



# How to score maximum presentation marks

Scoring maximum formal presentation marks on your extended essay requires no subject knowledge at all, but every year students miss out on these easy points.

**John Royce** shows you how to guarantee every mark going

## Exam context



The advice in this column will not only help you get full marks on the presentation criterion of the extended essay, it will also give you the skills to present other essays for the IB or at university.

**T**he *presentation* of the extended essay (EE) is all about the look, feel and structure. It has nothing to do with the quality of your research or your argument.

For second-year students submitting their EEs in 2017, presentation is assessed under criterion I (see p. 27). For students starting the Diploma in or after September 2016 and submitting their EEs in 2018, presentation is assessed under criterion D. In both cases, the keys to success are almost, but not completely, the same.

## Word count

The EE should include no more than 4000 words. Not all words in your essay count towards the word count. The full list of what is and what is not counted is given in the EE guide (p. 20 for exams in 2017, p. 85 for 2018 onwards). If you are unsure, ask your supervisor.

At present, if your essay uses more than 4000 words, you will gain zero marks for formal presentation.

From 2018, you do not lose marks for going over the word count. Instead, examiners are instructed to stop reading at 4000 words. If your essay is longer, the examiner will not read your full conclusion. If you over-run badly, the examiner may not read your full discussion, evaluation or analysis. You may lose marks under criteria C (critical thinking) and B (knowledge and understanding) — so you could lose far more than 4 marks.

Footnotes or endnotes are not counted if they contain bibliographical references. However, these words are counted towards the 4000 words if they contain explanations or information necessary for your argument. If you want it read, include it in the text.

## Page numbering

Be sure to number your pages. Your word processor can do this for you. Start numbering on the first page after your table of contents. It is not difficult to include page numbers on your essay, but many students manage to forget them, and so lose marks.

## Table of contents

A good table of contents acts as a map: it signs the way for your reader, who will know the direction your essay will take. As you write your essay, it is a good idea to structure your work by including a heading for each separate section. When you compile your table of contents, use these same section headings. Avoid 'empty' headers like 'Introduction', 'Body' or 'Conclusion' — they don't contain any genuine information. Consider starting each new section on a fresh page and ensure that the numbers on the pages match the page numbers in the table of contents.

Criterion D (2018) includes assessment of structure. If your essay flows well with clear links between paragraphs and sections, you will score well for structure. If you wander from point to point and back again, your essay lacks structure. Section headings help you keep your points together and make your essay coherent.

Your supervisor might advise you not to use section headings in your essay. This depends on the conventions of your subject. My advice is still to use them while writing your essay, because they do guide the structure and the flow of your essay, and they help you compile your table of contents. If the recommendation is not to use them, delete them in the text (but not from the table of contents) before you upload your final copy.

## Title page

The title page is the first page the examiner sees, and should tell the reader what the essay is about — it is another signpost. For the present guide, the title can be presented as a statement or as a question. From 2018, the title page should include the topic of your essay, along with your research question (RQ) as a subtitle. Include your overall word count on the title page.



From May 2018 and the introduction of a new guide, an abstract will no longer be required. For essays submitted prior to this, include your abstract after the title page but before the contents list.

### Illustrative material

Illustrative material is an excellent way to support your argument — but make sure that it is relevant. Place it in the text close to where you refer to it and be sure to refer to it in the text (e.g. 'see Fig. 1').

Include a short caption with the illustration and a note of the source if the material is not your own.

### Citations and references

**Citations** are short links in the text that tell a reader that the words or ideas are not your own. They link to a full **reference**, usually at the end in a **bibliography** (list of references, can also be titled 'Works cited' or simply 'References'), though sometimes at the foot of the page instead of or as well as at the end of the essay. Referencing footnotes and parenthetical citations do not count towards the word count. For more on citing and referencing, see IB Review, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 13–15.

### Bibliography

You could lose marks if you include citations that do not link to a reference or references that do not link to a citation. The reference list is usually in alphabetical order and you may lose marks if it is not. One exception to this is for styles that use in-text numbers or letters to link to foot- or endnote references. Some of these styles have a single list at the end of the essay in numerical (not alphabetical) order. Ask your supervisor or librarian for advice.

Whichever term you use ('Bibliography', 'Works cited' or 'References') make sure that this is the term used in the table of contents. Start your list of references on a fresh page and be consistent in formatting your references.

