

May 2018 extended essay reports

Korean A

Overall grade boundaries

Grade:	E	D	C	B	A
Mark range:	0-6	7-13	14-20	21-26	27-34

The range and suitability of the work submitted

There were major changes in extended essay criteria including reflections, grade descriptors and word count for the May 2018 session. Most of the essays submitted by candidates were suitable and satisfactory. However, some essays continued to include an “Abstract” in the essays. One essay did not include a bibliography. Some essays from several schools indicated “character count” instead of “word count”. The essays from one school counted words incorrectly such as 4000 words X 1.3 = 5200 words. One school added a page for supervisor’s predicted grade as an additional cover page to the EE. Some essays were descriptive and provided superficial analysis. Approximately 15% of the essays were category 3, 10% in category 2, and 75% in category 1. About one third of the category 3 essays demonstrated detailed and illuminating analysis of the text and its context, and provided well-constructed and convincing arguments. The main focus in a number of category 3 essays submitted were Language and Mass Communication and Language in Cultural Context. Categories were correctly specified in most of the essays, but there were some essays with errors. Some essays quoted and analysed in conclusions, which was inappropriate. Compared to the May 2017 session, a fair number of essays highly focused on critical thinking in relation to the new criterion C. Most category 1 and 2 essays were based on a wide range of novels, poetry, plays, essays and works in translation, with topics from Lee Yook Sa, Park Wanseo, Im Hwa, Chae Mansik, A. Breton and Jane Austin. Some candidates’ RPPF forms were unreadable due to broken characters or uploading mistakes. Quite a few candidates wrote their candidate numbers instead of their candidate personal codes.

Candidate performance against each criterion

Criterion A: focus and method

A fair number of essays demonstrated effective research skills resulting in a well-focused and appropriate research question. For many essays, identification and explanation of the research topic was communicated and the purpose and focus of the research was adequately clear, but only partially appropriate. More than half of the essays were awarded no more than four marks for this criterion. In some instances, the research questions were not clear at all. More than a third satisfied all three strands at the 5-6 level of achievement.

Criterion B: knowledge and understanding

Most of the essays demonstrated good knowledge and understanding of topics studied. The selection of source materials for most essays was clearly relevant and appropriate to the research question. About a third of essays used sources effectively and with understanding throughout. Use of terminology and concepts was generally good, accurate and consistent, demonstrating effective knowledge and understanding. Many category 3 essays used an appropriate range of sources and data and displayed well-planned investigations. A few category 2 essays were based on only works in translation, which is an inappropriate approach for language A, and which incurs penalties for criteria A, B and C.

Criterion C: critical thinking

Most essays were good examples of work which met the requirements of the 7-9 level of achievement in this criterion. The majority of the research was appropriate and its application was clearly relevant to the research question. However, a number of essays included less relevant research and detracted from the quality of the overall analysis. Most conclusions to individual points of analysis were supported by evidence but there were some minor inconsistencies in certain cases, an effective reasoned argument was developed from research, with a conclusion supported by the evidence presented. More than half of the essays were partially critical although research had been evaluated. Some essays were weak or insufficient in providing reasoned arguments and supporting evidence.

Criterion D: presentation

The structure of most essays was clear and appropriate in terms of the expected conventions for the topic, the argument and subject in which the essay is registered. There were candidates who did not indicate the titles of literary works and texts, page numbers and web addresses. Quite a few essays did not follow a standard format for title page, table of contents, page numbers, quotations, and documentation. Books and research materials that some essays listed in the bibliography were not cited in the essays. Some essays did not have a clear idea as to how to write references and in-text referencing.

Criterion E: engagement

A few reflections were written in English, which resulted in an award of 0 for criterion E. Most of the candidates' engagement was good and reflections on decision-making and planning were analytical and included references to conceptual understanding and skill development. Approximately a quarter of engagement was excellent and these reflections communicate a high degree of intellectual and personal engagement with the research focus and process of research.

Recommendations for the supervision of future candidates

Candidates should be aware that one English word equals to one Korean word for IB Korean Extended essays from the May 2018 session. Candidates should be aware that word count does not include contents, page, diagrams, footnotes, endnotes, bibliography and appendices. However, their word count includes explanatory footnotes if used.