

Extended Essay handbook

for use in the *International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme* at
SZTE Báthory István Gyakorló Gimnázium és Általános Iskola



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1. Introduction

The Extended Essay (EE) is a 4,000-word paper based on your independent research. As part of the IB core requirements, all students must complete this on a topic that relates to one of their DP subjects. The goal of the EE is to help you develop your academic research skills, i.e. formulating a research question, exploring a topic, conducting research, writing in an academic manner, and proper argumentation.

This document sets out to guide you through the essay-writing process. We recommend that you use this handbook throughout the research and writing process to ensure the successful completion of your EE.

Doing research and writing an article is a long process that might seem daunting at first. It is, however, a valuable skill to master, and your EE will help you try your wings at academic writing, which you will find useful during your university studies. This handbook was written and edited by your teachers, who have had first-hand experience with writing, either as a student, or as a writing instructor. Use this document whenever you feel lost, no matter whether you are working on a possible topic or are deep in the writing process.

2. Timeline of your EE

There is a strict timeline to follow while you are preparing your extended essay to ensure that each student has adequate time to prepare the specific segments of the EE. This timeline corresponds to requirements set by the IBO but do keep in mind that these are in-house deadlines and other IB World Schools might operate with a different set of expectations. Always refer to this document for information.

Year	Month	Activity
Year 1	September-November	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the in-house EE introductory workshop• Think of subjects and (broad) areas you are interested in• Choose your subject and supervisor (consult the EE coordinator if need be)• Start narrowing down your area of study into a research question
	December-January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Prepare the EE contract with your supervisor• Participate in the first reflection session with your supervisor• Develop a research timeline with your supervisor• Start your research by focusing on (primary and secondary) sources• Finalise your research question and prepare a research outline• Attend the in-house EE workshop on academic integrity and proper citation• 10% due*
	February-April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Attend the in-house EE workshop on academic writing• Work on your research and essay

Year 2		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25% due*
	May-June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on your research and essay • Participate in the interim reflection session with your supervisor • 50% due*
	September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on your research and essay • 75% due*
	October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit your draft to your supervisor • Schedule a meeting with your supervisor to discuss your draft
	November-December	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finalise your essay
	January	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit the final version of your essay • Participate in the viva voce with your supervisor

* We think of your EE as a research process and a way for you to develop your skills and knowledge on a particular area of interest. The percentages shown as requirements are not to be understood as a percentage of the word count required, but rather as progress in your research. As an example, you have finished reading all your secondary sources and have taken extensive notes, but you are yet to start your essay. Are you at 0%? We do not think so, but it is very hard to quantify your research progress. Consult your supervisor and agree on what these percentages mean in *your* research when you finalise your research timeline.

3. Participants of the EE

Preparing the EE is your responsibility, but there are several people who will help you along the way. Organisation of the EE is done by the EE coordinator. Subject teachers report to the EE coordinator on how you are progressing with your essay. The EE coordinator also ensures that each student has an EE supervisor, supervisors have enough support, and staff are aware of any changes and deadlines communicated by the IBO.

All EE supervisors and the EE coordinator are aware of the requirements of the EE and will inform you about them in time. Additionally, the EE coordinator will organise a workshop for all DP students each school year to familiarise you with the basics of essay writing, and where to look for credible information on academic integrity and essay writing.

Subject teachers can become EE supervisors if a student approaches them to sign up for an EE, or if they are assigned a student. An EE supervisor must have enough theoretical subject on the subject they are supervising. EE supervisors provide you with support, guidance, and advice on both subject- and writing-related matters. They monitor your progress, read your drafts, and comment on them. Your EE supervisor is responsible for monitoring progress, initiating in three mandatory and several unofficial meeting sessions, reading and commenting on one draft, and ensuring that the essay is handed in in time.

Please note that the EE is an independent piece of research. Your supervisor is there to help you if you need consultancy, but they can only offer your open-ended feedback. An EE supervisor cannot provide error correction, revision, or other writing or editing services. They are there to guide you through the process of writing, offering meaningful feedback that facilitates your learning.

