

# Extended Essay and VWA

Introductory Workshop

November 25, 2017

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# The Purpose of this Workshop

- ▶ Sherlock Holmes: "You see, but you do not observe. The distinction is clear. For example, you have frequently seen the steps which lead up from the hall to this room."
- ▶ Watson: "Frequently."
- ▶ Holmes: "How often?"
- ▶ Watson: "Well, some hundreds of times."
- ▶ Holmes: "Then how many are there?"
- ▶ Watson: "How many? I don't know."
- ▶ Holmes: "Quite so! You have not observed. And yet you have seen. That is just my point. Now, I know that there are seventeen steps, because I have both seen and observed."
  
- ▶ *We see and read the EE assessment criteria, but they often do not connect with our mind. We have difficulties to observe what they mean, to extract meaning from them. What is the „spirit“ of the Assessment Criteria?*
- ▶ *The purpose of this seminar is to help you understand and extract meaning from the EE Assessment Criteria, so that it is easier for you to quickly recognize if a certain EE is on the right track or not.*

# The Purpose of this Workshop

- ▶ **Morning:** Philosophy of the EE, EE Assessment overview, EE/VWA issues
- ▶ **Afternoon:** Applying the assessment criteria, EE examples
  
- ▶ To show you many EE examples and to sensitize you on what to look out for.
- ▶ To show how to combine the EE with the VWA.
- ▶ The EE of the different subjects are more similar than they might appear to be at first. They use the same Assessment Criteria. So if I give an example of Biology, then the ideas can often be applied to other subjects as well.
- ▶ Provide best-practice advice
- ▶ It is more important to understand and apply the Assessment Criteria, than to be a teacher of a particular EE subject.
- ▶ Not intended: Long discussions on how many points a certain EE should get.
- ▶ An understanding of EE Assessment Criteria will also help you understand Subject Criteria better (knowledge transfer).

# I received this email from a student

- ▶ Sehr geehrter Herr Prof. Kim!
- ▶ Die IB results waren für mich ja durchaus erfreulich, allerdings hat sich für mich bei der Note für den Extended Essay doch ein sehr großes Fragezeichen aufgetan. Gerade da ich eine **Predicted Grade A hatte, verwundert mich das D** doch etwas. Ich wollte mich deshalb einfach informieren, wie es mit einem **möglichen Remark** aussieht. Gibt es hierbei Aussichten auf Erfolg (da ich ja für einen zusätzlichen Punkt bei meinem TOK B ohnehin auf Grade B springen müsste)?
- ▶ Anbei finden Sie nochmals den Extended Essay.
- ▶ Herzlichen Dank für Ihre Mühe, Johannes
- ▶ **The student got 42 of 45 points (one of the best students)**

## Extended Essay

### German A1 HL

Inwieweit sind die Ausschreitungen rund um den Film *Im Westen nichts Neues* charakteristisch für die Weimarer Republik im Jahr 1930?

# Why did the student get a „D“?

- ▶ Noch bevor die Nationalsozialisten anfangen Sturm zu laufen, protestierte das Reichswehrministerium schon gegen den Film *Im Westen nichts Neues*. Die Anschuldigung, die deutsche Waffenehre werde verunglimpft, wurde jedoch nicht nur von der Vossischen Zeitung als völlig unverständlich abgetan, sondern auch das Auswärtige Amt ließ anfangs noch verlautbaren, dass nichts gegen den Film einzuwenden sei (Die Rote Fahne, 9.12.1930). Dementsprechend wurde der Film zuerst von staatlicher Seite geschützt und die Fortführung der Vorstellungen mit Polizeigewalt sichergestellt. Im Laufe der Auseinandersetzung änderte jedoch auch das Auswärtige Amt seinen Standpunkt und schloss sich den Verbotsforderungen des Remarque-Films an (Die Rote Fahne, 11.12.1930). Zeitgleich trat die Filmoberprüfstelle, die mit der Zulassung sämtlicher Filme in Deutschland betraut war, zusammen, um neu über ein Verbot zu beratschlagen, von dem man jedoch aufgrund der mehrheitlich rechts zuordenbaren Beisitzern von Anfang an ausgegangen war (Vossische Zeitung, 10.12.1930).
- ▶ *Comment: He connected different sources into a narrative (good), content-rich, some analysis was present, but there could have been more of it but generally the EE actually looks good. Why did the student get a „D“?*

## Extended Essay

### German A1 HL

Inwieweit sind die Ausschreitungen rund um den Film *Im Westen nichts Neues* charakteristisch für die Weimarer Republik im Jahr 1930?

# To which category does the Essay belong to?

Studies in Language and Literature  
(mother tongue language, language A) categories:

Category 1	Studies of one or more literary works originally written in the language in which the essay is presented.
Category 2	Studies of a literary work or works originally written in the language of the essay compared with one or more literary works originally written in another language. (The work originally written in another language may be studied in translation.)
Category 3	Studies in language based on one or more texts originally produced in the language in which the essay is presented.

## Extended Essay

### German A1 HL

Inwieweit sind die Ausschreitungen rund um den Film *Im Westen nichts Neues* charakteristisch für die Weimarer Republik im Jahr 1930?

**Answer: The EE does not fulfill the language A criteria. It is a History EE not a German EE.**

# What do we learn from this?

- ▶ Read the Guide and make sure that the student understands it and applies it.
- ▶ The EE is not only about getting a good mark. It is also about the learning experience.
- ▶ If a student wants to write it on a particular topic, then this should be made possible, if the EE Criteria can be met. It is student interest that counts, not teacher's interest.
- ▶ Some topics/RQ are, however, totally unsuitable.
- ▶ But the RQ/Topic might have to be adapted to:
  - ▶ Meet the Criteria
  - ▶ Make a research possible in the first place (some topics are too difficult to research, dangerous, no equipment)

# What about this one?

- ▶ Sehr geehrter Herr Prof. Kim!
- ▶ Ich habe mich eingehend mit der Literatur „Das Parfum“ (dessen Handlung im 18. Jahrhundert spielt) auseinandergesetzt und würde mich gerne mit dem kulturellen Hintergrund in dieser Zeit (Hygiene, Wert des Wassers, Wert des Duftes, ...) näher auseinandersetzen.
- ▶ Als konkrete Forschungsfrage habe ich mir überlegt: Das Parfum - „Inwiefern beeinflusst der kulturelle Kontext im 18. Jahrhundert den gesellschaftlichen Wert feiner Düfte?“ Ist diese Forschungsfrage Ihres Erachtens passend?
- ▶ Vielen Dank im Voraus .... Mit freundlichen Grüßen, ....
  
- ▶ *Subject German A: it is a non-literary topic. My answer is NO.*
- ▶ *Das Parfum: part of the reading list? If so then NO, as an individual approach might be missing.*
- ▶ *Too general for a History EE.*

And this one?

## Extended Essay German B

**Der Berliner Mauer und die Flucht der DDR-Bürger**

***Was führte zum Mauerbau 1961 in Berlin und welche Auswirkungen hatte die Berliner Mauer auf die Menschen in der DDR?***

- ▶ *This EE got good results. But it is about a historic topic!*
- ▶ *Why?*

# German B or History?

## Extended Essay German B

Der Berliner Mauer und die Flucht der DDR-Bürger

*Was führte zum Mauerbau 1961 in Berlin und welche Auswirkungen hatte die Berliner Mauer auf die Menschen in der DDR?*

Language B categories:

Category 1	A specific analysis of the language (its use and structure), normally related to its cultural context or a specific text.
Category 2	A socio-cultural analysis of the impact of a particular issue on the form or use of the language: (a) based on an examination of language use (b) an essay of a general cultural nature based on specific cultural artifacts.
Category 3	An analysis of a literary type, based on a specific work or works of literature exclusively from the target language.

