



Extended Essay Guide for Supervisors

An attempt of a compilation of the official IBO extended essay website taking into account the internal requirements for the Matura paper

Compiled by Michael Lütolf, May 2018
Revised February 2020

Information: Links to the IB Extended Essay website might ask you to provide login information. You should be able to continue to the website by clicking “Abbrechen”.

Contents

1	About the Extended Essay.....	1
1.1	What is the Extended Essay?	1
1.2	Why is the Extended Essay important?	1
2	Subjects and subject-specific guidance	1
3	Pedagogical support by the supervisor.....	2
4	Timeline.....	3
5	Supplement to the Matura Paper Brochure	4
6	Teacher support material (TSM) by the IBO.....	4
7	Assessment.....	5
7.1	Internal assessment by the supervisor	5
7.2	External assessment by the IBO.....	7
8	Academic honesty	8
9	Official documents.....	8
10	Resources	9

1 About the Extended Essay

1.1 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. 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. 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.

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

1.2 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.

2 Subjects and subject-specific guidance

The IBO defines the available Diploma Programme subjects for the EE for the session in question and provides a [subject-specific guidance](#) that informs the supervisor about the choice of topic, the treatment of the topic, and the assessment criteria.

Actually, the subjects are defined as following:

Group (with the link to the subject-specific criteria)	Subjects available
1: Studies in language and literature	German
2: Language acquisition	English or French
3: Individuals and societies	Business management; Economics; Geography; Global Politics; History; Information technology in a global society; Philosophy; Psychology; Social and cultural anthropology; World religions
4: The sciences	Biology; Chemistry; Computer science; Design technology; Physics; Sports, exercise and health science
5: Mathematics	Mathematics
6: The arts	Dance; Film; Music; Theatre; Visual arts
Interdisciplinary essays	Environmental systems and societies; Literature and performance; World Studies (including: 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.

3 Pedagogical support by the supervisor

The supervisor plays an important role in helping students to plan and undertake their research for the extended essay. The relationship should be an active two-way process with the supervisor primarily there to support and guide the student, during the supervision and reflection sessions, at the planning stage, and when the student is carrying out and writing up his research. This is done through the supervision process, including the three mandatory reflection sessions and the completion of the Reflections on planning and progress form (RPPF).

Supervisors are required to:

- undertake [three mandatory reflection sessions](#) with each student they are supervising
- sign and date each reflection summarized on the [Reflections on planning and progress form](#) (RPPF) and provide comments at the end of the process. If the form and essay are submitted via the eCoursework system, then it is deemed signed and authenticated. A blank or unsubmitted RPPF will score a 0 for criterion E of the assessment. The RPPF must be completed in the language of the student's extended essay submission. The student has a maximum of 500 words to write about all three reflections.
- provide students with advice and guidance in the skills of undertaking research
- encourage and support students throughout the research and writing of the extended essay
- discuss the choice of topic with each student and, in particular, help to formulate a well-focused research question which is suitable to the subject of registration (refer to subject-specific guidance) and ensure that the chosen research question satisfies appropriate legal and ethical standards with regard to health and safety, confidentiality, human rights, animal welfare and environmental issues
- is familiar with the [regulations](#) governing the extended essay and the assessment criteria, and gives copies of these to students
- monitor the progress of the extended essay to offer guidance and to ensure that the essay is the student's own work (this may include presenting a section of the essay for supervisor comment)
- read and comment on one draft only of the extended essay (but do not edit the draft); this should take place after the interim reflection session, but before the final reflection session, the viva voce
- ensure that the final version of the essay is handed in before the final reflection session (viva voce) takes place, and that no changes are made to it subsequently
- read the final version and, in conjunction with the viva voce, confirm its authenticity.

4 Timeline

This timeline shows a possible sequence of the process.

