



**IV Liceum Ogólnokształcące z Oddziałami Dwujęzycznymi
im. Stanisława Staszica w Sosnowcu
IB World School Candidate No. 061902**

Diploma Program (DP)

Extended Essay Handbook

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All information regarding the Extended Essay is published in the IB Extended Essay Guide.

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1. Introduction

The Extended Essay (EE) offers students a unique opportunity to move beyond the structured requirements of individual subjects and engage in a sustained piece of independent academic inquiry. It encourages intellectual curiosity, initiative and responsibility by allowing students to explore a topic that genuinely interests them and to develop their own line of investigation within a chosen academic discipline.

Undertaking the Extended Essay is not simply about producing a longer piece of writing; it is about learning how to think, question and research in a systematic and disciplined way. Throughout the process, students are expected to make decisions, evaluate sources, refine their ideas and respond to challenges that arise during their investigation. In doing so, they gradually develop the habits of mind associated with academic research, including critical analysis, methodological awareness and clarity of argument.

This guide has been designed to support students at every stage of their Extended Essay journey. It provides practical guidance, clarifies expectations and helps students understand both the formal requirements and the underlying purpose of the task. It also reflects the most recent updates to the Extended Essay requirements, incorporating the changes introduced in the new IB Extended Essay Guide. At the same time, it encourages students to approach the Extended Essay not as an obligation, but as an opportunity to explore a topic in depth, develop independence in learning and gain valuable preparation for future academic work.

2. Nature of Extended Essay

The Extended Essay is a compulsory component of the Diploma Programme for all students.

To be awarded the IB Diploma, a student must achieve at least a grade D in the Extended Essay, while a grade E constitutes a failing condition for the award of the Diploma. The Extended Essay is externally assessed and, in combination with the grade awarded for Theory of Knowledge, contributes up to three points to the total score for the IB Diploma.

It is an independent research or investigation on a topic chosen by the student in cooperation with an Extended Essay supervisor in the relevant subject. The essay is normally written in one of the six subjects that the student is currently studying as part of the Diploma Programme.

It is presented as a formal piece of sustained academic writing of no more than 4,000 words. In addition to the essay itself, students are required to complete a reflection component as part of the Extended Essay process; this reflection is submitted separately and does not count toward the 4,000-word limit.

The Extended Essay is the result of continuous work carried out by the student throughout the Diploma Programme and is expected to represent approximately 40 hours of independent work.

The Extended Essay should be understood not only as a final academic product but also as an iterative and reflective research process in which the student develops, refines, and justifies the research question, methods, argument, and conclusions over time. In the updated understanding of the EE, importance is placed not only on the final essay itself, but also on the student's research journey, decision-making, intellectual initiative and reflective engagement with the process of inquiry.

The Extended Essay requires an in-depth study of a student-chosen topic aligned with one of the IB Subject Areas. Writing an Extended Essay strengthens students' skills in a variety of areas, including:

- conducting independent research
- forming a clear and arguable research question/thesis
- effectively using research to support the thesis
- appropriately documenting sources used in the paper
- managing an extended timeline for a project
- communicating ideas and presenting arguments in an organised, logical and consistent manner

Writing an Extended Essay helps a candidate develop research, analytical, and academic writing skills that prepare them for the expectations of undergraduate-level academic work in college or university. Engaging in reflection on the research process, including reconsidering early assumptions, refining methods and responding to challenges encountered during the investigation. Understanding that the quality of the essay depends not only on the amount of information gathered, but also on the student's ability to select, analyse, evaluate and use evidence purposefully in relation to the research question.

3. Subjects of the Extended Essay

It is recommended to identify a subject of your EE before you choose a topic within this subject. A teacher in your school subject will be your EE supervisor. You may write your EE on any DP subject offered by the IV Liceum Ogólnokształcące.

The available subjects are:

Group 1 (Studies in language and literature): Language A: literature (Polish)

Group 2 (Language acquisition): Language B (English, German, French, Spanish)

Group 3 (Individuals and societies): Business Management, Economics, Geography, History, Philosophy, Psychology.

Group 4 (Sciences): Biology, Chemistry, Physics.

Group 5 (Mathematics): Mathematics: analysis and approaches, Mathematics: applications and interpretation.

Interdisciplinary subject: Environmental Systems and Societies.

