

May 2015 extended essay reports

Arabic B

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0-7	8-15	16-22	23-28	29-36

The range and suitability of the work submitted

This year there was a variety of topics, however many of the topics focused on the category 3 literary option rather than categories 1 or 2. The majority of candidates who wrote on category 1 or 2 EEs seemed to choose relatively superficial topics that were broad and lacking sufficient focus, therefore failing to meet the aims of the extended essay. The linguistic abilities of the candidates was generally very high, and this meant that EEs were coherent with sustained and clear argument.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: research question

As mentioned most of the research questions were interesting and related to the three categories yet many were too broad and needed to be more focused. It is important to note that in some EEs there were no consistency in the research question: it was worded differently in each location that it was presented.

Criterion B: introduction

Not many candidates wrote about the significance of the topic under investigation, most of the introduction was a repetition to what was written in the abstract (which should be written at the end of the EE process). Few candidates were able to score high marks in this criterion. The component parts of the introduction must feature, and these are detailed in the EE guide.

Criterion C: investigation

Most of the essays relied solely on web sources, which in some cases are of dubious reliability and must be treated as such. As for the EEs that focused on literary topics, the

literary work tended to be the main source of information. The candidates need to use more reliable sources other than web sites.

Criterion D: knowledge and understanding of the topic studied

Most of the candidates show good knowledge and understanding of their topics. They are able to understand the topic and have good knowledge, yet the problem is using this information effectively and not in a way that is just descriptive.

Criterion E: reasoned argument

Generally, candidates with poorly phrased and unfocussed research questions struggled with this criterion, as the argument was unfocussed. In many cases candidates were unsuccessful in developing the argument to demonstrate an understanding of the research question. Not many candidates scored as highly as they could have with more focus from the outset, in this criterion.

Criterion F: application of analytical and evaluative skills

The essays that scored well in this criterion were those who were able to integrate their primary and secondary resources in one meaningful text. Some of the essays were of a descriptive nature and neglected the analytical and evaluative skills that needed to be exhibited in order to support their research question.

Criterion G: use of language appropriate to the subject:

Most of the candidates were able to score high marks on this criterion, and used the correct subject specific terminology which added to the overall coherence.

Criterion H: conclusion

This criterion was problematic in some essays. Candidates in some cases present new information and do not retain the information presented in the essay. As detailed in the EE guide, there are component parts required of a conclusion, and all must be present in order to achieve the higher mark.

Criterion I: formal presentation

Formal presentation was generally very well done and candidates followed the formal requirements mentioned in the guide. However, some overlooked some of the requirements such as the table of contents.

Criterion J: abstract

In most cases the abstracts were written better than in previous years, yet in some cases some candidates forget to include the required components (question, method/scope and conclusion). These aspects need to be presented clearly in a straight forward manner in order to be awarded the higher mark.

Criterion K: holistic judgement

Supervisor comments are very important and useful for examiners in the process of assessing the extended essay. The comments need to be clear and not subjective in order to assist the examiner in reaching a fair mark. Supervisors should use the wording of this assessment criterion in order to guide their comments, and focus specifically on strengths demonstrated by the candidate during the research process that may not be wholly present in the essay itself.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

- It would be very useful for candidates to explicitly identify which category the research question is related to on the coversheet. There must be consistency in writing the research question on the cover page and within the essay. It should be consistently phrased.
- Candidates and supervisors are reminded to evaluate the reliability of all sources especially those from the web and to use a variety of sources.
- Quotations should contain proper quotation marks and should be relevant to the point being made.
- Candidates must be given the criteria by the supervisors and to know how to follow each part.
- Supervisors should explain to candidates that easy marks are lost if the component parts of the abstract, introduction, conclusion, are not presented. Overlooking these requirements is self-penalising on the part of the candidate, as the higher marks cannot be awarded.