



EXTENDED ESSAY FRIENDLY GUIDE

GUIDING YOU
TO THE TOP

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 03 THE EXTENDED ESSAY AND THE IB LEARNER PROFILE
- 05 THE EXTENDED ESSAY: NATURE, PURPOSE, AND VALUE
- 06 ROLE OF SUPERVISION AND REFLECTION
- 09 NATURE OF THE WORK
- THE EXTENDED ESSAY AND
- 10 INTERNATIONAL-MINDEDNESS
- 12 ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES
- 13 THE INTERDISCIPLINARY PATHWAY
- 16 CHOOSING YOUR EE TOPIC
- 17 DEVELOPING A RESEARCH QUESTION
- 18 THE SUBJECT-FOCUSED PATHWAY
- 20 THE RESEARCH AND WRITING PROCESS
- 21 ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
- 21 REFLECTION AND THE EXTENDED ESSAY
- 22 RULES AND RESPONSIBILITIES





The extended essay in an IB context

The extended essay is an element of the core of the Diploma Programme (DP).

It is a broad-based, two-year course that aims to encourage students to be knowledgeable and inquiring but also caring and compassionate.

The extended essay builds on skills developed in the PYP and MYP



These broad skills areas can be broken down further, as shown in the table below.

Research	Agency	Self-management	Reflection
Generating and answering	Creative thinking	Time management	Reflective thinking
Close reading	Reasoning	Academic integrity skills	Open-mindedness
Information literacy skills	Developing an argument	Self-regulation	Critical thinking
Digital literacy skills	Communication skills	Decision-making	Reflexivity
Analysis and synthesis	Evaluation	Ethical practice	Overviewing

EXTENDED ESSAY

EXTENDED ESSAY

THE EXTENDED ESSAY AND THE IB LEARNER PROFILE

The DP aims to develop in students the knowledge, skills and attitudes they will need to fulfil the aims of the IB, as expressed in the organization's mission statement and the learner profile. Learning and teaching in the DP represent the reality in daily practice of the organization's educational philosophy.

The table below shows some of the links between the extended essay and the learner profile attributes.



Attribute	Connection to the extended essay
Inquirers	Through research, students activate their interest in learning and apply the skills necessary to conduct inquiry.
Knowledgeable	Students acquire in-depth knowledge of their topic through exploration of current literature and/or research.
Thinkers	Students make reasoned analysis of their research topic and apply critical thinking skills in a creative way.
Communicators	Students effectively express ideas and information in an academic way.
Principled	As ethical researchers, students exercise academic integrity in all aspects of their work, showing respect for the ideas and work of others.
Open-minded	As researchers, students explore and include an appropriately wide range of points of view.
Caring	By clearly demonstrating the relevance of their topic, students exhibit their personal commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.
Risk-takers	Students explore new areas or novel situations and courageously defend their positions.
Balanced	Students' understanding of the importance of intellectual development is reinforced by the research process.
Reflective	Students draw well-evidenced, considered conclusions on their topic, and reflect on the transformative nature of their extended essay experience.

EXTENDED ESSAY

APPROACHES TO LEARNING (ATL) & APPROACHES TO TEACHING (ATT) IN THE DP CORE COMPONENTS OF IB PEDAGOGY

Five Approaches to Learning (ATL)

Students develop skills in:

1. Thinking skills
2. Social skills
3. Communication skills
4. Self-management skills
5. Research skills

Six Approaches to Teaching (ATT)

Teaching in the DP is:

- Inquiry-based
- Conceptually focused
- Contextualized (local & global)
- Collaborative
- Differentiated
- Informed by assessment

EXTENDED ESSAY

05



THE EXTENDED ESSAY: NATURE, PURPOSE, AND VALUE

STUDENT-LED ACADEMIC EXPLORATION

- The extended essay (EE) is a **student-led, independent research project** based on a topic of **personal interest**
- Students demonstrate **intellectual initiative** through:
 - In-depth inquiry within a single DP subject, or
 - An **interdisciplinary approach** drawing on more than one DP subject
- The EE offers the **excitement of intellectual exploration** while fostering independence and curiosity

CONNECTION TO THE DP CORE AND DP SUBJECTS

- A key aim of the DP core is that the EE both **supports and is supported by students' DP subjects**
- Students engage with DP subject knowledge as they:
 - Formulate a **focused research question**
 - Collect, interpret, and evaluate evidence
 - Construct a reasoned, coherent argument
 - Draw well-informed conclusions
- Students demonstrate:
 - Knowledge and understanding of relevant DP subjects
 - Appropriate use of **methods, concepts, theories, and subject-specific terminology**

EXTENDED ESSAY

ROLE OF SUPERVISION AND REFLECTION

- Students are guided throughout the process by a supervisor
- Supervision encourages students to:
 - Reflect on insights gained
 - Evaluate research decisions
 - Respond thoughtfully to challenges encountered
- Reflection is central to both **intellectual development and personal growth**





PREPARATION FOR LIFE BEYOND THE DP

- Researching and writing the EE is a challenging yet rewarding experience
- It prepares students for:
 - University-level research and academic writing
 - Independent learning and time management
 - Professional skills valued by employers.



