

Extended Essay: Formal Presentation

The extended essay should be written in formal academic style appropriate to the subject. The essay should be limited to 4,000 words maximum, which includes the introduction, the body, any quotations and the conclusion, but does **not** include the abstract, contents page, bibliography, endnotes, annotated illustrations, and any appendices.

Required elements:

- **Title page**

The title should provide a clear indication of the focus of the essay. Do not use your research question or hypothesis as the title.

- **Abstract**

The abstract presents an overview of the research question, and should be written last. The abstract should clearly state the research question, the scope of the investigation, and the conclusion reached; it should not exceed 300 words.

- **Contents page**

A table of contents must be included at the beginning of the essay, and all pages numbered.

- **Introduction**

The introduction

- indicates why the topic is interesting, significant and worthy of investigation
- provides background information and places the topic in an appropriate context
- clearly and precisely states the research question
- a clear, succinct statement of the thesis and argument

- **Body (Investigation)**

The body of the essay is a systematic development of a reasoned argument in relation to the research question. To put it more simply, the argument of the essay should be logical and convincing. It should demonstrate very good knowledge and understanding of the topic, and it should be apparent that an authoritative and relevant range of sources has been consulted, or that appropriate data has been gathered. The essay should reveal that the method of investigation has been well planned.

The structural conventions of the essay will vary with the subject. For example, sub-headings may be required for scientific investigations, which usually have separate sections for method and results. In other subjects, however, sub-headings should be avoided because they disrupt the flow and unity of the essay.

- **Conclusion**

The conclusion is clearly stated, relevant to the research question and substantiated by the evidence presented in the essay. It should indicate any unresolved issues or new questions that have emerged from the research.

- **References and bibliography**

The extended essay must reflect intellectual honesty in research practices. Students must accurately cite their sources using consistently applied documentation in an acceptable academic style. **Failure to document sources will be viewed as plagiarism and treated as a case of malpractice.**

- **Appendices**

Appendices, footnotes and endnotes are not an essential section of the extended essay and examiners are not required to read them. Care should be taken to include all information of direct relevance to the analysis and argument in the main part of the essay. Unless considered essential, complete lists of raw data should not be included in the extended essay.

Formal Presentation (General Assessment criterion I)

The layout, organization, appearance and formal elements of the essay should follow a consistent format. The formal elements include: title page, table of contents, page numbers, illustrative material, quotations, documentation (references, citations, bibliography), and appendices (if used).

In regard to illustrations, presentation and overall neatness are important. If graphs, diagrams, charts, tables, maps and the like are included, they must be well-labeled and easily interpreted. All such material must be directly related to the text, and acknowledged where appropriate.

“Reflections of an extended essay examiner”

Hugh Robertson

Body and development:

“...sole function (of the body) is the development and substantiation of the thesis or argument. Eliminate all irrelevant descriptive, narrative, biographical and anecdotal details.”

Conclusion

“Remember that last impressions are lasting impressions. The conclusion pulls the essay together and sums up the major points that shaped the thesis.”

Quotations

“Use quotations judiciously and integrate them smoothly into the text of the essay. They are frequently used to excess and parachuted into the essay as space fillers.”

Style

“Write your essay in a style that is clear and smooth and in a tone that is formal and scholarly. Precise, articulate expression has persuasive power.”

Subheadings/chapters

“Longer essays in certain subjects, like the sciences, might require section headings. However, headings can fragment the flow of the argument. Effective paragraphing will often eliminate the need for subheadings and chapters.”

Documentation

“Whether you are citing a quotation, an idea, an illustration or Internet information, you must document the source. Ensure that you use a major documentation style that is pertinent to the subject from which your topic is drawn.”

Length

“The most successful essays are in the 3,000 – 3,500 word range. Prune and cut your rough draft as you revise and edit so that your final copy is a crisp, clear, and cogent piece of writing. Remember that words should be weighed, not counted.”

Formal presentation

“Proofread your essay meticulously from title page to bibliography. Use computer technology to enhance the layout. An error-free and attractively laid out essay will have a positive effect on the examiner.”

Appendix

“All material placed in the appendix must be directly relevant to your thesis. This material must be cross-referenced to the development of the thesis.”

Technology

“Evaluate and filter Internet information with caution. Mindlessly downloading data and pasting it into the essay format does not constitute critical thinking and may be plagiarism.”