

## **RFS Extended Essay Guide:**

### **Introduction:**

The extended essay (EE) is an opportunity for DP students to undertake independent research on a topic of their choice under the guidance of a supervisor. Over the course of their EE journey, students engage in 40 hours' worth of work, which entails:

- Selecting an area of research from any one DP subject
- Producing a 4000-word independent research essay
- Completing three reflections at specific milestones using the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF)

### **Nature of the Extended Essay:**

The EE is a unique opportunity for students to engage in sustained academic research in preparation for university education. As a part of the EE, students are expected to show evidence of intellectual growth, critical and personal development, intellectual initiative, and creativity. This can be facilitated by the researcher's reflection space. Further, the process of researching and writing the EE represents the learner profile in action. Being open-minded, principled, and reflective are aspects of the student experience within the EE. Finally, the EE allows students to become more internationally minded by engaging with local and global communities on topics of personal inquiry.

### **Aims of the Extended Essay:**

The EE, being one of the centerpieces of the IBDP, is a valuable learning experience for students. It has three key aims and helps students to:

- Engage in independent research with intellectual initiative and rigor.
- Develop research, thinking, self-management, and communication skills.
- Reflect on what has been learned throughout the research and writing process.

### **The role of the extended essay coordinator**

- Orient students and supervisors about the EE requirements and processes, including academic integrity; share relevant support materials.
- Assign supervisors to all students, ensuring a reasonable allocation per supervisor, and encourage more staff members to take on this valuable role.
- Develop training programs for supervisors.
- Prompt students to explore all subjects; ensure students are not discouraged from choosing certain subjects without reason.
- Provide the necessary tools and support for students to actively engage with the researcher's reflection space.
- Provide opportunities beyond individual supervision time.

### Role of EE Supervisor:

1. undertake three mandatory reflection sessions with each student they are supervising
2. initial and date each reflection summarized on the *RPPF* and provide comments at the end of the process
3. encourage and support students throughout the research and writing of the extended essay
4. 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 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
5. is familiar with the regulations governing the extended essay and the assessment criteria, and gives copies of these to students
6. 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)
7. 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*
8. 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
9. read the final version and, in conjunction with the *viva voce*, confirm its authenticity.

Supervisors are **strongly** recommended to:

- read recent extended essay reports for the subject
- spend between three and five hours with each student, including the time spent on the three mandatory reflection sessions
- encourage the development of a Researcher's reflection space for students
- set a clear schedule for the reflection sessions
- ensure that the chosen research question is appropriate for the subject
- advise students on:
  - access to appropriate resources (such as people, a library, a laboratory)
  - research methods
  - how to cite and reference.

### Role of Student:

1. Create and use a Researcher's Reflection Space in MB as a planning tool to prepare for reflection sessions
2. share excerpts from the Researcher's reflection space with the supervisor during the reflection sessions
3. choose a subject, followed by a topic, and then think carefully about the research question for their essay
4. Reference the EE Subject Guide for the subject you chose to make sure that your topic meets the requirements. It can be an automatic E (failure) if your topic doesn't meet the requirements.
5. plan how, when and where they will find material and sources for their essay before deciding on the final topic and research question
6. plan a schedule for both the researching and writing of their extended essay, including extra time for delays and unforeseen problems
7. record sources as their research progresses using their Researcher's reflection space or some other method rather than trying to reconstruct a list at the end
8. have a clear structure for the essay before beginning to write
9. make the most of their supervision and reflection sessions by arriving prepared to discuss their work
10. refer to the EE Subject Guide and Grading Criteria to assure compliance with essay requirements

11. check and proofread the final version of their extended essay
12. make sure that the version they submit for assessment is the final version with all sources correctly and consistently referenced
13. ensure that all requirements are met.

### **Detailed extended essay guidance**

While guiding supervisors and students during the EE journey, it is recommended that you provide direction regarding the six key elements outlined below:

- Subject-specific guidance: Orient supervisors and students on the nature of the EE within different subjects.
- Topic and Research Question: Guide supervisors and students on choosing a subject, topic, and research question.
- RPPF Support: Provide guidance regarding the completion of the RPPF.
- EE Supervisor Feedback: Provide guidance regarding the nature of the feedback on the student work.
- EE Submission Requirements: explain the formal requirements for the completion of the EE.
- Viva voce: guide supervisors on how to conduct an effective viva voce

### **Supporting students: structure of the extended essay**

- **Title page:** It should include the title of the essay, the research question, the subject for which the essay is registered, and the word count.
- **Contents page:** It must be provided at the beginning of the EE, and all pages should be numbered.
- **Introduction:** It should tell the reader what to expect in the essay, including the focus of the essay, the scope of the research, the sources to be used, and an insight into the argument to be proposed.
- **Body of the essay:** It should include the research, analysis, discussion, and evaluation of the topic.
- **Conclusion:** It should say what has been achieved, including notes on any limitations and any questions that have not been resolved.
- **References and bibliography:** These should be completed in a consistent style of academic referencing.

