

# IB EXTENDED ESSAY LESSON #6

## RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION SPACE

This is the final lesson before you start the actual process. As you have already seen, one of the important parts of the essay is undertaking reflection on the work that you are doing. In this lesson you will learn about what is required and how you do this.

### REFLECTION DURING THE EXTENDED ESSAY

Reflection takes place in two forms within the Extended Essay.

Overall, writing the Extended Essay is a reflective process and there will be many occasions when you reflect on your work. Whether or not you do this as a written activity or less formally is a decision you will take, with the advice of your supervisor.

However, there are three times during the Extended Essay process when you must formally demonstrate your reflection. These are shown below.

#### Formal reflection sessions

Session	When held	Outcome
<b>First reflection session</b>	Takes place once you have undertaken some preliminary research.	By the end of the session you should begin to formulate a working research question.
<b>Interim reflection session</b>	Takes place once you have undertaken a significant amount of your research and have begun to formulate an argument in response to your research question.	By the end of the session both you and your supervisor should feel confident that there is a clear and refined research question; a viable argument; sufficient sources and a clear understanding of the writing process.
<b>Final reflection session (Viva Voce)</b>	Takes place only once the final Extended Essay has been submitted.	It is a celebration of the completion of the essay and a reflection on what the student has learned from the process.

The outcomes of three sessions must be recorded on the [Reflections on Planning and Progress Form](#). Both you and your supervisor will add comments to this form. This form will be submitted along with your essay and, on the basis of this, the examiner will make a decision on how many marks to award you for the engagement criterion. The maximum word count on the form is 500 words. Your supervisor will talk to you about this when it is time for your first mandatory reflection.

## PURPOSE OF REFLECTION - IB PERSPECTIVE

Below is what the IB has to say about your reflections. You need to read this carefully:

- *Reflection in the Extended Essay focuses on the student's progress during the planning, research and writing process. It is intended to help students with the development of their Extended Essay as well as allowing them the opportunity consider the effectiveness of their choices, to re-examine their ideas and decide whether changes are needed.*
- *The emphasis in the Extended Essay is on PROCESS reflection, characterised by reflecting on conceptual understandings, decision-making, engagement with data, the research process, time management, methodology, successes and challenges, and appropriate sources.*
- *Students will be encouraged to informally reflect throughout the experience of completing an Extended Essay, but are required to reflect formally during their reflection sessions with their supervisor and when completing the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form.*
- *It is a critical evaluation of the thinking process*
- *It demonstrates the discovery and evolution of conceptual understandings*
- *It demonstrates the rationale for decision-making*
- *It demonstrates skills development*
- *Effective reflection highlights the journey the student has taken to engage in an intellectual and personal process.*

## THE RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION SPACE

The Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS) is a space where you can record and reflect on your thoughts and ideas as you go along.

The IB does not stipulate what format this RRS should take:

Primarily, it is a space

*"where students are able to record reflections on what they are reading, writing and thinking."*

What form it takes is up to you. But you do need to have one!

The RRS could be a written diary or folder but since you are likely to be remote from your supervisor, so you will need a space where it is easy to share your reflections online.

The good news is that through this course you do already have one. The course contains many reflection tasks. Whilst you cannot update Journal entries once submitted, you can add your own comments to them at a later date. You can update document submissions at any time. You may also have set up a Google or Office online document at the start of the course (see Lesson 1). This can function as all or part of your Researcher's Reflection Space.

There may be other online tools and spaces you are familiar with and like using. If you would prefer to use a different sort of space, then you can have a discussion with your supervisor to see what else might be possible.

You should also remember that prior to the mandatory reflection sessions, you will be required to share some of what you are writing in your Researcher's Reflection Space with your supervisor. This space is the central place for you to log your reflections in order that you can refer back to them when necessary.

## WHAT TO PUT IN THE RESEARCHER'S REFLECTION SPACE

Take some time to think about what you could record in the Researcher's Reflection Space. It is completely your decision but here are some suggestions:

- Your own personal reflection notes.
- Your responses to artefacts, such as photos, newspaper clippings, twitter feeds, blogs, and so on.
- Your evaluations of research resources.
- Your notes of any questions and prompts from your supervisor.
- Any subject-specific, or ToK or CAS questions that come up
- Mind Maps and other diagrams.
- Questions that emerge from your research.

Whatever you do and however you choose to record and organise the information, make sure it is clearly laid out and easy to follow and refer back to.

A bit of organisation now will save you a great deal of time when it comes to starting to write the essay.

## TASK: REFLECTION: MY PREPARATION SO FAR

This lesson is the end of the introduction to the Extended Essay. You should now have an overall understanding of the process and started work on some of the preparatory skills needed to be successful with the process. In the next unit, you will actually begin the process of choosing a topic, forming a research question and researching the topic.

Write a 200 word reflection on how well prepared you feel for the process. Also add any further questions that you would like to discuss with your supervisor.

*(Note: This assignment is not graded - it will be reviewed by your supervisor)*