



An Overview of the Extended Essay



Nature of the Extended Essay

The mandatory extended essay (EE) for all Diploma Programme students is an in depth study of a focused topic chosen from the list of approved subjects – normally one of the student's six chosen subjects for the IB Diploma. The topic is chosen by the student in cooperation with a supervisor in the school.

Aims

The aims of the extended essay are to provide students with the opportunity to:

- Pursue independent research on a focused topic
- Develop research and communication skills
- Develop the skills of creative and critical thinking
- Engage in a systematic process of research appropriate to the subject
- Experience the excitement of intellectual discovery

Final Paper

The final paper is to be no more than 4000 words and should be the result of approximately 40 hours of work. The EE requires the following components: title page, abstract, contents page, introduction, body (development/methods/ results), conclusion, references and bibliography and Appendices. Students should select a system of academic referencing and stay consistent. The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that his or her EE is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged. Referencing styles may be found on the Regi website www.reginotredame.ca. Follow the links to IB and Extended Essay.

Both plagiarism and collusion are forms of malpractice that incur a penalty. The same piece of work, or two versions of the same work, cannot be submitted to meet the requirements of both the EE and another assessment component of a subject contributing to the diploma or an additional certificate.

Assessment

The method of assessment used by the IBO is criterion-related. Judges assess each student in relation to identified assessment criteria and not in relation to the work of other students.

All EEs are externally assessed by examiners appointed by the IBO, and are marked on a scale from 0 to 36.

The general assessment criteria are applicable to all EEs, irrespective of the subject in which the EE is registered. **A: Research Question, B: Introduction, C: Investigation, D: Knowledge and Understanding of the Topic Studied, E: Reasoned Argument, F: Application of Analytical and Evaluative Skills Appropriate to the Subject, G: Use of Language Appropriate to the Subject, H: Conclusion, I: Formal Presentation, J: Abstract and K: Holistic Judgment**

Each EE will be assessed against these criteria in the context of the subject in which it is registered. Students must carefully read and understand the Subject Specific Criteria presented in the Extended Essay Guide that is posted on the Regi website.

This maximum score is made up of the total criterion levels available for each essay. The total score is used to determine in which of the following bands the extended essay is placed. This band, in conjunction with the band for theory of knowledge, determined the number of diploma points awarded for these two requirements.

The band descriptors are:

- 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

		Theory of knowledge					
		Excellent A	Good B	Satisfactory C	Mediocre D	Elementary E	Not submitted
Extended essay	Excellent A	3	3	2	2	1 + Failing condition*	N
	Good B	3	2	1	1	Failing condition*	N
	Satisfactory C	2	1	1	0	Failing condition*	N
	Mediocre D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition*	N
	Elementary E	1 + Failing condition*	Failing condition*	Failing condition*	Failing condition*	Failing condition*	N
	Not submitted	N	N	N	N	N	N

Award of Diploma Points

The EE contributes to the overall diploma score through the award of points in conjunction with the theory of knowledge. A maximum of **three points** are awarded according to a student’s combined performance in both the extended essay and theory of knowledge. A student who fails to submit an extended essay will not be awarded a diploma.

Common IB Extended Essay Weaknesses/Pitfalls

The EE is an essay, not a report or a descriptive or narrative essay. It must have a **HYPOTHESIS** (or point of view) that is effectively argued or defended.

Topics are usually far too broad. It is strongly recommended that they be drawn from students’ HL subjects and have a narrow focus.

The **title** is critical and is the first thing the examiner sees; it should be relevant but concise. The title should not be finalized until the essay has been written, but students should be thinking about it all along. A title in question form is not recommended.

Personal acknowledgements should not be included, as they detract from the scholarly nature of the essay.

Abstracts are generally poorly done. The abstract is not an introduction to the EE, but a maximum 300-word **summary** of its entire contents. It should be completed at the end of the process. It should be clear, and concise, with all items covered. The abstract must follow the title page. It is therefore the first thing an examiner sees after the title.

A **good introduction** is absolutely essential and must include a **research question**, a statement of purpose, or a hypothesis. The purpose must be stated in the introduction (as well as the abstract) and include relevant background information and provide a description of the “problem” which provides the basis for scientific investigations or intellectual debate. The **body of the essay** is the longest and also the most important part of the EE. It is necessary both to develop and to substantiate the argument. The body must focus on the hypothesis; avoid irrelevant and/or trivial descriptive and anecdotal material.

A **conclusion** is a **requirement** and must be effective. As an assessed criterion, it must “pull together” the argument of the essay and restate its hypothesis.

Quotations should be concise, carefully selected, and used only to support arguments presented in the body of the essay. Do not write an essay that is merely a patchwork of quotations. Minimize the use of quotations unless it is a literature essay. Do not quote something that you can easily say in your own words, ex. “World War I began in 1914, sparked by the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife Sophie.”

Comparative topics are to be discouraged, since true analytical comparison is usually beyond the capability of senior high school students. Essays in English A1 do not need to be comparative in nature.

Responsibilities of the Student

- Choose a topic that fits into one of the subjects on the approved EE list
- Observes the regulations relating to the EE
- Consults with supervisor at least once a month to discuss progress. NOTE – your supervisor can only help you if you have something to show them
- Meets deadlines
- Acknowledges all sources of information and ideas in an approved academic manner
- Starts work early
- Plans how, when and where they will find the material for their essay
- Records sources as their research progresses
- Plan a schedule for both researching and writing the essay
- Checks and proof read the final version
- Makes sure all basic requirements are met

Responsibilities of the Supervisor

- Provides the student with advice and guidance throughout the process.
- Encourages and supports the student
- Discusses the choice of topic with the student and helps to formulate a well focused research question
- Monitors the progress of the EE to offer guidance and to ensure that the essay is the student’s own work
- Ensures 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 EE and the assessment criteria
- Reads and comments on one completed draft
- Does not edit the student’s work
- Reads the final version to confirm its authenticity
- Submits a predicted grade for the student’s EE
- Completes the supervisor’s report