Where permitted by IB regulations and school provision, students may also undertake an interdisciplinary Extended Essay in an approved interdisciplinary area, provided that the essay complies fully with the subject-specific requirements and assessment expectations of that category. Students should be aware that the choice of subject is not purely formal. It determines the methodological expectations, the nature of acceptable evidence, the conventions of argumentation and the subject-specific interpretation of the assessment criteria. For this reason, the subject should be chosen carefully before the research question is finalised.

4. Topic of the Extended Essay

Before choosing your research topic, students should be familiar with the writing criteria in the EE Guide (both the general ones, starting on page 72, and the subject-specific ones).

In the updated approach to the Extended Essay, students are strongly advised to treat the research question as the central organising principle of the entire investigation. The topic is important, but it is the research question that should guide the selection of sources, methods, the structure of the argument, and the conclusions.

The following questions may be helpful to review as students begin choosing their topic.

- Does my topic fall into one and only one subject area?
- Is my topic narrow enough to be effectively treated in a 4000-word essay?
- Am I writing in a subject area in which I am already knowledgeable?
- Is there sufficient information available on my topic?
- Will I be able to process the information that I find on my topic?
- Can my topic be transformed into a precise and researchable question?
- Is the research question suitable for investigation using the concepts, methods and forms of evidence appropriate to the chosen subject?
- Will my research question allow me not only to gather information, but also to analyse and evaluate it critically?
- Is the question focused enough to be answered persuasively within the formal constraints of the Extended Essay?

The student should identify at least three topics of interest within one to three chosen subjects and consult with the EE supervisor and the DP coordinator to select the one most suitable for conducting research and presenting results. The student should also consider at least three possible areas of interest or provisional topics within the selected subjects and discuss them with the EE supervisor and the DP coordinator to determine which can be developed into the most focused, viable, and academically appropriate research question. Students should remember that a broad area of interest is not yet an Extended Essay topic, and a topic is not yet a research question. The research process should move from an initial area of interest through preliminary reading and reflection toward a clearly formulated, manageable, and subject-appropriate research question.

5. Contract and Preliminary Outline

A preliminary outline for the completion and supervision of the EE, consistent with IB requirements.

Year 1	Date	Assignment/event
October	2 nd week of October	Kick-off meetings with Teachers
		Kick-off meetings with Students
		Kick-off meetings with Parents
December	2 nd week of December	Selection of initial subjects and topics (max 3)
		Selection of initial Supervisors (max 3)
		Supervisors and EE Coordination Meeting: discussion about the division of subjects, topics and Supervisors
January	2 nd week of January	Final selection of subject and Supervisor
		The first face-to-face meeting between Supervisor and Student + 1 st reflection
		Meeting with Librarian – discuss resource availability.
		Signing the EE Contract, including Parent, Student, Supervisor and EE Coordinator signatures

March	3 rd week of March	The second face-to-face meeting between Supervisor and Student + 2 nd reflection
April	by the end of April	First version of the Extended Essay
Year 2	Date	Assignment/event
September	2 nd week of September	The third face-to-face meeting between Supervisor and Student + 3 rd reflection
October	1 st week of October	Final version of the Extended Essay
	2 nd week of October	Viva voce
April	by 20 th April	Submitting predicted grades

Source: own elaboration

The above outline should be understood as a structured framework supporting not only the submission of the final essay, but also the gradual development of the research process. Each formal milestone should contribute to refining the research question, deepening the student's understanding of sources and methods, and the student's reflective awareness of how the essay is evolving.

Students should not treat early deadlines as purely administrative checkpoints. At each stage, they are expected to demonstrate evidence of intellectual progress, improved focus, methodological awareness and responsiveness to challenges encountered during the research and writing process.

6. Research and Writing

When conducting research and writing, students should:

- read carefully the assessment criteria and the relevant subject-specific guidance on the EE Guide, the IB's ethical guidelines and other associated policies where relevant, such as those related to animal experiments
- plan research and writing according to the Preliminary outline (described above)
- undertake extensive background reading on the chosen topic
- formulate a preliminary research question
- together with the EE supervisor, set deadlines for themselves that will allow students to meet the school's and IB requirements
- develop a research and writing plan, including a timeline
- begin to identify how and where you will gather source materials for research
- get familiar with the APA7 academic referencing, recommended to be used by all students of our school
- plan the structure for the essay. This may change as the investigation develops, but it is useful to have a sense of direction
- carry out the research
- treat the research question as the central reference point throughout the process and continuously check whether each source, method, paragraph and section contributes directly to answering it
- understand that the research and writing process is iterative. Students' questions, methods, structure and even working assumptions may need to be refined as their investigation progresses

- keep evidence of Students' decision-making process in their reflection space so that they can explain why particular sources, methods or analytical directions were selected, revised or rejected
- distinguish clearly between gathering information, analysing evidence and critically evaluating the strength, reliability and limitations of your findings and methods
- ensure that your approach remains appropriate to the conventions of the subject in which the essay is registered

For more information on the research and writing process, please refer to the EE Guide, p. 72.