EXTENDED ESSAY

EXTENDED ESSAY

SUPERVISION & REFLECTION

- Each student works with a **school supervisor**
- Students must attend **3 reflection sessions**
 - a. Initial reflection
 - b. Interim reflection
 - c. Final reflection (**viva voce** – short interview after completion)
- Reflections are recorded on the **Reflection and Progress Form (RPF)**

ASSESSMENT

- The essay is assessed using common criteria for all subjects
- Reflection is assessed under Criterion E
- Applies to both:
- Subject-focused essays
- Interdisciplinary essays



EXTENDED ESSAY

NATURE OF THE WORK

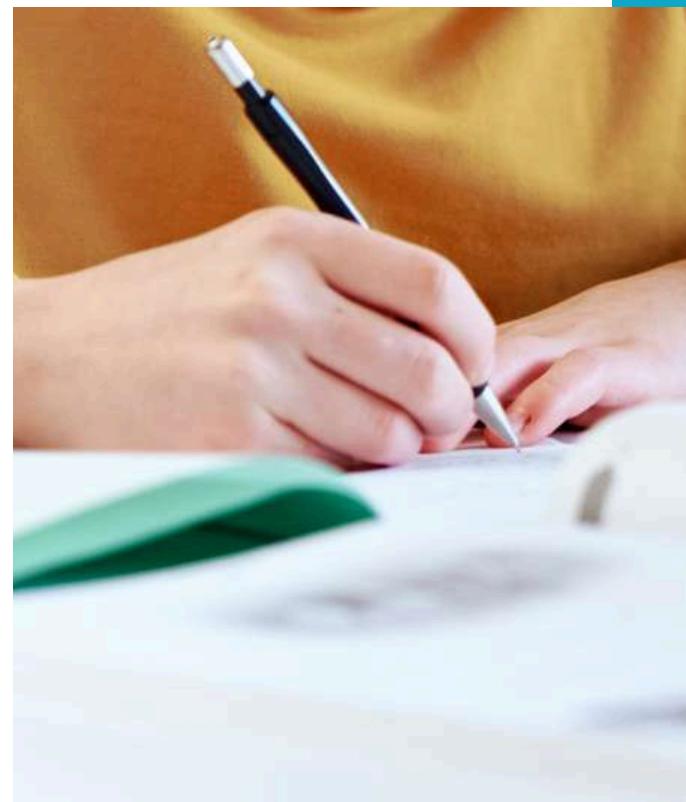
- An independent research project
- Topic is:
- Chosen by the student
- Approved and guided by a school supervisor.

LENGTH & FORMAT

- Maximum 4,000 words (main essay)
- Includes a reflective statement:
- Up to 500 words
- Recorded on the Reflection and Progress Form (RPF)
- Written as a formal academic essay.

TIME COMMITMENT

- Requires approximately 40 hours of student work



ASSESSMENT & DIPLOMA POINTS

- The extended essay is externally assessed
- Combined with Theory of Knowledge (TOK):
- Contributes up to 3 points to the IB Diploma score
- To earn the diploma:
- Students must achieve at least a grade D.



THE EXTENDED ESSAY & INTERNATIONAL-MINDEDNESS

Broadening Perspectives

- The extended essay helps students:
 - Widen their worldview
 - Develop respect for cultural diversity
- Research encourages students to:
 - Consider multiple perspectives
 - Evaluate ideas from different cultural backgrounds.

Critical Thinking & Culture

- The research and writing process involves:
- Analyzing different viewpoints
- Understanding how culture shapes ideas and knowledge
- Students learn that:
- Knowledge is not universal
- Perspectives can vary across cultures.

Local and Global Connections

- Students may:
- Investigate issues of global significance
- Explore how these issues:
- Affect local communities
- Connect the local context to global concerns.



**EXTENDED
ESSAY**

EXTENDED ESSAY

LINKS TO THE DP CORE

- International-mindedness connects the extended essay with:
- Theory of Knowledge (TOK)
- Examines how knowledge is shaped by different cultures
- Encourages awareness of diverse ways of knowing
- Creativity, Activity, Service (CAS)
- Students may design CAS projects:
- Focused on global issues
- Addressed from a local perspective.



EXTENDED ESSAY

ASSESSMENT OBJECTIVES

In working on the extended essay, students are expected to achieve the following assessment objectives.

Assessment objectives	
Knowledge and understanding	To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the topic chosen and the research question posed. To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of terminology and concepts. To demonstrate knowledge and understanding of relevant research methods.
Application and analysis	To apply relevant research methods to respond to the research question. To analyse the research to determine appropriate findings.
Synthesis and evaluation	To discuss in a balanced way the significance of the research findings. To develop a clear line of argument that links the research question, research findings and conclusions. To evaluate the effectiveness of the essay. To evaluate the extended essay learning experience and reflect on personal growth.
Communication of research	To communicate research according to appropriate structural conventions. To understand and demonstrate academic integrity.

EXTENDED ESSAY

13

THE INTERDISCIPLINARY PATHWAY

WHAT DOES “INTERDISCIPLINARY” MEAN?

- You study one topic using two DP subjects
- You combine ideas, methods, or perspectives from both subjects
- The two subjects work together, not separately.

WHY USE TWO SUBJECTS?

