
EXTENDED ESSAY: HEART OF THE IB DIPLOMA PROGRAM

Upper Arlington International Baccalaureate Program

- Compulsory for all Diploma Program students
- An in-depth study of a focused topic chosen from an IB Diploma subject area that you are studying. It is intended to promote high-level research and writing skills, intellectual discovery and creativity. Provides students the opportunity to engage in personal research in a topic of their own choice, under the guidance of a supervisor (a teacher in the school). Select a subject area in which you have a ***strong interest and willingness to follow through with the expectations and have course work underway within the IB program.*** This leads to a major piece of formally presented, structured writing, in which ideas and findings are communicated in a reasoned and coherent manner, appropriate to the subject chosen (containing no more than 4000 words). *“Highly successful essays often emerge from a candidate’s real interest in a known topic, thus providing motivation which will sustain engagement throughout the writing process.” (IB EE report)*
- It is externally assessed and, in combination with the grade for theory of knowledge, contributes up to three points to the total score for the IB diploma.
- Your paper will be the result of approximately 40 hours of work by you and **REQUIRES** regular meetings with your supervisor. It concludes with a required short interview, *viva voce*, with the supervising teacher after the final essay is submitted BUT before it is mailed for external assessment.
- In the Diploma Program, the extended essay is the prime example of a piece of work where the student has the opportunity to show knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm about a topic of his or her choice.
- Your supervisor is there to help you refine your topic, have a suitable research question, find appropriate resources and give feedback on a rough draft. Their role is to help you complete all of the pieces of the extended essay—not do the work for you. You must use appropriate research sources for your subject matter. Style of referencing will be set by your supervisor as format differs according to the subject area. Do not become overly dependent on internet sources-----use college libraries! A minimum of four hours of consultation with your supervisor is expected by IB and your supervisor. ***This is your time to shine and really explore a topic of interest.***
- The learning involved in researching & writing the extended essay is closely aligned with the development of many of the characteristics described in the IB learner profile. Students are, to a large extent, responsible for their own independent learning, through which they acquire and communicate in-depth knowledge and understanding. The research process necessarily involves intellectual risk-taking and extensive reflection; open-mindedness, balance and fairness are key prerequisites for a good extended essay.
- In working on the extended essay, students are expected to:
 - Plan and pursue a research project with intellectual initiative and insight
 - Formulate a precise research question
 - Gather and interpret material from sources appropriate to the research question
 - Structure a reasoned argument in response to the research question on the basis of the material gathered
 - Present their extended essay in a format appropriate to the subject, acknowledging sources in one of the established academic ways
 - Use the terminology and language appropriate to the subject with skill and understanding

- Apply analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject, with an understanding of the implications and the context of their research
- Extended Essays cannot be done on the same topics you are completing for Internal Assessments in your IB classes AND two or more diploma candidates cannot submit projects on the same topic.
 - In Science, it is strongly recommended that you complete an experiment. In order to place your research into the appropriate context, students should research the area of investigation before commencing any experimental work. Textbooks should never be the only source of information. Also, it must clearly be in ONE science subject. Should not be an experiment that is already widely known. Must be ethical in its approach. Science department may have earlier specific deadlines.
 - In Second Language, the essay is written in the second language but does not need perfection. Demonstration of ability to clearly communicate is the expectation, not a perfect essay.
- Your Extended Essay will be graded by an outside expert in the subject area. They are the final determiner of your score. There are a possible 36 points earned in 11 criteria. You cannot earn an elementary grade on both EE and TOK and still earn the full IB Diploma. Failure to submit an EE or TOK essay means you cannot earn the full IB Diploma. Many colleges and universities recognize your IB diploma more when you earn more than the minimum score of 24 points from your six exams and the bonus points. There are a possible 42 points from your six exams and 3 bonus points for a total of 45!

YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE EXTENDED ESSAY PROCESS

- Select a topic within one subject area you are studying
- Select a supervisor, don't delay; each has a limit of students they will supervise
- Read the assessment criteria and **meet with your supervisor** to focus your topic into a solid research question before school ends; your research question should not be too broad or too vague, too narrow, too *difficult* or inappropriate. A good research question asks something worth asking & that is answerable within 40 hours/4000 words. It should be clear what would count as evidence in relation to the question, and it must be possible to acquire such evidence in the course of the investigation.
- During the research process, and while writing the essay, you should
 - Start your work early and stick to deadlines
 - Read the assessment criteria and don't ignore them
 - Maintain a good working relationship with your supervisor—NOW is the time to spend with them to plan and focus, so you can write a solid rough draft
 - Think carefully about the research question for your essay; make sure you analyze the research question you pose
 - Plan how, when and where you will find material for your essay
 - Don't use the internet uncritically or solely as the source for your essay
 - Plan a schedule for both researching and writing the essay, including extra time for delays and unforeseen problems
 - Use the library and consult librarians for advice
 - Read past Extended Essays that are on the reserve shelf in the library
 - Read "Best Practice" essays if they are available in the subject area that you have chosen
 - Ask the coordinator for a copy of the syllabi for courses not taught at UA
 - Record sources as your research progresses (rather than trying to reconstruct a list at the end)

- Remember academic honesty and don't plagiarize; the student is **ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE** for ensuring that his or her extended essay is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged. Your supervisor has the responsibility of confirming that your essay is **YOUR** work and has been referenced properly.
- Have a clear structure for the essay itself before you begin to write; you do not want a descriptive report but a solid argument with solid evidence
- If you start having a problem with your research question, **CONTACT YOUR SUPERVISOR** immediately, so you have time to refocus or change if necessary
- Write your abstract after writing the final essay
- Check and proofread the final version carefully
- Let your enthusiasm and interest for the subject you selected show in your essay
- Make sure that all basic requirements are met (for example, all students should get full marks for the abstract)
- Don't repeat the introduction in the conclusion
- Don't cite sources that are not used
- Meet all deadlines set by the IB Diploma Coordinator and your supervisor
- Acknowledge all sources of information and ideas in an approved academic manner
- **The more background you have in a subject area, the better the chance you have of writing a good extended essay.**