

Extended Essay Template

EE and VWA

To convert the EE into a VWA, you need the following things extra:

- VWA cover page
- Eigenständigkeitserklärung
- Abstract
- All those things that the teacher asks you to include in the VWA (extra chapter etc). In most cases there is nothing to add.
- Begleitprotokoll

Title page

Include the following items on the title page:

- Words „Extended Essay“
- Subject in which the EE is registered
- Topic of the EE
- RQ of the EE
- Personal code, session number of candidate
- Name of supervising teacher

Comment: There should be no name on the essay in the PDF version, which is uploaded. The EE is anonymous. Include the name on the print-out you submit for the teacher.

Introduction (Topic and RQ)

Write 1 paragraph each:

- **Topic:** Context of the topic. How you got to the topic, previous studies on the topic etc.
- **RQ:** Clearly state the RQ at the beginning of the introduction! Print it in **bold** characters. Mention how you got to the RQ from the topic.
- **RQ: Purpose:** Relevancy of the topic/RQ: personal relevancy, relevancy for the subject/topic

- **Argument:** Also mention what the outcome (!!) of your investigation is. This is to make sure that you have a consistent argument throughout the essay. Do not be afraid of giving away your results/findings at the beginning of the essay.

Comments and common problems:

- Way too many students include theoretical background material which is not linked to the RQ. This is a waste of time and energy and you also lose points, because these parts distract from the main argument of the essay. If parts are not explicitly linked to the RQ, then either throw them out or make them relevant by including sentences that link it to the RQ. Otherwise waste of word count.
- Method not properly explained and justified (!) at all. "I will do internet research" or "I will compare the books" or "I will search for quotes" are not enough.
- Too much method, without justification: A problem in science EE. Move details to appendix and include a justified overview of the method at the beginning.
- Research Question not communicated/explained properly. There is some theoretical explanation, and then all of a sudden a RQ, and the reader wonders how the theory is connected to the RQ.

Method

Write 1 paragraph each:

- **Method:** How do you intend to answer the RQ? State the method/approach/strategy used for answering it. For science EE, put the detailed method into the appendix and give an overview here.
- **Method justification:** Justify why you use this method/approach/strategy and not another one.
- **Method limitations:** Mention the possible limitations of your approach.
- **Source selection and justification:** Mention which sources you selected. Which books, interviews, movies etc. did you use? Why did you selected these and not others? Most of you will have selected them because you could not find other ones. In this case you still must give a convincing justification.
- **Source evaluation** What are the strengths and weaknesses of the sources?

Comments and common problems:

- In some subjects (eg. Languages etc.) it is not customary to use the word „method“. In this case do not use the word „method“, but you still must make it clear how you intend to answer the RQ. „I am going to look for quotes in the book“ is not good enough. This is like saying in the sciences „I will do an experiment to find out.“
- Students select sources and then do not use them. A problem.
- Students list sources in the references section but do not cite them in the text. A problem.
- Students use irrelevant sources (non-citable sources) that they find. Extreme example: a personal blog of someone. Unless there is a good reason for this, it is not of academic relevancy.

Main Part

In the body of the EE, repeat the following steps:

- **Answer the RQ:** Answer the research question right at the beginning of each section.
- **Research:** Present supporting facts/information that you have researched. The type of research depends on the subject. This can include quotes from books (languages), diagrams and charts (sciences, economics etc), pictures (arts) etc. Reference it.
- **Paraphrase the research:** Explain the researched data in your own words so that the reader understands it. If you have a graph, explain the graph using your own words. If you use a picture, explain what the picture shows. If you have a quote from a book, say in your own words what the quote is about.
- **Analysis (this is the main part):** Explain to the reader how this research answers the RQ. There must be a clear link to the RQ. If you can not make this link, then why did you even waste time on this part? It is not relevant then. Or you have to make it relevant. This is the interpretation part. This is what you get many points for – and most students forget about this part.
- **Evaluation of researched data:** How good was the researched data/information for answering the RQ? Some students think that they desparately have to try to find weaknesses in good research. But also mention things that are good.

Comments and common problems:

- This is the main part and you can gain or lose many points here. The most common problem is, that students simply present researched data and information without actually answering the research question.
- Other students simply „ramble along“ without presenting any research. This is also a problem. Make sure that every part of the body is relevant for the RQ and explicitly answers it.
- When doing comparisons, you must directly compare, and not have two completely different sections.
- Sometimes EE contain large sections of summaries, which are not relevant for answering the RQ, or maybe it might be even relevant, but sentences are missing that link these summaries to the RQ.

