**New Albany High School**

**Extended Essay Introduction**

Class of 2017 IB Extended Essay Tentative Calendar

Tuesday, August 11th, 2015: Initial meeting with students and parents

Thursday, February 4th, 2016: Initial Student Proposals Due

Monday, February 22nd, 2016: Finalized Proposals with Research Question Due

Wednesday, February 24th, 2016: Begin Assigning Students to Teacher Supervisors

Monday, February 29th, 2016: Inform Students of their Teacher Supervisor

Monday, March 7th-Friday, March 11th, 2016: Teacher Supervisors Have a Short

Meeting with Students

Monday, April 18th- Friday, April 29th, 2016: Meeting with Supervising Teacher &

Outline Due

Monday, May 9th - Friday, May 20th, 2016: Meeting with Supervising Teacher to Check

Progress and Ask Questions

Monday, August 8th- Friday, August 19th 2016: Meeting with Supervising Teacher to

Check Progress and Ask Questions

Monday, September 12th- Friday, September 23rd, 2016: Meeting with Supervising

Teacher to Check Progress and Ask Questions

Friday, October 21st, 2016: Abstract Should be Completed

Tuesday, November 22nd, 2016: Final Draft Due for Review

Monday, January 9th-Friday, January 20th, 2017: Viva Voce

Check <http://mcgarveysdomain.weebly.com> for Updates

Assessment objectives

In working on the extended essay, students are expected to:

1. plan and pursue a research project with intellectual initiative and insight

2. formulate a precise research question

3. gather and interpret material from sources appropriate to the research question

4. structure a reasoned argument in response to the research question on the basis of the material

gathered

5. present their extended essay in a format appropriate to the subject, acknowledging sources in one of

the established academic ways

6. use the terminology and language appropriate to the subject with skill and understanding

7. apply analytical and evaluative skills appropriate to the subject, with an understanding of the

implications and the context of their research.

Structure

The structure of the essay is very important. This is what helps students to organize the argument, making best use of the evidence gathered. The required elements of the final work to be submitted are listed here. More details about each element are given in the “Formal presentation of the extended essay” section. Please note that the order in which they are presented here is not necessarily the order in which they should be written.

• Title page

• Abstract

• Contents page

• Introduction

• Body (development/methods/results)

• Conclusion

• References and bibliography

• Appendices

**How does the EE contribute to the students final point score?**

* The grades given for the student’s are combined with their grade for Theory of Knowledge (ToK) using the matrix below.
* A maximum of three points are awarded according to a student’s combined performance in both the extended essay and theory of knowledge.
* Failure to submit an EE means the student will fail the whole Diploma Programme
* Getting a grade E for the EE or a grade E for ToK is also a failing condition for the whole Diploma Programme

**Diploma Points Matrix**

**for the Extended Essay and Theory of Knowledge**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **Theory of Knowledge** | | | | | |
|  |  | A | B | C | D | F | Not submitted |
| **Extended Essay** | A | 3 | 3 | 2 | 2 | N | N |
| B | 3 | 2 | 1 | 1 | N | N |
| C | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | N | N |
| D | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | N | N |
| F | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Not submitted | N | N | N | N | N | N |

*N = Fail whole Diploma Programme*

**Advice on choosing a research question**

* Getting the exact research question right is one of the most important parts for both the student and the advisor
* Each EE will be registered with the IB under a subject heading (e.g. Theatre, Biology) and will be marked according to its subject specific content, using the assessment criteria.
* It must be manageable from the point of view of time and the 4,000 word limit. The main trap students fall into is making their research question too broad.
* It is best to avoid topics and questions too well-trodden as they restrict the student’s ability to come to personal judgements
* The research question should be in the form of a question. This helps to keep the EE focussed and makes it easier to come to a conclusion based on a systematic investigation
* It is best to avoid questions which lead to a more narrative and descriptive response. Marks are given for reasoned argument, analysis and evaluation. In particular steer students away from topics which are more biographical, unless it is a History EE which is going to lead to an evaluation of their historical significance.
* The IBO EE guide has a great deal of subject specific advice to guide you in choosing the research question.