For example, the first author is usually listed as:

Lastname, Firstname

If a work has two or more authors, some styles advise:

Lastname1, Firstname1, Lastname2, Firstname2 and Lastname3, Firstname3

while others advise

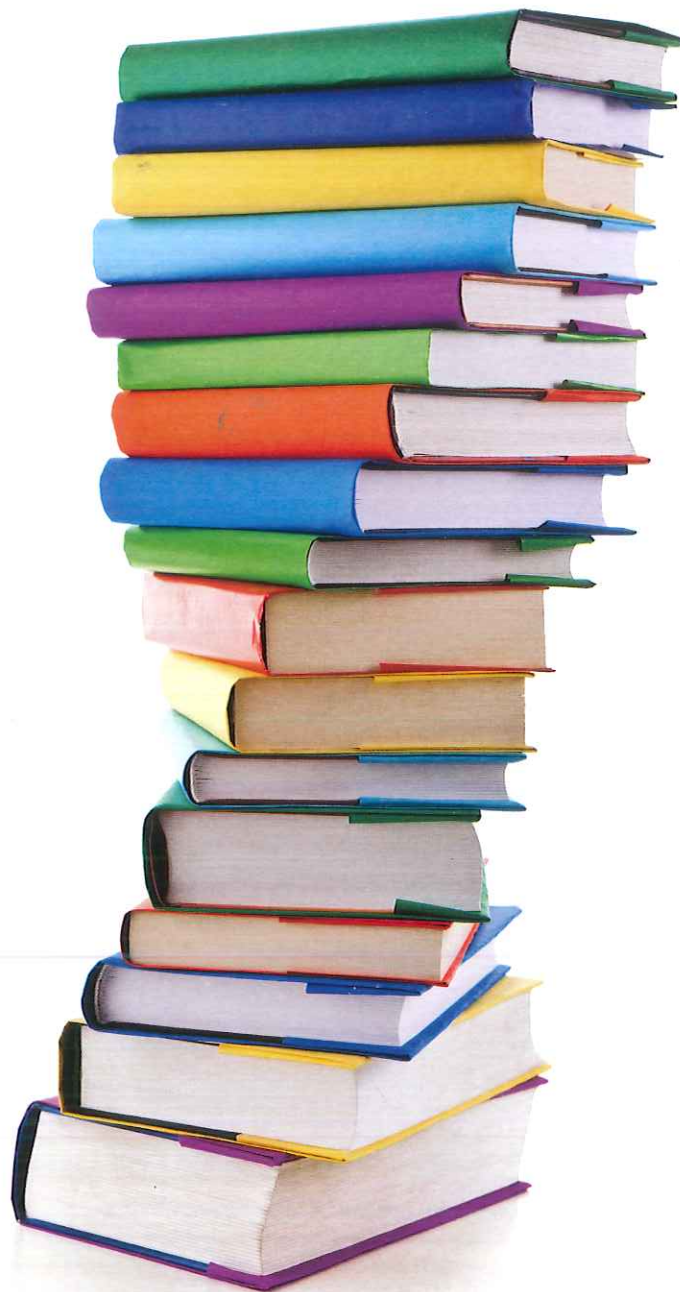
Lastname1, Firstname1, Firstname2 Lastname2 and Firstname3 Lastname3

Whichever form you use for two or more authors, be consistent. Similarly with punctuation: if you use upper case for all major words in a title (e.g. *Pride and Prejudice*), check that you have done this for all your references. If you use Sentence case (e.g. *Pride and prejudice*) check that this is what you use throughout.

Some subjects or guides suggest having separate alphabetised lists according to the type or format of your source material. In a music essay you might have a separate reference list for CDs and DVDs; a visual arts essay might have a separate list for illustrations. Check with your supervisor and with the subject-specific section of the EE guide.

### Quotations, paraphrases and summary

When you use the exact words of a source (i.e. when you copy and paste) you are quoting your source. You indicate that you are using a quotation by using quotation marks, or some other quotation marker — indented paragraphs are the most common alternative to quotation marks.



While quotations are commonly used in some subjects, other subjects favour paraphrasing or summarising other people's ideas. Whether you quote, paraphrase or summarise, it is vital that you show your use of someone else's words, work or ideas by citing the source in the text. Don't forget page numbers when you quote or summarise from printed work, and webpage addresses in the reference list for online material.