Important Rules to Know

- Some subjects are cross-disciplinary and cannot be used in the interdisciplinary pathway:
- Environmental Systems and Societies (ESS)
- Literature and Performance
- If your topic fits these subjects, you must choose the subject-focused pathway instead.

What Does “Integration” Look Like?

- You do not need to combine both subjects perfectly from the start
- Integration develops gradually as you research and write
- By the end, your essay should clearly show:
- How ideas from both subjects connect
- How this combination helps answer your research question.



Do the Subjects Have to Be Equal?

- No – the balance depends on your topic
- However, your essay must clearly show that both subjects are important
- Using two subjects should make your answer stronger, not more confusing.

How to Succeed

- It's recommended that you study at least one of the two subjects you choose
- Regularly talk to your supervisor to:
- Check your progress
- Improve the quality of your research
- Strong understanding of both subjects leads to better research and clearer conclusions.

EXTENDED ESSAY



Why Choose the Interdisciplinary Pathway?

You might choose it if you want to:

- Explore a topic more deeply
- Study a global or complex issue
- Connect ideas from different subjects
- Ask creative questions at the boundaries between subjects.

Examples of Interdisciplinary Topics

- Climate change modeling → Mathematics + Computer Science
- Gender studies → Biology + Social Anthropology
- Social media addiction → Biology or Psychology + Digital Society
- Internet scams → Economics + Digital Society
- Art and the brain → Visual Arts + Psychology
- Sustainability of plastics → Chemistry + Geography