**Advice on structuring and writing the EE**

* The EE has a fairly strict structure which the students must follow if they are to maximise their marks:
  + Abstract (This should be no more than 300 words and is not part of the formal word count. It acts as an overview of the whole EE and should make clear what the research question is, how it was investigated and what conclusion(s) were arrived at)
  + Introduction (This should make clear what the research question is about, how it relates to their existing knowledge on the topic and in what ways it is significant and worthy of investigation)
  + Main body (This should be separated into chapters and paragraphs)
  + Conclusion (This should make clear precisely what conclusion(s) have been arrived at, how they answer the research questions and how they are consistent with the main body of the essay)
* The language used must be formal and appropriate to the subject. (Assessment criteria G)
* The essay as a whole must have the proper layout and organisation as specified in the IBO’s EE guide. (Assessment criteria I)
* You must have a properly laid out bibliography. (There is advice in the students’ Sixth Form Planners on how to do this)
* 4,000 words may seem a great deal to you, but if you take it steadily then you will finish it.

**Advice on time management**

* All students will need some advice and encouragement on how to move ahead on their EE while also keeping up to date with their other studies. Some students may need more advice and support than others.
* The keys to successful time management include:
  + Plan when, where and how they will do it (when they plan in detail, they are more likely to do it)
  + Do some work on the EE every week (so they do not allow it to grow too cold)
  + Break their research into chunks (if they wait for a three hour slot to do some, they may be waiting a long time)
  + Keep going (even a bit of work is better than no work)
  + Keep on eye on the final destination and what they are trying to achieve
* In the end there is no secret to time management, it is just a question of effort and getting on with it.

**Group specific advice on choosing a research question:**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Group 1** | * It is better to avoid books they are already studying * Avoid biography and social history as it is an analysis of literature * Avoid juvenile and teenage fiction – it is not appropriate to an EE as the IB sees it. It is supposed to be an academic piece of analysis such as will impress an University Tutor * Avoid typical Sixth Form books like “Frankenstein” and “Handmaid’s Tale” * They can compare a book written in English with one translated into English |
| **Group 2** | * They must write it in the target language and it must be about a subject relevant to the target culture (i.e. it must be written in French about French culture & society, language or literature) * Any literature examined must have been written originally in the target language |
| **Group 3** | * Giving the research question a local angle can be very good for allowing opportunities for personal judgement * Avoid “What if..?” questions and questions which are will lead to too much biography or description of the social context. Analysis and evaluation are required. * For History, an analysis of reliability and/or representativeness of sources will be crucial, primary and/or secondary * For Psychology, the research must be based on secondary data not primary * For Geography, the research can include primary data but the EE need not place so strong an emphasis on primary field data |
| **Group 4** | * The research question needs to keep them within the subject they have chosen and not become trans-disciplinary (i.e. if it is Biology, it should incorporate biological theories and not drift into Chemistry or Physics) * The EE will be marked on its subject specific content according to what subject it is registered under (i.e. an EE registered as Chemistry will be judged on its chemical content). * For Experimental EEs, they need to have a fairly straightforward experiment which they can conduct rigorously. You do not need to be the supervising adult, but they will need one. They should avoid experiments for which the outcome is already well documented. Some topics are unsuitable for investigation because of ethical or safety issues. * For Library-based EEs, A questionnaire, survey or a library-based topic in Group 4 may be easier to research (in school or at a University library) but you need to manage a large amount of material and be selective for relevant information. |
| **Group 5** | * For ideas look in books about “100 greatest unsolved mathematical problems” * Avoid questions which are too trivial in terms of the mathematics * Mathematical topics can be chosen from areas such as engineering, the science and social sciences. The approach and development of the question must be mathematical |
| **Group 6** | * Avoid purely biographical or historical research questions. * For Theatre, the focus should not be a literary one and it is best to have a research question which will explore the links between theory and their application * For Visual Art, the research question should focus on the works of Visual Art. Visual Art can include architecture, photography and installations. Interviews with practitioners and authorities can be very effective when used as secondary material in relation to the research question |