An Extended Essay should be presented as a formally structured piece of academic writing, typically including the following components:

- title page (*IB requirement – see formal presentation requirements in the EE Guide*)
- contents page (*IB requirement – EE Guide, section on Presentation, Criterion D*)
- introduction (*IB expectation – described in subject-specific guidance and general structure of the essay*)
- body of the essay (*IB expectation – required for development of argument, see Criteria A and C*)
- conclusion (*IB expectation – described in general guidance on essay structure*)
- references and/or bibliography (*IB requirement – EE Guide, academic integrity and referencing requirements*)

The essay does not include an abstract. Students should note that an abstract is no longer required for the Extended Essay and should not be included.

The Extended Essay should be written in a clear, correct and formal style appropriate to the subject, from which the topic is drawn. The following formatting of the text is required:

- the use of 12-point, readable font (e.g. Times New Roman, Arial etc.) (*school requirement; IB requires only a clear and legible font*)
- double spacing (*school requirement; IB requires consistent and readable formatting*)
- page numbering (*IB requirement*)
- no candidate or school name on the title page or page headers (*IB requirement*)

Title Page

The title page should include only the following information:

- the title of the essay (*IB requirement; the title should clearly indicate the focus of the essay – school guidance based on IB expectations*)
- the research question (*IB requirement*)
- the subject for which the essay is registered (*IB requirement*)
- session (e.g. May 2028) (*IB requirement*)
- candidate number (*IB requirement*)
- word count (*IB requirement*)

Please note that the name of the school and your name should not appear on the title page or on any page headers. This is because the work is assessed anonymously. In the updated understanding of the Extended Essay, both the title and the research question should support clarity of focus. The title should identify the area and emphasis of the investigation, while the research question should express precisely what the essay is attempting to investigate or answer.

Contents Page

A contents page must be provided at the beginning of the EE, and all pages should be numbered and listed. Please note that an index page is not required; if included, it will be treated as absent.

Introduction

The introduction should tell the reader what to expect in the essay. The introduction should make clear to the reader the focus of the essay, the scope of the research, in particular, an indication of the sources to be used, and an insight into the line of argument to be taken. In addition, the introduction should clearly situate the research question, indicate the methodological approach appropriate to the chosen subject, and define the boundaries of the investigation. The introduction should make clear not only what the essay is about, but also how the student intends to investigate the question and on what basis the argument will be developed.

Body of the Essay

This is the main part of the Students' EE. It should be presented in the form of a reasoned argument. The form of the body varies with the subject of the essay. Still, as the argument develops, it should be clear to the reader what relevant evidence has been discovered, where and how it has been discovered and how it supports the main argument.

Once the main body of the essay is complete, the introduction and conclusion can be finalised. Any information that is important to the argument must not be included in appendices or footnotes/endnotes. The examiner will not read notes or appendices, so an essay that is not complete in itself will be compromised across the assessment criteria.

Students should be especially careful to distinguish between description, analysis and evaluation. A successful Extended Essay does not merely present information: it selects relevant evidence, analyses that evidence in relation to the research question and critically evaluates interpretations, methods, limitations and findings where appropriate.

The updated understanding of the assessment criteria places greater emphasis on the quality of the reasoning developed in the essay, the relevance of the evidence to the research question, and the student's ability to sustain a focused, coherent, and critically informed argument throughout the body of the essay.

Conclusion

The conclusion states what has been achieved, noting any limitations and unresolved questions. While Students might conclude the essay based on their findings, there must be a final, summative conclusion. This conclusion must relate to the research question posed. The conclusion should not simply repeat earlier points or restate the introduction. It should offer a clear, evidence-based answer to the research question and, where relevant, acknowledge the limitations of the method, the scope of the material and any unresolved issues that emerged during the investigation. In stronger essays, the conclusion demonstrates awareness not only of what has been established but also of the extent to which the chosen methods and evidence support the claims made.

