

Extended Essay Handbook

Business Management

Name:

Introduction

An extended essay in business and management provides students with an opportunity to carry out in-depth research in an area of personal interest relating to business and management. This is likely to be in the context of the Diploma Programme business and management course, but students may also want to consider issues that fall outside the scope of this. For example, they may want to undertake a detailed investigation into work relating to a specific regional/national context, or perhaps practical applications relating to the work of a particular management theorist. Whichever research area is chosen, it should be firmly rooted in the realms of accepted business and management theory. The extended essay provides students with an opportunity to develop research skills by reviewing business theory, concepts and principles, and critically analysing how these have been put into practice in the business world and the resultant impact on business activity. This will involve broad and detailed research using a range of sources. Excessive reliance on a single type of source, such as a company's annual report, is unlikely to give students sufficient scope or breadth in their analysis of the research question. The extended essay requires the application of business theory, tools and techniques to produce a coherent and structured analytical essay that effectively addresses the research question.

Choice of topic

Students should undertake an extended essay that uses the core principles of business and management as a basis for researching a particular topic. In their choice of topic, students are strongly advised to ensure they develop a research question that enables them to carry out relevant research and apply business theory, tools and techniques. It is important that the research question is sufficiently focused to allow adequate treatment within the word limit. The following examples of titles for business and management extended essays are intended as guidance only. The pairings illustrate that focused topics (indicated by the first title) should be encouraged rather than broad topics (indicated by the second title).

- “What motivates employees? Can Herzberg’s motivation theory help explain the improvement in productivity at XYZ Ltd?” is better than “Have motivational techniques benefited XYZ Ltd?”.
- “How significant has the contribution of Just-in-Time production been in improving efficiency in the textile industry?” is better than “How effective are Just-in-Time production techniques?”.
- “Why has the practice of publishing environmental audits been adopted more widely in Country X than in Country Y?” is better than “Why do firms publish environmental audits?”.

The topic may be chosen because of an interest in issues raised in the classroom, aspects of a student's own experience, or current events. The choice and treatment of the topic must, however, ensure that the student can address all the assessment criteria. An essay that is purely descriptive must be avoided: analysis and evaluation are critically important. It may help in achieving this if the student further defines the topic chosen for study in the form of a research question, followed by a statement of intent that indicates which methodology is going to be used in answering the question. In this way, the approach to the topic chosen may be even further clarified. Some examples of this could be as follows.

Topic	Operations management
Research question	To what extent has the introduction of Total Quality Management (TQM) improved quality at ABC Ltd?
Approach	A review of how quality management techniques have changed with the introduction of TQM. Relevant indicators are selected for measuring quality and the data for ABC Ltd is collected. The way in which ABC Ltd have adapted their approach to managing quality, and the impact of this on the selected indicators, is analysed and evaluated.
Topic	Growth strategies
Research question	How effective has the joint venture between ABC Ltd and UBI Ltd been as a growth strategy?
Approach	A review from secondary sources of growth strategies available to a firm and joint ventures specifically. Relevant indicators are selected to quantify the impact of the joint venture on the growth of ABC Ltd and UBI Ltd. Relevant data is collected from the two businesses, and the findings are analysed and evaluated.
Topic	Financial performance
Research question	Why has the market capitalization of XYZ Plc increased more than the market capitalization of its competitor ABC Plc?

Treatment of the topic

Students should use secondary data as the basis of their extended essay, supported, only where appropriate, by primary research. The sole use of secondary sources will allow students access to all levels of the extended essay assessment criteria. (Note that this is the reverse of the approach required in the HL internal assessment component of the business and management course, where primary research takes precedence.) Students should apply the accepted theories, tools and techniques of the subject to the topic/research question chosen. These may be applied to an organization, industry or market in a particular region or country, or globally. Students should ensure that the treatment of the topic allows for an analytical approach. It is important that the approach to all aspects of the essay is directly related to the research question and that the research carried out addresses the question. Topics researched should not be too broad in scope. The development of the essay must be related to the question directly and must not include information that is unnecessary. Strategic approaches should be encouraged and considered—for example, the effect of new technologies and cultural, international and ethical implications. If primary research is carried out in relation to an organization, there is a need for tact, sensitivity to other people and respect of confidentiality. A good extended essay will demonstrate the appropriate use and application of selected analytical tools, often supported by statistical data to assist the discussion and evaluation. Some examples of analytical tools are as follows.