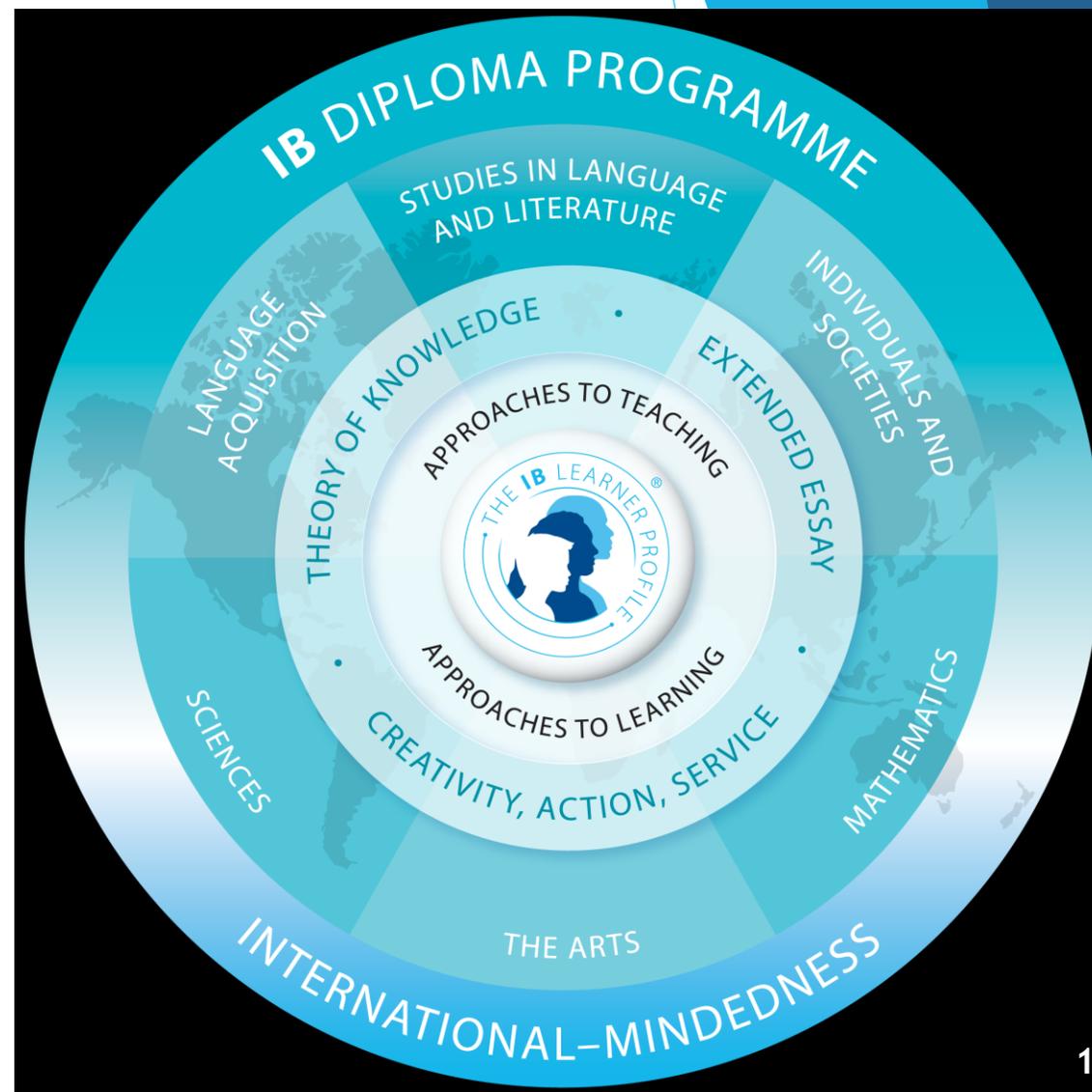
- ▶ Comment: If students want to write an EE with of a general cultural nature, then they should write it in a language B.
- ▶ Important! A connection to the „cultural artifacts“ (books, films etc.) is necessary!

# What do we learn from this?

- ▶ **Read and understand the EE Guide:** Teachers and students must understand the requirements and the nature of the EE. Often students are so happy that they found material so that they “carried away” and write the EE just like they have written other reports.
- ▶ There must be a course, workshop etc. which explains the EE to the students. Or the supervisors do that. Students must understand these Assessment Criteria, they must use them.
- ▶ **Supervise good students:** Especially good students will tend to work very independently on the EE. This can be a problem as there is less supervision and there is the danger that the students will go into a wrong direction.
- ▶ „There is a difference between a good essay and a good Extended Essay“ (quote from the IB)
- ▶ The Assessment Criteria should be seen as the „learning objectives“. The idea is that also otherwise weak students can get a reasonable mark, if they follow these criteria.

# You need for the IB Diploma the following

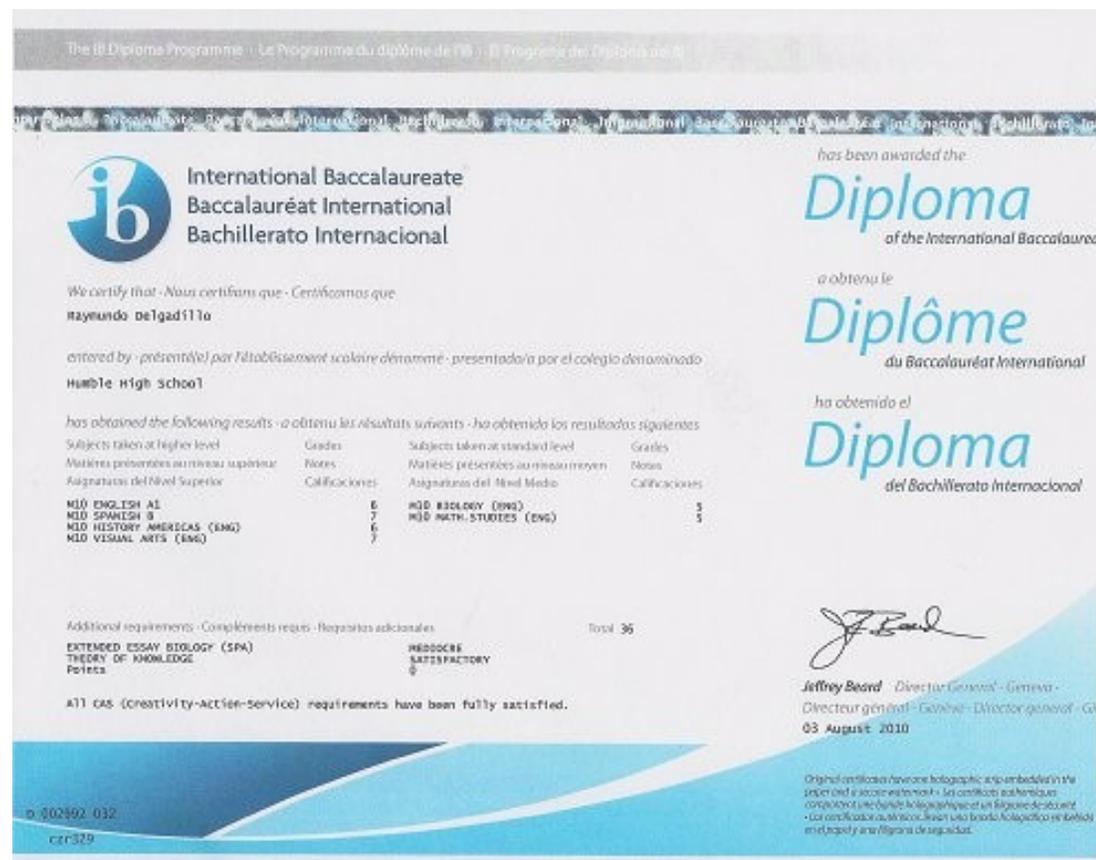
- ▶ 6 Subjects: 3 HL and 3 SL, of the 6 groups.
- ▶ TOK
- ▶ Extended Essay (EE)
- ▶ CAS
  
- ▶ Each subject gives max 7 points:
  - ▶ 7 pts \* 6 Subjects = 42 pts max.
- ▶ TOK and EE combined give max. 3 points:
  - ▶ 42 pts + 3 pts = 45 maximum points
- ▶ You need 24 pts to pass the IB Diploma, but there are other requirements as well!
- ▶ If a component is missing, then the student can/should do the rest and then do the missing components later. Student can still sit the IB exams, even if EE is not handed in. The student will only get the certificates, but not the full diploma.



# Two IB Documents

- ▶ Everyone gets this one. It lists the courses and the points obtained:

- ▶ If all requirements met, then they also get this one:



- ▶ Some universities require the correct courses, some don't care. Some require minimum points, others not. Some require the full Diploma (the one on the right), others are happy with the one on the left only.
- ▶ Important: do not give students a choice. Everyone must write an EE! This is also important as it counts for the VWA.



