

## The Thesis Statement: Verifying the Quality of Your Written Thesis

When you have a workable thesis, go ahead and check it against these qualities. Print this form more than once and bring it to a meeting with your supervisor. Be honest with yourself. If you're not sure where to check the statements below, have a discussion with your supervisor, or have your supervisor evaluate your thesis using this form and see if you both agree with your marks.

My Working Thesis Statement: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Has/Does/Is my thesis... (place an "X")

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1. take a clear stance ____                                | fail to take a stance or argument ____               |
| 2. justify discussion ____                                 | fail to justify appropriate discussion ____          |
| 3. focus on one main idea ____                             | have no focus or focus on too much ____              |
| 4. answer the research question ____                       | fail to answer the research question ____            |
| 5. specific ____   | too general or vague ____                            |
| 6. use clear diction throughout ____                       | clouded with elements of ambiguity ____              |
| 7. avoid redundancy in terms ____                          | use unnecessary words ____                           |
| 8. considered form in relation to argument ____            | not yet considered form in relation to argument ____ |
| 9. allow for open-mindedness in discussion ____            | seem to lead to a close-minded discussion ____       |
| 10. changed or flexed from the beginning <sup>1</sup> ____ | stayed rigidly consistent ____                       |

Notes:

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<sup>1</sup> Keep in mind that your thesis is best constructed on the premise of inductive reasoning. Though you want to have a working thesis from the beginning, your research—your observations and data collection—must be allowed to influence and create your thesis. By no means should your thesis drive your research. If your thesis does not change at all during this process, it means that you haven't re-evaluated it, you are searching only for data to support your original argument, or you aren't learning much because you have a disengaging topic. Worse yet, your paper may be biased and probably will seem much weaker to others than to you in its content. To begin your extended essay with the attitude that "I already know my answer, confidently and completely" defeats the entire purpose of the exploration for knowledge.