



EXTENDED ESSAY (EE) SUPERVISOR HANDBOOK 2026 – 2028

Guidelines, supervision, internal deadlines and coordinator handoff procedures

EE Supervision 2026-2028: Key Numbers and Non-Negotiables

3-5 hrs

recommended supervision time

Across check-ins and three mandatory reflective sessions.

3

formal reflections

Two recorded on the RPF; final one is to be reviewed.

1

full draft with written comments

Only one supervisor-commented full draft is permitted.

500

reflection words max

One final reflective statement on the RPF.

30

marks total

Criteria A-E under the 2027 EE model.

Nov/Jan

key internal handoffs

By end of November to coordinator; predicted grades by January.

Framework aligned to the IB Extended Essay Guide (first assessment 2027) and school internal deadlines.

This handbook is built around four principles

- Supervise the process, not the product.
- Use questioning and planning to develop student independence.
- Keep feedback future-oriented and within IB boundaries.
- Document formal reflections, handoffs and authenticity carefully.

1. The supervisor’s role in the 2027 EE model

The supervisor is the student’s primary school-based mentor throughout the EE process. The role is to guide, prompt, monitor, and document progress - not to shape or repair the final product. Supervisors help students understand the nature of the task, refine a focused research question, choose appropriate methods, work ethically, and complete the reflection process.

Core responsibilities

- Ensure the student understands the EE pathway, subject fit, formal requirements, and academic integrity expectations.
- Undertake three mandatory reflection sessions and be available for regular check-ins.
- Record attendance at formal reflection sessions on the RPF and ensure the student completes the reflective statement there.
- Report concerns early to the EE coordinator if the student needs boundary-crossing help or if authenticity is in doubt.

Use school subject guidance and coordinator resources, but remember that the development of the research question is itself an assessed element.

2. School supervision cycle and internal deadlines

The school timeline below incorporates both the official reflection process and the school’s internal checkpoints. Supervisors should share these dates early and revisit them regularly with students.

School Supervision Cycle and Internal Deadlines



Operational note: to stay IB-compliant, the single substantial written commentary should be reserved for the student’s one full draft. The June draft is best treated as a checkpoint with formative guidance and meeting notes.

Operational interpretation of the timeline

- By January of Year 1: the student uploads the research plan and essay proposal to the shared folder.
- In Year 1: the first two mandatory reflection sessions should be completed, alongside additional check-ins as needed.
- By June of Year 1: the student submits an approximately 1,500-word checkpoint draft.
- In Year 2: the student submits one full draft for the supervisor’s single round of written commentary before the final clean version is submitted by end of October.
- On 15 November: the viva voce takes place.
- By end of November: supervisors share the completed supervision file with the coordinator.
- By January: supervisors submit predicted grades overall and by criterion.

3. What support supervisors are expected to provide

A successful supervisor is active, organized and strategic. The support should be tailored to the student’s needs while keeping the work student-owned. The focus is on helping the student make better decisions, not on making those decisions for them.

Stage	Supervisor focus	Typical actions
Launch	Pathway, topic, feasibility	Clarify subject fit; discuss topic viability; explain EE requirements; establish working habits and shared folder use.
Development	RQ, sources, methods	Question assumptions; test focus and scope; encourage preliminary reading; discuss research methods, ethics, and source quality.
Drafting	Argument, evidence, structure	Discuss line of argument; point to underused evidence; help break next steps into manageable tasks.
Completion	Authenticity, reflection, submission readiness	Read the final clean version before viva voce; conduct the final reflection; check file readiness and handoff materials.

Time expectation

- The total supervision time recommended by the IB is approximately 3-5 hours.
- This normally includes three formal reflection sessions and a small number of additional check-ins.

4. Helping students develop a strong research question

Supervisors should help students arrive at a question that is clear, focused, researchable, and analytical. The best intervention is usually careful questioning. Students should frame the EE as a question - not a title, topic area, or statement of intent.

