

## What is the IB Extended Essay?



Participation in this process develops the capacity to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge. This dashboard access is your EE resource Lab center during your IB two concurrent years. Many resources are taken from the IBO and other IB world schools as well as some developed documents from BBS EE Coordinator, IBDPC and EE supervisors. All information needed can be found by contacting the BBS IB EE Coordinator, your IBDPC or EE Supervisor.

The extended essay is an independent, self-directed piece of research, finishing with a 4,000-word paper and a 500-word reflection (approx. 40 hours of work). It is one of the core components of the IB DP Program and required for all students taking the full diploma program.

### A Helpful Note from BBS IBDPC:

Take a deep breath. You are not alone. All full IB students around the world are about to start this same IB rite of passage with you. Focus first on understanding the EE process and requirements. **Set goals** to help you to **organize your time** effectively, and **communicate** regularly with your EE Supervisor to get advice and support. The rest will come.

### The extended essay provides:

- practical preparation for undergraduate research
- an opportunity for students to investigate a topic of personal interest to them, which relates to one of the student's six DP subjects, or takes the interdisciplinary approach of a World Studies extended essay.

### Through the research process for the extended essay, students develop their ATL skills in:

- formulating an appropriate research question
- engaging in a personal exploration of the topic
- communicating ideas
- developing an argument

Participation in this process develops the capacity to analyze, synthesize and evaluate knowledge.

### Support

Students are supported by a supervisor throughout the Extended Essay process. This is 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.

## Objectives

During the Extended Essay students, will...

- plan and pursue a research project with intellectual initiative and insight.
- formulate a precise research question.
- gather and interpret material from sources appropriate to the research question.
- structure a reasoned argument in response to the research question on the basis of the material gathered.
- present their extended essay in a format appropriate to the subject, acknowledging sources in one of the established academic ways.
- use the terminology and language appropriate to the subject with skill and understanding.
- apply analytical and evaluative ATL skills appropriate to the subject, with an understanding of the implications and the context of their research

## Assessment

All extended essays are externally assessed by examiners appointed by the IB. They are marked on a scale from 0 to 34.

The score a student receives relates to a band. The bands 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.

## Purpose of the EE

The first step in the EE process is to decide in which Diploma Programme subject you want to complete an in-depth study of a focused topic. This is normally one of your six chosen subjects and your supervisor will be allocated on the basis of this decision.

- Ultimately, the point of the Extended Essay (EE) is to prepare you in a very practical, hands-on way for research and academic writing at college or university. Unlike the rest of the IB programme, which is mostly prescribed for you, you will get to **create your very own topic of interest** out of a huge selection of potential subjects.
- You will hear this multiple times, but you are your **own guide** on the Extended Essay! This has its perks and its challenges. The perks are that it is an exciting opportunity to self-direct your own study, and if you are someone who thrives on doing things your own way on your own time, it will feel liberating. The challenge comes from the **independence** and **responsibility** now being put on your shoulders. If you tend to procrastinate or rely on teachers to choose your essay topics and enforce deadlines, the EE can seem overwhelming.

**The EE is a long process and is likely to take several months or even a year to complete.**

There are many other things you will need to figure out early in the process including:

- What kind of essay you are going to write?
- How formal should your writing be?
- What tense and voice (third person or first person) should you use?
- Are you collecting primary data yourself or are you analyzing primary and secondary sources?

The sources you use will depend on the subject you choose for your essay. For example, a topic in history or politics will likely require you to research and analyze a collection of primary & secondary sources, mostly in print. With a topic in any of the experimental sciences, you may design an experiment based on a hypothesis or question. You will then execute that experiment and analyze the results of the data you collect.

Throughout the research and writing process, you will be encouraged to **reflect** on your experiences, both formally and informally.

Use your personal Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS) on MangeBac to re-examine your ideas and decide whether changes are needed at different points during the process. More information can be found in The Importance of Reflection.

You will also need to complete three formal reflection sessions with your supervisor which need to be written up on the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF). More information can be found in The Importance of Reflection.