Evaluation of method

Then evaluate the method(s) that you used:

- **Strengths of the method:** What parts of the method was good, and why? What, why and how much was the method you used suitable for answering the RQ? This is also for the non-science EE. For example, in the languages: Was your strategy for selecting the quotes in the books good?
- **Weaknesses of the method:** What parts of the method were problematic and why? Evaluation means that you put a „value“ on it. Answer to what extent the method was successful or not for answering the RQ.
- What would you do different in the future and why?

Conclusion

Write 1 page maximum:

- Restate your RQ: „For my research question: To what extent...“
- The method used: „To answer this, I conducted a field study...“ (etc)
- Evaluation of the method
- Answer the RQ: „I found out that...“
- Comparison to what other people found out.
- Your evaluation of the research
- Your evaluation of the method

Comments:

- Do not include new information
- By reading the conclusion, I expect to read a short version of the EE.

References

- Make an alphabetic lists of all used sources.
- Use one consistent style, it does not matter which one.
- Simply listing Internet addresses is not a full reference.
- It does not count to the word count.

Appendix

- Include all additional information here.
- This can include long data tables (sciences), questionnaires, transcripts etc.
- It is not assessed and does not count to the word count.
- A complete appendix does, however, show effort and engagement

Irrelevant things

Irrelevant things that students are worried about:

- „Which citing style should I use? MLA or APA?“ – Why are you worried about the style, if you do not even know what to cite? Students worry about the citing style and then only copy-paste a link and think that this is enough. Use one style and stay consistent throughout the EE.
- „Can I use the word ‚I‘?“ – Where in the assessment criteria does it say that you can not use it? Use it, otherwise there is the danger that you let the research itself answer the RQ. You should answer the RQ and you should evaluate it. If you do not want to use it, then convert to passive voice.
- „But I have to include this background information otherwise the reader does not know what I am talking about“ – if not relevant for the RQ, then this is a waste of word count and energy. Make it relevant, if you want to include it. Or take it out for the EE and include it in the VWA.

Common misunderstandings:

- Students think that the EE is simply a summary of researched facts and information. You must do research, but this alone is not enough.
- Students think that they do not have to do research, and simply can start analyzing. This is the opposite extreme and it is also wrong. Some students tried to do this. They simply started writing whatever came into their mind.
- Students think that they can answer the RQ only in the conclusion. The reader has to read 18 pages until he/she is given the answer. The RQ should be answered in:
 - Abstract (VWA)
 - Introduction: Answer it already in the introduction! Why not???
 - Give the reader an easy time to follow your argument! Does not have to be long.
 - Body: This one is split up into sections and each section answers the RQ.
 - Conclusion. Here you answer the RQ again. Otherwise points lost due to lack of an argument.

Extended Essay Checklist (+ or -)

Instructions:

1. The checklist has numbered items. Find these items in the EE and write the number of the item on the EE.
2. If the item has been found in the EE and if it has been written sufficiently well, then make a check mark in the table.
3. Add up all of the check marks for each Criteria A-E and award good-medium-bad for each Criterion
4. Add up final points and determine grade estimate.

Criterion A: Focus and method [max. 6 pts]

The topic is communicated accurately and effectively. Identification and explanation of the research topic is effectively communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is clear and appropriate.

The research question is clearly stated and focused. The research question is clear and addresses an issue of research that is appropriately connected to the discussion in the essay.

Methodology of the research is complete. An appropriate range of relevant source(s) and/or method(s) have been applied in relation to the topic and research question. There is evidence of effective and informed selection of sources and/or methods.

Problem: Students do not write a methodology because they think that it is not relevant to their subject. They think that only science EE have a method. **Problem:** Students do not maintain a focus. They include long sections of background information which does not relate to the RQ.

1	The student has identified a topic and communicates it clearly.	
2	The research can be done systematically	
3	The student has identified a RQ and stated it clearly	
4	The RQ is linked to the topic („maintains focus“)	
5	The purpose of the research is made clear	
6	The method is explained and complete	
7	The source selection is explained and justified	
8	A focus on the topic/RQ is maintained throughout the essay (no irrelevant parts)	
Award good, medium or bad for this criterion:		

Criterion B Knowledge and understanding [max. 6 pts]

Knowledge and understanding is excellent. The selection of source materials is clearly relevant and appropriate to the research question. Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is clear and coherent and sources are used effectively and with understanding.

Use of terminology and concepts is good. The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding.

Problem: Students sometimes include many irrelevant sections that do not relate to the RQ. They include unnecessary background information and unnecessary theory.

