

Extended Essay Information – May 2018 Exam Session (Current year 8)

Summary of deadlines:

- Students to secretary: Deadline for Extended Essay: Nov. 30 (12:00). Print out and USB stick.
- Students to supervisors: RPPF Form on January 31. Viva Voce completed before that.
- Supervisors to ko@europagym.at: RPPF Form on February 16, 2018. Teachers added comments to form. The earlier the better.

Important differences to previous EE sessions

- Requirement of the **RPPF Form**, which is Criterion E. Filled out by teacher and student.
- **Different assessment criteria.** They are more general, in my view overlap with the VWA criteria well.
- **No student name** on title page. Reasons: not needed as uploaded via password; prevent allegations of discrimination.
- **No Abstract**, but not forbidden to write one. If one is written, then it counts to the wordcount, so it might be better maybe to move it to the appendix. Makes a good impression, more Engagement points maybe (suggestion). Possible reasons for this (unusual) IB decision: Force examiners to read whole essay, prevent students from moving relevant parts to the abstract, without mentioning them later (abstract often looked like an introduction, which made marking difficult).

Websites for info:

- <http://www.okim.info/ib/extended-essay/>: contains all info, plus explanatory videos.
- [Extended Essay Guide](#): direct link to the guide.

Handing in the EE by students

- Deadline for the EE: Thursday November 30, 2017 in the main secretariate, in the form of a print-out.
- The essay must be anonymous. The cover sheet does not have the student's name, only the session number (will be given), title and word count.
- The student also must hand in a USB stick with the essay on it, the USB stick must be labelled, otherwise it can not be returned. Also on Dropbox as a backup. The version on the USB stick will be uploaded.
- Naming of the file on the USB stick: 1007-0001.pdf (etc.) the session code of the student.

General comments about the RPPF

- They are assessed and the Personal Engagement which is recorded on the form counts about 20% of the points. Students should fill out this form carefully.
- If the personal engagement was good, but if this does not reflect in the form, then there will not be any points.
- If the personal engagement was bad, but the student makes it appear as if it were good, then the teacher will write an appropriate comment in the comments section of the form.
- Supervising teachers should write a comment. This was optional in the past, but now the form counts directly to the points. So there is now a direct way of influencing the points of criterion E.

Suggested method for the RPPF Form (will be marked, Criterion E)

- The RPPF has to be filled out by teacher and students.
- There are several ways:
 - A. students send an email to the teacher (at a pre-arranged deadline) with the comment. The teacher copy-pastes this comment into the form and saves it.
 - B. student keeps form and fills it out and sends the form after each reflective session to the teacher.
- Avoid: students should not fill out everything just before the deadline. It is intended as an accompanying documentation.
- Students should write and send comments now, also of reflective session 1, if they have not done so.
- The form should have the following name: RPPF2017-1007-0001.pdf (session code, the 0001 will be different from student to student).

EE and VWA

- The supervision process of the VWA continues until the VWA presentation has been completed (not just until handing in the VWA).
- If the EE is acceptable (in November), then there is no formal need to add words, but possible if required by the supervisor. Supervisor decides.
- The EE must then be reformatted to meet the VWA criteria (Abstract, title page etc).
- If the EE is not acceptable, then the student can/should/must/may improve it for the VWA. How this is done, and whether there is a need to do this depends on the teacher.
- As a general rule: as the EE is based more on data gathering and analysis (and not so much on summary of existing material), the 4000 words max of the EE is formally sufficient. If the EE contains much summary of literature, then one can expect the student to write more for the VWA. It depends on the judgment of the teacher.
- The 3 Reflective Sessions can/should of course also count to the supervision process of the VWA, but it does not mean that by completing the 3 Reflective Sessions no more VWA supervision has to take place.
- EE may not be „corrected“ by the supervising teacher. Students can/should/may be told the points that they probably would get on the Criteria, but they can not be told in detail what to write or how to write it in order to get more points. [Click here for more info](#) and examples.
- VWA: After the handing in of the EE, the teachers can give any kind of feedback, which is in accordance of the VWA regulations. Until the VWA deadline students can make improvements.
- For the VWA:
 - Students: Title page, Abstract (not an EE requirement anymore!), upload of VWA, Begleitprotokoll, Eigenständigkeitserklärung
 - Teacher: Begleitprotokoll, Essay with corrections by teacher (to justify the mark), Beurteilungsraster.
- All formal criteria for the VWA must be fulfilled.