Bibliography

Students should use the APA 7 style of academic referencing as soon as they start writing. That way, they are less likely to forget to include a citation. It is also easier than adding references at a later stage. Accurate and consistent referencing is an essential element of academic integrity and academic presentation. All sources used directly or indirectly in the essay must be acknowledged appropriately. Students should ensure full consistency between in-text citations and the bibliography/reference list. Sources cited in the essay must appear in the bibliography, and sources listed in the bibliography must genuinely have been used in the essay.

Illustrations

Presentation is assessed according to the extent to which the essay conforms to accepted academic standards. Any illustrative material used in the Extended Essay, such as graphs, diagrams, tables or images, must be clearly presented, appropriately labelled and directly relevant to the content of the essay. All such material must be acknowledged where required.

Any information essential to the understanding of the essay must be included in the main body of the text. Examiners are not required to read material presented in appendices.

Appendices

Appendices are not essential to the Extended Essay. Examiners are not required to read them, and any material included in appendices is not considered in the assessment. Students must ensure that all information relevant to the analysis, discussion and evaluation of the essay is included in the main body of the text.

Appendices may be used to include supplementary material that supports the essay but is not essential to its understanding. Such material may include, for example, questionnaires, interview questions, permission letters, extracts from texts (where permitted), or raw data in the experimental sciences, provided that no analysis or conclusions are included.

Essential evidence, analysis and evaluation must be presented within the main body of the essay. Material placed in appendices will not contribute to the assessment.

7. Recommended Things to Avoid

Students should avoid working with a research question that is too broad, too vague, too narrow, too difficult or inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered. A well-formulated research question should be clearly focused and suitable for investigation within the constraints of the Extended Essay.

A good research question addresses an issue that can be meaningfully explored within approximately 40 hours of work and within the 4,000-word limit. It should be clear what counts as relevant evidence, and that evidence should be accessible within the scope of the investigation. If appropriate evidence cannot be identified or obtained, the research question is unlikely to be successfully addressed.

Students should avoid:

- failing to analyse the research question
- ignoring the assessment criteria
- collecting material that is not relevant to the research question
- using sources uncritically
- plagiarism and improper referencing

- relying on description or narrative rather than analysis
- repeating the introduction in the conclusion
- citing sources that have not been used in the essay
- treating the essay as a compilation of information rather than as a focused investigation
- confusing analysis with description or evaluation with unsupported opinion
- including excessive background material that does not contribute directly to the argument
- placing essential information in appendices
- failing to consider the limitations of sources or methods
- treating reflection as a purely formal requirement rather than as part of the research process
- using artificial intelligence tools in ways that compromise the authenticity of the work or violate IB academic integrity expectations

Students are strongly encouraged to select a subject in which they have prior knowledge and academic preparation. Writing an Extended Essay in a subject that is not being studied as part of the Diploma Programme may result in difficulties in meeting subject-specific expectations.

8. Reflection on the Extended Essay

Students are required to engage in three mandatory reflection sessions with their supervisor, including the final viva voce. Reflection is documented on the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF), with a maximum total of 500 words.

Reflection is a central component of the Extended Essay process. Students are expected to demonstrate engagement with their research through evidence of decision-making, problem-solving and intellectual development throughout the investigation. Effective reflection goes beyond merely describing completed tasks. Students should demonstrate how their thinking has evolved, how they have responded to challenges, and how their choices have influenced the development of the essay. The use of the Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS) is strongly recommended. The RRS provides a space for recording ideas, questions, decisions and reflections throughout the research process and supports meaningful discussion during supervision sessions.

Students may use the RRS to:

- record reflections and evolving ideas
- respond to sources and other materials
- explore emerging questions
- plan and organise their investigation
- document decision-making processes

Reflection should enable students to:

- explain how and why the research question was refined
- justify the selection or rejection of sources and methods
- identify challenges encountered and explain how they were addressed
- demonstrate the development of their understanding of the topic and subject-specific approach
- show authentic engagement and ownership of the research process

9. The Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is understood as a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. It is influenced by a range of factors, including peer pressure, culture, parental expectations, role modelling and the development of academic skills.

