IB Extended Essay in History
Essential Check-List

This sheet provides guidance regarding how to lay out your Extended Essay in History. It should be used alongside the marksheet grid which you should also have been provided with.

Research Question - Front Cover

- Research Question
- A relevant picture with a caption underneath
- Your name and candidate number
- “International School of Toulouse (FR042)”
- Overall Word Count (4000 words maximum)

Table of Contents – Page 2

- Provide a breakdown of the investigation in the format
  A. Abstract Page 3
  B. Introduction Page 4
  C. Investigation Page 5
    1. [Factor 1] Page 5
    2. [Factor 2] Page X
    3. [Factor 3] ...etc
  D. Conclusion Page X
  E. Bibliography Page X
  F. Appendix Page X
    1. [Description] Page X
    2. [Description] ...etc

A. Abstract – Page 3

1. Research Question
   “This essay investigates the question [your research question goes here].”
2. Scope of the Investigation
   “The investigation makes use of a range of primary and secondary sources:…”
   “The investigation is structured in the following manner…”
3. Conclusions Reached
   “The main conclusions reached in the investigation are that…”

An abstract is is designed to allow readers to understand quickly the contents of the extended essay. Any Abstract exceeding 300 words gets 0/2 marks.

B. Introduction – Page 4

1. Historical Relevance
   Outline why the topic / period you have chosen for study is so important to know about, and why your question within that topic is such an important one to answer.
2. Contemporary Relevance
   Why the issues raised by your question still have contemporary relevance.

C. Investigation – Page 5 onwards

1. Structure of the Investigation
   Outline how the investigation is structured (“The investigation will firstly consider… it will then move on to… Following this, consideration will be given to… [etc]”)
2. Source Material
   Outline the (a) Primary sources and (b) Secondary sources you will use. For each source referred to, explain its values (origin, purpose) and its limitations (origin, purpose). Add a footnote next to each source mentioned giving a full Harvard Author-Date reference.
3. The Main Debates

---

1 The limit of 4000 words DOES include the introduction, the investigation itself and the conclusion. It DOES NOT include the Abstract, Contents Page, Bibliography or Appendix. Footnotes are NOT included in the overall word count.
(i) What are the main disagreements between the sources with regard to your question?
(ii) Why do the sources disagree so strongly?

4. Analysis of the debate
This is the main body of course essay.
Proceed to examine each key argument / factor in turn.
Within each paragraph, take every opportunity to consider the value and limitations of each
source that you use (Origin? Purpose? Friendly or hostile witness? Untrue, or merely
incomplete? Written to inform, or to persuade?)
evaluating its strengths and weaknesses and reaching your own judgment at the end of each
section.

D. Conclusion
• “This investigation has sought to answer the question ‘[your question here’].”
(Restate the research question)
• “The evidence and arguments considered has led me to the conclusion that the
answer to this question is that…”
(Answer the research question as far as you are able).
• “Nevertheless, my studies demonstrate that there are clearly problems with reaching
a final answer to the question because…”
(Comment here on such things as (a) weaknesses of the source material available; (b) gaps
in the historical record; (c) the question produced different answers depending on “When”

E. Bibliography
1. Primary Sources
2. Secondary Sources
3. Other sources (including websites)
All sources should be listed alphabetically (by author surname), using the Harvard Author-
Date-Title-Publisher-Page system. Websites should be provided in a similar form using the
format Author-Date accessed-Title of page.

F. Appendix
• Any sources included as Appendix items must be referred to within the main body of the
study either in brackets like this (Appendix 1) or as footnotes like this².
• Material in the Appendix is not included in the overall word count.

Miscellaneous Points
• The limit of 4000 words DOES include the introduction, the investigation itself and the
conclusion. It DOES NOT include the Abstract, Contents Page, Bibliography or Appendix.
Footnotes are NOT included in the overall word count.
• Page Numbers are required on all pages.
• Tables and charts should appear in the body of the essay, as close as possible to their first
reference.
• The examiner can award 4 marks for “Holistic [Overall] Judgment”. The key thing here is an
interesting, narrow question, examined through original and stimulating resources, which are
well analysed and evaluated.
• Remember that visual sources (photographs, paintings, cartoons) have the benefit of taking
up none of your valuable word count, breaking up the study, making it look more professional
and providing stimulating insights. However, under no circumstances throw in visual sources
which you do not refer to within the study.

² Appendix 1