# The Matrix

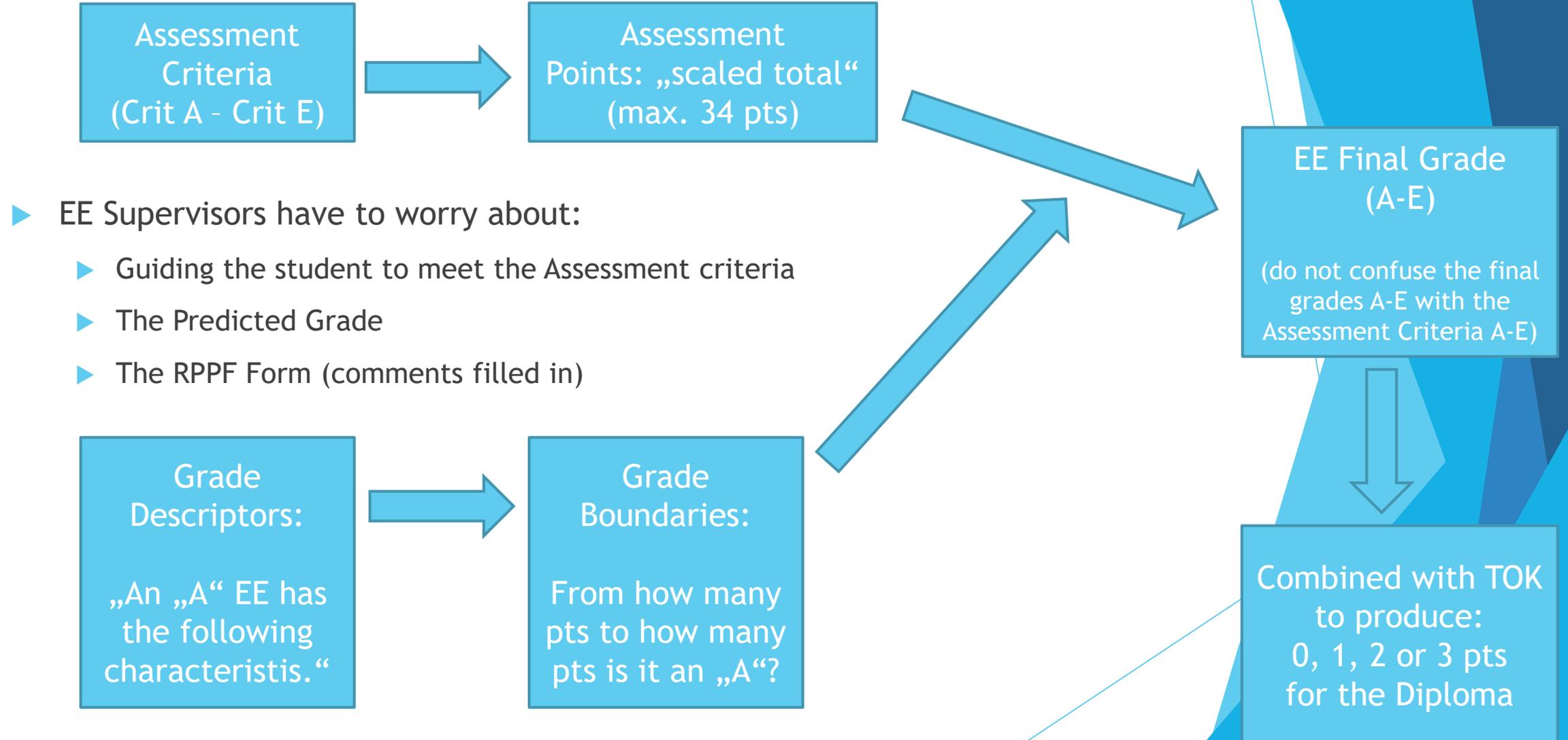
TOK = TOK Essay + TOK Presentation  
 (TOK Essay is not the same as Extended Essay)

- ▶ Criticism 1: One single component (the EE in this case) can result in the student not getting the IB Diploma.
- ▶ Criticism 2: Few points for much work.
- ▶ Retake of the EE is possible.
- ▶ It is possible to use the same subject/topic, but not with VWA.
- ▶ Change in subject only possible at next May session (do not allow).

		Theory of knowledge					
		Grade A	Grade B	Grade C	Grade D	Grade E	No grade N
Extended essay	Grade A	3	3	2	2	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade B	3	2	2	1	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade C	2	2	1	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade D	2	1	0	0	Failing condition	Failing condition
	Grade E	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition
	No grade N	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition	Failing condition

Grade N: No EE, plagiarism, etc.

# How everything plays together



# EE Assessment Criteria Overview

Criterion A: focus and method	Criterion B: knowledge and understanding	Criterion C: critical thinking	Criterion D: presentation	Criterion E: engagement
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Topic</li><li>• Research question</li><li>• Methodology</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Context</li><li>• Subject-specific terminology and concepts</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Research</li><li>• Analysis</li><li>• Discussion and evaluation</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Structure</li><li>• Layout</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Process</li><li>• Research focus</li></ul>
Marks	Marks	Marks	Marks	Marks
6	6	12	4	6

Total marks available: 34



# Grade Boundaries

- ▶ Same for all EE Subjects.
- ▶ Can be found in the „Subject Report“ for the EE (MyIB, OCC)
- ▶ Might change from year to year as they have to be aligned with the **Grade Descriptors**.
- ▶ Not necessary to mark the EE to calculate points for the **predicted grade** (estimation is enough).
- ▶ **Careful! Old grade boundaries (36 pts.) Now it is out of 34 pts.**
  - ▶ **Rason: new EE Syllabus from May 2018 onwards. New grade boundaries were not determined yet! The IB will do this once the points are in.**

## Overall grade boundaries

<b>Grade:</b>	E	D	C	B	A
<b>Mark range:</b>	0-7	8-15	16-22	23-28	29-36

# Grade descriptors

- ▶ IB uses Grade Descriptors to determine the Grade Boundaries.
- ▶ Help you determine the Predicted Grade (PG). Categorize the EE into good/medium/bad and then estimate a B, C or D.
- ▶ Available for all IB subjects and also for TOK and EE
- ▶ Grade A: very difficult to achieve; Grade E: something really is wrong with the EE.
- ▶ For the PG, I First time teachers: mark the essay with the criteria! And then use Grade boundaries and grade descriptors.
- ▶ D and E for an EE which is used for the VWA is a warning sign that the VWA might be negative.

## Grade A

Demonstrates effective research skills resulting in a well-focused and appropriate research question that can be explored within the scope of the chosen topic; effective engagement with relevant research areas, methods and sources; excellent knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; the effective application of source material and correct use of subject-specific terminology and/or concepts further supporting this; consistent and relevant conclusions that are proficiently analysed; sustained reasoned argumentation supported effectively by evidence; critically evaluated research; excellent presentation of the essay, whereby coherence and consistency further supports the reading of the essay; and present and correctly applied structural and layout elements.

**Engagement with the process is conceptual and personal, key decision-making during the research process is documented, and personal reflections are evidenced, including those that are forward-thinking.**

## Grade E (failing condition)

Demonstrates an unclear nature of the essay; a generally unsystematic approach and resulting unfocused research question; limited engagement with limited research and sources; generally limited and only partially accurate knowledge and understanding of the topic in the wider context of the relevant discipline; ineffective connections in the application of source material and inaccuracies in the terminology and/or concepts used; a summarizing of results of research with inconsistent analysis; an attempted outline of an argument, but one that is generally descriptive in nature; and a layout that generally lacks or incorrectly applies several layout and structural elements.

**Engagement with the process is limited, with limited factual or decision-making information and no personal reflection on the process.**

# Predicted Grade (PG)

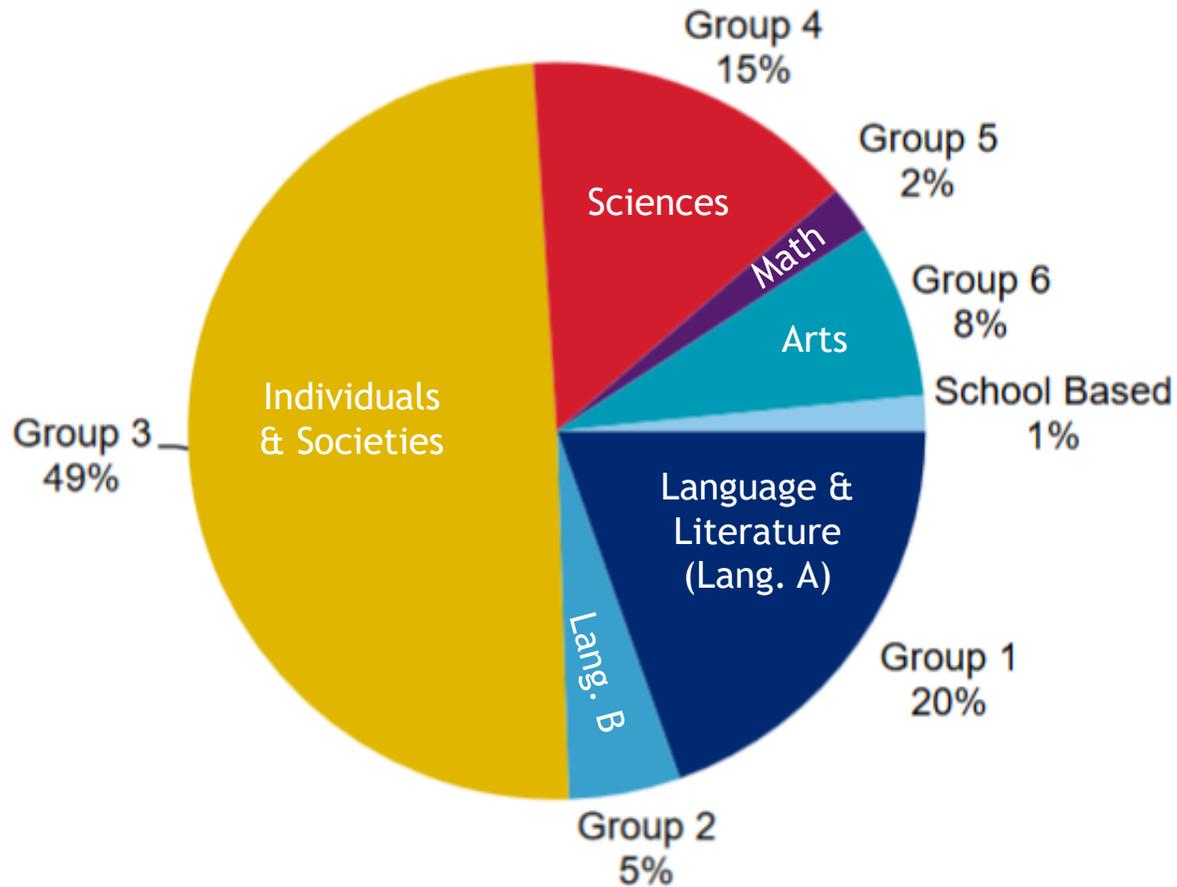
- ▶ Must be given for all subjects. Have to be typed in into the IB system (IBIS)
  - ▶ 1-7 points for the 6 Subjects
  - ▶ A-E for EE and TOK
- ▶ The **Predicted Grade** can be estimated, but I recommend that new teachers fully mark the EE to become familiar with the **Assessment Criteria**.
- ▶ Purpose of the PG
  - ▶ IB-internal control system to check the examiners
  - ▶ Feedback for students on how to improve (but may be too late already to improve)
  - ▶ Some need them for university admission
  - ▶ To control/check teacher performance (some private schools)
  - ▶ In case something goes wrong (exams lost...) the PG will be used

