



Reflections on planning and progress form (RPPF)

Annotated exemplar



About this annotated RPPF exemplar

This annotated exemplar is designed to help both supervisors and students demystify the process of completing an RPPF effectively, making explicit what is often implicit for examiners, and provides a valuable model for students to achieve success.

What is included:

- For each reflection session, a suggested outline for what that session may focus on has been provided. Suggested topics that may be discussed at each session have also been included.
- A high-quality student reflection for each session has been included. These reflections fall into the highest markband for Criterion E, which is utilised to evaluate the RPPF.
- Each reflection has been annotated to identify how the requirements of Criterion E have been successfully met. Criterion E is added below for ready reference.

Extended essay: Criterion E

Level	Descriptors of strands and indicators
0	The work does not reach a standard outlined by the descriptors, an RPPF has not been submitted, or the RPPF has been submitted in a language other than that of an essay.
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 challenges experienced in the research process.• These reflections communicate a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement with research focus and process of research, demonstrating authenticity, intellectual initiative and/or creative approach in the student voice.

First formal reflection session

This initial reflection session should be a dialogue between the student and the supervisor based on the student's initial explorations. It is recommended that the student sends their supervisor an outline of their research proposal ahead of the meeting to give the supervisor the opportunity to review their work. This will ensure that the reflection session is focused and productive.

Topics of discussion that may arise during this session include:

- a review of the requirements and extended essay assessment criteria for the subject
- a review of ethical and legal implications, if applicable
- a dialogue about possible approaches and any potential problems that might arise
- a discussion of strategies for developing the student's ideas for the essay and expanding the research so that the essay starts to take form
- probing and challenging questions that will help the student focus their thinking; this should lead to the development of the student's research question
- an outline of the next steps that the student should undertake to refine their question; this should take the form of a research and writing timeline. (EE Guide, 2018)

At my first formal reflection session, I told my supervisor about my keen interest in WWII and the factors that influenced countries' decisions to join the war. I shared the findings of my preliminary research, highlighting my interest in the issue of neutrality of Spain and Sweden that never joined WWII. My supervisor advised me to choose one of those two countries so I decided to write about Spain. On my supervisor's advice to narrow focus, I decided to investigate whether pro-Nazi sentiments were a reason behind this neutrality. We discussed challenges around gathering reliable sources so I decided to use the OPCVL method to evaluate source reliability while ensuring that I communicate varying perspectives. My supervisor advised me to tap into sources written in my mother tongue since I am bilingual to access this diversity in sources.

1

The candidate shows awareness of the EE process.

2

The candidate shows an awareness of the challenges they may face in conducting this type of research. Strategies tied to concepts within the discipline are evident & the candidate acknowledges a need to become more informed on the topic before proceeding with more detailed research.

3

The candidate shows awareness of the assessment requirements, subject-specific research strategies, and plans for future action.

The interim reflection session

This session is a continuation of the dialogue between supervisor and student wherein the student demonstrates the progress they have made with their research. Students typically discuss any challenges they have encountered, offer their own potential solutions, and seek advice, as necessary.

During this session the supervisor might discuss:

- a completed piece of sustained writing from the student in order to ensure that they understand the academic writing requirements, including referencing formats
- whether an appropriate range of sources has been accessed and how the student is critically evaluating the origin of those sources
- what the student now has to do in order to produce the full draft of their essay, and ways and means of breaking down the task into manageable steps

By the end of the interim reflection session both student and supervisor should feel satisfied that there is:

- a clear and refined research question
- a viable argument on which to base the essay
- a sufficient range of appropriate sources
- a clear vision for the final steps in the writing process.

Between the interim session and the completion of the extended essay, students should continue to see their supervisor as needed. However, the third and final reflection session should not take place until after the extended essay has been completed.

Assessing causes for Spain's neutrality directed my research and I found many sources of information, which helped me produce a comprehensive annotated bibliography that proved to be of great value when I started writing my first draft. My sources of information were diverse, including a documentary, books, websites, videos, journals, and articles. Finding primary sources was one of the challenges that I had to overcome. Still, I overcame this when I sought out my supervisor, who directed me towards secondary sources, as many of them included primary historical knowledge. My outline was repeatedly revisited which made me initially realize that I had too much information about the causes of the Spanish Civil War. However, repeated revisions in consideration of the assessment criteria were also very helpful. A steady process of writing and revising eventually culminated in producing a final draft. I realized that planning is crucial to use my time wisely throughout this process. Moreover, I found sharing my struggles with my supervisor is more helpful than struggling alone because the advice and suggestions helped me tackle obstacles.

