

Classical Languages Extended Essay Subject Guide

Overview

An extended essay (EE) in classical Greek or Latin gives students the opportunity to investigate in depth non-trivial controversial topics within studies of either the ancient Greek or Roman worlds.

Language requirements

Students will submit their essay in either English or Spanish, depending on their language of registration.

The essay requires students to engage with sources written in classical Greek and Latin, so they must also have sufficient proficiency in these.

Choice of topic

The chosen topic will normally focus on a non-trivial aspect of the language or literature and its impact on civilization of the ancient Greek or Roman world, where scholarly opinion is divided.

Controversy in scholarly opinion helps the students to find academic works related to the topic, enabling them to build and develop an argument.

Students may choose to focus on some aspect of:

- classical Greek or Latin language or literature, or
- classical Greek or Roman culture and civilization.

The topic must allow students to demonstrate the interwoven nature of the relationship between language, literature and the culture and civilization. However, since the language, literature, and culture and civilization are closely interwoven, it is appropriate to study the language in the context of the literature and civilization, and literature and civilization as presented through the classical Greek or Latin languages. In other words, students who focus on culture and civilization must show a connection to the

language or literature of classical Greek or Latin. It is not appropriate for a student to simply focus on the culture or civilization in isolation from the language or literature.

Examples of topics

✓ Focused topics	× Broad topics
The opening of Thucydides' history is a valid model for subsequent historians to aspire to	An examination of whether the purpose of Thucydides's history is revealed by its opening
The Melian debate, as presented by Thucydides: the true nature of Athenian democracy, or an atypical aberration	Thucydides' presentation of the Melian episode
The relevance of the autobiographical in an analysis of Catullus' poetry	Catullus' love poetry
Cicero's <i>First Catilinarian</i> effectively argues for Catiline's execution	Rhetorical techniques in the <i>First Catilinarian</i>

Treatment of the topic

Students will normally answer their research question by investigating appropriate texts and scholarly works on their chosen topic. Students should use these texts and commentaries as references in the essay.

They can also use other source material such as works of art, architecture and material culture if they help answer the question.

Language-focused essays

Students must show that they understand the morphology and syntactic structure of the language and how these elements are used within particular text(s).

Students must also link the language to the texts' cultural and historical background.

Literature-focused essays

Students must show an awareness of a work read, at least partly, in the original Greek or Latin.

Their essay should show they understand how the author uses the language to create particular effects, e.g. in terms of style.

Wherever relevant to the argument, students must identify, analyze and evaluate links between the language, literature and culture.

Culture- and civilization-focused essays

Students must show an understanding of both historical and cultural context and how studying the language and literature helps foster that understanding.

Students must establish the historical and cultural context of their topic. This is best done through appropriate references to art, literature or archeological sources. Secondary reading is therefore an essential part of the research process.

To meet all the assessment criteria for the EE students must engage in critical thinking. This means that they must analyze, discuss and evaluate the material that they present.

Examples of topics, research questions and suggested approaches

Once students have identified their topic and written their research question, they can decide how to research their answer. They may find it helpful to write a statement outlining their broad approach. These examples are for guidance only.

Topic	Creating a dream-like atmosphere: the use of language in <i>Aeneid</i>
Research question	How effectively does Virgil's use of language in <i>Aeneid</i> VI (lines 1–294) anticipate the dream-like atmosphere of his Underworld?
Approach	A textual analysis of the use of language and poetic techniques to anticipate the description of the Underworld in Virgil's <i>Aeneid</i> .

Topic	Religious architecture in Augustus' Rome: the prominence of temples
Research question	Why did Augustus give temples such prominence in his building program?
Approach	A thematic and historical analysis of Augustus' building program including an analysis of some sources in Latin.

Topic	The development of Attic "Middle Comedy"
Research question	Is Aristophanes' <i>Ecclesiazusae</i> the first example of Greek Middle Comedy? Why or why not?
Approach	An evaluative analysis of the <i>Ecclesiazusae</i> with respect to the structures and tropes of Attic Old and Middle Comedy.

Topic	The portrayal of the Trojans as villains in the <i>Iliad</i>
Research question	To what extent are the Trojans portrayed as the villains of the <i>Iliad</i> ?
Approach	An evaluative analysis of the way Homer portrays the Trojans in the <i>Iliad</i> and its implications.

An important note on "double-dipping"

Students must ensure that their EE does not duplicate other work they are submitting for the Diploma Programme. In particular, students of classical Greek or Latin should avoid overlap between their individual study and EE.

For example, a student whose individual study investigates Roman agricultural practices should not submit an EE examining the extent to which Virgil's Georgics promotes established farming techniques.

Differences between the EE and individual study

	EE	Internal Assessment
Research question	Controversial	Non-controversial
Treatment of the topic	Synthesis of content and evaluation of arguments from both primary and secondary sources to develop a full response to the research question.	Selection of primary sources relevant to the research question, supplemented by annotations.

Students risk their diploma if academic misconduct is detected.