# Predicted Grade (PG) - how to determine it

- ▶ Step 1: Mark the EE according to the **EE Assessment Criteria**. Add up the points.
  - ▶ Highlight all those parts on the EE for which a student gets points.
  - ▶ Especially highlight independent thinking (analysis, reflection etc).
  - ▶ Cross out all those parts, which are irrelevant. Ignore them if they do not relate to the RQ.
- ▶ Step 2: Using the **grade boundaries**, give a grade from A to E
  - ▶ Grades B, C, D are the most likely.
- ▶ Step 3: Check yourself. Read the **Grade Descriptors** and check if your „stomach feeling“, of the EE matches to the grade.
- ▶ Good news: You do not have to do this for the Predicted Grade, but I recommend it for practice, especially first-time EE teachers.
- ▶ Experienced teachers will be good at estimating the PG without marking.

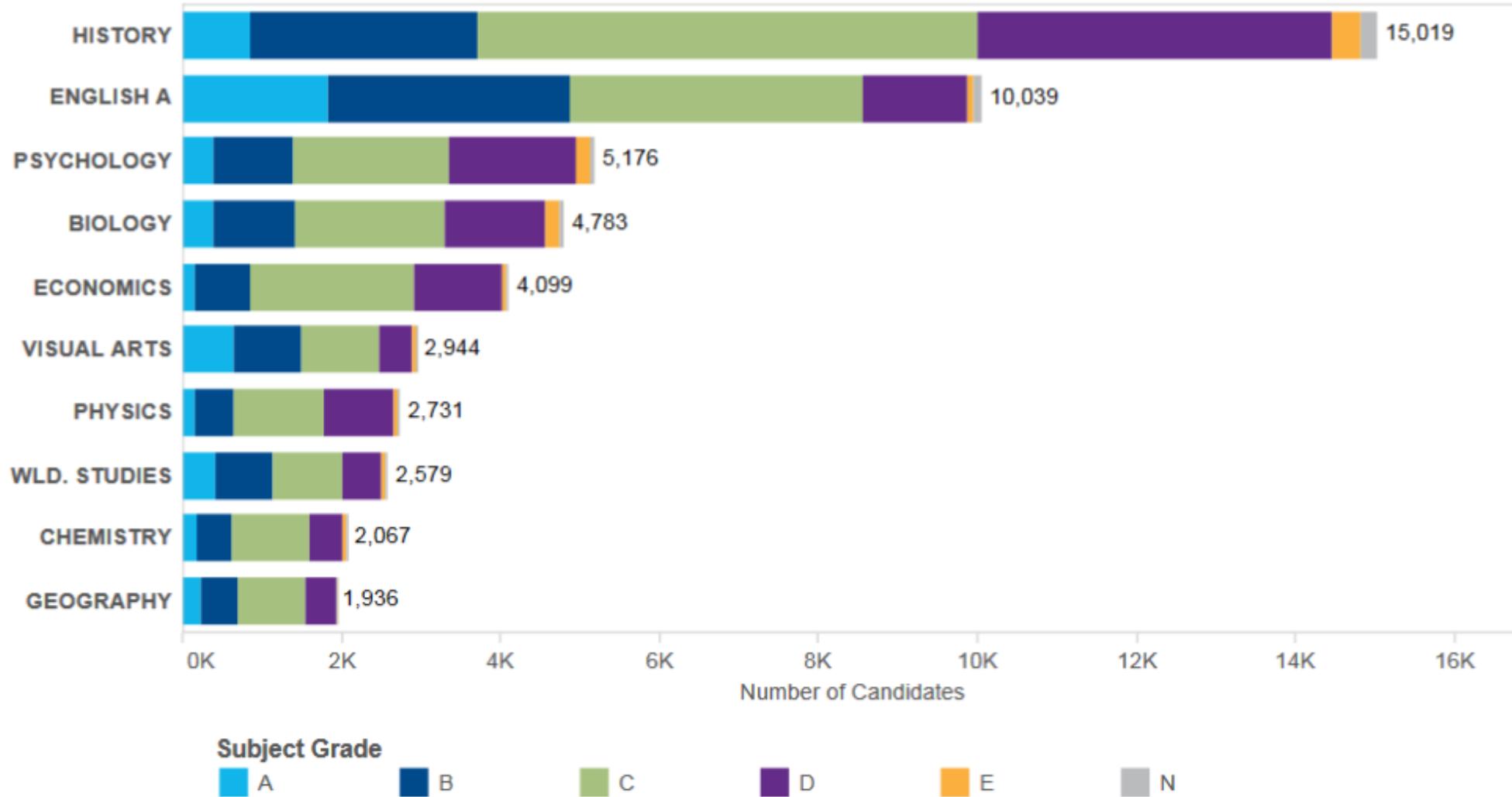
# May 2015 Statistical Bulletin

**Extended Essay**  
**Candidates Percentage by Subject Group**



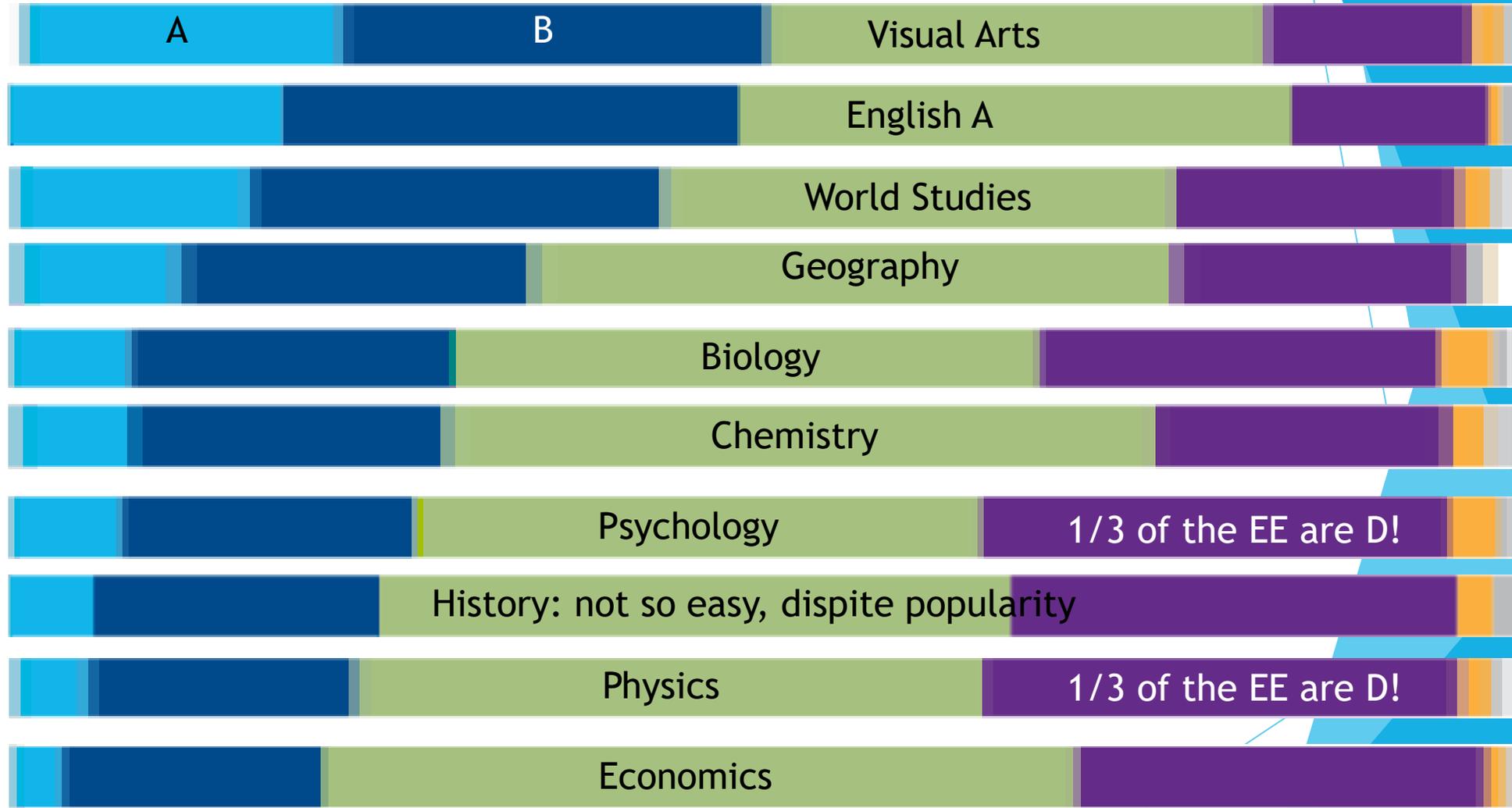
# May 2016 Statistical Bulletin

### Top 10 Extended Essay Subjects



# Which EE subject is the easiest?

Easiest to get A or B



Most difficult

# Why are results in some subjects better?

- ▶ The simple answer that „the subject is easier“ is unlikely as there is a Criteria-based assessment.
- ▶ Students who have a preference for Visual Arts will choose it. And they will be more motivated.
- ▶ Paradigm conflict. It is not in the nature of some subjects to do a lot of analysis. Some subjects are very facts-based. We **teach facts** in Biology and expect them to be able to **interpret** in the Biology EE. Some subjects require much analysis. In other subjects it is much easier to write summaries or to forget about analysis.
  - ▶ It is difficult to write 4000 words simply summarizing a book in English A. Students are forced to be analytical.
  - ▶ In Visual Arts students will interpret more, because this is more in the nature of the subject.
  - ▶ In the sciences, one can easily fill 4000 words with researched material, and do very little analysis and interpretation (hence the lower points)
- ▶ Some subjects include much analysis in their IA or EA. It is easier for students to transfer this knowledge to the EE. It is taught in class how to analyze.
- ▶ Students who prefer factual subjects (who have this “linear” mind set) might have a more difficult time with the more “creative” (analytical) aspects of the EE.
- ▶ **Summary: it is the lack of analysis that is to blame for the lower points and not the subject.**

# Minimizing parallel work

- ▶ Check if the Internal Assessment (IA) of a subject is similar to an EE of this subject.
  - ▶ Biology: Students use the structure of the Personal Project (IA) to write the EE.
  - ▶ Psychology: It is not possible to use the IA for the EE. The IA is a replication of a psychological experiment, which is not allowed for the EE.
- ▶ Students have to write an EE introduction for the school-internal TOK mark.
  - ▶ They explain the RQ, the context and method
  - ▶ TOK teacher checks only if done.
- ▶ EE Workshop for students for one day.
  - ▶ Finding a RQ, explaining the Assessment Criteria etc.

# Show the EE Guide

- ▶ [https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/extendedessay/apps/dpapp/index.html?doc=d\\_0\\_eeyy\\_gui\\_1602\\_1\\_e&part=1&chapter=1](https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/extendedessay/apps/dpapp/index.html?doc=d_0_eeyy_gui_1602_1_e&part=1&chapter=1)
- ▶ Ib.okim.info - Menu: Extended Essay Guide:  
<http://www.okim.info/ib/extended-essay/>

# EE/VWA one one slide

- ▶ Students should write an EE according to the EE Assessment Criteria. They should forget about the VWA during the writing process.
- ▶ The only thing that they worry about is registering the EE Topic (not RQ) in the VWA Datenbank, and to include the RQ as one of the guiding questions (Leitfragen).
- ▶ After completion of the EE, all the necessary changes are made to convert it into a VWA. These changes should, ideally, be only on a formal nature (Abstract, cover page, etc).
- ▶ The idea is to complete most of the work for the EE/VWA before the „vorgezogene Matura“.

# Similarities EE and VWA

- ▶ Students only write one report, but print it 2 times (one for EE one for VWA).
- ▶ Supervised by the same teacher.
- ▶ Both follow a similar assessment scheme
  - ▶ VWA Beurteilungsraster ist „unverbindlich“, can be adapted to the EE.
  - ▶ VWA Beurteilungsraster is very similar to EE Assessment Criteria
- ▶ Both EE and VWA are requirements
- ▶ Engagement (motivation etc) counts towards final mark
- ▶ Word count can be (!) the same
- ▶ Language of EE is the language of VWA (no translation needed)
- ▶ Progress must be documented but forms are different (RPPF vs. Begleitprotokoll)

# EE creates new knowledge, VWA maybe

- ▶ „Im Unterschied zu einer wissenschaftlichen steht bei einer vorwissenschaftlichen Arbeit nicht neuer Erkenntnisgewinn im Vordergrund [...]“ (<http://www.ahs-vwa.at>)
- ▶ VWA („vor-wissenschaftlich“): A summary of **existing knowledge** is possible, but does not have to be limited to this.