## **The Importance of Reflection**

### **Why should you undertake reflection throughout your EE?**

Being **reflective** is one of the attributes of the IB learner profile and all three elements of the core of the Diploma Programme (EE, TOK and CAS), have reflection embedded within them. It is an **essential skill** that **all learners need to develop**.

The reflection you do as part of the EE process is a critical evaluation of your decision-making process.

### **The reflection you undertake should demonstrate:**

- How your **conceptual understanding** related to your question and research has developed.
- The **rationale** for your decisions, conclusions and recommendations.
- How your ATL **skills** and **understanding** have improved.
- The **authenticity** of your work as they are written in your 'voice'.
- Your level of **engagement** with the EE process both intellectually (what you learned about the topic) and personally (what you have learned about you as a learner).

## **The Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS)**

A researcher's reflection space (RRS) is a physical or digital journal where you can write reflections about what you are reading, writing and thinking in relation to your EE.

Using an RRS (Google Folder, Google Classroom, or ManageBac )can help you in a number of ways including:

- Preparing for your three formal reflection sessions with your supervisor.
- Managing your EE workload.
- Maintaining focus on your EE throughout the process.
- Capturing any emerging questions you have.

## **Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF)**

The RPPF captures your reflections after three separate reflection sessions with your supervisor. The RPPF gets submitted to the IBO and is used with your actual essay to determine your grade. Using your completed RPPF the examiners gain an insight into your thinking processes and how these have developed over time. Your completed RPPF is solely used to assess criterion E which is worth 18% of the total EE grade, so you can see how important it is!

**Once you have entered a reflection on the RPPF, you must not amend it later in the EE process.**

Although you may have informal meetings and discussions with your supervisor throughout the EE process, there are three mandatory reflection sessions that must take place. After each one you will add a reflection to your RPPF based on reflections you completed in your RRS and the meeting you had with your supervisor.

**Only the first 500 words of your combined reflections will be assessed by the examiner.**

This table provides some additional information.

Reflection Session	Purpose	Advice
<b>First Reflection</b>	Takes place early in the EE process. Focuses on initial <b>ideas</b> , how you plan to do your <b>research</b> and formulating a suitable EE <b>topic</b> and <b>research question</b> . Should be around <b>150 words</b> .	Use your RRS to discuss with your supervisor <b>why</b> you are interested in your chosen topic, <b>how</b> you will link it to the relevant IB subject and any outstanding <b>questions</b> you have.
<b>Interim Reflection</b>	Takes place after you have completed a significant proportion of your research and have started writing the essay. Focuses on how your <b>thinking</b> and <b>arguments</b> have developed and any <b>challenges</b> you have faced. Should be around <b>150 words</b> .	Use your RRS to discuss with your supervisor whether you have <b>sufficient data and information</b> to answer your research question, whether or not your question needs to be reformulated, what your <b>reaction</b> to your research is and how you have <b>overcome any challenges</b> .
<b>Final Reflection (Viva Voce)</b>	Takes place after your final essay has been submitted. Focuses on how you have <b>grown</b> as a learner, your <b>personal experience</b> with the EE process, and what <b>improvements</b> could have been made to your own working practices with hindsight. Should be around <b>200 words</b> .	This session is more of an interview than a discussion and will be longer than the previous two sessions. However, you should use your RRS to reflect on the <b>successes and difficulties</b> you faced in the research process and to provide <b>evidence of your learning</b> experience.

### Your EE Supervisor

#### What is the role of your EE supervisor?

The relationship between you and your EE supervisor is **the most important one** in the extended essay process. Your EE supervisor will usually be a teacher at your school but must be suitably qualified in the subject you have chosen for your EE.

You are allowed to consult with **subject specialists** as well as your supervisor but they cannot take on the role of your supervisor. **For example**, you may want to meet with a market research expert to seek advice about sampling when undertaking your research but they cannot have a reflection meeting with you.