- Ansoff's Matrix
- Boston Matrix
- Break-even analysis
- Decision tree analysis

- Financial accounts and performance ratios
- Fishbone diagram analysis
- STEEPLE analysis
- Position maps
- Statistical tables/charts/diagrams
- SWOT analysis

Students must ask probing questions and look at all relevant factors when considering the information obtained from their research. Information cannot always be accepted at face value. A critical approach, in which the skills of analysis and evaluation are displayed, is essential. Students should indicate unresolved questions, or new questions that have arisen from their study, in their conclusions. An extended essay in business and management is a formal essay and, as such, should fully meet the assessment criteria for the organization and formal presentation of an extended essay. In addition, it should be remembered that a business and management essay must be written in an objective style without personal bias. Observations and conclusions should be derived from the evidence and not based on any preconceptions of the student.

Frequent reference to the assessment criteria will help keep a sharper focus on the essay.

Assessment of Extended Essays

Use of Assessment Criteria All extended essays are externally assessed by examiners appointed by the IBO. All extended essays are marked on a scale from 0 to 36. Criterion levels will be awarded to each extended essay using a **best match model**.

For each criterion, examiners are instructed to identify the level descriptor that is most appropriate (i.e. the best match) for the extended essay under consideration, rather than to progress upwards through the levels until the essay fails to meet one or more aspects of the descriptor.

The assessment criteria

Criterion A: Focus and method

This criterion focuses on the topic, the research question and the methodology. It assesses the explanation of the focus of the research (this includes the topic and the research question), how the research will be undertaken, and how the focus is maintained throughout the essay.

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>The topic is communicated unclearly and incompletely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the topic is limited; the purpose and focus of the research is unclear, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation in the subject for which it is registered. <p>The research question is stated but not clearly expressed or too broad.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research question is too broad in scope to be treated effectively within the word limit and requirements of the task, or does not lend itself to a systematic investigation in the subject for which it is registered. • The intent of the research question is understood but has not been clearly expressed and/or the discussion of the essay is not focused on the research question. <p>Methodology of the research is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The source(s) and/or method(s) to be used are limited in range given the topic and research question. • There is limited evidence that their selection was informed.
3–4	<p>The topic is communicated.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the research topic is communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is adequately clear, but only partially appropriate. <p>The research question is clearly stated but only partially focused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research question is clear but the discussion in the essay is only partially focused and connected to the research question. <p>Methodology of the research is mostly complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Source(s) and/or method(s) to be used are generally relevant and appropriate given the topic and research question. • There is some evidence that their selection(s) was informed. <p>If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion.</p>
5–6	The topic is communicated accurately and effectively.

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identification and explanation of the research topic is effectively communicated; the purpose and focus of the research is clear and appropriate. <p>The research question is clearly stated and focused.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research question is clear and addresses an issue of research that is appropriately connected to the discussion in the essay. <p>Methodology of the research is complete.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding

This criterion assesses the extent to which the research relates to the subject area/discipline used to explore the research question, or in the case of the world studies extended essay, the issue addressed and the two disciplinary perspectives applied, and additionally the way in which this knowledge and understanding is demonstrated through the use of appropriate terminology and concepts.

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>Knowledge and understanding is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of source material has limited relevance and is only partially appropriate to the research question. • Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is anecdotal, unstructured and mostly descriptive with sources not effectively being used. <p>Use of terminology and concepts is unclear and limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject-specific terminology and/or concepts are either missing or inaccurate, demonstrating limited knowledge and understanding.
3–4	<p>Knowledge and understanding is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The selection of source material is mostly relevant and appropriate to the research question. • Knowledge of the topic/discipline(s)/issue is clear; there is an understanding of the sources used but their application is only partially effective. <p>Use of terminology and concepts is adequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is mostly accurate, demonstrating an appropriate level of knowledge and understanding. <p>If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than four marks can be awarded for this criterion.</p>

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
5–6	<p>Knowledge and understanding is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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. <p>Use of terminology and concepts is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The use of subject-specific terminology and concepts is accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding.

Criterion C: Critical thinking

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

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–3	<p>The research is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research presented is limited and its application is not clearly relevant to the RQ. <p>Analysis is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is limited analysis. • Where there are conclusions to individual points of analysis these are limited and not consistent with the evidence. <p>Discussion/evaluation is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An argument is outlined but this is limited, incomplete, descriptive or narrative in nature. • The construction of an argument is unclear and/or incoherent in structure hindering understanding. • Where there is a final conclusion, it is limited and not consistent with the arguments/evidence presented. • There is an attempt to evaluate the research, but this is superficial. <p>If the topic or research question is deemed inappropriate for the subject in which the essay is registered no more than three marks can be awarded for this criterion.</p>
4–6	<p>The research is adequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some research presented is appropriate and its application is partially relevant to the Research question. <p>Analysis is adequate.</p>