In practice, academic integrity involves:

- undertaking research honestly and producing authentic work
- acknowledging all sources appropriately and respecting intellectual property
- ensuring that all submitted work accurately reflects the student's own understanding and effort

Academic misconduct includes, but is not limited to:

- plagiarism: presenting the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgement
- collusion: supporting another student in behaving dishonestly
- duplication of work: submitting the same work for different components of the Diploma Programme
- falsification of data: creating or altering data that has not been collected appropriately
- improper or incomplete referencing

The inappropriate use of artificial intelligence tools may also constitute academic misconduct. This includes submitting AI-generated text, ideas, analysis or paraphrasing as if they were entirely the student's own work, or using such tools in a way that misrepresents authorship.

Students must ensure that any use of digital tools, including AI, is consistent with IB academic integrity principles and does not compromise the authenticity of the work. The final submission must represent the student's own thinking, decision-making and academic voice.

The student is responsible for ensuring that all work submitted is genuinely their own and that all sources of ideas and information are appropriately acknowledged.

Procedures (School Policy)

In the event of a suspected breach of academic integrity:

- the teacher reports the concern in accordance with the school's academic integrity procedure
- the case is reviewed following the school's Academic Integrity Policy
- the IB Diploma Programme Coordinator is informed where appropriate
- where required, the IB Organisation is notified in accordance with IB regulations

Further action is taken in accordance with IB guidelines and the school's internal policies.

10. The Assessment of the Extended Essay

The Extended Essay is externally assessed by IB examiners and evaluated according to five assessment criteria. These criteria are designed to assess both the quality of the final essay and the student's engagement with the research process.

The assessment emphasises:

- the clarity and focus of the research question
- the appropriateness of the methodology
- the quality of analysis and evaluation
- the coherence and structure of the argument

- the standard of academic presentation
- the level of engagement demonstrated through reflection

The maximum mark for the Extended Essay is 34 points.

Criterion	Title	Marks
A	Focus and method	6
B	Knowledge and understanding	6
C	Critical thinking	12
D	Presentation	4
E	Engagement	6
Total		34

Source: International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025)

a. Criterion A: Focus and method

This criterion focuses on the topic, the research question and the methodology. It assesses the explanation of the research focus (including the topic and research question), how the research will be conducted, and how the focus is maintained throughout the essay. In interpreting this criterion, students should understand that the research question must function as the central organising element of the essay. A well-focused essay is not one that merely announces a topic, but one that demonstrates a clear, viable and subject-appropriate line of inquiry supported by informed methodological choices.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–2	The topic is communicated unclearly and incompletely. Identification and explanation of the topic is limited; the purpose and focus of the research are unclear, or it does not lend itself to a systematic investigation of the subject for which it is registered. The research question is stated but not clearly expressed, or is too broad. The essay's discussion does not address the research question. The research methodology is limited. The sources and/or methods to be used are limited in range, given the topic and research question. There is limited evidence that their selection was informed.
3–4	The topic is communicated. The research topic and its explanation are communicated; the purpose and focus of the research are adequately clear, but only partially appropriate. The research question is clearly stated, but only partially focused. The discussion in the essay is only partially focused and connected to the research question. The research methodology is mostly complete. Sources and/or methods to be used are generally relevant and appropriate given the topic and research question. There is some evidence that their selection was informed. If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered, no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion.
5–6	The topic is communicated accurately and effectively. The research topic and its explanation are effectively communicated; the purpose and focus of the research are clear and appropriate. The research question is clearly stated and focused. The research question addresses an issue of research that is appropriately connected to the discussion in the essay. The research methodology is complete. An

	appropriate range of relevant sources and/or methods has been applied in relation to the topic and research question. There is evidence of effective and informed selection of sources and/or methods.
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Source: own elaboration based on International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025).

b. Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding

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. Students should remember that strong performance in this criterion requires more than factual correctness. It requires relevant and effective use of subject-specific concepts, terminology and source material in a manner appropriate to the discipline in which the essay is registered.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not meet the standards outlined in the descriptors below.
1–2	Knowledge and understanding are limited. The selection of source material is limited in relevance and only partially appropriate to the research question. Knowledge of the topic and discipline is anecdotal, unstructured, and largely descriptive, with sources used ineffectively. The use of terminology and concepts is unclear and limited. Subject-specific terminology and/or concepts are either missing or inaccurate, demonstrating limited knowledge and understanding.
3–4	Knowledge and understanding are good. The selection of source material is mostly relevant and appropriate to the research question. Knowledge of the topic and discipline is clear; there is an understanding of the sources used, but their application is only partially effective. The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is mostly accurate, demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding. If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject, no more than four marks can be awarded.
5–6	Knowledge and understanding are excellent. The selection of source materials is clearly relevant and appropriate to the research question. Knowledge of the topic and discipline is clear and coherent, and sources are used effectively and with understanding. The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding.