### **Supporting Supervisors: Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF)**

The role of student reflections for future action is paramount in the EE. After meeting their supervisor at three crucial junctures during their EE journey, students document reflections in the RPPF, which inform the EE examiners' judgment on Criterion E and authenticate the EE process. As a coordinator, you are expected to guide supervisors on how to conduct these three formal meetings with students. Below is a brief sketch for these meetings:

#### **Meeting 1: First reflection**

Students discuss their options with their supervisor and decide on their chosen topic and research question.

#### **Meeting 2: Interim reflection**

Students discuss their outline or rough draft of the EE with their supervisor.

#### **Meeting 3: Final reflection and viva voce**

Students complete their viva voce with their supervisors. Supervisors provide comments on the RPPF.

## Further guidance on effective supervisor feedback

After students have submitted the first draft of their EEs, supervisors are expected to give written feedback. Ensure that supervisors provide appropriate feedback in line with IB academic integrity guidelines. Here are some pointers for the dos and don'ts you can share with supervisors:

### Supervisors Feedback:

Annotate sparingly with open-ended comments on how the essay can be improved on one draft only. Understand the difference between too much and too little support. Provide generic advice regarding language structure or research approach.

### Supervisors Feedback: Don't:

- Choose a topic or write the research question for the students.
- Reframe the focus of the essay for the students.
- Identify sources for the students.
- Edit or proofread students' work.
- Add or make corrections to citations.

### Following IB Guidelines:

Administration of the EE involves ensuring that the school adheres to the IB philosophy and guidelines throughout the process. Below are three key areas you should consider:

- **Policy:** Ensure that the school develops a robust policy on all details pertaining to the EE.
- **Allocation:** Ensure that students are allocated to a suitable supervisor with adequate content and subject knowledge.
- **Release time:** Ensure that supervisors receive a reasonable number of students and adequate release time to guide them in their EE journey.

## Extended essay submission requirements

- A final draft of a 4000-word essay submitted by the student
- A 500-word RPPF completed by both student and supervisor
- A predicted grade for each student submitted by the supervisor
- Report of the authenticity of the student's work (e.g., Turnitin report)

### Overview of extended essay criteria:

A: Focus and method [6 marks]: Topic, research question, and methodology

B: Knowledge and understanding [6 marks]: Context, subject-specific terminology, and concepts

C: Critical Thinking [12 marks]: Research, analysis, discussion, and evaluation

D: Presentation [4 marks]: Structure and layout

E: Engagement [6 marks]: Reflection and the research process

**Grade descriptors:**

Students' final assessment against the different criteria will result in a final grade out of 34, which will then be converted into a letter grade. Each letter grade represents a 'grade descriptor'. The most recent grade boundaries for the EE are in the table below. These are subject to change and will be revised by the IB at every examination session.

After assessing students against the five criteria, their numerical grade is then converted to a letter grade. Each letter grade represents a 'grade descriptor'. Grade descriptors consist of characteristics of performance at each grade. The grade descriptors are also intended to help teachers explain the academic requirements of the IB Diploma Programme to students, undertake formative assessment, report progress, and predict students' grades.

### Organizing and Managing the Extended Essay Timeline:

Students engage in dialogue with their respective topic supervisor to deliberate upon and address concerns pertaining to the extended essay. Typically, students are allowed the opportunity to select their supervisors. There is a significant enrollment of students pursuing their Extended Essay (EE) in Arabic A and Arabic B. Consequently, the Arabic department will undertake the task of allocating these students among the available teachers.

Typically, the allocation of students per supervisor ranges from 1 to 7. The supervisor, EE & DP coordinator, and parents are notified of any delays in the submission of students' work in order to monitor their progress. Parents are also informed of their children's academic achievement. The participation in reflection sessions is compulsory, and the level of engagement demonstrated by each student is monitored by both the supervisor and the IB Coordinator. Additionally, parents are kept updated about their children's development throughout these sessions.

DP Year	Date	Detail
DP <sub>1</sub>	October.1 <sup>st</sup>	Meeting session with the IB coordinator Discuss the nature and requirements of the EE. Introduce assessment criteria and the EE guide. Explain the EE deadlines. Discuss reflection sessions. Guide students in choosing the subject and supervisor. Clarify the responsibilities of the supervisor, student, and school. Emphasize academic honesty.
DP <sub>1</sub>	October.15 <sup>th</sup>	Students submit the name of their chosen subject and supervisor to the IB coordinator.
DP <sub>1</sub>	April.1 <sup>st</sup>	First reflection session Students discuss their chosen topic and research question with their supervisor
DP <sub>1</sub>	May.1 <sup>st</sup>	Students submit a detailed outline to their supervisor.
DP <sub>1</sub>	July & August	Students write the EE, guided by their chosen supervisor.
DP <sub>2</sub>	Sept.1 <sup>st</sup>	Interim reflection session Students discuss their progress and any challenges with their supervisor.
DP <sub>2</sub>	Sept.15 <sup>th</sup>	Students submit the first draft of their EE to their supervisor.
DP <sub>2</sub>	Oct.31 <sup>st</sup>	Students submit a revised draft to their supervisor
DP <sub>2</sub>	Jan.21 <sup>st</sup>	Students submit the final draft of their EE.
DP <sub>2</sub>	Feb.15 <sup>st</sup>	Final reflection session, viva voce Students complete their viva voce with their supervisors. Supervisors provide comments on the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form (RPPF). Mandatory Reflection Sessions and Supervision