Broad topic areas within the five interdisciplinary frameworks

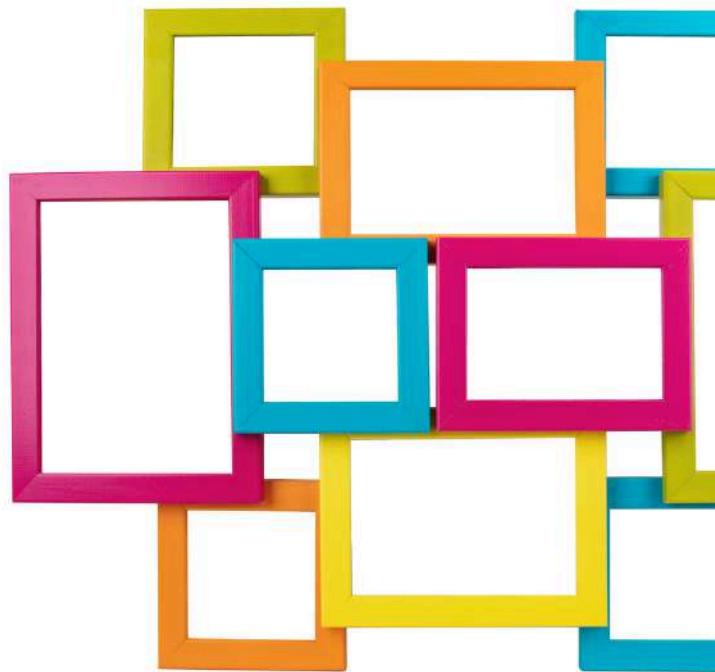
Power, equality, justice

Culture, identity, expression

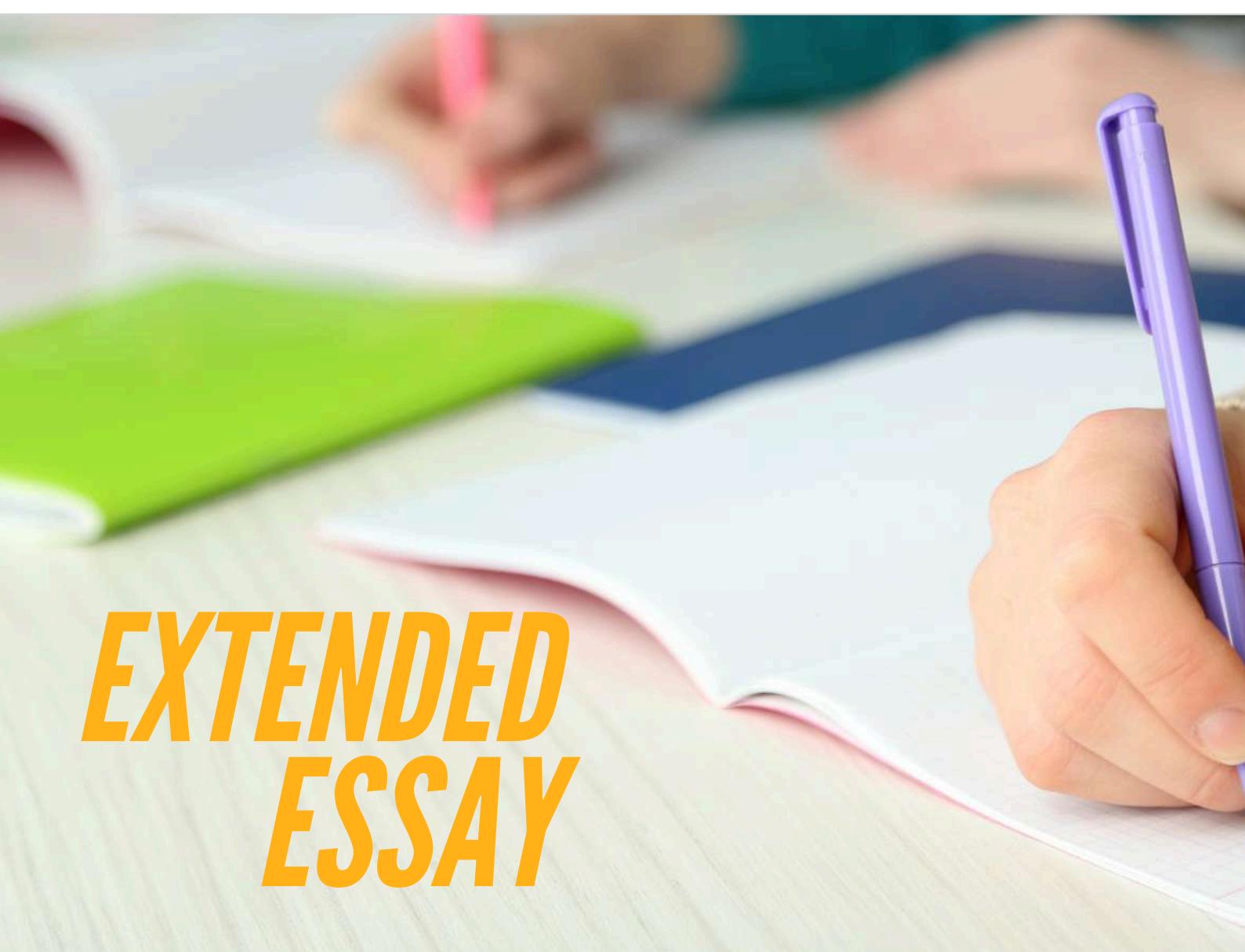
Movement, time, space

Evidence, measurement, innovation

Sustainability, development, change



EXTENDED ESSAY





Choosing Your EE Topic

Choosing your topic is **the most important step** in your Extended Essay journey. A good topic helps you feel confident, motivated, and organized from the very beginning.

Before you decide, **take your idea for a walk** –think about how it can grow, connect to more than one subject, and turn into a strong research question.

If you already have a general area of interest, these four guiding questions will help you narrow it down:

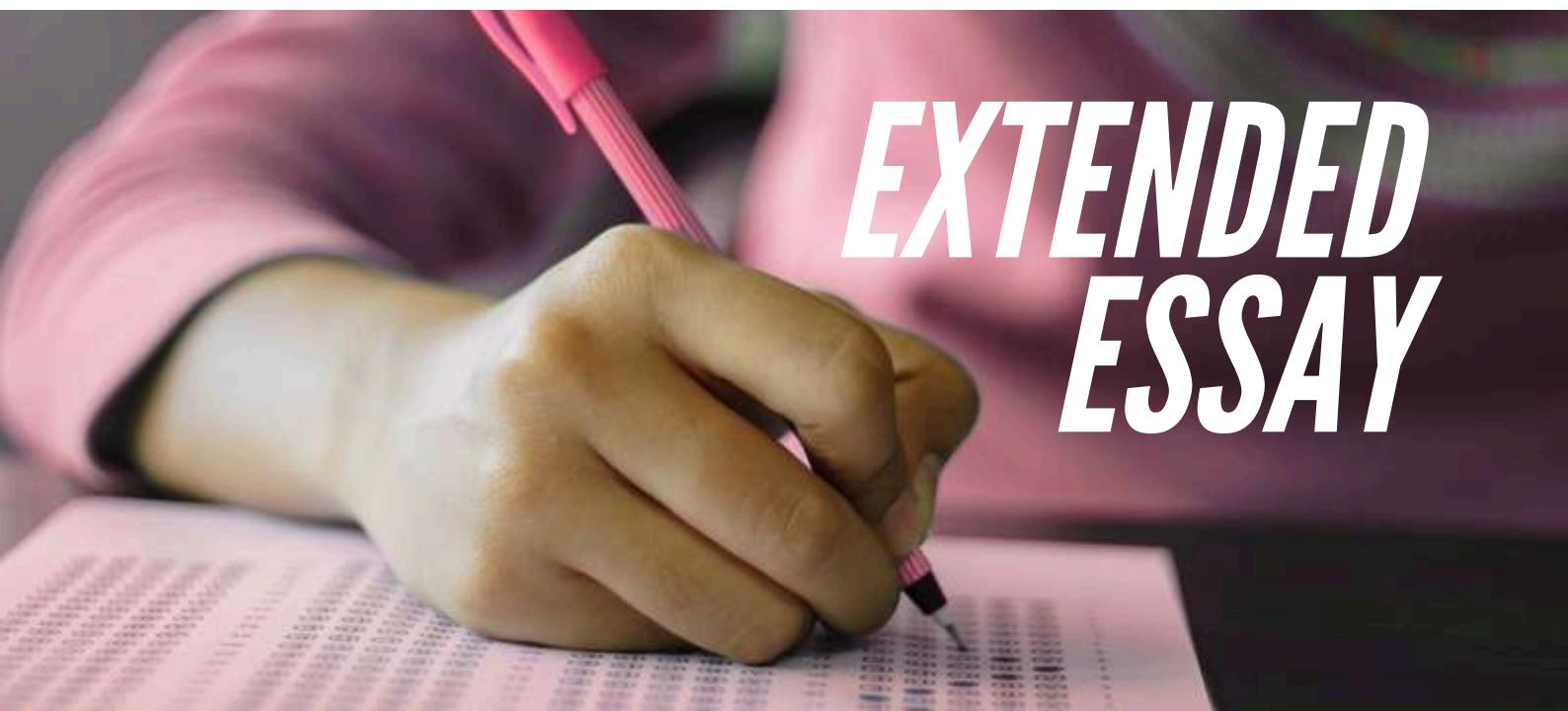
What part of this topic really interests me?