Your supervisor is there to **support you** through the EE process but the relationship must be an active two-way process. It is important that you **initiate discussions** with your supervisor to get the **advice** and **information** you need.

**Do not wait for your supervisor to chase you about your EE. It is a student-led process so you must take the lead!**

**The IBO is very strict about what supervisors are and are not allowed to do. For example, your supervisor is not allowed to proofread your essay or correct any spelling or calculations.**

**This is a list of the things supervisors have to do:**

- Undertake three mandatory reflection sessions with you.
- Initial each reflection you complete on the RPPF.
- Provide supervisor comments on the RPPF once all three reflections have been submitted.
- Provide advice and guidance in the skills of undertaking research.
- Encourage and support you throughout the EE process.
- Help you to formulate a well-focused research question.
- Be familiar with the EE rules and assessment criteria.
- Monitor your progress.
- Read and comment on one draft only of the extended essay.
- Make sure you hand in the final version of the essay before the final reflection session (viva voce) takes place, and that no changes are made to it afterwards.
- Read the final version of your essay and confirm its authenticity.

**Forming a positive working relationship with your supervisor will help you through the EE process.**

## **Assessment**

### **How is the EE assessed?**

You already know that the extended essay is an **academic 4000-word piece of research** that students undertake from a range of sources and is designed to help prepare you for the expectations of undergraduate study at university.

However, you may not be sure how you will be assessed.

You will be assessed on your submission of **two** documents:

1. Your reflections as captured on your completed RPPF form.
2. The Extended Essay itself.

Each EE is **marked out of 34** with grades awarded from **A to E**.

**If you do not submit your EE or achieve an E grade for your EE, you will not be awarded your diploma.**

The following table shows how the **34 marks are allocated** across five assessment criteria:

Criterion	Description	Marks
<b>Criterion A</b> - focus and method	<p>Focuses on the topic, the research question and the methodology.</p> <p>It assesses the explanation of the focus of the research, how the research will be undertaken, and how the focus is maintained throughout the essay.</p>	6
<b>Criterion B</b> - knowledge and understanding	<p>Focuses on subject-specific content, context and terminology. It assesses the extent to which the research relates to the subject area/discipline used to explore the research question and the use of appropriate terminology and concepts.</p>	6
<b>Criterion C</b> - critical thinking	<p>Focuses on the research, discussion, analysis and evaluation. It assesses the extent to which critical-thinking skills have been used to analyse and evaluate the research undertaken.</p>	12
<b>Criterion D</b> - presentation	<p>Focuses on structure and layout. It assesses the extent to which the presentation follows the standard format expected for academic writing and the extent to which this aids effective communication.</p>	4
<b>Criterion E</b> - engagement	<p>Focuses on engagement in research focus and the research processes. It is assessed at the end of the assessment of the EE and is based only on the reflections on your RPPF using your EE and supervisor comments as context.</p>	6
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>34</b>

The EE is externally assessed so it will not be marked by your supervisor.

## Timeline

When will you complete your EE?



Resource: <https://bahrainbayan.managebac.com/guide/extended-essay/timeline>

As you begin the EE process, try to **follow these steps**:

1. Choose a subject and topic that is of **interest** to you.
2. Carry out **preliminary reading** about the topic.
3. Start posing some **general questions** about the topic using words like 'how', 'why' or 'to what extent'.
4. **Evaluate** your questions based on whether they are clear, focused, and arguable.
5. Meet with your supervisor to **discuss** your ideas.
6. **Select which question to use** for your essay based on what outcomes you can achieve. Consider what kind of argument you could make and whether there is enough research to support you with this.

**The key to a successful essay is writing a clear, focused and arguable research question.**

Hurrah! Once you have your approved **research question** you can start to develop your argument, using concrete facts and data from your reading and research to support your ideas.

**Your supervisor should approve your research question through your first reflection session for your RPPF.**

## Structuring the EE

How you structure your essay is really important!

**Having a clear framework will help you to organise your arguments and make best use of the evidence you collected during your reading.**

The IB helps you with this!