Green flags	Red flags
Focused enough for 4,000 words	Topic is too broad or purely descriptive
Arguable and analytical	Question invites summary, narrative or opinion only
Matched to subject concepts and methods	Weak or confused fit with subject pathway
Supported by accessible sources / data	Resources are scarce, unreliable or inaccessible
Open to refinement as research evolves	Student treats first wording as fixed forever

Useful supervisor prompts

- What exactly are you trying to find out?
- How will this question invite analysis rather than description?
- What sources or data would allow you to answer it well?
- Is the question still viable if one type of source becomes unavailable?
- What would a likely line of argument look like?

5. Helping with methods, sources, citation and use of evidence

Supervisors are not expected to act as librarians or co-researchers, but they should support students in making better research decisions. This includes discussing source quality, breadth of reading, method suitability, ethical collection of data, and consistent citation practice.

Area	Supervisor guidance	What to watch for
Source selection	Ask students to justify why a source is credible, relevant and useful.	Over-reliance on websites, summaries, or one point of view.
Range of evidence	Encourage a mix of strong secondary sources and, where appropriate, primary material.	Thin reading, no literature/context review, or token evidence.
Method choice	Check that the chosen method fits the subject and research question.	Method is impractical, unethical, or disconnected from the question.
Citation practice	Require a standard school-approved style used consistently.	Missing quotations, inconsistent formatting, absent access dates.
Use of evidence	Push the student to analyse and synthesize, not simply insert quotations.	Patchwriting, long unexplained quotations, unsupported claims.

Citation baseline to reinforce

- Students may use any standard school-approved style, but it must be consistent.
- They must distinguish clearly between their own words and others' words.
- They are expected to acknowledge all crucial text, graphs, images, audiovisual material and data that are not their own.

6. Feedback protocol: when and what written feedback to provide

Feedback is one of the most sensitive aspects of EE supervision. The goal is to move the student forward while keeping ownership firmly with the student. Feedback should be pointed, selective, and future-oriented.

Feedback Boundaries for Supervisors

You may do

- ask pointed, future-oriented questions
- comment once on one full draft
- discuss RQ, methods, structure and next steps
- flag citation gaps or weak sourcing
- record reflections and attendance on the RPF

You may not do

- proofread spelling or punctuation
- rewrite sections or move whole sections
- correct maths/experimental work
- fix bibliographies or citations for students
- comment in writing on multiple full drafts

Best practice: use macro-comments, margin prompts and a short feedback sheet focused on argument, evidence, structure, and academic honesty - not line editing.

Recommended school feedback sequence

- January / spring meetings: oral or meeting-note feedback on feasibility, RQ, methods, reading and planning.
- June checkpoint draft (approx. 1,500 words): use a checkpoint feedback sheet or meeting notes focused on progress, structure, RQ fit, source base and next steps. Avoid treating this as the single commented full draft.
- Early October full draft: this is the one stage at which the supervisor should provide written comments on the student's full draft.
- End of October final clean version: no further substantive written commentary. Read it in preparation for the viva voce and authenticity check.

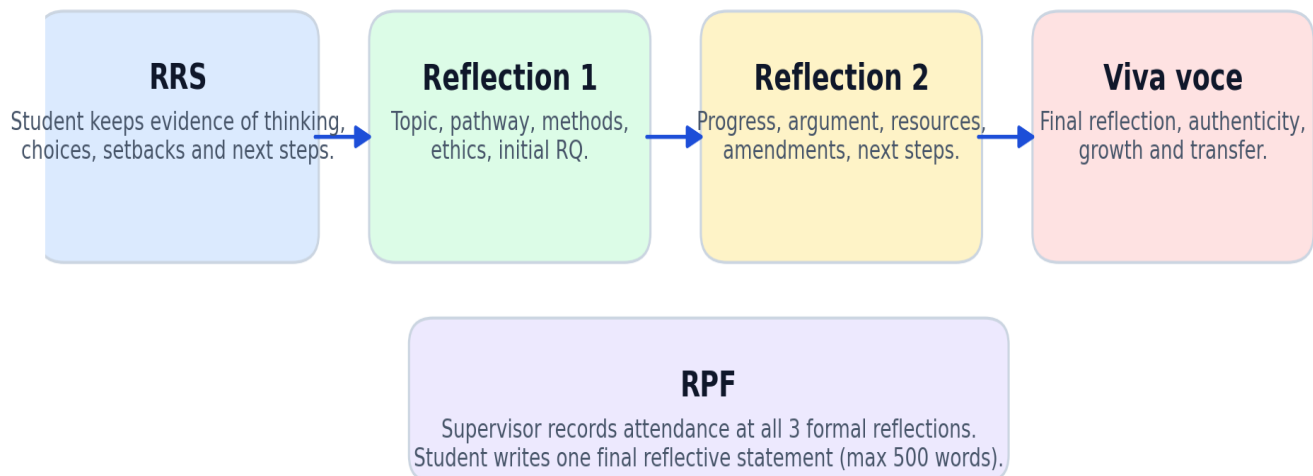
What written comments on the full draft should look like