4. EE reflection sessions

During the essay writing process, you must participate in three mandatory sessions of reflection with your supervisor. These must be recorded on the *Reflections on planning and progress form*, available on the school website. Between these three sessions, additional check-in sessions are encouraged to discuss short- and long-term progress and address any issues that arise.

4.1. First reflection session

This is the first formal meeting with your supervisor; however, we do encourage you to have check-in sessions and informal meetings on possible supervision until this point. Arrive with a topic or research proposal, and the EE contract, to be signed by you and your supervisor, also available on the school website.

4.2. Interim reflection session

By the interim reflection session, you will have made significant process in your research. Arrive with a refined research question, data or evidence you have collected, a refined methodology, and a working bibliography.

4.3. Commenting on a draft

Before submission, your supervisor will comment on one completed draft of your essay. We recommend you schedule a check-in session with your supervisor after submitting your draft to them to ensure there is time for discussion.

Your supervisor has strict rules to follow regarding the comments of your draft. They are only allowed to give open-ended comments that do not involve the editing of your text. Supervisors cannot:

- correct spelling and punctuation
- correct experimental work or mathematics
- re-write any of the essay
- indicate where whole sections of the essay would be better placed
- proofread the essay for errors
- correct bibliographies or citations.

4.4. Submitting the final EE

Before the final reflection session, called the viva voce, you must hand in the final version of your essay. This must not contain any remarks or comments made by your supervisor or anyone else, and no additional changes can be made later.

4.5. Viva voce

The viva voce is the final interview between you and your supervisor. They will present their final remarks, ask you to comment on the research and writing process, and ask additional questions on how you have profited from the EE process. If you have prepared your essay with enough attention to detail, correct referencing, and according to the EE timeline, this meeting should be a celebration of your achievements.

5. The writing process

In academia, we usually employ a process approach to writing. When we write essays, we usually focus on the outcome, i.e. the essay, but in practice, a significant part of the writing process happens before you even write the first letters of your paper. Regarding the EE, the first step of completing your essay is determining which subject you would like to focus on in your essay.

5.1. How to choose a topic and supervisor

The topic forms the basis of your EE research. We recommend that you start considering which subject you would like to prepare your EE in early on. It is important to find a balance between personal interest and academic alignment: the ideal topic fits your interests and passions well but is also researchable. Start with asking the following questions:

- What subjects am I most excited about?
- Which sub-topics have I enjoyed the most in the classroom?
- Are there any issues or questions I would like to explore?

You will be assigned a supervisor based on the subject you choose; ideally, your own subject teacher will be your supervisor. Supervisors have expertise on the topic and give guidance and support throughout the research project. Do choose a supervisor with whom you feel comfortable communication. Feel free to approach your potential supervisor early on to discuss possible topics and the feasibility of your research.

5.2. How to develop a research question

EE requirements state that your research must focus on a research question, regardless of the subject you chose to explore in your EE. A good research question is clear and focused. After you have chosen a topic, it is best to try and formulate a question based on it and specify it. Here is an example how you can develop your topic into a research question:

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Choose a subject: | History |
| 2. Identify a topic: | Authoritarian regimes |
| 3. Narrow the focus: | Mussolini's authoritarian regime |
| 4. Specify an aspect: | Minority rights under Mussolini's authoritarian regime |
| 5. Formulate a question: | To what extent did Mussolini's policies affect the rights of ethnic minorities in Italy from 1922 to 1943? |

5.3. Structuring and formatting your EE

You will have to structure your EE following conventions of academic writing. You are required to follow the following guidelines regarding formatting:

- Use 12-point Times New Roman, double-spaced, with 2.54 cm margins.
- Number pages in the top right corner.
- Do not include candidate, school, or supervisor names on the title page or headers.
- Keep your EE under 4,000 words.

In addition, your EE must include the following six elements:

1. Title page: Include the title, research question, subject (and category if needed), and word count.
2. Contents page: Number all pages; no index required.
3. Introduction: Outline the focus, scope, sources, and argument.
4. Body: Present evidence, analysis, and argument, adhering to subject conventions.
5. Conclusion: Summarize findings and address limitations.
6. Bibliography: Use the Chicago style consistently.