There are **six required elements** but you can add more sections depending on your essay subject and topic:

1. **Title page** - This must only include your title, research question, subject and the word count.
2. **Contents page** - Number your pages and include a contents page at the start of your essay.
3. **Introduction** - Tell readers what to expect in your essay.
4. **Body (research, analysis, discussion and evaluation)** - The requirements for this section vary from subject to subject, but essentially this should take the form of a reasoned argument which tells the reader what relevant evidence has been discovered, where/how it has been discovered and how it supports the argument.
5. **Conclusion** - Say what has been achieved, including notes of any limitations and any questions that have not been resolved.
6. **References and/or bibliography.**

## **Presentation**

### **How your EE should be presented**

Presentation counts! As you recall, the presentation is assessed under criterion D and is worth 4 marks.

Your final essay should look professional and academic. Make sure you write in a clear, correct and formal academic style that is appropriate for your subject area.

You will want to review your own work and check its authenticity using Turnitin to ensure there are no errors and that you are following the advice given to you by the IB and your supervisor.

### **The IB has set out the following formatting requirements:**

- Choose a **font, font size and spacing** conducive to on-screen marking.

**A good example might be Arial or Times New Roman, size 12 with double-line spacing.**

- Include **page numbering**.

**This should be at the bottom of your pages and will help you create a professional contents page.**

- Do **not** include your candidate, supervisor, or school name anywhere in the essay or the RPPF.

**Your EE is externally marked so needs to be anonymous.**

- Make sure the **file size** for your essay is not more than 10 MB.

**If your file size is too large, it cannot be uploaded to the IB.**

## Evaluating Academic Sources

### How you can verify and validate sources

Source evaluation is the process of **critically evaluating information** in relation to your EE in order to determine if it is **appropriate** for your research question.

**Understanding how to assess the credibility of the information you come across in your EE research is essential.**

As your EE is an **academic research paper** you need to ensure you are using a **range of quality resources**. These will vary from subject to subject but ensuring your sources are credible is important across all subjects.

**The following questions can be used to help you evaluate each source:**

- **Who** wrote it? Is it scholarly or non-scholarly?
- **When** was it written and/or published? Is it up to date?
- Does it contain any **evidence or information** that you can check?
- Do you have other sources that **support** the content of this source?
- Is it **biased** or **impartial** and does this matter for this source? (For example, advertising material on a website is expected to be biased while a newspaper article should be more objective.)
- What was the **purpose** of the publication?

**Remember that you can ask your EE supervisor for help and support.**

The following video gives you more information about evaluating academic sources for essays and assignments. Give the C.R.A.A.P. test a try! Refer to this link: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVn9AU2\\_Y\\_Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MVn9AU2_Y_Y)

**Sometimes, you may need to rely on the Internet for your EE. There is a kind of ‘hierarchy’ of domain names that can be used as a general guide of reliability with education (or .edu) websites usually being the most reliable.**

**.edu** stands for **education**

**.ac** stands for **academic**

**.gov** stands for **government**

**.org** stands for **organisation**

**.com** stands for **commercial**

**.net** stands for **network**

**Remember: Credible sources lead to credible academic writing.**

**Academic Integrity**

## How you can ensure your work is authenticated

It is **your responsibility** to provide the reader with the precise sources of quotations, ideas and points of view in your essay. You achieve this through **accurate citations**, which may include in-text or footnotes throughout your essay, and a full list of references at the end of your paper. The type of citation method you use will vary depending on your subject matter and/or the instructions of your school.

**Keeping track of your sources and properly referencing them** as you go through the research and draft-writing process **is critical!**

**Mistakes here could lead to failure of the IB diploma.**

As a general rule of thumb, the **four main citation styles** used in academic publications are:

- Chicago Manual
- MLA
- APA
- Harvard Reference

There are plenty of websites that you can find online to clarify **how to cite your sources**.

Just **be aware** that a given website might take liberties with some of the details of the guidelines, so when in doubt, **trust only the official published manual** for each style.

### References:

IBO and PRC

ManageBac