Why does this topic need an interdisciplinary approach?

Which framework fits my topic best?

Which two DP subjects will I use?

**EXTENDED
ESSAY**



Developing a Research Question

Once your EE topic is ready for the **interdisciplinary pathway**—meaning you have chosen a clear framework and two suitable DP subjects—the next step is to create a **strong research question**. Your research question is the heart of your Extended Essay. It guides your research, your analysis, and your writing.

A good research question should:

- ✓ Be clear and focused
- ✓ Be flexible
- ✓ Use both DP subjects meaningfully
- ✓ Encourage higher-level thinking
- ✓ Be manageable within 4,000 words



**EXTENDED
ESSAY**

The Subject-Focused Pathway

Your Extended Essay should always start with **your personal interest**. If your idea clearly belongs to **one DP subject**, then the **subject-focused pathway** is the right choice for you. This pathway allows you to explore a topic **deeply within one subject**, using its tools, concepts, and ways of thinking.

When should I choose the subject-focused pathway?

Choose this pathway if:

- Your topic fits **naturally into one DP subject**.
- You want to explore the topic **in depth**, not across subjects.

What does “subject-focused” mean?

A subject-focused EE means that you:

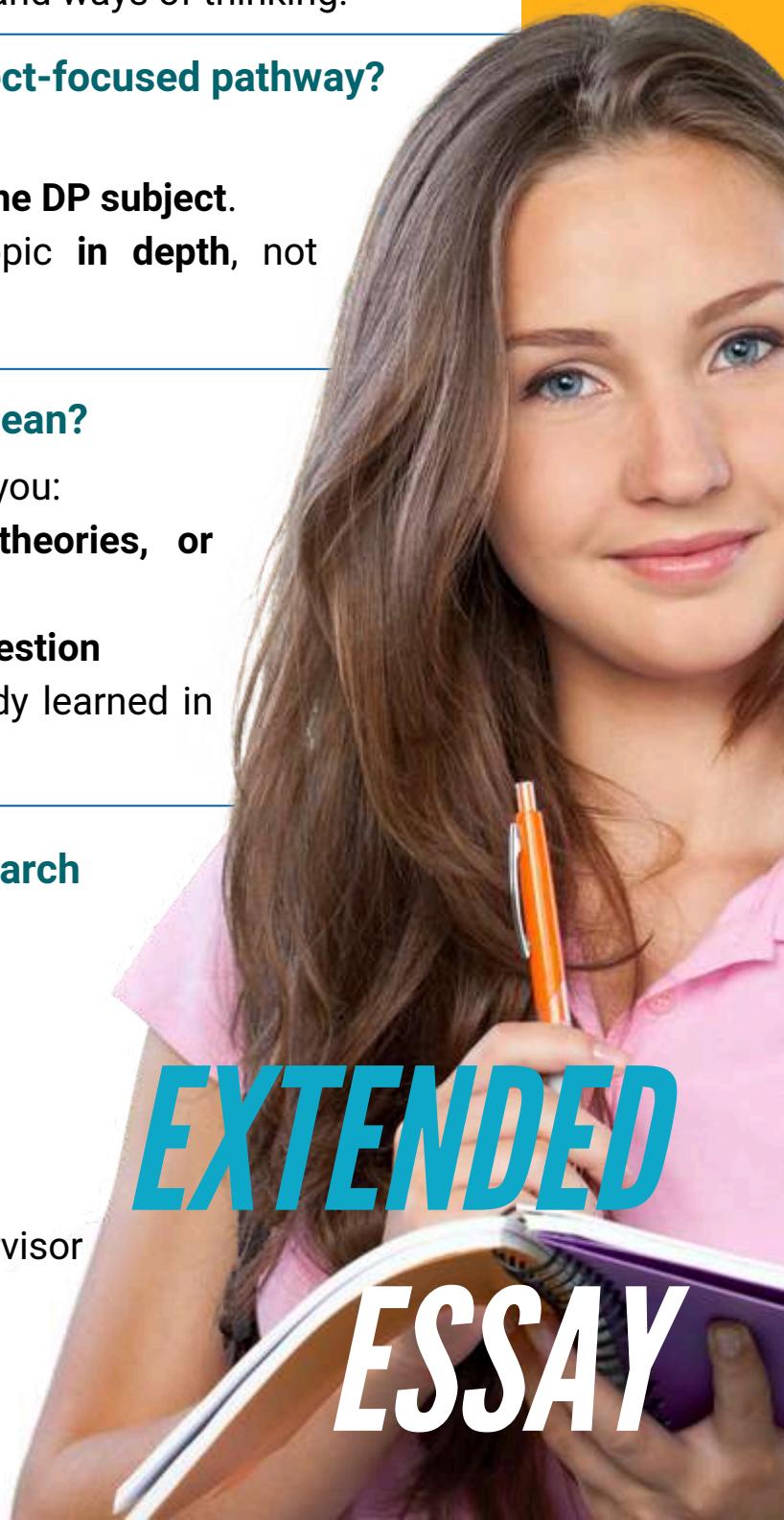
- Use **knowledge, concepts, theories, or methods** from **one DP subject**
- Answer **one clear research question**
- Build on what you have already learned in your DP classes.