Interpreting the EE assessment criteria

Criterion A: Focus and method

(Strands: Topic, Research question, Methodology)

An essay in classical languages must focus on an aspect, usually a controversial one, of the ancient Greek or Roman world. The topic that is being investigated must be clearly and precisely focused. It is advisable to state the topic as a way of a research question that is going to be under scrutiny and investigation. Students should not work with a research question that is too broad, too vague or too limited in scope. The student must explain why the topic is worthy of investigation with depth and insight, considering always the historical and cultural context of the research question. The chosen topic will normally focus on a non-trivial aspect of the language, literature or civilization of the ancient Greek or Roman world, where scholarly opinion is divided. Controversy in scholarly opinion helps the students to find academic works related to the topic enabling them to build and develop an argument. The student should specify how the topic is going to be investigated, stating the method that is going to be used to gather the information and what kind of sources is the student gathering and why. The information and the sources gathered should be relevant and

appropriate to the subject and to the research topic. The explanation for the methodology used should be convincing accordingly to the topic that is being investigated.

Criterion B: Knowledge and understanding

(Strands: Context, Subject-specific terminology and concepts)

The essay should show clear evidence that the student knows and understands the significance of the topic. The essay should show full awareness of the areas of knowledge and understanding that will be brought into the foreground in the essay. The essay should show then clear evidence of knowledge and understanding of the historical context and/or cultural features that would be necessary to state in the essay to address the research topic in a meaningful way. The essay should also explain how the research question relates to existing knowledge on the topic. Knowledge and understanding of the topic should be communicated in a clear way using the language and the terminology that is apt to the subject in which the student is registered and to the topic that is being investigated. The student should make use of subject and topic specific terminology and should do this with accuracy and consistency avoiding general or personal un-specific remarks not based in any source.

Criterion C: Critical thinking

(Strands: Research, Analysis and Discussion and evaluation)

The student will consider carefully the range of resources available that are relevant and appropriate to the topic. The essay should show clear evidence of substantial background reading. Students should gather data that will help them to develop a well-argued discussion on the chosen topic. The data gathered should be the evidence found in the academic works and reference books or articles to establish the context and to support the argument and conclusion of the essay. Students should avoid presenting common knowledge on the topic, and lengthy and irrelevant material. Students should analyze and discuss the research question avoiding at all costs merely describing or reporting, i.e., merely telling things without developing an argument based on the data gathered. Students should be aware of the need to give their essays the backbone of a developing argument. Students should avoid personal views: all

comments should be based on specific details and placed into context using references. The essay must show a solid foundation on specific relevant knowledge. This knowledge can then be analyzed, and, on the basis of this analysis, an argument can be formed and a conclusion to the research question reached. The analysis is developed through proper critical evaluation and discussion of the gathered information following an argument that is the backbone of any good essay.

Criterion D: Presentation

(Strands: Structure, Layout)

This criterion relates to the extent to which the essay conforms to accepted academic standards in relation to how research papers should be presented. It also relates to how well these elements support the reading, understanding and evaluation of the essay. Students may provide a section and sub-section structure to their essays, with appropriate informative headings if this fits with the particular conventions of individual disciplines. Students should be aware of the appropriate format for their chosen subject.

Use of charts, images and tables

In a classical Greek and Latin extended essay, any charts, images or tables from literature sources included in the essay must be carefully selected and labeled. For essays with a linguistic focus, charts and tables may be appropriate for demonstrating the relationship between certain words/structures. They should only be used if they are directly relevant to the research question, contribute towards the understanding of the argument, and are of a good graphic quality.

A bibliography is an essential structural element, contributing as far as it is visually presented, to criterion D, in addition to the other presentation requirements: title page, table of contents, page numbers, and so on.

While there is no explicit penalty in criterion D for exceeding 4,000 words, students should be aware that examiners will not read beyond the 4,000-word limit, therefore affecting the application of multiple criteria. Criterion D specifically may be impacted if, in exceeding 4,000 words, one of the structural requirements of the essay (for example, the conclusion, or

important illustrative material) is unassessed by the examiner because he or she is not required to read beyond 4,000 words.

Any material that is not original must be carefully acknowledged, with specific attention paid to the acknowledgement and referencing of quotes and ideas. This acknowledgment and referencing is applicable to audiovisual material, text, graphs and data published in print and electronic sources. If the referencing does not meet the minimum standard as indicated in the guide (name of author, date of publication, title of source and page numbers, as applicable), and is not consistently applied, work will be considered as a case of possible academic misconduct. Incomplete references and those that do not meet the minimum requirements as detailed in the Effective citing and referencing document are not penalized in criterion D, but examiners are required to alert the IB to candidates who overlook these minimum requirements, for further investigation. Criterion D assesses references and bibliography purely on how they are presented (for example, consistent, laid out in an appropriate academic manner).

Criterion E: Engagement

(Strands: Process, Research focus)

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 (RPPF).

Students are expected to provide reflections on the decision-making and planning process undertaken in completing the essay. Students must demonstrate how they arrived at a topic as well as the methods and approach used. This criterion assesses the extent to which a student has evidenced the rationale for decisions made throughout the planning process and the skills and understandings developed.

For example, students may reflect on:

- the approach and strategies they chose, and their relative success
- the '*Approaches to learning*' skills they have developed and their effect on the student as a learner
- how their conceptual understandings have developed or changed as a result of their research

- setbacks they faced in their research and how they overcame these
- questions that emerged as a result of their research
- what they would do differently if they were to undertake the research again.

Effective reflection highlights the journey the student has engaged in through the EE process. Students must show evidence of critical and reflective thinking that goes beyond simply describing the procedures that have been followed.

The reflections must provide the examiner with an insight into **student** thinking, creativity and originality within the research process. The **student** voice must be clearly present and demonstrate the learning that has taken place.