  - ▶ Example: „Treatment of Alzheimer’s and other neurodegenerative diseases“ - possible for VWA, not EE.
- ▶ EE („wissenschaftlich“): The student must demonstrate that **new knowledge** is created.
  - ▶ Critical reflection and discussion of researched facts
  - ▶ Research questions that are „new“, which combine different concepts, that were not yet combined. Invented example: „How does multiculturalism influence the stress-coping strategies of science teachers?“ (Psychology). Or books that were not compared yet (languages).
  - ▶ New methods, approaches to answer the RQ.
  - ▶ Students talk about difficulties that were encountered with the applied methods (especially natural sciences, but not only.)
  - ▶ Discussion of limitations, problems
- ▶ **Students write an EE and then use it also as a VWA. This is possible, but not the other way around.**

# The most important difference: Critical Thinking

- ▶ **VWA does not require** critical analysis of researched materials, it does **not require** reflection and discussion.
- ▶ The **EE does require** them, and this makes up a large number of points.
  - ▶ A simple summary of researched facts is not enough for a good EE.
  - ▶ Students must talk about these facts, they must analyze them.
- ▶ The VWA, however, does not forbid critical reflection and analysis. It is simply not part of the VWA Beurteilungsraster.
  - ▶ As a matter of fact, the better VWAs do include these aspects.

## Assessment

[Home](#) > [Guide](#) > [Assessment](#) > [The assessment criteria](#) > [Criterion C: Critical thinking](#)

### Criterion C: Critical thinking

This criterion assesses the extent to which critical-thinking skills have been used to analyse and evaluate the research undertaken.

[Home](#) > [Guide](#) > [Subject-specific guidance](#) > [General requirements](#) > [Research question](#)

## Research question

Students should identify a **working** research question early on but be prepared to change, eg if too little information is available to permit the intended investigation.

Students should be guided by the idea that **what they are writing is important** because:

- it seeks to fill a gap in understanding their chosen topic, or
- it offers a resolution to some controversial argument.

The research question should therefore be **non-trivial** and follow from the existing body of literature on the topic. It must be:

- specific, sharply focused and capable of being answered within a 4,000-word essay
- stated clearly in the introduction of the essay and on the title page
- related to the chosen topic.

Students need to **avoid researching questions that are too narrow or too obvious** as this will limit their ability to formulate **reasoned arguments**.

Their answer to the question must be **analytical rather than descriptive**. !!!

# Other differences between EE and VWA

- ▶ VWA is „vorwissenschaftlich“, the EE is „wissenschaftlich“
- ▶ EE: marked by IB - strict      VWA: marked by teacher - unverbindliches (!) Beurteilungsraster
- ▶ EE research question is often significantly **more specific** than a „conventional“ VWA. But as the EE counts for the VWA, there is no conflict.
- ▶ EE must be supervised by a teacher who is familiar with EE criteria.
  - ▶ Supervisor does not have to have completed IB workshop, but would be better.
  - ▶ It is more important to understand the Criteria, than to be a teacher of the EE subject, but because the EE is much more specific it should be a teacher of the subject.
- ▶ EE must be assigned to a specific IB subject.
  - ▶ Student ideally has this IB subject, but this is not an IB requirement.
- ▶ Some formal requirements (VWA: Abstract, Eigenständigkeitserklärung etc.)
- ▶ **Make the Maturavorsitz aware that EE are generally shorter because of the more stringent requirements and because of analysis.**

# VWA and EE Length, word count

- ▶ In the past: VWA was significantly longer than EE.
  - ▶ VWAs that were too short were assessed negatively.
  - ▶ And/or teachers had to justify why the VWA word count was not reached.
- ▶ Now: With the new regulations, there is **no formal need** to write more to convert the EE to a VWA. However, it might be necessary write more to get a positive VWA.
- ▶ If the EE is already very good and if it would also result in a good VWA mark, then do not ask the student to write more to turn it into a VWA. If it is bad, then you must inform student on how to improve it (=VWA Betreuungsprozess goes on).
- ▶ Reason why the VWA word count is not a requirement anymore: In some subjects there is much practical work involved (Sciences) and also much critical thinking.
- ▶ Case 1 - Long VWA: if it only summarizes facts.
- ▶ Case 2 - Short VWA: is much lab work, evaluative and critical thinking, complex research was necessary. This is in agreement with the EE.
- ▶ NO: Students write a VWA and then convert it to an EE.
- ▶ YES: Students write an EE and then convert it to a VWA by adding an e.g. extra chapter(s). These chapters can be summaries. But this is not necessary if the EE is OK. The teacher decides what needs to be done for what grade.