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is analysis but this is only partially relevant to the research question; the inclusion of irrelevant research detracts from the quality of the argument. • Any conclusions to individual points of analysis are only partially supported by the evidence. <p>Discussion/evaluation is adequate.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An argument explains the research but the reasoning contains inconsistencies. • The argument may lack clarity and coherence but this does not significantly hinder understanding. • Where there is a final or summative conclusion, this is only partially consistent with the arguments/evidence presented. • The research has been evaluated but not critically.
7–9	<p>The research is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of the research is appropriate and its application is clearly relevant to the research question. <p>Analysis is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research is analysed in a way that is clearly relevant to the research question; the inclusion of less relevant research rarely detracts from the quality of the overall analysis. • Conclusions to individual points of analysis are supported by the evidence but there are some minor inconsistencies. <p>Discussion/evaluation is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An effective reasoned argument is developed from the research, with a conclusion supported by the evidence presented. • This reasoned argument is clearly structured and coherent and supported by a final or summative conclusion; minor inconsistencies may hinder the strength of the overall argument. • The research has been evaluated, and this is partially critical.
10–12	<p>The research is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research is appropriate to the research question and its application is consistently relevant. <p>Analysis is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The research is analysed 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. <p>Discussion/evaluation is excellent.</p>

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Criterion D: Presentation

This criterion assesses the extent to which the presentation follows the standard format expected for academic writing and the extent to which this aids effective communication.

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–2	<p>Presentation is acceptable.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The structure of the essay is generally appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, argument and subject in which the essay is registered. • Some layout considerations may be missing or applied incorrectly. • Weaknesses in the structure and/or layout do not significantly impact the reading, understanding or evaluation of the extended essay.
3–4	<p>Presentation is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Criterion E: Engagement

This criterion assesses the student's engagement with their research focus and the research process. It will be applied by the examiner at the end of the assessment of the essay, and is based solely on the candidate's reflections as detailed on the [RPPF](#), with the supervisory comments and extended essay itself as context.

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors or a RPPF has not been submitted.
1–2	<p>Engagement is limited.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive.

Level	Descriptor of strands and indicators
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These reflections communicate a limited degree of personal engagement with the research focus and/or research process.
3–4	<p>Engagement is good.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflections on decision-making and planning are analytical and include reference to conceptual understanding and skill development. • These reflections communicate a moderate degree of personal engagement with the research focus and process of research, demonstrating some intellectual initiative.
5–6	<p>Engagement is excellent.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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.

Organising the Essay After careful outlining and drafting, it is likely that the majority of extended essays will follow a structure similar to that described below.

Introduction

The introduction should include:

- An indication of why the topic chosen is interesting, important or worthy of study
- Some background information and an attempt to place the topic in an appropriate context
- An indication of whether the topic has been narrowed to a focus of more manageable proportions
- A clearly and precisely stated research question
- A clear concluding statement of the thesis and argument, i.e. the response to the research
- Questions that will subsequently be developed in the body of the essay.

Body / Development

The essential feature of the major section, or body, of the essay is the systematic development of a convincing answer to the research question. The structure and the approach to this section will be shaped by the conventions of the particular subject in which the extended essay is being undertaken. Some subjects may require sub-headings for major sections within the main body. For example, scientific investigations will usually have separate sections for method and results. In some other subjects, however, sub-headings should be avoided because they disrupt the flow and unity of an essay.

Conclusion The requirements of the conclusion are that it

- Is clearly stated
- Is relevant to the research question being investigated
- Is substantiated by the evidence presented
- Indicates issues, unresolved questions and new questions that have emerged from the research

Length

The upper limit is 4000 words for all extended essays. This upper limit includes the introduction, the body, the conclusion and any quotations, but does **not** include:

- The abstract
- Acknowledgements
- The contents page
- Maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations and tables
- The references/bibliography
- Appendices.

Essays in excess of 4000 words are subject to penalties and examiners are not required to read material in excess of the word limit.

Abstract

An abstract not exceeding 300 words must be included. It does not serve as an introduction but presents a synopsis of the extended essay, and therefore should be written last.

The inclusion of an abstract is intended to encourage candidates to examine closely the development of an argument within the extended essay and the pertinence of any conclusions that are reached. It is also designed to allow readers to understand quickly the contents of the extended essay. It should be in past tense.

The minimum requirements for the abstract are to state clearly:

- The research question being investigated
- The scope of the investigation
- The conclusion/s of the extended essay.

The abstract should be on one side of a sheet of paper, and placed immediately after the title page.

Contents Page

A contents page must be provided at the beginning of the extended essay and all pages should be numbered. An index is not required.

