

## Extended Essay assessment criteria

Note: These descriptors have been modified to avoid copyright issues.

### Criterion A: Focus and method

- To what extent is the topic of the essay communicated effectively?
- To what extent is the research question clearly stated and focused?
- To what extent is the methodology of the research complete?

Marks	Descriptor
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The topic is not clearly identified or explained. The purpose and focus of the research are unclear and do not lend themselves to the subject.</li><li>• The research question is too broad and does not lend itself to an investigation in the subject. The research question is understood but not clearly articulated. The essay is not focused on the research question.</li><li>• The sources and methods are limited. There is limited evidence that the selection of these sources and methods is informed.</li></ul>
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The topic is identified and explained. The purpose and focus of the research are adequately clear but only partially appropriate to the subject.</li><li>• The research question is clear. The essay is only partially focused on and connected to the research question.</li><li>• The sources and methods are generally relevant and appropriate to the topic and research question. There is some evidence that the selection of these sources and methods is informed.</li></ul>
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The topic is identified and explained effectively. The purpose and focus of the research are clear and appropriate to the subject.</li><li>• The research question is clear. The essay is focused on and connected to the research question.</li><li>• A range of sources and methods is relevant and appropriate to the topic and research question. There is evidence that the selection of these sources and methods is informed and effective.</li></ul>

## Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding

- To what extent does the essay show knowledge and understanding?
- To what extent is the use of concepts and terminology clear and appropriate?

Marks	Descriptor
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The application of sources has limited relevance to the topic and is only partially appropriate to the research question.</li><li>• Knowledge of the topic is sporadic, incoherent and descriptive. Sources are not effectively used.</li><li>• Subject-specific terminology and concepts are missing or inaccurate, showing limited knowledge understanding</li></ul>
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The application of sources is mostly relevant to the topic and is appropriate to the research question.</li><li>• Knowledge of the topic is clear. There is evidence of an understanding of the sources. Application of the sources is only partially effective.</li><li>• Subject-specific terminology and concepts are used mostly accurately, showing an appropriate knowledge and understanding.</li></ul>
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The application of sources is clearly relevant to the topic and appropriate to the research question.</li><li>• Knowledge of the topic is clear and coherent. Sources are used effectively and with understanding.</li><li>• Subject-specific terminology and concepts are accurate and consistent, showing effective knowledge and understanding</li></ul>

## Criterion C: Critical thinking

Note: If the topic or research question is inappropriate for the subject, candidates will not be awarded more than 3 marks for Criterion C.

- To what extent is the research appropriate to the research question and its application relevant to the argument?
- To what extent is the research analysed and focused on the research question?
- To what extent are conclusions drawn from evidence?
- To what extent is a reasoned argument developed from the research with a conclusion that is drawn from the evidence?
- To what extent is a reasoned argument structured and coherent?
- To what extent has the research been critically evaluated?

Marks	Descriptor
1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The research is limited and its relevance to the research question and argument is not clear.</li><li>• Analysis of the research is limited.</li><li>• Conclusions to individual points of analysis are limited and not consistent with the evidence.</li><li>• The discussion and evaluation are limited. Arguments are outlined but incomplete, descriptive or narrative.</li><li>• The structure of arguments is unclear, incoherent or hinders understanding.</li><li>• The final conclusion is limited and not consistent with the arguments or evidence.</li><li>• Any attempts to evaluate the research are superficial.</li></ul>
4-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The research is adequate. Its application is partially relevant and appropriate to the research question and argument.</li><li>• Analysis of the research is adequate and only partially relevant to the research question. Irrelevant research takes away from the argument.</li><li>• Conclusions to individual points of analysis are only partially supported by the evidence.</li><li>• The discussion and evaluation are adequate. Arguments explain the research but the reasoning contains inconsistencies.</li><li>• The argument may lack clarity and coherence without hindering understanding.</li></ul>

- The final conclusion is only partially consistent with the arguments or evidence.
- The research is evaluated but not critically

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- The research is good. Its application is clearly relevant and appropriate to the research question and argument.
- Analysis of the research is good and clearly relevant to the research question. Less relevant research rarely takes away from the argument.
- Conclusions to individual points of analysis are supported by the evidence, though there are minor inconsistencies.
- The discussion and evaluation are good. Effective and reasoned arguments develop from the research with a conclusion that is supported by the evidence.
- The reasoned argument is clearly structured and coherent, supporting the final, summative conclusion. Minor inconsistencies may hinder the strength of the argument.
- The research is evaluated. Evaluation of the research is partially critical.

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- The research is excellent. Its application is consistently relevant and appropriate to the research question and argument.
- Analysis of the research is excellent and clearly focused on the research question. Less relevant research does not take away from the argument.
- Conclusions to individual points of analysis are effectively supported by the evidence.
- The discussion and evaluation are excellent. Effective, focused and reasoned arguments develop from the research with a conclusion that is supported by the evidence.
- The reasoned argument is well structured and coherent, supporting the final, summative conclusion. Minor inconsistencies do not hinder the strength of the argument.
- The research is critically evaluated.

### Criterion D: Presentation

- To what extent does the structure of the essay lend itself to the topic, subject and argument?
- To what extent is the layout correct?
- To what extent do the structure and layout support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the essay?

Marks	Descriptor
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The structure of the essay is generally appropriate to the conventions of the topic, argument and subject.</li><li>• Some aspects of the layout may be missing or applied incorrectly.</li><li>• Poor structure and layout do not take away from the reading, understanding and evaluation of the essay significantly.</li></ul>
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The structure of the essay is clearly appropriate to the conventions of the topic, argument and subject.</li><li>• Aspects of the layout are applied correctly.</li><li>• The structure and layout support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the essay.</li></ul>

## Criterion E: Engagement

- To what extent does the RPPF show reflection on decision making and planning?
- To what extent does the RPPF show personal engagement with the focus and process of research?

Marks	Descriptor
1-2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement is limited. Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive.</li><li>• Reflections show a limited degree of personal engagement with the focus and process of research.</li></ul>
3-4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement is good. Reflections on decision-making and planning are analytical and refer to conceptual understanding and skill development.</li><li>• Reflections show a moderate degree of personal engagement with the focus and process of research, showing some intellectual initiative.</li></ul>
5-6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Engagement is excellent. Reflection on decision-making and planning are evaluative and refer to the candidate's ability to consider actions and ideas in response to challenges and set-backs during the research process.</li><li>• Reflections show a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement with the focus and process of research, showing authenticity, intellectual initiative and a creative approach in the student voice..</li></ul>