March (week 10)	<p>Information session</p> <p>Introduction to the EE.</p> <p>Students start thinking about potential topics and discuss ideas with subject teachers</p>
24 April (week 17), 11 am	<p>Registration due</p>
May (till June)	<p>Check-in sessions 1 (discussion of initial ideas) and 2 (discussion of research question(s) and resources gathered by the student).</p> <p>Students are encouraged to include in their Researcher's reflection space (RRS¹) examples of initial topic exploration, possible sources and methods, preliminary research questions and their personal reactions to the issues. In attending their first reflection session with their supervisor, students can use notes made in the RRS as the basis for discussion as well as to demonstrate the progress they have made in the research process.</p> <p>¹ The RRS is a personal learning environment (compared to a process journal) that can be either a physical or virtual support tool. It is a space in which students are able to record reflections on what they are reading, writing and thinking. Link to Examples.</p>
27 May (week 22)	<p>Declaration of topic and supervisor due</p>
June	<p>Proposal due</p> <p>1st formal reflecting session with supervisor (Preparation; Session contents; RPPF)</p>
July to October	<p>Conduction of experiments (science EEs)</p>
August to October	<p>Writing of the first draft of the extended essay</p>
Mid October	<p>Submission of the first draft to the supervisor</p> <p>2nd reflection session with supervisor (Preparation; Session contents; RPPF)</p> <p>As their RRS develops, students can demonstrate the progress of their thinking, the development of their argument and raise any questions they may have with their supervisor.</p> <p>At this stage the RRS may include reactions to readings, progress in the timeline for completion of the extended essay, a possible outline of arguments, challenges encountered and the strategies used to overcome them.</p>
December/January	<p>Check-in session 3: Supervisor's comment on completed draft</p>
February (week 5)	<p>Final extended essay due</p>

	Students submit their final EEs on the KSBG administration (office C18, according to the requirements mentioned in the Matura paper brochure).
February	<p>Viva voce (concluding interview between student and supervisor after the submission on IBIS. Preparation; Session contents; RPPF).</p> <p>During the viva voce, which takes place at the completion of the extended essay process, the RRS can form the basis for discussion about the process of completing the essay. Students can show what they have learned about the topic, the research process followed, their own learning, as well as outlining new questions they have uncovered. Most importantly, during the viva voce the RRS may help to highlight the personal significance of the work to the student and ultimately contribute to the supervisor's report.</p> <p>The student completes his RPPF by adding their final summative comments, signs and dates the form before passing it to their supervisor. The supervisor adds his summative comment and submits (thereby authenticates) the RPPF on behalf of the student to the coordinator.</p> <p>(The student sent the electronic version of the EE to the coordinator prior to the viva voce.)</p>
March (week 12)	Oral presentation of the EE

5 Supplement to the Matura Paper Brochure

Formal requirements for the EE:

- Extent: max. 4,000 words
Reflection: max. 500 words (for all 3 reflections on the RPPF)
Abstract: An abstract is not a formal requirement for an EE.
Title page only includes the following information: the title of the essay, the research question, the subject for which the essay is registered (if it is a language essay also state which category it falls into; if a world studies essay also state the theme and the two subjects utilized), word count. Important: No names and no candidate number are to mention.
- Language: Basically, 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 prorektor responsible for the Matura paper.
- Formatting: Size 12 readable font and double-spaced.
- Temporal extent: The EE is the result of approximately 40 hours of work.

6 Teacher support material (TSM) by the IBO

The IBO provides a [website with teacher support material](#) covering the following topics:

- [An overview of the EE](#): This section provides a summary of what the EE involves and describes how it fits within the core of the Diploma Programme.

- [Pedagogical support for the EE](#): This section offers practical advice and support for creating conditions for student success. It outlines the setting up of the relationship between supervisor and student, then provides background information and resources for the research and writing process and reflection.
- [Supporting the WSEE](#): This section explains how the process differs for students who decide to write a WSEE (World Studies Extended Essay).
- [Assessing the EE](#): This section provides an insight into the assessment criteria and how you can help students understand the expectations with regard to these. It includes examples of student work at different grades with comments and marks from examiners across a number of different subjects.

7 Assessment

7.1 Internal assessment by the supervisor

The internal assessment conducted by the 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 13th grade of the Matura certificate.

Regarding the IB Diploma, the extended essay will be **externally assessed**, and as such, **supervisors are not expected to mark the essays or arrive at a number to translate into a grade**. However, supervisors have to **submit a predicted grade** ([Assessment grade descriptors](#) A to E) presented below for the EE they supervised. Predicted grades for all subjects should be based on the qualitative grade descriptors for the subject in question. These descriptors are what will be used by senior examiners to set the boundaries for the extended essay, and so schools are advised to use them in the same way.