# Only VWA, without EE?

- ▶ Then do not allow it. It complicates matters.
- ▶ At the VWA presentation, you have different standards within the group.
- ▶ Students then have an additional problem to worry about: „Maybe I should not do the IB, as writing a VWA is easier.“
- ▶ Some will want to write a VWA-only, because they look for the easy way out. They do not have to do the critical thinking part, and can only write a summary.
- ▶ Some are interested in a topic that does not fit well into a particular subject.
- ▶ There is no easy way to convert a VWA into an EE. But it is easy the other way around. If the student changes his/her mind, then they have to start from the beginning.
- ▶ It is a further argument for them not to do the full IB.

# Show VWA Beurteilungsraster

- ▶ <http://www.okim.info/ib/wp-content/uploads/VWA/02-VWA-Beurteilungstraster.pdf>
- ▶ „Der Beurteilungsraster für die vorwissenschaftliche Arbeit stellt eine **unverbindliche Orientierungshilfe** für die Bewertung der Kompetenzen der Schüler/innen dar. Die Kompetenzen werden durch sog. Deskriptoren näher beschrieben, die Gewichtung der Deskriptoren liegt im **Ermessen des/der Prüfers/in**. Diese sollen bei der Einschätzung bzw. Bewertung der jeweiligen Kompetenz hilfreich sein. Der Beurteilungsraster kann bei der Erstellung des **begründeten** Beurteilungsvorschlages **Unterstützung** bieten, auf Grundlage des Beurteilungsvorschlags entscheidet die Prüfungskommission über die Beurteilung der vorwissenschaftlichen Arbeit.“
- ▶ **Pain English: mark the VWA the way you want but be able to justify your marking.**
- ▶ **Consequence: Use the EE criteria. Fill out the Beurteilungsraster so that it meets the EE Criteria at the end.**
- ▶ **If all teachers apply the EE Criteria then there is also consistency.**

# VWA Beurteilungsraster and EE Criteria

VWA	Extended Essay
Selbstkompetenz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion E - Engagement</li> </ul>
Inhaltliche und methodische Kompetenz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion A - Focus and Method</li> <li>• Criterion C - Critical Thinking</li> </ul>
Informationskompetenz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion E - Engagement (“reflections on decision making...”)</li> <li>• Criterion B - Knowledge and Understanding (“selection of source material...”)</li> </ul>
Sprachliche Kompetenz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion B - Knowledge and Understanding (“use of subject specific terminology....”)</li> <li>• Criterion C - Critical Thinking (“effective and focused reasoned argument...”)</li> </ul>
Inhaltliche und methodische Kompetenz	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion A - Focus and Method</li> <li>• Criterion C - Critical Thinking</li> <li>• Criterion D - Presentation</li> </ul>

- ▶ The assessment is compatible!

# VWA Beurteilungsraster and EE Criteria

VWA	Extended Essay
Criterion A - Focus and Method	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Inhaltliche und methodische Kompetenz</li> </ul>
Criterion B - Knowledge and Understanding (“selection of source materials...”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informationskompetenz</li> <li>• Sprachliche Kompetenz</li> </ul>
Criterion C - Critical Thinking (“effective and focused reasoned argument...”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sprachliche Kompetenz</li> <li>• Inhaltliche und methodische Kompetenz</li> </ul>
Criterion D - Presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Informationskompetenz</li> </ul>
Criterion E - Engagement (“reflections on decision making...”)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selbstkompetenz</li> <li>• Informationskompetenz</li> </ul>

- ▶ The assessment is compatible!

# How to convert the EE to a VWA

- ▶ If the EE is done well, there are few additional formal requirements.
- ▶ Wordcount: the teacher decides if the quality of the EE is good enough for a VWA. The teacher can request additional material to be added, but this is not a formal requirement. LISA: EE are accepted as is, if they are good enough.
- ▶ Cover page of EE is anonymous, therefore a new cover page must be made for the VWA.
- ▶ Abstract is not a requirement anymore for the EE, therefore one has to be written for the VWA
- ▶ VWA: Eigenständigkeitserklärung, Begleitprotokoll, Beurteilungsraster
- ▶ EE: RPPF form. Letter and signature if (scientific) research was done outside of school.
- ▶ **Important: The approved VWA topic can not be changed. After submitting the EE, the student still can add/change the essay to make it meet the approved VWA topic.**

# Where and what to register

- ▶ Student: has to register the EE at the secretariat. Supervisors are allocated.
- ▶ Student: has to register the EE as a VWA in the VWA Datenbank (those that do the Matura)
- ▶ IB Coordinator: has to register the subject and language of the EE in IBIS.
  - ▶ It is not necessary to register the Topic/RQ in IBIS, only the subject and language in which the EE is written. German for German A and English for all other subjects.
- ▶ The EE RQ can be changed along the way. This is not recommended, but possible.
- ▶ The EE topic can not be changed after registration and approval of the LSR.
  - ▶ Keep the EE/VWA topic general and include the RQ as a „Leitfrage“.

# How much feedback is allowed?

- ▶ Check the Guide.
- ▶ [https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/extendedessay/apps/dpapp/guide.html?doc=d\\_0\\_eeyy\\_gui\\_1602\\_1\\_e&part=4&chapter=10](https://ibpublishing.ibo.org/extendedessay/apps/dpapp/guide.html?doc=d_0_eeyy_gui_1602_1_e&part=4&chapter=10)
- ▶ **What supervisors cannot do:**
  - ▶ 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.

