE webpage (see chapter 10, official documents). Furthermore, you need to pay attention to the subject-specific criteria, which are covered on the same webpage (see "Subject-specific guidance" for an overview).

Together with the Theory of Knowledge (TOK) essay, the extended essay contributes up to three additional points to the overall diploma score. The diploma point matrix reveals the points granted for assessment grades obtained from the two essays (Fig. 1). Any failing condition means that the student also fails the IB diploma.

		Theory of Knowledge					
Grades achieved		Excellent A	Good B	Satisfactory C	Mediocre D	Elementary E	Not submitted
Extended Essay	Excellent A	3	3	2	2	F	F
	Good B	3	2	2	1	F	F
	Satisfactory C	2	2	1	0	F	F
	Mediocre D	2	1	0	0	F	F
	Elementary E	F	F	F	F	F	F
	Not submitted	F	F	F	F	F	F

**Fig. 1.** The diploma points matrix (May 2015 onwards) according the IBO. The number of points awarded is determined by a combination of the performance levels in both the EE and TOK. F: Failing condition.

## 12 Official documents

[IBO Extended Essay Guide Website](#)

[Effective Citing and Referencing](#) (from the IBO)

[Reflection on planning and progress form](#) (from the IBO)

On [SharePoint](#) (Dokumente > Dokumente Schülerinnen und Schüler > IB-Klassen):

- Guidelines for the use of animals in IB World Schools (from the IBO)
- Ethical guidelines for extended essays research and fieldwork (from the IBO)
- KSBG Academic Honesty Policy

## 13 Resources

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) (2017). Extended Essay Guide Webpage. URL: [https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/extendedessay/apps/dpapp/index.html?doc=d\\_0\\_ee-yyy\\_gui\\_1602\\_1\\_e&part=1&chapter=1](https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/extendedessay/apps/dpapp/index.html?doc=d_0_ee-yyy_gui_1602_1_e&part=1&chapter=1) (Accessed 9 March 2021).

International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) (2017-13). Extended Essay Guide. First exams 2013. IBO (UK) Ltd. Cardiff, Wales, UK. 183 pp.

Marvergames, C. (2016). Extended Essay Guide 2016-17. UWC Robert Bosch College. URL: <http://www.uwcrobertboschcollege.de/en/library/resources-research-writing/extended-essay-resources> (Accessed 3 Jan 2017).