- Macro-level comments on argument, organization, methods, use of evidence and citation gaps.
- Targeted questions such as 'What evidence supports this claim?' or 'How does this paragraph answer the RQ?'
- Occasional margin prompts that direct the student to rethink, clarify or verify - not to copy a supervisor's wording.

7. Reflection sessions, the RRS and the RPF

Check-ins and formal reflection sessions are not the same. Supervisors may hold short planning conversations whenever needed, but only three formal reflections are recorded on the RPF. Each formal session should usually last around 20-30 minutes and should focus on progress, learning and next steps.

Reflection Workflow: RRS, Reflection Sessions and RPF



Session	Approx. timing in this school	Main focus	Supervisor record/action
Reflection 1	By January, around proposal stage	topic choice, pathway, ethics, methods, initial RQ	Record attendance on RPF; set next steps
Reflection 2	Before / around June checkpoint	progress, argument, source range, amendments, writing plan	Record attendance on RPF; agree next milestones
Viva voce	15 November	completion, authenticity, growth, transfer, challenges and learning	Record attendance on RPF; student then completes final reflective statement

RRS and reflection forms

- Encourage students to maintain an RRS (researcher’s reflection space) from the start; it may be digital or physical.
- The RRS is not submitted, but it is valuable evidence for reflection sessions and the final reflective statement.
- The RPF is the formal document. Supervisors record attendance at each formal reflection there, and the student writes one final reflective statement of up to 500 words.

Some older legacy documents may still refer to the RPPF; for the 2027 guide the working form name is the RPF.

8. Academic integrity, AI and authenticity

Supervisors are central to maintaining academic integrity. Students must produce authentic work, acknowledge support, and cite sources appropriately. Supervisors must be alert to collusion, ghostwriting, over-editing by others, and misuse of AI tools.

Appropriate to discuss / allow	Raise concern / report early
project planning tools, calendars, note-organization methods	student cannot explain arguments or wording in the essay
translation / accessibility support where appropriate and transparent	sudden stylistic shifts or polished prose inconsistent with prior work
discussion of ethical AI use and limitations	substantial external editing, family rewriting, tutoring-company involvement
students using citation generators but checking outputs themselves	AI-generated text presented as student writing
plagiarism/self-check tools used formatively	doubt about authenticity of the final work