# Formalities needed

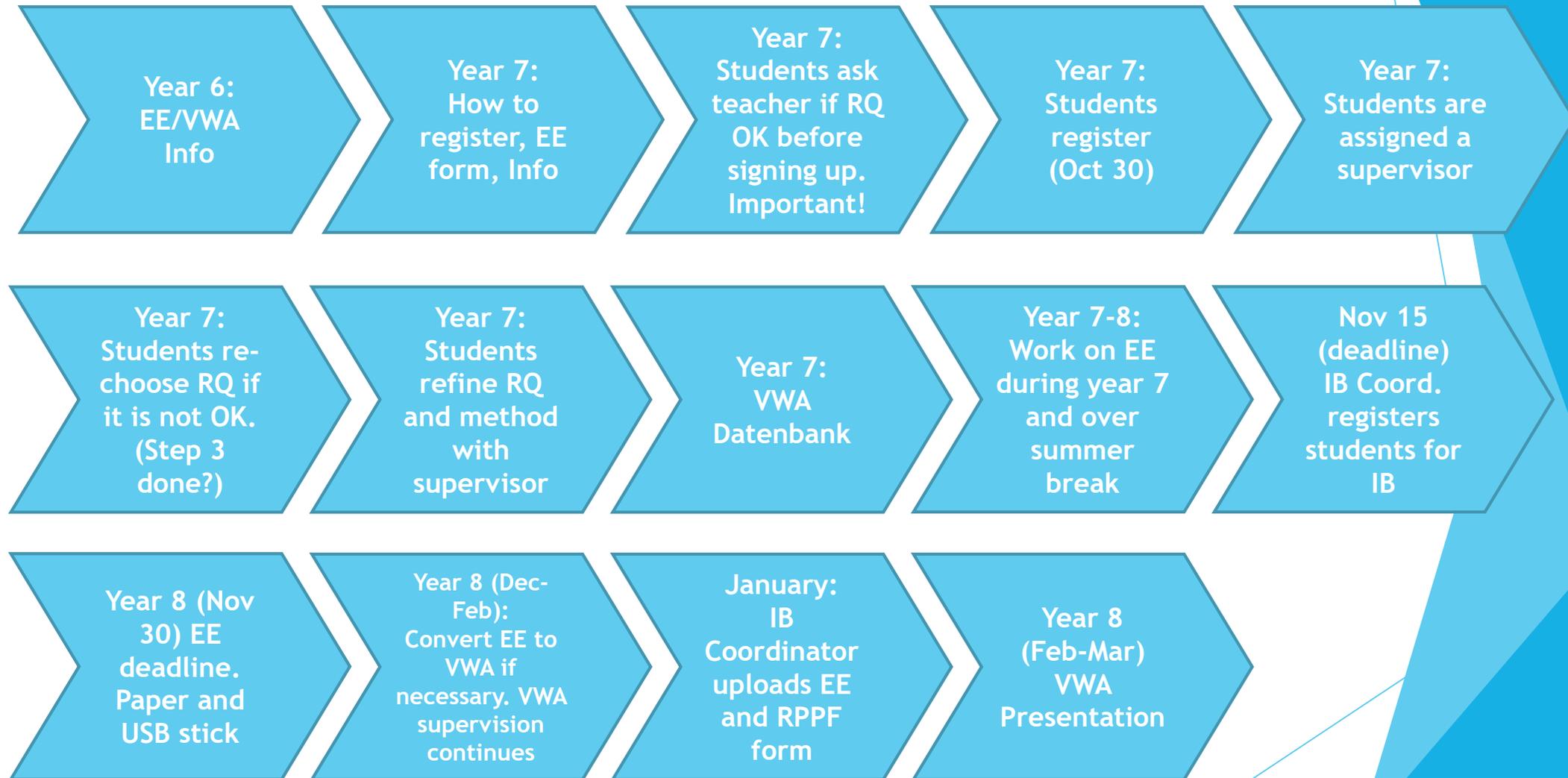
## ▶ EE

- ▶ RPPF form: counts for criterion E
- ▶ IBIS registration (Coordinator)
- ▶ No name on the cover page or anywhere in the EE
- ▶ Upload of the EE: Coordinator if early deadline, or student

## ▶ VWA

- ▶ Eigenständigkeitserklärung
- ▶ Begleitprotokoll: Teacher
- ▶ Begleitprotokoll: Student
- ▶ Beurteilungsraster
- ▶ VWA Datenbank

# Timeline (LISA)



# Do not allow students:

- ▶ Do not allow students to write two reports, an EE and a VWA. They should only write one essay, which counts for both VWA and EE.
  - ▶ Lack of supervisors.
  - ▶ Students will change their mind and then ask to drop one of them in the middle of the process.
  - ▶ Conflicting requirements.
- ▶ Do not allow students to write a „VWA-only“. A VWA can not be converted to an EE easily.
  - ▶ They can not think of a specific RQ and then want to write a general VWA and then say that they are „interested in the topic“.
  - ▶ Or they are worried about writing an essay in English.
  - ▶ Or they are worried about the strict IB guidelines and then want to go the easy way.
  - ▶ Or they simply want to write a summary of secondary sources.

# You can allow:

- ▶ External supervisors are possible: There are some formalities necessary.
  - ▶ Example: a student wants to write it in Greek mother tongue (not VWA), and no teacher in school is able to supervise this. If there are not enough IB teachers in school, then these possibilities can relieve the situation.
  - ▶ This external supervisor must be able to provide proper guidance according to IB regulations
  - ▶ Reflective sessions must take place in school.
  - ▶ **Careful! External supervisors can not be an examiner for the VWA Presentation!** This is only possible for students that only do the IB!
- ▶ Non-IB teachers, not (yet) IB trained teachers as supervisors are possible
  - ▶ They must stick to the EE criteria.
  - ▶ IB teachers should be given priority. IB teachers should not be allowed to reject students, and then non IB teachers having to take them.

# IB students and teachers must be given priority

- ▶ Problem: not enough EE supervisors.
- ▶ It must be avoided that non-EE teachers are forced to supervise an EE. If they are to supervise an EE, then they have to apply EE Assessment Criteria.
- ▶ IB teachers must be willing to supervise EE.
- ▶ It must be avoided that students are forced to write an EE in an IB subject that they do not have or that they do not want to take.
- ▶ One should take care that the balance of subjects is fair. Teachers of popular subjects often supervise too many EE.
- ▶ The personal interest and/or preference of a teacher for a specific topic or student must have a low priority.
  - ▶ No: „I’m not interested in this topic, so I will not accept it. The student should write it in a different subject (=less work for me).“
- ▶ Every EE student must be assigned to an EE supervisor.
- ▶ It must be avoided, that teachers are „full“ with VWA-only students and that EE students are left alone.

# Does this sound familiar (invented examples)?

- ▶ „We do not allow students to write EE in my subject, because the results are always so bad.“
  - ▶ Will result in an overloading of other subjects.
  - ▶ Results are bad because of Assessment Criteria which are not applied properly.
- ▶ „I like this VWA-only topic and am now full with VWAs. I can not accept EE.“
  - ▶ Student may have to change EE topic
  - ▶ Another teacher will have to take the student
- ▶ „Do not write an EE in subject XYZ. You have to do an experiment and this is too difficult for you. It is much easier to write it in subject ABC. You only have to secondary research. The results are also much better.“
  - ▶ This is wrong on so many levels. Do not discourage students. It's not about the points.
  - ▶ Overloading of certain subjects.
  - ▶ The experiment can be done in a very short time. Points are not given for a fancy experiment.

# Solutions if there are not enough supervisors

- ▶ It is possible for non-subject teachers to supervise EE of a different subject. The IB does not care.
- ▶ Biology teacher can maybe supervise Chemistry or Physics EE.
- ▶ A „Core“ teacher can supervise an EE, even if he/she does not teach IB.
- ▶ Language A and B teachers can cooperate. A teacher who teaches English A could also supervise an English B EE.
- ▶ Every teacher should choose a second subject which he/she is willing to read into to supervise, whether or not he/she is teaching this subject for the IB. (Example: „Too many students want to do Psychology EE, I do not teach Psychology but am willing to supervise it, and I will train myself.“)
- ▶ Outsourcing of supervision. Problem with VWA-Presentation, however.
- ▶ But generally IB teachers must be required to supervise EE. It costs € to send them to a workshop.

# EE and VWA Registration

- ▶ EE Registration for the IB
  - ▶ Takes place when IB students are registered for the IB exams
  - ▶ IB Deadline: Before November 15 of year 8
  - ▶ Subject and Language of EE must be indicated, not Topic or RQ. Theoretically some EE can be written in another language (e.g. Biology EE written in German). Not advised.
- ▶ VWA Registration over VWA Datenbank.
  - ▶ Agreement with LSR OÖ: registration language (Thema, Leitfragen) is same language as VWA.
  - ▶ Keep VWA topic general as it can not be changed later.
  - ▶ Mention EE RQ as one of the Leitfragen

# Step 1: EE/VWA info to grade 6

- ▶ Must be done by a teacher who knows the EE and VWA.
- ▶ In the past this was done by the VWA Koordinator and then I had to correct many things. This confused students. Examples:
  - ▶ „It does not matter in what subject you write the VWA.“
  - ▶ „The VWA supervisor does not need to be a teacher of the subject. Anyone can supervise the VWA.“
  - ▶ „It is not necessary to allocate a VWA to a subject.“
  - ▶ „You can do „fächerübergreifende VWAs“. Very risky for EE. It will be graded according to the subject it is registered.
  - ▶ „There is a certain word count you have to reach.“ Formally not anymore. Depends on teacher.
  - ▶ „You have to use MLA.“ The IB does not care. It’s got to be done properly and consistently. But I support a school-internal standard. Sciences always use APA citing convention.

## Step 2: Registration info in year 7

- ▶ Students must be given an overview of the whole EE/VWA process and on how to register. It is basically this information that you see now.
- ▶ This info is given beginning of year 7.
- ▶ Students should be given a list of teachers and what EE subjects they supervise.
- ▶ Otherwise the students do not know, who to talk to and what names to put on the registration form.
- ▶ Students need time to think of a RQ and topic for a particular subject!

# Step 3: Students ask teachers if RQ is OK

- ▶ This is a very short hallway-talk with the teacher (30 seconds). These examples are real.
  - ▶ Student: „Can I write my Biology EE on Ebola?“
  - ▶ Teacher: „Where are you going to get the Ebola virus from, and who are you going to infect with the virus to test it? No, because you can not do an experiment in it.“ (Science EE must be experimental)
  - ▶ Student: „I want to make model rockets and test different rocket engines (chemicals) on how well the rocket flies.“ (Physics)
  - ▶ Teacher: „No. This is too dangerous.“ (Safety issue. Difficult to measure the flight of rocket.)
  - ▶ Student: „Can I write my EE on the impact of the 2008 World Economic Crisis on my home-country Nigeria?“ (Economics)
  - ▶ Teacher: „Are you going to fly to Nigeria to interview the minister of Economics there? How do you want to answer such a general question? You can write a book on this.“ (Too general)
- ▶ This is to avoid that students put an unsuitable RQ on the form.
- ▶ This does not have to be the teacher that will supervise the student.

## Step 4: Students register on paper

- ▶ This includes: Teacher's name, topic, RQ and possible method.
- ▶ They should include a short method as well. This is to check if the RQ can be answered at all.
- ▶ If the student does not know how to answer the RQ, then this might indicate that the RQ is problematic.

## Step 5: Students are assigned a supervisor

- ▶ The statement that „VWA supervisors can reject a topic but not a student“ is unrealistic. Sometimes too many students sign up for one supervisor.
- ▶ There must be a system in place that makes sure that the student gets an appropriate supervisor and that the student is still able to write it on the topic of his/her choice.