5.4. Working with sources

During the EE process, you will be working with sources to support your arguments. It is important to learn how you can evaluate those sources. You can always start by researching the topic on Google Scholar or on the SZTE library website, where you have access to a great number of reputable sources. In addition, evaluate your sources by asking the following questions:

1. Is the author respected in the field? What can you find out about them?
2. Is the publisher reputable?
3. Does the resource contain any bias?
4. Does the paper include proper citations?
5. How current is the information?

Once you have a list of reputable sources and have taken notes, there are two ways to transfer those ideas into writing.

If you encounter a definition, phrase, or any kind of information that you think should not be changed, you can provide a quotation:

“Conservation biology is a young field, but its roots antedate science itself.”¹

¹ Soulé, “What Is Conservation Biology?,” 733.

Ideally, however, you should strive to change the wording of the idea so that it fits your own writing. We call this a paraphrase (note the lack of quotation marks):

While conservation biology is a new field of study, its origins go back to before the development of modern science.¹

¹ Soulé, “What Is Conservation Biology?,” 733.

Sometimes, out of courtesy, you can mention the author as well:

Soulé highlights that while conservation biology is a new field of study, its origins go back to before the development of modern science.¹

¹ Soulé, “What Is Conservation Biology?,” 733.

Note that each idea must be referenced if it comes from an author other than you. Some people only give the page number for direct quotations, but we require you to provide a full reference (with page number) for paraphrases as well.

5.5. How many references should I make?

It might seem strange that a reference or citation is needed for each idea that is not your own. Many students only provide one citation at the end of a paragraph, even though the paragraph

includes multiple ideas (the number of ideas roughly equates to the number of sentences). This is incorrect, since the reader will think that only the final idea is referenced, and all other ideas are yours.

Frogs are excellent indicator species to measure wetland health. They are very sensitive to changes in pH caused by acid rain, and they are also very sensitive to different types of pollution. When frog populations in a wetland plummet, one can be sure that something is going wrong in the wetland. When oddities in frog morphology appear, like frogs with five legs or two heads, one can assume something is going wrong in the wetland environment.¹

¹ Willemssen, *Frogs*, 73.

A correct, but ugly way to avoid this is providing a reference for each and every idea. This is an accepted way to present the ideas, but it reads repetitive with a footnote after each sentence:

Frogs are excellent indicator species to measure wetland health. They are very sensitive to changes in pH caused by acid rain, and they are also very sensitive to different types of pollution.¹ When frog populations in a wetland plummet, one can be sure that something is going wrong in the wetland.² When oddities in frog morphology appear, like frogs with five legs or two heads, one can assume something is going wrong in the wetland environment.³

¹ Willemssen, *Frogs*, 73.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

The best way to improve readability is to add phrases that note where the information comes from. It reads more fluently and is also correct in terms of referencing, since it is stated clearly that these are not the author's own ideas:

Frogs are excellent indicator species to measure wetland health. Willemssen¹ relates to research conducted recently in Wisconsin that shows that frogs are very sensitive to changes in pH caused by acid rain, and they are also very sensitive to different types of pollution. Her research indicates that when frog populations in a wetland plummet, one can be sure that something is going wrong in the wetland. Also, she finishes by noting that when oddities in frog morphology appear, like frogs with five legs or two heads, one can also assume something is going wrong in the wetland environment.

¹ Willemssen, *Frogs*, 73.

6. Style guides and sheets

Academic settings usually prescribe the use of one (or one of several) style guide(s). These are handbooks that set the standards for editing and formatting written documents: how we present data, construct our writings, and cite our sources.

There is a great number of style guides in use in academia at the same time, and requirements differ institution to institution. Commonly used style guides include APA, Chicago, and MLA. None of these guides are better than the other, but they do differ in terms of recommendations and requirements.