### Appendices

Appendices are included in the essay after the bibliography. In many ways, appendices are like illustrative material. If you are using them, they should be referred to in the text (e.g. 'full details in Appendix 2'), but examiners are not required to read them. Everything that contributes to your argument must be included in the text of the essay itself.

You might use an appendix to provide a survey questionnaire, raw data (such as measurements or survey responses), original



**Table 1** Presentation checklist



Element	Check for...	Done
Title page	Title  2017: if RQ included, is it the same wording as the RQ in the abstract and/or in the introduction? 2018 onwards: have you included <u>both the title (topic)</u> and the RQ?  Word count	
Table of contents	Have you used your section headings?  Do page numbers match the number in the text?	
Page numbers	Is every page numbered?  Do page numbers match the number in the contents list?	
Illustrative material	Does every graphic, table etc. have a <u>caption?</u>  Does every illustration indicate the source (if it is not your own material)?  Is every <u>illustration</u> mentioned in the text?	(Fig 1)
Quotations	Are all quotations clearly indicated (quotation marks or indented paragraph)?  Is the source of every quotation cited?	
Paraphrase and summary	Is the source of every paraphrase or summary cited?  Is it clear where your use of someone else's work starts and where it ends?	
Documentation	Are all citations in the text linked to a reference at the end?  Are all references at the end linked to at least one citation in the text?  Is the bibliography page headed ('Bibliography', 'Works cited', or 'References')?  Is the bibliography in alphabetical order (if this is the style you are using)? Is the bibliography in number order (if this is the style you are using)?  Are reference elements in the same order?  Is punctuation consistent?	
Appendices	Does every appendix have a title (and a source if necessary/appropriate)?  Is every appendix mentioned in the text?	
Word count	Is your word count <u>4000 words</u> or less after subtracting words/items that are not counted?	

**IBReviewExtras**



Download this checklist at  
[www.hoddereducation.co.uk/ibreviewextras](http://www.hoddereducation.co.uk/ibreviewextras)

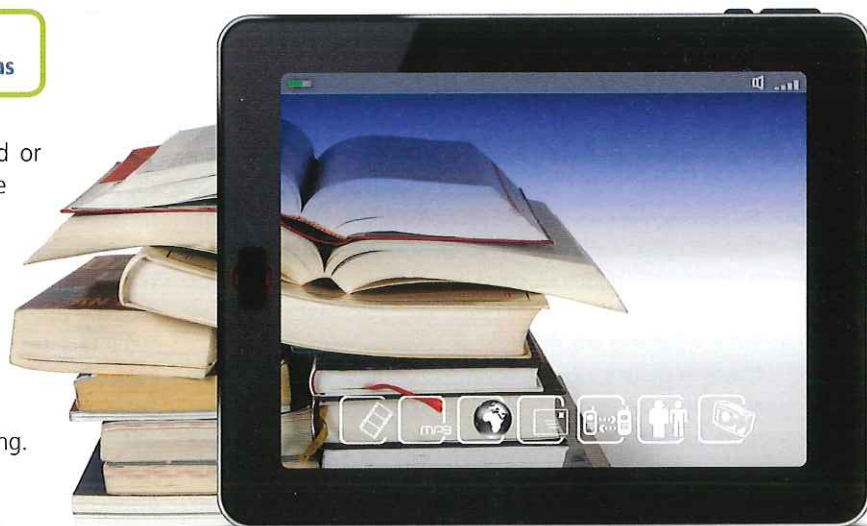
texts of translated material, copies of unpublished or out-of-print material and so on. Be sure to include a heading (similar to a caption for an illustration in the text) and the source if the material is not your own.

### Readability

It is important that the examiner can read your essay. Use a plain font (e.g. 12-point Arial), standard margins (2.5 cm) all round and double spacing.

### Before submission

As your final act of presentation, print your essay (either on paper or in PDF format) and proofread this carefully. Use the checklist (Table 1) to ensure you have covered all the points. In particular, review the page numbers and any text boxes or illustrations, as these can shift around in a Word document. If necessary, re-edit the Word file, re-print as PDF, and re-check. Once you are happy, upload the PDF version.



**John Royce** is a teacher and librarian, and has worked in England, Zambia, Malawi, Germany and Turkey. He was part of the team that produced *Academic honesty in the IB educational context* and *Effective citing and referencing*.