How to do subject-focused research successfully

If you choose this pathway:

- Read both:
 - **Subject-specific guidance**
 - **Generic EE guidance**
- Use **EE support materials**
- Work closely with your supervisor and ask for feedback regularly.

**EXTENDED
ESSAY**



Rigour in a subject-focused EE

To produce a strong EE, your work must be:

- well researched
- accurate and detailed
- clearly written
- deeply connected to your chosen subject.

EXTENDED ESSAY



Choosing a topic (subject-focused)

Before deciding, **take your idea for a walk**—think about how it can grow within one subject.

Ask yourself these three questions:

- What specific aspect of this topic really interests me?
- Why is a subject-focused approach the best choice for this topic?
- How can this topic help me challenge myself and expand my thinking in this subject?



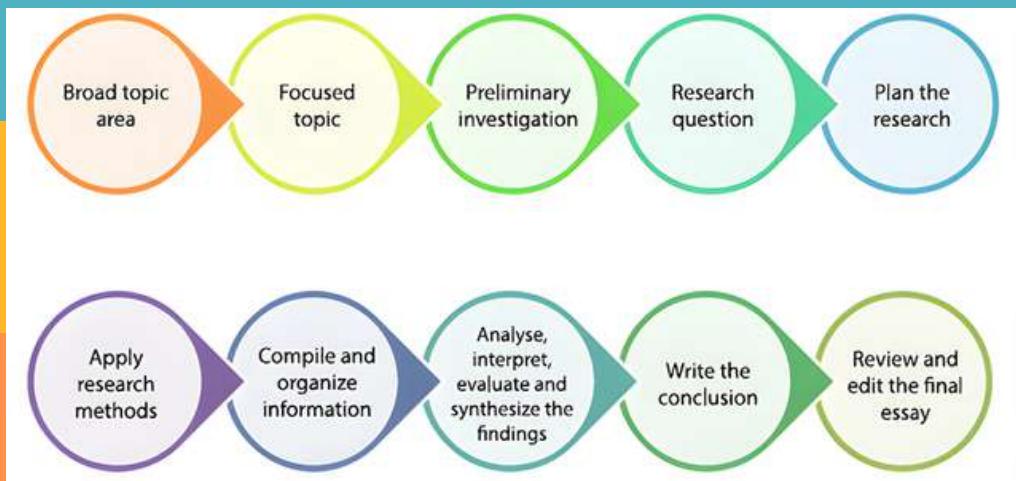
Developing a Research Question (Subject-Focused)

Once you choose your DP subject, develop a research question that is:

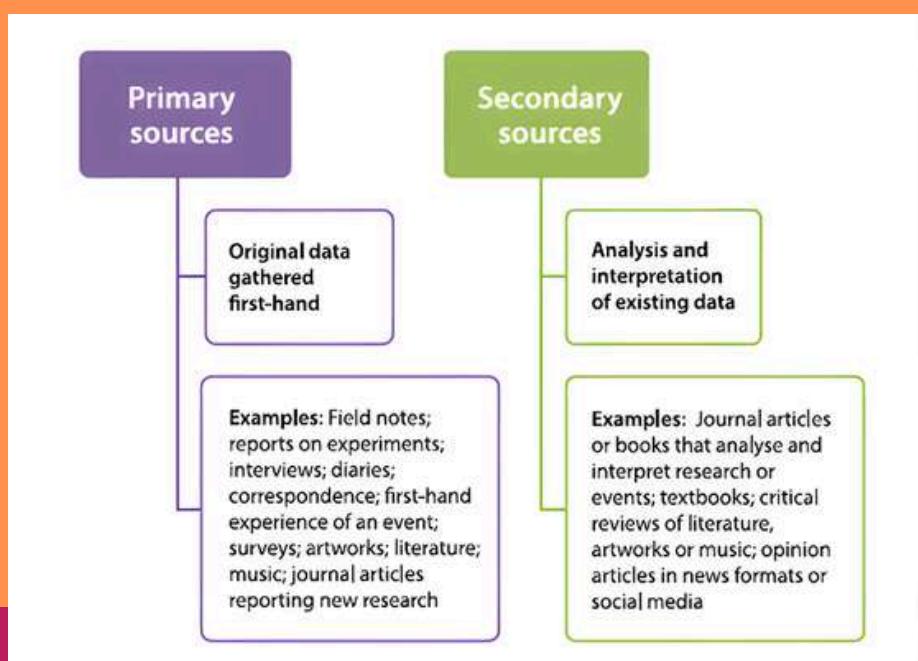
- **Clear and focused**
- **Flexible** (can be refined as research develops)
- **Based on one DP subject**, using its knowledge, concepts, theories, or methods
- **Analytical**, encouraging analysis, evaluation, and synthesis (not description).

