

The Extended Essay Appendix

A. Do I Need an Appendix?

In an essay, an appendix comes after the bibliography and includes somewhat relevant information that otherwise cannot be placed into words in a traditional bibliography. A relatively easy way of finding out is to see if you can answer “yes” to any of the following questions:

1. Do I need to include maps or illustrations in my paper to help the reader understand my argument?
2. Do I need to include raw data of any kind, including graphs and charts, to justify an experiment?
3. Do I need to show music or artwork?

B. Placement in My Essay: Does it Go in the Appendix or the Body? It Matters!

Now, here’s why it gets tricky. According to the IBO extended essay handbook, “Appendices, footnotes and endnotes are not an essential section of the extended essay and examiners are not required to read them, so care should be taken to include all information of direct relevance to the analysis and argument in the main body of the essay. Unless considered essential, complete lists of raw data should not be included in the extended essay. Students should not constantly refer to material presented in an appendix as this may disrupt the continuity of the essay.”

Appendices are distinct possibilities for students writing extended essays in science, music, visual arts, math, and sometimes history. They are much less likely—though not unheard of—in group 1 and group 2 essays. Students should address the following questions at least once during their meetings for the extended essay:

1. Does it look like I’ll need an appendix? If no, you’re set. If yes, then...
2. Is there anything in my appendix that is so frequently referred to that it is best placed as a figure in the body of the paper, to increase the essay’s readability?
3. Because evaluators are not required to look at the appendix, is there anything in the appendix so crucial to the thesis statement that I should put it in the body of the paper, just in case?
4. Have I rid my essay’s appendix of any irrelevant data, figures, illustrations, maps, and so on?

C. Creating a Proper Appendix

Students should carefully look at exemplars of extended essays in their areas to see how other successful students have handled this section. Generally, an appendix is not a difficult section to create in a paper. But you need to make sure that your reader can easily find whatever you reference in the paper. Your appendix will vary greatly from another individual student’s appendix due to your research question, data presented, documentation style, and subject area.