9	The topic / RQ is relevant for the subject in which the EE is registered	
10	The selected sources are relevant and sufficient	
11	The sources (research) is used for answering the RQ (some students think that simply listing the research is already answering the RQ)	
12	Subject-specific terminology is used	
	Award good, medium or bad for this criterion:	

Criterion C: Critical thinking (analysis and evaluation of the research) [max. 12 pts]

The research is excellent. *The research is appropriate to the research question and its application is consistently relevant.*

Analysis is excellent. *The research is analyzed effectively and clearly focused on the research question; the inclusion of less relevant research does not significantly detract from the quality of the overall analysis. Conclusions to individual points of analysis are effectively supported by the evidence.*

Discussion/evaluation is excellent. *An effective and focused reasoned argument is developed from the research with a conclusion reflective of the evidence presented. This reasoned argument is well structured and coherent; any minor inconsistencies do not hinder the strength of the overall argument or the final or summative conclusion. The research has been critically evaluated.*

Problem: Many students think that simply presenting the research is enough. They forget to analyze the research and the method. Eg. they present many quotes or data tables but do not talk about them. They let the research alone answer the RQ but this is not enough.

13	The research was used/applied to answer the RQ	
14	All the parts of the EE are relevant for the RQ	
15	There is a clear reasoned argument and this one is maintained throughout the essay	
16	The methods used were evaluated critically (limitations and advantages of the method)	
17	The research was evaluated critically (limitations and advantages of the research)	
18	The final conclusion is clear and answers the RQ	
	Award good, medium or bad for this criterion:	

Criterion D: Presentation [max. 4 pts]

Presentation is good. *The structure of the essay clearly is appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, the argument and subject in which the essay is registered. Layout considerations are present and applied correctly. The structure and layout support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the extended essay.*

Problems: Inconsistent formatting, missing page numbers, tables and diagrams not properly labeled, etc. Reference section only contains link to the website but not the full details.

19	The essay is structured based on the conventions of the topic?	
20	Does the layout help in understanding the essay?	
	Award good, medium or bad for this criterion:	

Criterion E: Engagement [max. 6 pts]

Engagement is excellent. *Reflections on decision-making and planning are evaluative and include reference to the student's capacity to consider actions and ideas in response to challenges experienced in the research process. These reflections communicate a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement with the research focus and process of research, demonstrating authenticity, intellectual initiative and/or creative approach in the student voice.*

Problems: Students do not realize that they will get points on the form. They are motivated, show up on the meetings, do all of the research well, but they write a bad form. Points lost. The form is not sufficiently reflective and evaluative (read section in the guide!! The comments simply mention what has been done when – not enough. Many students lose (easy to gain) points here. Teachers might fill out only that students showed up on the appointments, but they should also comment on intellectual initiative, self-reflection of the student. Engagement is not simply doing that what you have to do anyway to research and write the essay. Rather: how did you overcome problems?

21	Did the student include reflective (!!) and evaluative comments in the RPPF?	
22	Do the comments on the RPPF show high personal and intellectual engagement?	
	Award good, medium or bad for this criterion:	

EE Grade Estimator

Instructions:

- Look at the checklist and decide if you award a „good“, „medium“, or „bad“ for the different criteria.
- Write the average points (in paranthesis) in the „Pts given“ section. Example: if you awarded a “good” for criterion A, then write “5.5” into the “Pts given” section. See table below.
- Add up the points
- Convert the points into a grade

Notes:

- The IB does not give half-points, but for our purpose it makes estimation easier.
- The points in paranthesis is the average ones. You can use this to estimate points.
- Grade boundaries might change from year to year, but for estimating, it should be fine.
- For giving predicted grades, it is not necessary to give points. You can also use the grade descriptors.
- The important thing is not really the grading itself, but rather one has to make sure that the student has all important parts of the EE.

	Good	Medium	Bad	Pts given
Criterion A (max 6)	5-6 (5.5)	3-4 (3.5)	0-2 (1)	
Criterion B (max 6)	5-6 (5.5)	3-4 (3.5)	0-2 (1)	
Criterion C (max 12)	12-9 (10.5)	5-8 (6.5)	0-4 (2)	
Criterion D (max 4)	4 (4)	2-3 (2.5)	0-1 (0.5)	
Criterion E (max 6)	5-6 (5.5)	3-4 (3.5)	0-2 (1)	
Total points (estimate):				

Suggested grade boundaries (they might change):

E (0-7) D (8-15) C (16-22) B (23-28) A (29-34)