The research and writing process

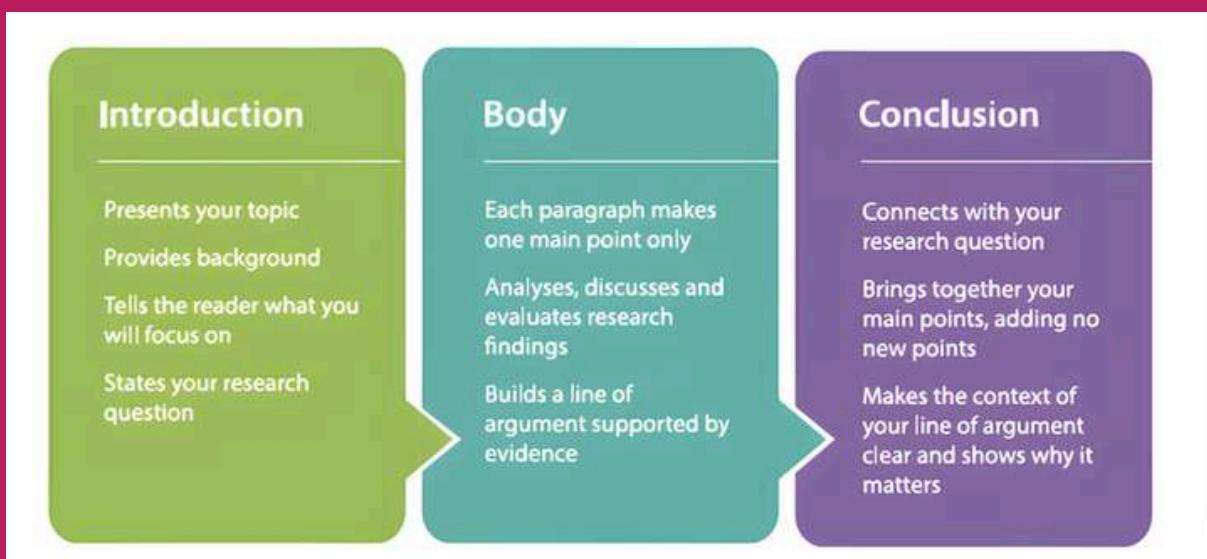
EXTENDED ESSAY



Primary and secondary sources



Structure



Academic Integrity

21

- Academic integrity means honesty and accuracy in your research and writing.
- Your EE must be authentically your own; any help or sources must be clearly acknowledged.
- Cite all sources properly so readers can distinguish your ideas from others'.
- Report your research and findings truthfully and accurately.



What to avoid

- **Collusion:** working with other students on work that will be assessed individually.
- Submitting someone else's work as your own or sharing your work for others to submit.
- Paying for or using services (or people) to **write your essay** for you.



Using AI responsibly

- Using AI to **write an essay for submission** is not allowed.
- AI may be used as a **support tool** (e.g., ideas, comparison, checking language), but:
- It must be **acknowledged and cited**.
- Information must be **checked and verified** with reliable sources.



Your Values, Skills, and Ethics

- Be a **principled learner**: cite sources correctly, use others' ideas to support your own, and never fabricate data or quotations.
- **Cite while writing** and learn from feedback—this builds authentic academic integrity.
- Use the **RRS** to stay organized: clearly label your ideas, quotes, paraphrases, and record source details early.
- Ask for help from your **supervisor** when unsure and practise these skills in all your work.

Well-being, Ethics, and Safety

- Discuss **sensitive topics** with your supervisor and follow IB ethical guidelines.
- Respect **participants' well-being, privacy, culture, and informed consent**.
- Follow **safety rules**, especially for experiments and fieldwork.
- Be **environmentally responsible** in fieldwork, travel, and use of materials.

**EXTENDED
ESSAY**



Reflection and the Extended Essay

The Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS)

- A personal space (physical or digital) to record ideas, notes, questions, and reflections.
- Helps you track your thinking, plan research, and connect with your topic.
- Supports preparation for reflection sessions and your final reflective statement.

Reflection Sessions with Your Supervisor

- Three mandatory sessions:
- First session – discuss potential topics, initial research, and emerging questions.
- Interim session – review progress, challenges, research methods, and refine your research question.
- Final session (viva voce) – celebrate completion, discuss learning, and reflect on skills and experiences.
- Check-ins between sessions are optional and help with guidance and progress but are not part of formal reflection.

Preparing for Sessions

- Bring RRS entries and relevant research.
- Reflect on:
 - Your topic and research question
 - Challenges and successes
 - Skills and knowledge gained
 - Ethical and practical considerations

The Reflective Statement

- 500 words, written at the end of the EE.
- Use your RRS, reflection sessions, and viva voce notes.
- Address:
 - What you learned as a learner
 - Skills and insights gained
 - How the experience changed your perspective
 - How you can transfer learning to future studies or life
 - Assessed using Criterion E: shows growth, evaluation, and transfer of learning.



