

# Global politics extended essay

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Extended essay

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*For grade boundary information, please refer to the Grade boundaries for Diploma programme coordinators document available on the PRC.*

## Extended essay

### The range and suitability of the work submitted

As usual, there were a small number of essays which were not on topics linked to Global politics.

Many essays this session were descriptive in nature, hindered by an ineffective research question. When a question is not framed in a way that it invites analysis, evaluation and argument, then the essay will usually be narrative, with superficial, ineffective attempts of analysis that are often not linked to the research question.

Students should be encouraged to focus closely on explicitly identifying and discussion research methods, along with providing a rationale for why those methods have been selected, and why they are deemed appropriate. Comparatively few students appear to think about this beyond listing the types of sources they use. There is generally not enough exploration of the validity and reliability of all sources, rather, they are assumed as authoritative. Students should also be encouraged to explore the value of secondary and primary evidence, and coached in assessing reliability of sources.

### Candidate performance against each criterion

#### Criterion A: focus and method

It must be clear from the research question that the essay has the potential to move from the descriptive to the analytical. Students must outline their methods and state their sources; both need to be justified. A good number of essays included comprehensive introductions that contextualised the focus and method.

#### Criterion B: knowledge and understanding

Theoretical frameworks and key concepts are not always properly defined. Terminology is often used and effective. Knowledge and understanding should be supported by applied, reliable sources.

#### Criterion C: critical thinking

Too many essays are descriptive and do not move into an evaluative investigation. Analysis should be done by the student, as well as critical thinking (balancing theories with facts and a student conclusion). Research should include sources of facts (official reports, press releases) and theory or key concepts sources (scholarly articles, books and papers). Interviews can be used with key sections referred to in the body of the essay, but the transcript as a whole should be included as an appendix.

#### Criterion D: presentation

Most essays performed well against this criterion, though some candidates still forget to include a title on the coversheet.

#### Criterion E: engagement

These tended to be limited to process summaries and rarely moved into true reflection.

## Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Topics that are too local in nature should be avoided, as it is often difficult for students to link these to the broader field of global politics.

It is important that students have a strong background in global politics, and as with the guidance **elsewhere for the extended, it's recommended that those students taking the global politics EE are also taking the global politics DP course.**

Effective essays often stem from well-focused research questions. Research questions do not need to be unnecessarily complicated but focused enough to be dealt with within the 4000-word count.

The final research question should encapsulate the type of research conducted; a clearly global politics appropriate framework in terms of coverage in time and place for the content; an explicit formulation of the question with a fundamental theoretical component that can be clearly answered in terms of appropriacy, effectiveness for data selection and analysis, and hypothetical validity.

The extended essay is a piece of academic research and the sources selected must be valid and scholarly.