1

Candidate makes reference to the demands of criterion A and creates and unpacks an open-ended intellectual question

2

Candidate shows maturity and growth through self-reflection on the process of seeking advice during an academic undertaking

3

Candidate exhibits an awareness of what needs to be done to produce improved work

4

Candidate reflects on her planning making reference to her ability to consider actions in response to challenges experienced in the research process

Final reflection session (viva voce)

The viva voce is a short interview between the student and the supervisor, and is the mandatory conclusion to the extended essay process. Students who do not attend the viva voce will be disadvantaged under criterion E (engagement) as the 'Reflections on planning and progress form' will be incomplete. The viva voce is conducted once the student has submitted the final version of their extended essay. At this point in the process, no further changes can be made to the essay. The viva voce is a celebration of the completion of the essay and a reflection on what the student has learned from the process.

The viva voce is:

- an opportunity to ask the student a variety of open-ended questions to elicit holistic evidence of the student's learning experience
- an opportunity for the supervisor to confirm the authenticity of the student's ideas and sources
- an opportunity to reflect on successes and difficulties encountered in the research process
- an aid to the supervisor's comments on the 'Reflections on planning and progress form'
- The viva voce should last 20-30 minutes. This is included in the recommended amount of time a supervisor should spend with the student.

My viva voce was an important learning experience for me. My supervisor asked me a series of questions regarding my learning journey. Of significance for me was learning the importance of considering different historical perspectives when writing a historical investigation. For example, I learned from conducting this investigation Franco's perspective of political pragmatism. This subject intrigued me, and I would like to read further and learn more about it. In my viva voce meeting, one challenge I indicated was the importance of adhering to a very well-articulated work schedule. Being organized was an important factor that enabled me to produce a well-structured essay. Conducting this research also made me better understand issues related to selectivity and bias. I better understood that historians can gear the conduct of their research to validate a certain hypothesis by selecting sources of information that would enable proving a certain point of view. Thus, and due to the nature of the discipline of history, I was also aware that this discipline could often reflect a perspective of subjectivity.

1

Candidate shows a conscious awareness of growth in both communication and research skills

2

Candidate shows a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement

3

Candidate reflects on ATL skills she struggles with and the importance of developing them for EE success

4

Candidate shows an awareness of the difficulties faced when completing this type of research

Continued →

Supervisor's comments

The supervisor's comment on the Reflections on planning and progress form is not used to determine the student's grade against criterion E: Engagement but will be referred to as a context to check that the student's reflections are authentic and have not been fabricated. When completing this part of the form, supervisors should ensure that they include the following:

- Student's motivations for chosen topic and RQ
- Student's ability to stick to the action plan
- Student's strengths
- Student's development
- Student's approach to challenges
- Reference should be made to the viva voce
- Number of contact hours with student (guidance and feedback)
- Confirmation that this is the student's work.

I am very impressed and pleased with the candidate's intellectual and reflective growth throughout this process. I saw her knowledge and understanding blossom with time. She increasingly gained confidence in her ability to conduct her research, which was not significantly present when she started the writing process. The candidate chose a topic with a high level of personal interest, which was reflected in her engagement in the process. She stated that the extended essay has helped her understand the complexity of the topic and fostered in her an open mind about drivers for political decisions. During the viva voce, the candidate expressed how this was an excellent opportunity for them to understand the nature of history whereby different analyses could be present about the same historical event. Further, the candidate indicated that the process of completing the historiography was a challenge as the existing literature spanned across a spectrum from left to right-wing narratives but was able to tackle it successfully with the use of the OPCVL strategy. I was very impressed to see what looked like a very focused

1

Candidate's development

2

Candidate's motivation for the topic

3

Reference should be made to the viva voce- Candidate's development

4

Candidate's approach to challenges

5

Candidate's strengths

Continued →

essay, that effectively integrated historical concepts related to continuity and change and addressed the implications of political decisions. The candidate showed connections to and growth in her understanding of international-mindedness through this essay. I can confirm the authenticity of the candidate's work and that we spent approximately 3 hours working on the essay together.

5

Candidate's strengths

6

Confirm that this is candidate's work

7

Number of contact hours with candidate (guidance and feedback)



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