Grade	Description
A	<p>Demonstrates effective research skills resulting in a well-focused and appropriate research question that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; effective engagement with relevant research areas, methods and sources; excellent knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; the effective application of source material and correct use of subject-specific terminology and/or concepts further supporting this; consistent and relevant conclusions that are proficiently analysed; sustained reasoned argumentation supported effectively by evidence; critically evaluated research; excellent presentation of the essay, whereby coherence and consistency further supports the reading of the essay; and present and correctly applied structural and layout elements.</p> <p>Engagement with the process is conceptual and personal, key decision-making during the research process is documented, and personal reflections are evidenced, including those that are forward-thinking.</p>
B	<p>Demonstrates appropriate research skills resulting in a research question that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; reasonably effective engagement with relevant research areas, methods and sources; good knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; a reasonably effective application of source material and use of subject-specific terminology and/or concepts; consistent conclusions that are accurately analysed; reasoned argumentation often supported by evidence; research that at times evidences critical</p>

	<p>evaluation; and a clear presentation of all structural and layout elements, which further supports the reading of the essay.</p> <p>Engagement with the process is generally evidenced by the reflections and key decision-making during the research process is documented.</p>
C	<p>Demonstrates evidence of research undertaken, which has led to a research question that is not necessarily expressed in a way that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; partially effective engagement with mostly appropriate research areas, methods and sources—however, there are some discrepancies in those processes, although these do not interfere with the planning and approach; some knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the discipline, which is mostly relevant; the attempted application of source material and appropriate terminology and/or concepts; an attempted synthesis of research results with partially relevant analysis; conclusions partly supported by the evidence; discussion that is descriptive rather than analytical; attempted evaluation; satisfactory presentation of the essay, with weaknesses that do not hinder the reading of the essay; and some structural and layout elements that are missing or are incorrectly applied.</p> <p>Engagement with the process is evidenced but shows mostly factual information, with personal reflection mostly limited to procedural issues.</p>
D	<p>Demonstrates a lack of research, resulting in unsatisfactory focus and a research question that is not answerable within the scope of the chosen topic; at times engagement with appropriate research, methods and sources, but discrepancies in those processes that occasionally interfere with the planning and approach; some relevant knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the discipline, which are at times irrelevant; the attempted application of source material, but with inaccuracies in the use of, or underuse of, terminology and/or concepts; irrelevant analysis and inconsistent conclusions as a result of a descriptive discussion; a lack of evaluation; presentation of the essay that at times is illogical and hinders the reading; and structural and layout elements that are missing.</p> <p>Engagement with the process is evidenced but is superficial, with personal reflections that are solely narrative and concerned with procedural elements.</p>
E (failing condition)	<p>Demonstrates an unclear nature of the essay; a generally unsystematic approach and resulting unfocused research question; limited engagement with limited research and sources; generally limited and only partially accurate knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; ineffective connections in the application of source material and inaccuracies in the terminology and/or concepts used; a summarizing of results of research with inconsistent analysis; an attempted outline of an argument, but one that is generally descriptive in nature; and a layout that generally lacks or incorrectly applies several layout and structural elements.</p> <p>Engagement with the process is limited, with limited factual or decision-making information and no personal reflection on the process.</p>

7.2 External assessment by the IBO

An external examiner of the IBO will assess the extended essay using five general assessment criteria listed in the table below. A total of 34 marks can be achieved.

Criterion	Content and marks assigned Explanation
A: Focus and method	Topic, research question and methodology (6 marks) 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.
B: Knowledge and understanding	Context, subject-specific terminology, and concepts (6 marks) 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.
C: Critical thinking	Research, analysis, discussion and evaluation (12 marks) This criterion assesses the extent to which critical-thinking skills have been used to analyse and evaluate the research undertaken.
D: Presentation	Structure and layout (4 marks) 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.
E: Engagement	Process and research focus (6 marks) 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.

[This table presented in the TSM](#) can be shared with the students. It is thought to encourage them to think about the assessment criteria and reflect on whether they have addressed the expectations within their essay. The IBO published a [collection of assessed EE](#) that might help students to gauge the level of top ranked essays.

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					
		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.

8 Academic honesty

The school's academic honesty policy is compulsory and any misconduct has its consequences.

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

The students must ensure that they do not use material submitted for any other assessment component of your IB diploma as part of their EE submission. While resources can be shared between components, sometimes it is best to avoid this. Resources used for the internal assessment, for example, could be used as part of the EE, but no content can be duplicated at all.

9 Official documents

[IBO Extended Essay Guide Website](#)

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

[Animal Experimentation Policy](#)

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

[Extended Essay Guide for students of the KSBG](#)

KSBG Academic Honesty Policy (on SharePoint > Dokumente > Dokumente für Schülerinnen und Schüler > IB-Klassen)

10 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 (Accessed 20 February 2020).