At SZTE Báthory István Gyakorló Gimnázium és Általános Iskola, we require you to complete your academic assignments using the rules set by the **Chicago Manual of Style**. We chose this guide because it is widely used in American academia and offers a flexible way to present information. Specifically, we recommend using **short footnotes** when citing sources.

6.1. How to use the Chicago style

Style guides are lengthy and bulky books intended to cover all scenarios and meticulous details of editing and formatting your text. It is easy to get lost trying to find what you need and many of the details might seem superfluous. This is why you are not required to purchase the official manual and use it when writing. In this document, we provide you with a detailed description of the most important considerations of the Chicago style.

Using one style is a skill to master, not a set of rules to memorise. We recommend that you do not learn what is written here. Instead, we encourage you to actively use this style sheet when you are working on your EE. When you are working with a source material, open this document and search for the type of your source material (e.g. book, edited book, journal article, etc.) and with the help of the example, write your own reference.

6.2. Citing a source for the first time

When you cite a source in your essay for the first time, you must provide all the necessary information. We call this the full footnote:

¹ First name Last name, Title of book, number of edition. (Place of publication: Publisher, Year), page numbers.

¹ Marya Schechtman, *The self: A very short introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024), 24-25.

Pay attention to the correct order of the information as well as the correct use of commas, colons, stops, and italics.

The most common sources you will use during your studies are: books, book chapters, edited books, journal articles, and websites. Use these examples to write your references:

Books by a single author

¹ First name Last name, Title of book, number of edition. (Place of publication: Publisher, Year), page numbers.

¹ Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, 10th anniversary ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2022), 10.

Books with multiple authors

¹ First name Last name and First name Last name, *Title of book*, number of edition. (Place of publication: Publisher, Year), page numbers.

¹ Colin Hay, Anand Menon, *European Politics*. (Oxford: OUP, 2007), 395.

Edited books

¹ First name Last name, ed., *Title of Book*, number of edition. (Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication), page number.

¹ Rick Bonnie and Patrik Klingborn, ed., *Water in Ancient Mediterranean Households*. (Milton Park: Routledge, 2024), 30.

Chapters in edited books

¹ First name Last name, “Title of Chapter,” in *Title of Book*, ed. First name Last name of the editor (Place of publication: Publisher, Year of publication), page numbers.

¹ Kyle Whyte, “Why Does Anything Need to be Called Wild?,” in *The Heart of the Wild: Essays on Nature, Conservation, and the Human future*, ed. Ben A. Minteer and Jonathan B. Losos (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2024), 73.

Journal articles

¹ First name Last name, “Title of Article,” in *Title of journal* volume number, issue number (year): page number, URL.

¹ Michael E. Soulé, “What Is Conservation Biology?,” *BioScience* 35, no. 11 (1985): 729, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1310054.pdf>

Websites

¹ First name Last name, “Title of Webpage,” *Website Name*, last modified Month Day, Year, URL.

¹ Jasper van Wezel, Lotte Mertens, and Jans Henke, “Quantum Physics Isn’t as Weird as You Think. It’s Weirder,” *SciAm*, last modified October 12, 2023, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/quantum-physics-isnt-as-weird-as-you-think-its-weirder/>

Sometimes, a piece of information may be missing, e.g. some books do not have different editions, or some websites do not state who the author is. You can leave those parts out in this case.

6.3. Citing a source for the second time

After the initial full footnote, use the shortened form for every subsequent citation of the same source. We only use the last name of the author and omit everything except for a shortened title and page number. Shorten the title only if it is necessary (overlong titles are easy to shorten) or if it can be done in a meaningful way.

Books by a single author

¹ Last name, *Shortened Title*, page number.

¹ Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples’ History*, 10.

Books with multiple authors

¹ Last name and Last name, *Shortened Title*, page number.

¹ Hay and Menon, *European Politics*, 395.

Edited books

¹ Last name, ed., *Shortened Title*, page number.

¹ Bonnie and Klingborn, ed., *Water in Ancient Mediterranean Households*, 30.

Chapters in edited books

¹ Last name, "Shortened Title of Chapter," page numbers.

¹ Whyte, "Why Does Anything Need to be Called Wild," 73.

