

Extended Essay Supervision

The extended essay supervisor has four principal responsibilities:

- to encourage and support the candidate throughout the research and writing of the extended essay
- to provide the candidate with advice and guidance in the skills of undertaking research
- to ensure that the extended essay is the candidate's own work
- to complete the supervisor's report.

The supervisor should help candidates understand the relative importance of the extended essay in the overall context of the diploma. It is recommended that candidates spend about 40 hours in total on the extended essay. Since candidates will be faced with many other commitments during the Diploma Programme, the demands of the extended essay may appear daunting at times. An important role of the supervisor is to offer encouragement, support and reassurance during the preparation and writing of the extended essay.

The amount of time spent by the supervisor with each candidate will vary depending on the circumstances, but will usually be between two and three hours in total. To help candidates organize the time they spend on the extended essay, schools are encouraged to set internal deadlines for important stages in writing the extended essay. A schedule of stages will permit supervisors to maintain close contact with the candidates and may include: selecting the subject; deciding on the topic; formulating the research question; completing the research; drafting a rough copy; and submitting the final version.

The supervisor must ensure that the candidate is thoroughly conversant with all the pertinent information in this guide. The supervisor must provide advice and guidance appropriate to the particular requirements of the candidate, including assistance with:

- defining a suitable topic
- formulating a precise research question
- access to appropriate resources (such as people, a library, a laboratory)
- techniques of gathering and analysing information/evidence/data
- documentation methods for acknowledging sources
- writing an abstract.

While the supervisor is encouraged to discuss the choice of topic and research question with the candidate, the candidate must be allowed to decide on the topic and the research question and develop his/her own ideas. The supervisor must ensure that the chosen research question satisfies appropriate legal and ethical standards with regard to health and safety, confidentiality and human rights, and animal welfare and environmental issues. Further information about such issues is given in the relevant subject guidelines.

The supervisor is encouraged to read and comment on the first draft of the extended essay, but is not permitted to edit this draft for the candidate. It is the candidate's responsibility to correct mistakes and verify the accuracy of the contents of the extended essay.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that a completed extended essay cover accompanies the final version of the extended essay. If the extended essay cover is not signed by either the candidate or the supervisor, the essay will not be accepted for assessment and may be returned to the school. The supervisor must complete the supervisor's report on the inside of the cover and submit the extended essay in its cover to the IB coordinator.

The supervisor is responsible for ensuring that the extended essay is the candidate's own work, by monitoring the progress of the essay. In addition, the supervisor should read the final version of the extended essay. If the supervisor suspects that malpractice, such as plagiarism, has occurred, he/she must write a full report outlining the reasons for suspicion. The supervisor should present this report to the IB coordinator who will then follow the appropriate procedures. It may be necessary for the candidate to consult an external resource person during the research. This is permissible but it is the responsibility of the candidate's extended essay supervisor within the school to complete all the formalities described above.