

MODES DE LA CONNAISSANCE | FORMAS DE CONOCIMIENTO | WAYS OF KNOWING

# IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014

ROME • 16–19 OCTOBER



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## **IB AFRICA, EUROPE & MIDDLE EAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE 2014**

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# **Engagement in the Extended Essay: the role of reflection**

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# Aims of this presentation

- To contextualise the role of reflection in the core;
- To explore reflection in the extended essay;
- To develop an understanding of the role that engagement and reflection will play in the new iteration of the EE;
- To explore how student reflection in the EE can be facilitated.

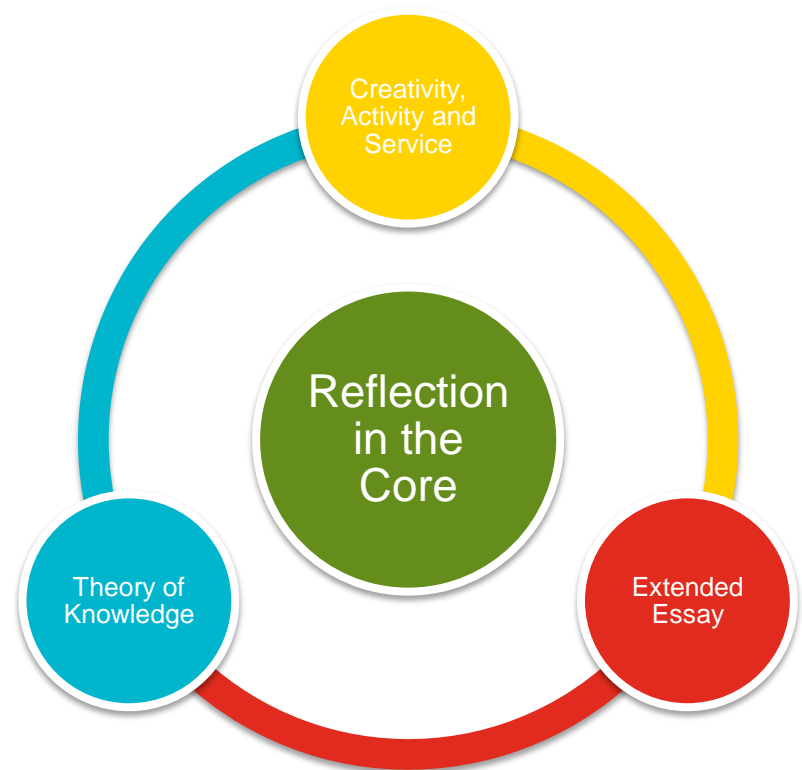


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# Reflection in the core

Being reflective is one attribute of the IB learner profile.

***‘We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.’***





# What is reflection?

- Talk to the person or persons sitting next to you.
- What do you understand by reflection?
- Discuss the role of reflection in learning: Identify some of the advantages of reflection. What, if any, are the barriers to reflection in learning?
- How do you see reflection being different in the three components of the core?



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# Reflection in CAS

- Reflection is central to building a deep and rich experience of CAS. It focuses on students exploring their own actions and reflecting on their personal growth.
- The emphasis in CAS is on **AFFECTIVE** reflection, characterised by reflecting on attitudes, feelings, values, principles, motivation, emotions and self-development.
- Students will be encouraged to informally reflect on their CAS experiences throughout the CAS programme, but are required to reflect formally when developing a CAS portfolio.



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# Reflection in TOK

- TOK is about reflecting on the nature of knowledge. Students are encouraged to reflect on how knowledge is constructed as well as the commonalities and differences in their subject areas.
- The emphasis in TOK is on **CRITICAL** reflection, characterised by reflecting on metacognition, evaluation, justification, arguments, claims and counter claims, underlying assumptions and different perspectives.
- Students will be encouraged to informally reflect on their engagement with knowledge throughout the course, but are required to reflect formally as part of the TOK essay and the TOK presentation.



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# Reflection in the EE

- Reflection in the EE focuses on the student's progress during the planning, research and writing process. It is intended to help students with the development of their EE 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 EE 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 EE, but are required to reflect formally during their reflection sessions with their supervisor and when completing the *Reflections on Planning and Progress Form*.





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# Rationale for introducing an engagement criterion

- Good practice.
- To facilitate the development of learner profile attributes.
- Supports, and is supported by the new *Approaches to Teaching and Learning* initiative.
- To encourage students to plan, review and reflect on their own progress in the research process.
- To strengthen the supervision process.
- To form part of an assessment of students' engagement with their topic and the research process.
- To monitor and ensure the authenticity of student work.



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# The role of reflection in the EE

- 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.



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# 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.
- It is worth 6 out 34 marks.



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# Criterion E: Engagement

## Engagement with the process:

- the student has engaged in discussions with their supervisor in the planning and progress of their research; the student is able to reflect on and refine the research process, and react to insights gained through the exploration of their research question;
- the student is able to evaluate decisions made throughout the research process and suggest improvements for their own working practices.

## Engagement with their research focus:

- an insight into *their* thinking, *their* intellectual initiative, *their* creative approach through reflections on the thought and research process;
- the extent to which the student voice is present rather than that of the supervisor and academics; is the student's engagement reflected?



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# Facilitating student engagement

- The role of the supervision and reflection process
- The role of the '*Researcher's Reflection Space*'
- The role of the supervisor
- The '*Reflections on Planning and Progress form*'



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# The supervision and reflection process

- The current 3-5 recommended hours
- Included in this are 3 mandatory reflection sessions, which must be recorded on the '*Reflections on Planning and Progress form*'
- Recording of reflections is mandatory and the RPPF must be submitted with the EE for assessment under criterion E
- New guidance will be provided on how students and supervisors can prepare for these reflection sessions.