Students: make sure that you address these points when filling out the form.

Preparation for the first reflection session

As preparation for their first reflection session, students should do the following.

1. Think about subjects and areas of particular personal interest and do some initial background reading into a subject and topic of their choice.
2. Using this as a starting point, explore a variety of possible research topics.
3. Read the [subject-specific section of the *Extended essay guide*](#) for the subject they are interested in, paying particular attention to the nature of the subject and the treatment of the topic.
4. Undertake further background reading and begin to gather information around their area of interest. This exploration should give rise to a variety of topics and questions that students can consider for further research. At this stage it is important that students consider the availability of reliable and valid sources for the topic under consideration. All of this should be recorded in their Researcher's reflection space.
5. Begin developing a research proposal which might include a MindMap[®] of ideas, an annotated article or preliminary bibliography. Additionally, students must already be thinking in terms of the following questions.
 - Is my topic appropriate for the subject I am considering?
 - Why am I interested in this area and why is it important?
 - What possible questions have emerged from my initial reading?
 - Are there any ethical issues that I need to consider?
 - What possible methods or approaches might be used for research in this area and why?

It is recommended at this point that the student-supervisor relationship is formalized and the student can consider himself or herself prepared for the first formal reflection session.

First formal reflection session

This initial reflection session should be a dialogue between the student and the supervisor based on the student's initial explorations. It is recommended that the student sends their supervisor an outline of their research proposal ahead of the meeting in order to give the supervisor the opportunity to review their work. This will ensure that the reflection session is focused and productive.

Topics of discussion that should arise during this session include:

- a review of the requirements and assessment criteria for the subject
- a review of ethical and legal implications, if applicable
- a dialogue about possible approaches and any potential problems that might arise
- a discussion of strategies for developing the student's ideas for the essay and expanding the research so that the essay starts to take form
- probing and challenging questions that will help the student focus their thinking; this should lead to the development of the student's working research question
- an outline of the next steps that the student should undertake in order to refine their question; this should take the form of a research and writing timeline.

Tip

Following this first session, the student is required to complete the first student comment section of the [Reflections on planning and progress form](#) and submit it to their supervisor who must then sign and date the form. Please refer to the section [“Protocols for completing and submitting the Reflections on planning and progress form”](#) for more information.

Preparation for the interim reflection session

Between the first and second reflection session, students can engage in informal conversations with other people, such as subject teachers, the extended essay coordinator, the librarian or their supervisor. They must also ensure that they are progressing with their research plan.

In preparation for the interim reflection session, students should have:

- attempted to refine a focused and appropriate [research question](#)
- significantly deepened their research and recorded pertinent evidence, information or data in the [Researcher's reflection space](#)
- reviewed and consolidated the methodologies they are using
- formulated arguments based on the evidence that they have collected
- added to the working bibliography for their research.

The interim reflection session

This session is a continuation of the dialogue between supervisor and student in which the student must demonstrate the progress they have made in their research. They must also be able to discuss any challenges they have encountered, offer their own potential solutions and seek advice as necessary.

During this session the supervisor might discuss:

- a completed piece of sustained writing from the student in order to ensure that they understand the academic writing requirements, including referencing formats
- whether an appropriate range of sources has been accessed and how the student is critically evaluating the origin of those sources
- what the student now has to do in order to produce the full draft of their essay, and ways and means of breaking down the task into manageable steps.

By the end of the interim reflection session both student and supervisor should feel satisfied that there is:

- a clear and refined [research question](#)
- a viable argument on which to base the essay
- a sufficient range of appropriate sources
- a clear vision for the final steps in the writing process.