# General requirements (EE guide)

(comments were added)

- ▶ All students must:
  - ▶ provide a logical and coherent rationale for their choice of topic (**comment: why was the topic/RQ chosen?**)
  - ▶ review what has already been written about the topic (**comment: the context of the topic, RQ**)
  - ▶ formulate a clear research question (**comment: often too broad, unclear, or not explained**)
  - ▶ offer a concrete description of the methods they use to investigate the question (**comment: sometimes forgotten because the word “method” is associated with the natural sciences.**)
  - ▶ generate reasoned interpretations and conclusions based on their reading and independent research in order to answer the question. (**comment: often too little interpretation, only a summary of researched facts is presented**).
- ▶ **Comment: These points must be visible in the essay somewhere! The students must write them down!**

# Possible structure of an Extended Essay

- ▶ Title page, Table of contents, Acknowledgements, Abstract optional (!!!)
- ▶ Research Question
  - ▶ Explaining the context of the RQ
  - ▶ Previous research that has already been done in this area
- ▶ Significance of RQ
  - ▶ Personal significance and/or general relevancy. Why is it worth to find an answer to this? Personal connections are good.
- ▶ Method or Approach to answering the RQ
  - ▶ Which sources were selected and why? How were quotes selected (languages?)
  - ▶ How was the experiment done (sciences)?
  - ▶ Was the method changed? Why? This is critical thinking.
- ▶ Results and Discussion - This is the main part and the longest.
  - ▶ While it is common for the sciences to separate results and discussion into two different sections, I think it is better to discuss individual results right after they are presented. Weave results and discussion together. Otherwise there is the danger that there is a long theoretical section at the beginning and too little discussion at the end. Some results are then not talked about at all.
- ▶ Conclusion
  - ▶ Main findings are summarized, RQ answered.
  - ▶ No new ideas are introduced
- ▶ References
- ▶ Appendix

# Enforcing the EE

- ▶ For the TOK Mark (!), students have to write the EE introduction (right and back of booklet)
- ▶ Do not confuse students by sending them to the VWA-AHS website. They should stick to the EE criteria.
- ▶ Give a timeline.
- ▶ Teachers of the same subject group should cooperate.
- ▶ Information sessions for students to explain the process.

Name:

Class:

Subject of Extended Essay (indicate category for the languages):

Supervisor:

Topic of EE:

Focussed Research Question:

**Properly explain (paragraph) how you came up with this research question.**

- „I was thinking about it“ is not good enough.
- Include changes that you made to the RQ and why you made these changes.
- Include difficulties you had refining the RQ.

**Explain why this RQ is personally important for you (paragraph).**

- „It is an interesting RQ is not good enough.“ „I like the author“ or „I do not know much about this“ are not good enough.
- Explain your personal connection to the RQ.

**Explain why this RQ is important for the subject, for other people, for society for an organization etc (paragraph).**

**Explain how you are going to answer the RQ (paragraph). This is your method.**

- „I will read books and do interviews“ is not good enough.
- What are you going to be looking for in these books?
- If you do an experiment, then give a rough outline of this experiment.

**Explain possible problems or limitations of your method.**

- While the method must be able to answer the RQ, maybe it won't be easy. Where do see possible challenges? Do you need special equipment? Rare books? Which ones?
- Are there certain aspects of the RQ that your method is not able to answer well?

**Explain which sources you are most likely going to use and why.**

- Even if you do not have a list of books etc yet, explain what types of books (etc) you will be looking for.

# EE Myths

- ▶ Myth: You need to collect much data, do a good experiment, to get a good mark.
  - ▶ Research is only a small part of the final points.
  - ▶ Students have to analyze, discuss the research findings.
- ▶ Myth: It is necessary to include much background information, so that the reader understands the essay.
  - ▶ Students like to include irrelevant background information, that they simply summarized from sources. This does not give points. Background information must be linked to the RQ.
- ▶ Myth: The essay has to be written in an advanced, technical language.
  - ▶ It has to be readable. It is permissible to use the pronoun „I“, even recommended, otherwise too little personal analysis possible.
  - ▶ The essay does have to use the language of the subject, though, but it should not sound „stilted“
- ▶ Myth: It is enough to write a summary of researched facts.

# Role of the Supervisor

- ▶ Students submit Topic, RQ, Method to possible supervisor
- ▶ Supervisor must tell student if the RQ is possible for the subject. Examples:
  - ▶ Psychology: no surveys allowed
  - ▶ History: 10-year Rule, no family history studies
  - ▶ Language A and B: The 3 categories
  - ▶ Biology: ethical rules relating to animal experiments, should be experimental.
  - ▶ Etc.
- ▶ RQ must be answerable within the word limit. It must be specific, but not too specific.
- ▶ The method for answering the RQ must be possible
- ▶ **Supervisors and students must read the Subject-specific guide!!!**

# Common Problems

- ▶ Not following the subject specific regulations.
  - ▶ Examples: Doing a questionnaire in Psychology, animal experiments in Biology, not honoring the 10-year rule in History...
- ▶ Only summarizing research, without discussion and analysis.
  - ▶ Examples: Presenting data tables and graphs but not analyzing the data. Presenting quotes from a book, but only summarizing the content of these quotes without analysis.
- ▶ Not justifying the chosen methods or approach, or even forgetting about it.
- ▶ When comparing ideas or events, students sometimes treat the topics separately over longer sections. They do not compare them, but give separate accounts of their research.
  - ▶ How are A and B similar? They first explain what A is and then 5 pages later they explain B. Rather they should directly compare.
- ▶ They include irrelevant chapters, ideas, which do not answer the RQ. Sometimes these ideas can be made relevant by linking them to the RQ, but often this is not done.
  - ▶ Example: they compare 2 books or paintings and then add the biography of the author or artist. It is not clear, however, why this biography is relevant for the RQ.

# Problems of Science EE

- ▶ **Method not explained:** Students focus too much on listing the method, without explaining why they are doing what they are doing. Method is presented as a recipe without reflection.
- ▶ **Method too prominent:** Too much focus on the method, without analysis of the obtained data. Students think that the experiment has to be complex (and that this is enough) to make a good EE.
- ▶ **Experiment too complex:** They don't understand it, because it is a finished recipe (eg. Experiment done at the University). Can not reflect on it.
- ▶ **Insufficient data analysis:** Students collect much data, but do not analyze it sufficiently. They only present data tables and graphs, but do not do enough processing and also do not talk about the quality (significance) of the data.
- ▶ **Irrelevant parts:** Students mention too much theoretical, summarized background information, which is not relevant for the RQ.

# Problems of language, humanities, arts EE

- ▶ Students do not appreciate that it is important to explain their method of answering the research questions. Often they think that a „method“ is only something for the sciences.
- ▶ They think that saying „I will read the books and compare them“ is enough. Comparison based on what criteria? Why not different ones?
- ▶ Students do not explain how the sources were selected. „I chose the two books because they are the only ones on the topic“ might be true but implies that the student wants to summarize ideas from the books and the justification is also not subject-specific.
- ▶ A collection of quotes does not automatically answer the RQ. Students have to talk about them, analyze them.
- ▶ And a new case: One student did not have any researched data and only wrote personal opinion without any research.

# Good news

- ▶ Considering the fact, that the essay is graded so strictly, I get the impression that an E is only given if there are really big problems.
- ▶ Experiments do not have to work well for the student to be awarded a good mark.
- ▶ „There is a difference between a good essay and a good Extended Essay.“ Criteria are important. Students who are otherwise not good also have a decent chance of getting a decent EE score, as long as they follow the Criteria. The Criteria are the learning goals.
- ▶ Students who are not very good, can research and write a quick EE, without much time input, and still pass the IB.

# Difficulties to overcome

- ▶ Students like to summarize facts, collect data and then present them, but this is not what they get many points for.
- ▶ Students have to talk, analyze these facts but they were often not taught how to do this.
- ▶ „There is a difference between a good essay and a good Extended Essay.“ Criteria are important. Otherwise good essays that do not follow them will lose points.
- ▶ Non-IB students write VWAs with general topics. It takes energy to convince IB students that their marking criteria are more specific than those of their friends, siblings etc. Difficulties switching over into IB EE mode.
- ▶ Limited number of EE supervisors.
- ▶ Supervisors who have EE and VWA-only have to follow different assessment standards. It would probably be unfair to force VWA-only students to follow the strict EE rules.

# The ideal situation

- ▶ Students meet with supervisors regularly.
- ▶ All research completed after the summer break from year 7 to 8.
- ▶ One lesson per week, for one semester, EE practice. How to properly write a RQ, method etc. An EE course.
- ▶ Students know how to cite and reference.
- ▶ Students understand that simple summaries of secondary sources is not the intention of the EE.
- ▶ Students know how to critically reflect.
- ▶ Students know how to express complex ideas in few words. Mother tongue English speakers have an advantage, but this is outweighed by other factors.