**Advice on library-based researching**

* Text books should never be the only source of research.
* The students should conduct some basic research as part of their selection of a research question.
* The students will need advice on how to keep track of the books, journals and periodicals they have consulted so that they can complete their bibliography
* Academic Honesty requires that the students are open about ideas as well as quotations they make use of from other people.
* Take time talking through with the students where they could access good material for their research.
* Steer the students away from using the internet (because even with all your warnings, they will use it anyway)
* Non-virtual sources are: school Library and Librarians, Ealing Libraries and Librarians (they can ask for books from other Libraries through the Ealing system), University Libraries, British Library (EE Coordinator has forms they can use to get access), University Tutors (through email contact)
* Virtual sources are: academic search engines and databases such as Google Scholar, Open J-Gate and SSRN (Wikipedia has a handy list <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_academic_databases_and_search_engines>)
* Students will need some advice throughout the process about where next to look for research materials.
* As the student researches, they should also keep an eye on the Assessment criteria and on the advice and regulations from the IBO.

**Advice on experiment-based research**

* Even though they are conducting experimental work, the students should also research the area of investigation before they start they start their experiments, so they can place their work in the appropriate academic context. Where possible, they should consult original research using scientific journals, personal communications and the Internet. Textbooks should never be the only source of information.
* It is the student’s responsibility to liaise with the science technicians and to build up a good relationship with them. But they will need encouragement and support in managing their time so they do this.
* In your head set a deadline for when they should have completed their experiments by, and then set them a deadline a couple of months earlier.
* They will need repeated discussions about what constitutes appropriate experimental behaviour, conduct and rigour.
* The student needs to gather sufficient data to be evaluated.

**What is expected from the advisor?**

* Spend between three and five hours with each student
* Provide advice guidance and support to the student in:

1. deciding on the specific research question so that it is appropriate for the subject and Extended Essay format
2. researching their topic/ question (i.e. where to find them, what to look for etc.)
3. structuring and writing the Extended Essay

**What can the advisor not do?**

* Advisor must not write the students EE for them
* Advisor cannot edit their first draft
* Advisor must not allow them to choose a research topic or question which is not appropriate for the EE
* Advisor should not let the student just drift without working regularly on their EE

**What if the student is at risk of not meeting deadlines?**

* Speak to the student and speak to the EE coordinator
* Tell the student what you are expecting to see from them and when
* Remind them that not meeting deadlines makes their EE more difficult to complete and that not handing in a sufficiently good EE might mean they fail the whole Diploma Programme
* Keep on speaking to the student and the EE coordinator
* Your grade may be affected in your Language A1 class, as well

**How are the Extended Essays marked?**

* Schools provide predicted grades for the EE.
* The EE are marked by external examiners. These could be in countries anywhere around the world.
* The Assessment Criteria are given in the IBO EE Guide. Maximum mark available is 36.
* The marks given are used to award the EE a grade A-E.
* Significant discrepancies between a predicted grade and an examined grade will mean that the EE gets looked at again for moderation.

**The Viva Voce interview**

* Once the students have completed their EE, they will have a V*iva Voce* interview, during January 2017. It will be led by the EE Coordinator and the student’s supervisor.
* The purpose of these interviews is threefold:

1. To help us check on plagiarism
2. To give the students’ an opportunity to reflect on the EE process and what they have learnt
3. To help us write the supervisor’s report

* The interview should last between 10 and 15 minutes and is part of the recommended amount of time the supervisor should spend with the student.