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# Reflection sessions

## First reflection session

- This session should take place once the student has undertaken some preliminary research.
- By the end of this session students should begin to formulate a working research question.

## Interim reflection session

- This session should take place once the student has undertaken a significant amount of their research and have begun to formulate an argument in response to their research question.
- By the end of this session both the student and supervisor should feel confident that there is a clear and refined RQ; a viable argument; sufficient sources; and a clear understanding of the writing process.

## Final reflection session (Viva Voce)

- This session should take place once the final version of the EE 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 Researcher's Reflection Space (RRS)

- The RRS is a personal learning environment that can be either a physical or virtual support tool.
- A space in which students are able to record reflections on what they are reading, writing and thinking.
- It supports learning, thinking, critical analysis and evaluation and contributes not only to the development of a successful extended essay but also to skills and competencies for pathways beyond the Diploma Programme.
- It can be used to:
  - Record their reflections;
  - Respond to artefacts, such as photos, newspaper clippings, twitter feeds, blogs, etc;
  - Respond to prompts and questions that may arise in the students' subject areas, TOK classes or other aspects of the DP;
  - Create Mind Maps®;
  - Record emerging questions.





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# An example from a RRS

IB Research Reflection Space #3 Date: 29 May 2013



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RRS 7: What are some struggles you faced in reaching this point of your essay?

I faced many struggles on the road to writing my essay. As soon as the extended essay topic was introduced, I was very unsure of what I wanted mine to focus on. I had narrowed my options down to either an essay in world studies, or an essay in literature, analyzing two novels. Eventually, I chose literature, and am very happy with my choice. I do not regret my decision, yet there still were many struggles to overcome. I decided on my novels fairly quickly, yet seemed to be having troubles as one of my novels, *The Kite Runner*, was significantly larger in length than my second novel, *Of Mice and Men*. My essay was to analyze the two novels side by side, and making sure that *The Kite Runner* does not dominate it, is definitely a struggle. Besides that, I was also unsure of what my detailed topic would be. Writing an essay in lit class is one thing, but a 4000 word extended essay is slightly different, in the way that it must be much more detailed; and I was worried that I would not be able to find a good enough topic that I could write about without being repetitive. However, as summer went on, I began overcoming each of my obstacles, and now have half of my essay done, and believe that I am in good shape with the work I have so far.



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# The RRS and reflection sessions

- Evidence from a RRS can be used to stimulate discussions in the reflection sessions.
- In the first reflection session this may include: initial topic exploration; possible sources and methods; preliminary research questions; and, personal reactions to the research topic.
- In the interim reflection session this may include: reactions to readings; a timeline; a possible argument outline; setbacks and strategies for dealing with them.
- In the final reflection, the viva voce, this may include: new questions uncovered; what they have learnt about the topic and their own learning; the significance of their research.



# The role of the supervisor: responsibilities

- Working with the person or persons sitting next to you discuss what you think are the responsibilities of an EE supervisor
- Who can be an EE supervisor?
- What can a supervisor do?
- What are supervisors not permitted to do?
- *Share good practice:* How might DP/EE coordinators support the role of the supervisor more effectively?



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# The role of the supervisor

- The supervisor provides the student with advice and guidance in the skills of undertaking research.
- Encourages and supports the student throughout the research and writing of the extended essay.
- Guides the student in formulating a well-focused research question which satisfies appropriate legal and ethical standards.
- The supervisor is not expected to verify content within the student's extended essay. It is the student's responsibility to make sure credible/accurate sources have been used.



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# Guiding student reflection

- In critically reviewing student engagement in the research process, it might help to think in terms of three different levels of reflection:
  - descriptive,
  - analytical,
  - and evaluative reflection.
- These levels correspond to the attainment levels of the rubric for Criterion E: Engagement.





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# Questions students might consider

| Descriptive   | Analytical   | Evaluative   |
|---|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•What did I do?</li><li>•How did I undertake my research?</li><li>•What were the problems I faced?</li><li>•Did my approach or strategies change throughout the process?</li><li>•What have been the high and the low points of the research and writing process?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•Was my research successful?</li><li>•If I changed approach or strategies during the process, why did I do this?</li><li>•What did I learn from the experience in terms of my understanding of the subject area and/or the skills needed to undertake research?</li><li>•How has my understanding of the topic and research process developed throughout the task?</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•If I were to undertake this research again, would I do it differently – if so, why or why not?</li><li>•What has affected this?</li><li>•If I did do the research again would I change the theories applied, the methodological approach? Would this have led to a different outcome?</li><li>•What can I conclude from this?</li><li>•Were the strategies I used for undertaking my research the most appropriate for achieving my outcomes?</li><li>•What, if any questions emerged as a result of my research that I was not expecting? Would these questions influence my approach if I were to undertake the research again?</li></ul> |





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# The Reflections on Planning and Progress form (RPPF)

- Two-page writable PDF for student and supervisor comments.
- Submitted with the essay for external assessment.
- Schools have already been informed of this change.
- The form is now available on the OCC for schools to begin using in preparation for the formal requirement in the new guide of 2016.
- Common approach in MYP personal project and proposed for the IBCC reflective project.



# Thank you.

## Any questions?

- Please send comments or questions to:  
[dpdevelopment@ibo.org](mailto:dpdevelopment@ibo.org)