Rules and Responsibilities

EXTENDED ESSAY

School



- Provides structure and guidance for supervision.
- Ensures students have appropriate supervisors and meet deadlines.
- Supports academic integrity and submission processes.

DP / EE Coordinator



- Ensures essays follow IB rules and subjects are approved.
- Guides students and supervisors on the process, reflection sessions, and ethics.
- Oversees submission and authentication of essays.

Supervisor



- Guides and mentors students (not doing their work).
- Holds three mandatory reflection sessions and regular check-ins.
- Reviews one full draft, ensures ethical research, and confirms authenticity.
- Advises on research, resources, and referencing.

Student

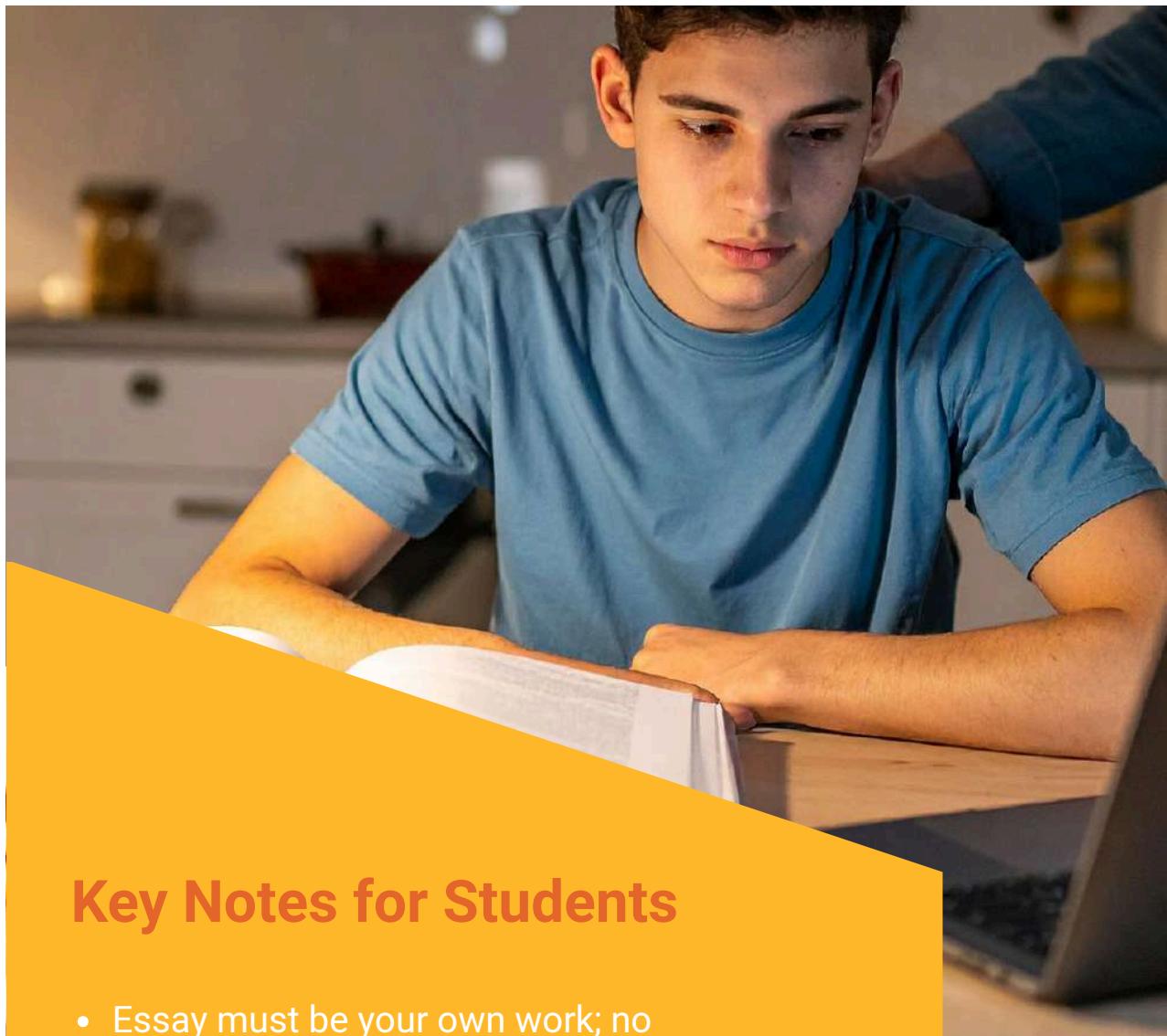


- Chooses a DP subject and ensures essay meets requirements.
- Maintains academic integrity, including correct citations.
- Attends reflection sessions, records reflections in the RPF, meets deadlines, and completes their essay independently.

School Library / Librarian



- Supports research skills, RRS, referencing, and evaluating sources.
- External Mentors (if needed)
- Can guide research but cannot replace the supervisor.
- Any guidance must be documented and approved by the school.



Key Notes for Students

- Essay must be your own work; no “double-dipping” from other DP tasks.
- RPF and reflections are mandatory for submission and assessment.
- Follow ethical and legal research standards.
- Supervisor ensures your essay is authentic before submission.



STAR COLLEGE



STARS COLLEGE



www.scs.edu.lb