

EE – Extended Essay

The Extended Essay of 4,000 words offers the opportunity for IB students to investigate a topic of special interest related to one of the student's six Diploma Programme (DP) subjects/disciplines. An extended essay can also be undertaken in world studies. The world studies extended essay provides students with the opportunity to carry out an in-depth interdisciplinary study of an issue of contemporary global significance, utilizing two IB diploma disciplines. Both types of extended essay (single-disciplinary and interdisciplinary essays) are intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity expected at university. They provide students with an opportunity to engage in personal research in a topic of their own choice, under the guidance of a supervisor (a teacher in the school). This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject or issue chosen. It is recommended that students follow the completion of the written essay with a short, concluding interview – viva voce – with the supervisor. In countries where interviews are required prior to acceptance for employment or for a place at university, the extended essay has proved to be a valuable stimulus for discussion

The Research Process

Owing to the diversity of subjects and the different approaches to research, this guide does not offer detailed advice on the methods and skills of research. However, a systematic process, shaped by the nature of the subject, is essential to generate and gather information and ideas that can be used to develop a convincing answer to the specified research question.

The Choice of Subject

The subject in which the Extended Essay is registered must be chosen from the list of available subjects given in the handbook for procedures of the Diploma programme. It is advisable to choose the subject for the Extended Essay before deciding what the topic or research question of the Extended Essay will be. Since the IB specifies the range of permitted subjects; certain topics may not be appropriate as an Extended Essay. The subject chosen for the Extended Essay does not have to be one of the subjects being studied by the candidate for the Diploma, but care should be taken to choose a subject in which the candidate has sufficient knowledge and skills.



Candidates should also base the choice of subject on the level of personal interest they have in that particular subject. It is also to be remembered that whatever subject and/or topic is chosen, it must not contain any repetition of what material has been covered in class and must therefore be an extension of that knowledge.

The Choice of Topic

The topic of the Extended Essay is the particular area of study within the chosen subject. Before a final decision is made about the choice of topic the relevant subject guidelines should be carefully considered.

Candidates should aim to choose a topic that is both interesting and challenging to them. The topic chosen should be limited in scope and sufficiently narrow to allow candidates to examine an issue or problem in depth. It should present the candidate with the opportunity to collect or generate information and/or data for analysis and evaluation. Candidates are not expected to make a contribution to knowledge within a subject.

A broad topic is unlikely to result in a successful Extended Essay, a topic that requires no personal research and/or requires an essentially narrative or descriptive approach is not suitable for an Extended Essay. Similarly, although a reliance on secondary sources is sometimes necessary, an Extended Essay, which only provides a summary of such sources, will not be successful. Writing a précis of a well- documented topic is unlikely to result in a successful Extended Essay.

The Research Question

When an appropriate topic has been chosen, candidates should narrow the focus of the investigation and formulate a specific research question. For many Extended Essays this will be phrased in the form of a question but alternatives such as launching the investigation with a hypothesis are acceptable. Indeed some may argue that stating a premise and mounting an argument in its defense may provide more purpose and focus. By frequently referring to this research question, candidates should be able to maintain the purpose and orientation of the investigation. Candidates are encouraged to formulate a challenging research question but to ensure that it can be explored within the constraints of essay length, time and resources available to them.

It is also important to make sure that enough information is available about the topic to conduct



fruitful research. If there is any uncertainty about this, it is recommended to make an appointment with the Librarian to discuss the matter. The Research Question may be stated in the title, title page, or defined in the introduction; if only stated in the title or title page, it should be restated in the introduction. It is not sufficient to state it only in the abstract or on the cover sheet. The Research Question may be stated as a hypothesis rather than a question.

The Length of the Extended Essay

The EE is presented as a formal piece of scholarship containing no more than 4,000 words. The upper limit of 4,000 words for all extended essays is rigid. However, this upper limit includes the introduction, the body, the conclusion and any quotations, but does NOT include:

- the 300 word abstract
- acknowledgements
- the contents page
- maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations and tables
- equations, formulas and calculations
- citations/references (whether parenthetical or numbered)
- footnotes or endnotes
- the bibliography
- appendices.

Extended Essays containing more than 4,000 words are subject to penalties and examiners are not required to read material in excess of the word limit.

With regards to tables and diagrams, intrinsic information or summative information is not included in the word count. However, if the text included in the table or diagram is additional information that is an integral part of the essay, then the words are counted.

Aditya Birla World Academy uses the MLA system of citation and referencing.

How the extended essay is assessed

As has been already suggested, the Extended Essay is awarded marks according to general and subject-specific assessment criteria. These are to be read together because the general criteria are

often modified by the subject-specific criteria. For example, under Criterion (Formal Presentation), there may slight differences required in a Group4sciencesubjectthaninaGroup1 Language A essay. In total; however, every essay is awarded mark out of 36.

There are eleven criteria in total and it is important to remember that, while the whole essay is assessed by an external examiner, criteria K (Holistic Judgement), is indicated by the internal school EE Supervisor. It is also important to remember that the school has to indicate what the Supervisor thinks the essay has achieved.

	Criteria	Mark
A	Research question	/2
B	Introduction	/2
C	Investigation	/4
D	Knowledge and understanding of the topic	/4
E	Reasoned argument	/4
F	Application of analytical and evaluative Skills appropriate to the subject	/4
G	Use of language appropriate to the subject	/4
H	Conclusion	/2
I	Formal presentation	/4
J	Abstract	/2
K	Holistic judgment	/4
	Total	