Illustrations

Presentation and overall neatness are important, and it is essential that illustrative material, if included, is well set out and used effectively. Graphs, diagrams, tables and maps are effective only if they are well labeled and can be interpreted with ease. All such material, which is incorporated into the extended essay, must be directly related to the text and acknowledged where appropriate. The use of photographs and postcards is acceptable only if they are captioned and/or annotated and are used to illustrate a specific point made in the extended essay.

References / Bibliography

The direct or indirect use of the words of another person, written, oral or electronic, must be acknowledged appropriately as must visual material in the essay, derived from another source. A candidate's failure to comply with this requirement will be viewed as plagiarism, and will therefore be treated as a case of malpractice.

The list of references should include only those works, such as books and journals, that have been referenced by the candidate. MLA format of quoting and documenting sources, should be applied consistently.

Appendices

Appendices are not an essential section of the extended essay and examiners are not required to read them, so 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.

An extended essay should not constantly refer to material presented in an appendix as this may disrupt its continuity

EE Checklist and Timeline

Task	Target Completion Date	Done
✓ Decide what to research – Identify the topic and develop the research question		
✓ Doing the research – locate the relevant sources, gather notes from each source		
✓ Organizing the research – putting all the information in outline form in order to discover the best way to relay what you have discovered.		
✓ Create subtopics – divide and present your research		
✓ Analyzing the data – question what you have discovered and relate your concerns in the body of the essay		
✓ Reach a conclusion – what did you learn? Are there unanswered questions? Do you feel you need to do more research?		
✓ Writing the rough draft – write once, read over, make changes,		
✓ Writing the rough draft - write a second time, read over, make changes		
✓ Writing the rough draft - write a third time, hand to another person for critique, think about the comments/questions raised by the reader		
✓ Write the final draft – edit for appearance, accuracy of citations, page numbers, appendices and illustrations (if used)		
✓ Write the Abstract – summarize your research in 300 words		
✓ Write a Table of Contents – organize and present the research for publication		
✓ Insert Header – mark every page with your name and IB candidate number		
✓ Electronic Copies – Turn in PDF and Word/Pages versions of essay		

General Criteria Checklist

Action Check

- Is the essay within 4000 words?
- Is there a Contents page?
- Are all pages numbered?
- Are all diagrams, charts and graphs indexed and labeled and sources referenced where applicable?
- Are all necessary terms defined/explained?
- Is every reference cited in MLA style?
- Are your references cited **consistently** and **correctly**?
- Does the Reference List include **all and only** the works of reference you have consulted?
- Does the Bibliography specify **author(s), title, and date of publication and publisher** for every reference?
- Are the Bibliography sources cited **consistently** and **correctly**?
- Does the Appendix contain only relevant information?
- Are all references to the Appendix clearly **cross-referenced** and **labeled**?
- Is your research question stated on the title page?
- Is your research question stated and in bold in the Introduction?
- Is your research question restated and in bold in the Conclusion?
- Does your Conclusion address unresolved questions?
- Does your Conclusion address new questions that have emerged?
- Are your **Introduction** and **Conclusion** titled?
- Is your Abstract within 300 words?
- Does your Abstract contain the **research question** (in bold), the **scope of the investigation** and **the conclusion reached**?

Formatting Your IB Extended Essay

The Final Draft: Order of Items

- Title Page (main focus of the essay and not necessarily the research question)
- Abstract (300 words... this is written last. Include abstract word count at bottom of page)
- Contents page (all pages of essay included except for the title page, abstract and contents page)
- Introduction
- Body of essay (with section headers if desired)
- Conclusion (EE word count on final page)
- Reference List
- Appendices

Formatting Do's and Don'ts

DO ☺

- Centre title at the top (References, Works Consulted or Works Cited)
- Double space
- Include your last name, page number and candidate number in top right corner of *every page of the essay*
- 1 inch margin all sides
- Indent at the start of paragraphs (tab)
- **Bold** your research question in the introduction
- All in-text citations (Larson 2011) must have a corresponding citation in the Reference List.
- Use italics to denote book titles within the body of the essay (do not underline)
- Use quotations sparingly and succinctly.
- Lengthy quotations (more than 3-4 lines) should be indented and justified one inch rather than placed in quotations

DON'T ☹

- You may use headings to denote the various parts of the paper but name them purposefully (not Body, Main, etc.)
 - Do not right justify
 - Do not put quotations in italics or bold font
 - Don't use BOTH in-text citations and footnotes- this is redundant.
 - Don't overuse tables and charts such that they break the flow in the paper (append them instead- however note that the IB examiner is not required to read the appendix so use your judgment).
 - Do not use photographs or images unless they illustrate a specific point. If used they must be captioned and/or annotated
 - Don't underline your title or put it in quotation marks
 - Don't use a whimsical font- keep it formal (Helvetica, Arial)