

Advice for students

The table below is designed to help you think about the assessment criteria and whether you have addressed the expectations within your essay. You do not need to address all of the questions posed, but they do provide some guidance in terms of what to consider.

Criterion	Unpacking the criteria
A: Focus and method	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does this essay meet the requirements for the subject for which you are registering it? • Is your research question stated as a question? • Have you explained how your research question relates to the subject that you selected for the extended essay? • Have you given an insight into why your area of study is important? • Is your research question feasible within the scope of the task? Could your research question be “answered” or it is too vague? • Did you refer to your research question throughout the essay (not only in the introduction and conclusion)? • Did you explain why you selected your methodology? • Are there other possible methods that could be used or applied to answer your research question? How might this change the direction of your research? • If you stated a particular methodology in the introduction of your essay, or specific sources, have you used them? • Are there any references listed in the bibliography that were not directly cited in the text?
B: Knowledge and understanding	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you explained how your research question relates to a specific subject you selected for the extended essay? • Have you used relevant terminology and concepts throughout your essay as they relate to your particular area of research? • Is it clear that the sources you are using are relevant and appropriate to your research question? • Do you have a range of sources, or have you only relied on one particular type, for example internet sources? • Is there a reason why you might not have a range? Is this justified?
C: Critical thinking	<p>This criterion assesses the extent to which critical thinking skills have been used to analyse and evaluate the research undertaken.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you made links between your results and data collected and your research question? • If you included data or information that is not directly related to your research question have you explained its importance?

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are your conclusions supported by your data? • If you found unexpected information or data have you discussed its importance? • Have you provided a critical evaluation of the methods you selected? • Have you considered the reliability of your sources (peer-reviewed journals, internet, and so on)? • Have you mentioned and evaluated the significance of possible errors that may have occurred in your research? • Are all your suggestions of errors or improvements relevant? • Have you evaluated your research question? • Have you compared your results or findings with any other sources? • Is there an argument that is clear and easy to follow and directly linked to answering your research question, and which is supported by evidence?
D: Presentation	<p>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.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you read and understood the presentation requirements of the extended essay? • Have you chosen a font that will be easy for examiners to read on-screen? • Is your essay double-spaced and size 12 font? • Are the title and research question mentioned on the cover page? • Are all pages numbered? • Have you prepared a correct table of contents? • Do the page numbers in the table of contents match the page numbers in the text? • Is your essay subdivided into correct sub-sections, if this is applicable to the subject? • Are all figures and tables properly numbered and labelled? • Does your bibliography contain only the sources cited in the text? • Did you use the same reference system throughout the essay? • Does the essay have less than 4,000 words? • Is all the material presented in the appendices relevant and necessary? • Have you proofread the text for spelling or grammar errors?
E: Engagement	<p>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, after considering the student's RPPF.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have you demonstrated your engagement with your research topic and the research process? • Have you highlighted challenges you faced and how you overcame them? • Will the examiner get a sense of your intellectual and skills development? • Will the examiner get a sense of your creativity and intellectual initiative? • Will the examiner get a sense of how you responded to actions and ideas in the research process?