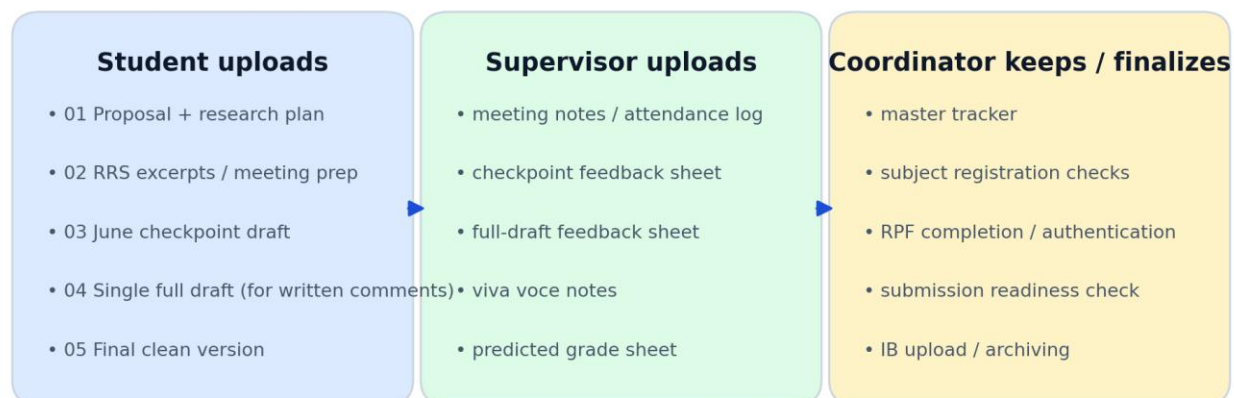
When in doubt

- Do not authenticate work whose authenticity is in doubt.
- Raise concerns early with the EE coordinator rather than trying to solve a serious authenticity issue alone.
- Use the viva voce as one source of authenticity evidence, but not the only one.

9. Shared folder workflow and coordinator handoff

Because all EE supervision materials will be shared in a common folder, consistency matters. Supervisors should use the same structure, file names and handoff routine so that the coordinator can track completion, check compliance and prepare the final submission efficiently.

Recommended Shared Folder Workflow



Use clear version names and dates. Restrict editing rights so the final clean version cannot be altered after supervisor review.

By end of November, supervisor submits	Purpose	Suggested filename / note
meeting log + attendance	evidence of support and formal reflections	StudentName_EE_meetinglog
checkpoint feedback sheet	record of June progress guidance	StudentName_EE_checkpointfeedback
full-draft feedback sheet	record of single written full-draft commentary	StudentName_EE_fulldraftfeedback
final clean essay version	submission-ready essay read before viva voce	StudentName_EE_finalclean
RPF status / viva voce notes	reflection completion and authenticity record	StudentName_EE_RPF_vivavoce

Folder discipline

- Use dates in filenames where useful.
- Avoid overwriting commented drafts with final clean versions.
- Make sure the final clean version contains no supervisor comments.

10. Predicted grades and final January submission to the coordinator

After the viva voce and end-of-November handoff, supervisors should complete a school predicted-grade record by January. This should include both an overall predicted grade and criterion-by-criterion marks based on the final clean version and the reflection evidence available.

Criterion	Marks	What supervisors consider	Internal note to coordinator
A: Framework for the essay	/6	RQ, methods, structure, fit with task	Any structural concerns still visible?
B: Knowledge and understanding	/6	subject knowledge, terminology, context	Subject fit secure?
C: Analysis and line of argument	/6	quality of analysis and argumentative coherence	Strong enough throughout?
D: Discussion and evaluation	/8	evaluation, balance, significance, limitations	Any sections overly descriptive?
E: Reflection	/4	evaluative growth and transfer in reflective statement	Reflection evidence specific enough?

Prediction note

- Predicted grades should be evidence-based and aligned to the 2027 criteria.
- Use criterion comments to help the coordinator see the reasoning behind the prediction.

11. Quick-reference supervisor checklist

- I have explained the EE requirements, subject fit and pathway to the student.
- The student has uploaded a research plan and essay proposal by January.
- The first two formal reflection sessions have taken place and been recorded on the RPF.
- I have used check-ins to monitor feasibility, source quality, methods and progress.
- The June checkpoint received formative progress feedback without crossing into prohibited commentary.
- I have provided one set of written comments on one full draft only.
- I have read the final clean version before the viva voce.
- The viva voce was completed on or around 15 November and recorded on the RPF.
- By end of November I uploaded the required supervision materials to the shared folder.
- By January I submitted an overall predicted grade and criterion-by-criterion marks to the coordinator.

School contact box

- EE Coordinator: _____
- Shared folder path / drive: _____
- Year 1 proposal deadline: _____
- Year 2 full draft deadline: _____
- Year 2 final clean submission deadline: _____
- Predicted grade submission date: _____

References and source basis

This handbook was prepared using the following IB materials relevant to first assessment 2027 and to EE supervision:

- Extended essay guide (first assessment 2027).
- Extended essay support material.
- Reflection and the extended essay.
- Researching and writing the EE.
- Academic integrity policy.
- Diploma Programme Assessment procedures 2025.