

Curriculum Overview – Extended Essay

“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 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.”

[What is the extended essay? - International Baccalaureate® \(ibo.org\)](https://www.ibo.org/what-is-the-extended-essay/)

The Extended Essay is designed to achieve the following objectives (taken from the Extended Essay Guide):

- Knowledge and understanding
 - To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topic chosen and the research question posed.
 - To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of subject specific terminology and/or concepts.
 - To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant and/or appropriate research sources and/or methods used to gather information.
- Application and analysis
 - To select and apply research that is relevant and appropriate to the research question.
 - To analyse the research effectively and focus on the research question.
- Synthesis and evaluation
 - To be able to discuss the research in terms of a clear and coherent reasoned argument in relation to the research question.
 - To be able to critically evaluate the arguments presented in the essay.
 - To be able to reflect on and evaluate the research process.
- A variety of (research) skills
 - To be able to present information in an appropriate academic format.
 - To understand and demonstrate academic integrity.

Principles and Purpose of the Extended Essay

Here we explore these principles in the context of the Psychology Curriculum:

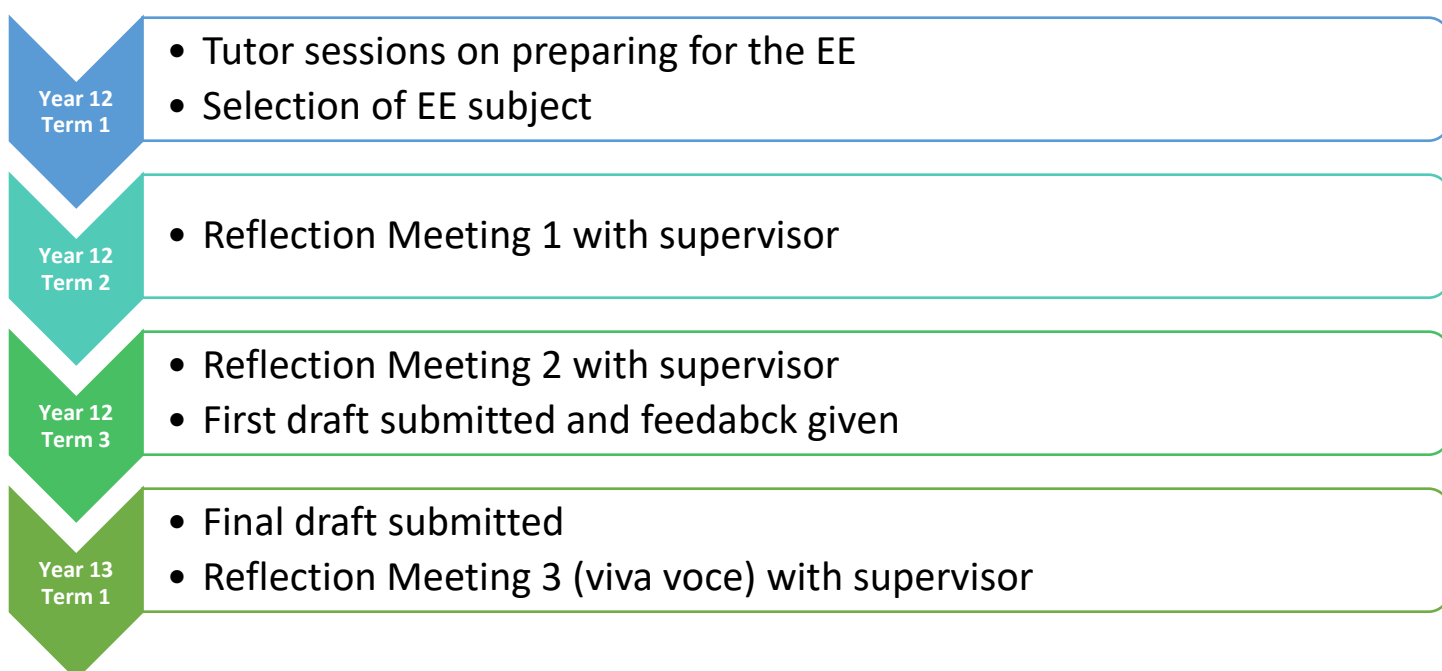
- **Entitlement:** All IB students have the right to study an Extended Essay as part of the Core Programme of the IB Diploma.
- **Coherence:** Students are provided with a supervisor who guides them through the EE process, and carries out 3 reflection sessions.
- **Mastery:** Students are expected to develop strong research skills reading academic literature, and the ability to write a 4000 word thesis.
- **Adaptability:** Students are asked which subject they wish to write their EE in, and every effort is made to achieve first choice requests. If a first choice subject is not possible (for example there is not a suitable supervisor), their second choice will be offered.
- **Representation:** The EE is planned with diversity and inclusion in mind. Pupils will show multiple elements of the learner profile throughout the EE process including being open-minded and reflective.
- **Education with character:** The EE has embedded within it, spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development. The IB Learner Profile are developed through application and discussion.