Source: own elaboration based on International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025).

c. Criterion C: Critical thinking

This criterion assesses the extent to which critical-thinking skills have been used to analyse and evaluate the research undertaken. In the updated interpretation of the Extended Essay, students should pay particular attention to the distinction between analysis and evaluation. Analysis involves breaking down and interpreting evidence in relation to the research question; evaluation involves making critical judgements about the quality, limitations, reliability, significance or implications of that evidence, method or argument. Strong essays demonstrate both.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–3	The research is limited. The research presented is limited, and its application is not clearly relevant to the research question. Analysis is limited. There is limited analysis, and conclusions are limited or inconsistent with the evidence. Discussion and evaluation are limited. The argument is incomplete, descriptive or narrative in nature. The construction of an argument is unclear and/or incoherent. The

	conclusion is limited and not consistent with the evidence. Evaluation of research is superficial. If the topic or research question is inappropriate, no more than three marks can be awarded.
4–6	The research is adequate. Some research is appropriate and partially relevant. Analysis is present but only partially relevant; irrelevant material detracts from the argument. Conclusions are only partially supported. Discussion and evaluation are adequate but contain inconsistencies. The argument may lack clarity and coherence. The conclusion is only partially consistent with the evidence. Evaluation is present but not critical.
7–9	The research is good. The majority of research is appropriate and relevant. Analysis is clearly related to the research question, with only minor inclusion of less relevant material. Conclusions are supported by evidence with minor inconsistencies. Discussion and evaluation are good. A reasoned argument is developed and generally coherent. The evidence supports the conclusion. Evaluation is present and partially critical.
10–12	The research is excellent. The research is consistently relevant. Analysis is effective and clearly focused on the research question. Conclusions are well supported by evidence. Discussion and evaluation are excellent. A clear, focused and coherent argument is developed. The conclusion is fully consistent with the evidence. The research has been critically evaluated.

Source: own elaboration based on International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025).

d. Criterion D: Presentation

This criterion assesses the extent to which the presentation follows the standard format expected for academic writing and how this aids effective communication. Students should remember that a presentation is not limited to appearance. It also includes the effective organisation of the essay, the logical sequencing of ideas, clarity of headings where appropriate, the accurate use of academic conventions, and the correct integration of references, tables, charts, and illustrative material.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach the standard outlined below.
1–2	Presentation is acceptable. The structure is generally appropriate. Some layout elements may be missing or incorrectly applied, but this does not significantly hinder understanding.
3–4	Presentation is good. The structure is appropriate and clear. Layout elements are correctly applied. The structure and layout support understanding and evaluation of the essay.

Source: own elaboration based on International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025).

e. Criterion E: Engagement

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 in the RPPF, with the supervisory comments and the extended essay itself as context. In the updated approach to the Extended Essay, this criterion should be understood as centrally important to the idea of EE as a process of inquiry. Students should aim to demonstrate not just task completion but also evidence of ownership, reflection, adaptation, problem-solving, and intellectual development throughout the life of the project. High-level performance in this criterion typically requires evidence that the student made meaningful decisions, reconsidered earlier assumptions, responded thoughtfully to difficulties and developed a clearer understanding of both the topic and the research process itself.

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard, or no RPPF has been submitted.
1–2	Engagement is limited. Reflections are mostly descriptive. They demonstrate limited personal engagement with the research focus and process.
3–4	Engagement is good. Reflections are analytical and include reference to conceptual understanding and skill development. They demonstrate moderate engagement and some intellectual initiative.
5–6	Engagement is excellent. Reflections are evaluative and demonstrate the student's ability to consider actions and ideas in response to challenges. They show a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement, authenticity and initiative.

Source: own elaboration based on International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025).

General Criteria Checklist

In applying all assessment criteria, students should remember that the strongest Extended Essays are characterised by:

- a clearly focused and viable research question
- an appropriate and well-justified methodological approach
- careful and relevant selection of sources or evidence
- sustained analysis directly linked to the research question
- critical evaluation rather than simple description
- a coherent and logically developed argument
- effective academic presentation
- authentic and thoughtful reflection on the research process

11. The Diploma EE/TOK points matrix

The Diploma EE/TOK points matrix is also presented below:

EE \ TOK	A	B	C	D	E
A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition
B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition
C	2	2	1	0	Failing condition
D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition
E	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition

Source: International Baccalaureate Organisation (2025).

