

Extended Essay. Comment and Assessment Rubric – Business & Management

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.

(Strands: Topic, Research question, Methodology)

The EE title must be stated in the form of a question that promotes the application of the higher order skills of analysis, evaluation and synthesis, rather than encouraging a descriptive essay.

The research question must be specific and sharply focused on a business problem or issue worthy of investigation. It should require the use of business management theories, tools and techniques. Topics that consider generic or broad issues will restrict the possibility of effective treatment within the word limit and will constrain performance on this criterion.

Students must use secondary resources in the first instance. Students should employ high-level academic research and writing skills, and show that the student is capable of intellectual discovery and creativity.

The essay should be based on a comprehensive review of the literature on the topic selected. It must not end up as a practical investigation resembling a higher level internal assessment.

Any essay based heavily on questionnaires and/or interviews will inevitably lose marks on a range of criteria.

If primary research is conducted it must provide information that is not accessible from secondary sources or that significantly enhances the value of the secondary data presented.

All research conducted, whether primary or secondary, should support specific quantitative and qualitative analysis and evaluation directly related to the research question.

Students must demonstrate that their essay has been well planned and that they have designed an appropriate and coherent approach and structure to address the research question.

Criterion A: Focus and method. *The Assessment Criteria*

Level	Descriptor
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	<p>The topic is communicated accurately and effectively</p> <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.

(Strands: Context, Subject-specific terminology and concepts)

The sources collected by the student should be relevant to the research question and applied appropriately, so that an argument can be formed and a conclusion(s) reached. The student should use the sources to place their topic into a wider business context.

For example, if the focus of the essay is on the role of social media, the student should be able to explain the impact the social media has on a number of business functions, such as marketing and recruitment.

The student must demonstrate that they have a good grasp of business terminology and that they can use this fluently, accurately and consistently when developing lines of argument. They may need to clarify terms or provide further explanation or definition of selected terms or concepts.

Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding. *The Assessment Criteria*

Level	Descriptor
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>
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.

(Strands: Research, Analysis and Discussion and evaluation)

Throughout the essay, the student is expected to present and analyse business data and sources and to evaluate the insights and significance of these for addressing the research question. To score highly against this criterion, the student needs to demonstrate a sophisticated application of analytical and evaluative skills.

An integrated use of research and business theories, tools and techniques is required to develop an argument and to assess the strengths and limitations of various perspectives on the topic under investigation. Essays that are wholly or largely descriptive in nature will score poorly against this criterion.

The student should develop a reasoned, coherent and logical argument in response to the research question. Where appropriate, conclusions to points should be made throughout, and there must be at least one culminating conclusion that summarizes the student's response to the research question. Any judgments made should be consistent with the argument presented and supported by evidence.

The student should comment on the quality, balance and quantity of the sources and reflect on any bias or limitations that may weaken the strength or affect the objectivity of supporting materials.

The student should point out any limitations or unresolved issues in the research and suggest further action to address these.

Criterion C: Critical thinking. *The Assessment Criteria*

Level	Descriptor
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> <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> <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.

(Strands: Structure, Layout)

This criterion relates to the extent to which the essay conforms to accepted academic standards in relation to how research papers should be presented. It also relates to how well these elements support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the essay.

Students may provide a section and sub-section structure to their essays, with appropriate informative headings. sub-headings should not distract from the overall structure of the essay or argument presented.

Any graphs, charts, images or tables from literature sources included in essays must be carefully selected and labelled. They should only be used if they are directly relevant to the research question, contribute towards the understanding of the argument and are of a good graphic quality. Large tables of raw data collected by the student are best included in an appendix, where they should be carefully labelled.

Too many graphs, charts and tables detract from the overall quality of the communication. Only processed data that is central to the argument of the essay should be included in the body of the essay, as close as possible to its first reference. Any tables should enhance a written explanation and should not themselves include significant bodies of text; if this is the case then these words will be included in the word count.

Students must take care in their use of appendices as examiners are not required to read them. All information with direct relevance to the analysis, discussion and evaluation of the essay must be contained in the main body of the essay.

Any material that is not original must be carefully acknowledged, with specific attention paid to the acknowledgment and referencing of quotes and ideas. This acknowledgment and referencing is applicable to audio-visual material, text, graphs and data published in print and electronic sources. If the referencing does not meet the minimum standard as indicated in the guide (name of author, date of publication, title of source and page numbers, as applicable), and is not consistently applied, work will be considered as a case of possible academic misconduct.

A bibliography is essential and has to be presented in a standard format. Title page, table of contents, page numbers, etc must contribute to the quality of presentation.

The essay must not exceed 4,000 words of narrative. Graphs, figures, calculations and diagrams are not included in the word count. Students should be aware that examiners will not read beyond the 4,000 word limit, nor assess any material presented thereafter.

Criterion D: Presentation. *The Assessment Criteria*

Level	Descriptor
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, after considering the student's *Reflections on planning and progress form*.

(Strands: Process, Research focus)

This criterion is applied by the examiner at the end of the assessment of the essay, after considering the student's Reflections on planning and progress Form (RPPF). It assesses the overall impression the examiner has with regard to the student's engagement with the research process and their subject area.

Students are expected to provide reflections on the decision-making and planning process undertaken in completing the essay. Students must demonstrate how they arrived at a topic as well as the methods and approach used. This criterion assesses the extent to which a student has evidenced the rationale for decisions made throughout the planning process and the skills and understandings developed.

For example, students may reflect on:

- the approach and strategies chosen, and their relative success
- the Approaches to learning skills they have acquired and how they have developed as a learner
- how their conceptual understandings have developed or changed as a result of their research
- setbacks faced in their research and how they overcame these
- questions that emerged as a result of their research
- what they would do differently if they were to undertake the research again.

Effective reflection highlights the journey the student has engaged in through the EE process. In order to demonstrate that engagement, students must show evidence of critical and reflective thinking that goes beyond simply describing the procedures that have been followed. Reflections must provide the examiner with an insight into student thinking, creativity and originality within the research process. The student voice must be clearly present and demonstrate the learning that has taken place.

Criterion E: Engagement. *The Assessment Criteria*

Level	Descriptor
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors below.
1–2	Engagement is limited. <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Reflections on decision-making and planning are mostly descriptive.- These reflections communicate a limited degree of personal engagement with the research focus and/or research process.
3–4	Engagement is good. <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	Engagement is excellent. <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 setbacks 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.