Journal articles

¹ Last name, "Shortened Title of Article," page number.

¹ Soulé, "What Is Conservation Biology?," 729.

Websites

¹ Last name, "Shortened Title of Webpage."

¹ van Wezel, Mertens, and Henke, "Quantum Physics Isn't as Weird as You Think."

6.4. Citing the same source repeatedly

When you cite a source right after you cited the same source, we use the abbreviation *Ibid.* (short for *ibidem*, meaning "in the same place") to avoid repetition. We use *Ibid.* when the citation refers to the same source and page as the previous footnote, and *Ibid.*, page number if you are referring to a different page in the same source.

¹ Dunbar-Ortiz, *An Indigenous Peoples' History*, 10.

² *Ibid.*

³ Whyte, "Why Does Anything Need to be Called Wild," 73.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 75.

6.5. Bibliography

Even though we use long footnotes when we first cite a source, we still need a bibliography list at the end of the essay. Using the long footnotes is a good basis, but there are two notable differences:

1. We list the bibliography list edited with hanging indent (i.e. the second line starts with a gap).
2. We write the names of the authors as Last name, First name, and arrange the entries alphabetically.

Bonnie, Rick and Klingborn, Patrik, ed., *Water in Ancient Mediterranean Households*. (Milton Park: Routledge, 2024).

Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne, *An Indigenous Peoples' History of the United States*, 10th anniversary ed. (Boston: Beacon Press, 2022).

Hay, Colin and Menon, Anand, *European Politics*. (Oxford: OUP, 2007).

Schechtman, Marya, *The self: A very short introduction*, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2024).

- Soulé, Michael E., “What Is Conservation Biology?,” *BioScience* 35, no. 11 (1985),
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/1310054.pdf>
- van Wezel, Jasper, Mertens, Lotte and Henke, Jans “Quantum Physics Isn’t as Weird as You Think. It’s Weirder,”
SciAm, last modified October 12, 2023, <https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/quantum-physics-isnt-as-weird-as-you-think-its-weirder/>
- Whyte, Kyle, “Why Does Anything Need to be Called Wild?,” in *The Heart of the Wild: Essays on Nature, Conservation, and the Human future*, ed. Ben A. Minteer and Jonathan B. Losos (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2024).

7. Assessment

The EE is assessed externally, i.e. your supervisor will give you a predicted grade, but senior examiners will give you your official final grade. Please note that Criterion E is evidenced by the *Reflections on planning and progress form*, submitted with your essay. Senior examiners are experts of the topic and are experienced EE evaluators assigned by the IBO, to ensure that grades are awarded fairly to everyone. They use a detailed rubric to evaluate your work; a simplified rubric is presented below.

Criterion	Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
Criterion A: Focus and method (6 marks)	0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
	1–2	The topic is communicated unclearly and incompletely. The research question is stated but not clearly expressed or too broad. Methodology of the research is limited.
	3–4	The topic is communicated. The research question is clearly stated but only partially focused. Methodology of the research is mostly complete. 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 question is clearly stated and focused. Methodology of the research is complete.
Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding (6 marks)	0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
	1–2	Knowledge and understanding is limited. Use of terminology and concepts is unclear and limited.
	3–4	Knowledge and understanding is good. Use of terminology and concepts is adequate. 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	Knowledge and understanding is excellent. Use of terminology and concepts is good.
Criterion C: Critical thinking (12 marks)	0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
	1–3	The research is limited. Analysis is limited. Discussion/evaluation is limited. If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than three marks can be awarded for this criterion.
	4–6	The research is adequate. Analysis is adequate. Discussion/evaluation is adequate.
	7–9	The research is good. Analysis is good. Discussion/evaluation is good.
Criterion D: Presentation (4 marks)	0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
	1–2	Presentation is acceptable.
	3–4	Presentation is good.
Criterion E: Engagement	0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors, an RPPF has not been submitted, or the RPPF has been submitted in a language other than that of the essay.

(6 marks)	1–2	Engagement is limited.
	3–4	Engagement is good.
	5–6	Engagement is excellent.