The EE/TOK matrix rewards balanced performance in both components. The highest score (3 points) is achieved when students perform well in both the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge (e.g. A/A or A/B). The matrix is asymmetrical: strong results are rewarded, but weaker combinations quickly reduce the number of points. Even with a good result in one component, a low grade in the other significantly limits the total score. A key rule is the failing condition: a grade E in either EE or TOK results in no diploma being awarded. This highlights that both components are essential parts of the IB

Diploma. Overall, the matrix encourages students to achieve consistent, balanced performance rather than relying on strength in only one area.

12. References

- A recognised academic referencing style should be used consistently throughout the essay (*IB requirement – consistency is required; the school may determine a specific style*)
- Students should follow one referencing system consistently throughout the essay (*IB requirement*)
- All sources must be acknowledged appropriately, including direct quotations, paraphrased ideas, data, concepts, images, graphs, tables and any other material derived from external sources (*IB requirement*)
- Inaccurate, incomplete or inconsistent referencing may negatively affect both academic integrity and the assessment of presentation (*IB-aligned expectation*).

The school recommends the use of APA (7th edition) referencing style. Detailed guidance is available on the official APA Style website: <https://apastyle.apa.org/>

13. EE Submission Guidelines

- each Student must submit an electronic version of the completed essay to their supervisor by the deadline set by the school (*school requirement*)
- accepted file formats are PDF and/or DOCX (*school requirement*)
- Students must ensure that the essay is complete in itself and that no essential content is placed in appendices (*IB requirement*)
- all citations must be accurate and consistent throughout the essay (*IB requirement*)
- the final submission must represent the Student's own authentic work (*IB requirement*)
- Students must ensure that the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF) has been completed in accordance with IB requirements (*IB requirements*)
- the submitted version should reflect the final version discussed with the Supervisor (*IB-aligned expectation*)

14. Contract Template

The contract template should reflect not only deadlines and responsibilities, but also the understanding that the Extended Essay is a staged process requiring active student participation, regular reflection, responsible academic conduct and sustained communication with the Supervisor.

Extended Essay Contract

Name: _____

Essay Subject: _____

Proposed Topic: _____

Research Question: _____

I confirm that I have read and understood the regulations and guidelines for the International Baccalaureate Extended Essay. I agree to adhere to all requirements, including deadlines set by the school, academic integrity principles and expectations regarding independent research.

I understand that the Extended Essay must be submitted and assessed to be eligible for the IB Diploma, and that failure to meet IB requirements may result in a failing condition.

I agree to maintain regular contact with my Supervisor and to inform them and the IB Coordinator of any significant changes to my research question or approach.

I understand that I am responsible for ensuring that all submitted work is authentic and properly referenced, and that any breach of academic integrity may have serious consequences.

Student Name: _____

Student Signature: _____

I confirm that I have read and understood the expectations of the Extended Essay and will support my child in meeting the requirements, including deadlines and academic integrity expectations.

Parent/Guardian Name: _____

Parent/Guardian Signature: _____

Date: _____

15. Conclusion

The Extended Essay represents a significant and rewarding component of the IB Diploma Programme, offering students the opportunity to engage in independent, sustained and meaningful academic inquiry. Through the process of selecting a research question, conducting an investigation and developing a structured argument, students not only deepen their subject knowledge but also acquire essential academic skills that extend beyond the classroom.

This handbook has been designed to support students throughout each stage of the Extended Essay process, from initial planning to final submission. It brings together the key requirements, expectations, and good practices necessary to produce a successful essay, while also reflecting the latest updates to the IB Extended Essay Guide. By following the guidance provided, students can approach their work with clarity, confidence and a strong understanding of both the formal criteria and the broader purpose of the task.

Ultimately, the Extended Essay should not be seen solely as an assessment requirement, but as an opportunity to develop independence in learning, critical thinking and intellectual curiosity. Students are encouraged to take ownership of their research, reflect on their progress, and engage fully with the challenges and possibilities that the process offers. A well-executed Extended Essay is not only a demonstration of academic ability but also an important step in preparing for future study and lifelong learning.

16. References

International Baccalaureate Organisation. (2025). *Extended essay guide (first assessment 2027)*. International Baccalaureate Organisation.

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