Between the interim session and the completion of the extended essay, students should continue to see their supervisor as appropriate to their needs, although the third and final reflection session should not take place until after the extended essay has been completed and uploaded for submission.

Tip

Following this interim session, the student is required to complete the second student comment section of the [Reflections on planning and progress form](#) and submit it to their supervisor who must then sign

and date the form. Please refer to the section [“Protocols for completing and submitting the *Reflections on planning and progress form*”](#) for more information.

Preparation for the final reflection session (*viva voce*)

Supervisors must have already read the final version of the essay, sent to them by the candidate, before this session takes place.

Students should bring the following to this session:

- extracts from their RRS that illustrate how they have grown as learners through the process of reflection
- a willingness to share their personal experience and to discuss the skills and development of conceptual understandings that they have acquired through the completion of the extended essay.

Tip

It is important to note that students must not be allowed to make any changes to their extended essay after this meeting. Once they have submitted the essay as final to their supervisor, it is the supervisor's responsibility to ensure that changes are not made. This is particularly important for schools who allow candidate upload of the essay.

Final reflection session (*viva voce*)

The *viva voce* is a short interview between the student and the supervisor, and is the mandatory conclusion to the extended essay process. Students who do not attend the *viva voce* will be disadvantaged under criterion E (engagement) as the [Reflections on planning and progress form](#) will be incomplete.

The *viva voce* is conducted once the student has uploaded the final version of their extended essay to the IB for assessment. (**NOTE BY KO: Essay will be given to secretary on Nov 30th.**) At this point in the process no further changes can be made to the essay. The *viva voce* is a celebration of the completion of the essay and a reflection on what the student has learned from the process.

The *viva voce* is:

- an opportunity to ask the student a variety of open-ended questions to elicit holistic evidence of the student's learning experience.
- an opportunity for the supervisor to confirm the [authenticity](#) of the student's ideas and sources
- an opportunity to reflect on successes and difficulties encountered in the research process
- an aid to the supervisor's comments on the *Reflections on planning and progress form*.

The *viva voce* should last 20–30 minutes. This is included in the recommended amount of time a supervisor should spend with the student.

In conducting the *viva voce* and writing their comments on the *Reflections on planning and progress form*, supervisors should bear in mind the following.

- The form is an assessed part of the extended essay. The form must include: comments made by the supervisor that are reflective of the discussions undertaken with the student during their supervision/reflection sessions; the student's comments; and the supervisor's overall impression of the student's engagement with the research process.
- An incomplete form resulting from supervisors not holding reflection sessions, or students not attending them, could lead to criterion E (engagement) being compromised.
- In assessing criterion E (engagement), examiners will take into account any information given on the form about unusual intellectual inventiveness. This is especially the case if the student is able to demonstrate what has been learned as a result of this process or the skills developed.
- Examiners want to know that students understand any material (which must be properly referenced) that they have included in their essays. If the way the material is used in context in the essay does not clearly establish this, the supervisor can check the student's understanding in the *viva voce* and comment on this on the *Reflections on planning and progress form*.
- If there appear to be major shortcomings in citations or referencing, the supervisor should investigate thoroughly. No essay should be authenticated if the supervisor believes the student may be guilty of plagiarism or some other form of academic misconduct.
- The comment made by the supervisor should not attempt to do the examiner's job. It should refer to things, largely process-related, that may not be obvious in the essay itself.
- Unless there are particular problems, the *viva voce* should begin and end positively. Completion of a major piece of work such as the extended essay is a great achievement for students.

Tip

Following this final session, the student is required to complete the last student comment section of the *Reflections on planning and progress form*, sign and date it and submit it to their supervisor, who must then add their own comments, sign and date the form. The supervisor must then upload the form into the e-coursework system, confirm the authenticity of both the form and essay, and submit them to the IB for assessment as one portfolio. Please refer to the section [“Protocols for completing and submitting the *Reflections on planning and progress form*”](#) for more information.

A blank or unsubmitted RPPF will score a 0 for criterion E.