Students are supported in developing the learner profile through the Extended Essay (taken from the Extended Essay Guide):

- **Inquiry** - Through research, students demonstrate both the acquisition of skills necessary to conduct inquiry and their interest in learning.
- **Knowledgeable** - Students acquire in-depth knowledge of their topic through exploration of current literature and/or research.
- **Thinkers** - Students make reasoned analysis of their research topic and apply critical thinking skills in a creative way.
- **Communicators** - Students effectively express ideas and information in an academic way.
- **Principled** - Students exercise academic integrity in all aspects of their work, showing respect for the ideas and work of others, and caring for the welfare of subjects studied and for the environment.
- **Open-minded** - As researchers, students will seek out and express an appropriately wide range of points of view.
- **Caring** - By clearly demonstrating the relevance of their topic, students exhibit their personal commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.
- **Risk-takers** - Students explore new areas or novel situations and courageously defend their positions.
- **Balanced** – Students’ understanding of the importance of intellectual development is reinforced by the research process.
- **Reflective** - Students draw conclusions on their topic demonstrating thoughtful consideration and they have the opportunity to assess their strengths and weaknesses.

Roadmap of the EE

Early in year 12, students have a series of sessions via their tutor learning about the process and requirements of the Extended Essay. They then submit a form with up to 3 subject requests as well as a provisional overview of their proposed research question. The EE coordinator then reviews these and matches up students with supervisors.



‘Why This, Why Now?’

In our planning, we have asked ourselves 'why this, why now?'

Here we provide some examples of the curriculum choices we have made, and why the units have been placed in the order we have chosen:

Example 1: Students have sessions during tutor time to learn about the EE process and requirements before they submit their choices. During these initial months, students are also encouraged to talk to their teachers to ensure they understand the specific course requirements.

Example 2: Students use time over the summer holidays to work on their final draft having received feedback prior to this. Many subjects complete their internal assessments in the first term of year 13, so having completed all but the viva voce and final reflection by then supports them with their workload.

Supporting Students with their Extended Essay

The supervisor provides check-in meetings as well as the mandatory reflection meetings.

Check-in meetings are determined by the needs of the individual student. For example, a 10 minute meeting to clarify a question or discuss a timeline may be sufficient in one instance, but in another, a more lengthy discussion about finding and understanding resources may be required.

The supervisor also carries out 3 mandatory reflection meetings, each taking approximately 20-30 minutes. Before and after the meeting, the student will complete the relevant section on the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form. These meetings are dialogues guided by the supervisor, focusing on progress made so far and setting clear objectives for the next stage of researching and writing.

Assessing the Extended Essay

Formative Assessment in the Extended Essay

The supervisor will provide feedback on the first draft in the form of open-ended comments. The supervisor does not provide any editing comments or proofreading, but may (for example) state that the bibliography needs checking, as does the accuracy of referencing on page X.

Summative Assessment in the Extended Essay

The Extended Essay is marked externally, and given a grade from A (work of an excellent standard) to E (work of an elementary standard; failing criteria). There are 5 criterion used to mark the Extended Essay:

- A: Focus and Method (6 marks)
- B: Knowledge and Understanding (6 marks)
- C: Critical thinking (12 marks)
- D: Presentation (4 marks)
- E: Engagement (6 marks)

Progression from the Extended Essay

Progression to University and Careers

The completion of an Extended Essay provides students with a range of transferable skills towards university and/or future careers. International mindedness is promoted through the curriculum, and the flexibility of choice with regards to research questions. The Extended Essay develops skills in reading, analysis and communication; all of which are important for undergraduate study and careers.