IB Extended Essay: Lesson #14—Coming to a Conclusion

Coming to a conclusion

In this lesson you will look at requirements of the conclusion to your essay and prepare for your interim reflection session with your supervisor.

Below is what the IB has to say about the conclusion.

*The conclusion says what has been achieved, including notes of any limitations and any questions that have not been resolved. While students might draw conclusions throughout the essay based on their findings, it is important that there is a final, summative conclusion at the end. This conclusion must relate to the research question posed.*

# Some tips for writing your conclusion

Like writing the introduction it can be difficult to know how to sum up and finish your essay. Follow these rules to help make sure your conclusion does the job.

* Make sure your conclusion is directly related to the research question. At this point you should be providing an answer to the question.
* Sum up both the arguments for and against any argument, but make sure you do make a concluding statement.
* Make sure your final conclusion is consistent with the evidence and findings you've presented in the essay. It should not be presenting new evidence.
* Do reference any key sources that support your findings, again.
* Don't be afraid to make note of:
  + Any limitations of the research - what could you have done differently?
  + Any issues that are still unresolved - what were you unable to find evidence for or against?
  + Any new questions that have been generated by your research - where would you go next?
* Whilst doing the above try to ensure your conclusion is not too long - remember you are wanting to create a memorable and convincing summary.

# Examples

Take a look at the two example conclusions. Do you think they meet the requirements of a conclusion for an Extended Essay?

## **Economics example**

### **How did the tax reform in Slovakia affect its growth and development?**

**Conclusion**

This analysis suggests that the tax reform was a good choice for Slovakia. Although it is hard to quantify its impacts of growth and development in Slovakia, one thing is for sure: none of he macroeconomic indicators worsened. Indeed, based on previous analysis, it can be concluded that the tax reform helped improve many of them.

Slovakia achieved record rates of economic growth and FDI; unemployment fell to its historic minimum; working poor people and the rich largely benefited, with the middle-class’s slight loss compensated by the increase in real wages. The retired people and the unemployed only felt the negative effects of the reform on inflation and thus their situation deteriorated. However, if the reform increases the overall quality of life, they will also gain in the long term – these findings correspond to the economic theory.

This analysis also suggests that the argument of the opposition that the tax reform will decrease progressivity of the tax system is invalid, as the kakwani index increased after the reform.

It can be concluded that the increase in growth also reflected to development. While the long term benefits are highly probable, even in the short term the change has been to the better. "However, it is important to remember that the tax reform was mainly designed to for the economy not to redistribute incomes" (Smith 2000).

Nevertheless, it remains unresolved whether the long run benefits will be as positive as predicted, whether inflation will be kept under control, how will increasing strength of the economy affect exports through more valuable Slovak crowns and whether the economic growth will indeed be able to reach even to the poorest.

This paper dealt only with direct influences of the tax reform it did not evaluate other policies, reforms or barriers to growth in Slovakia which were created or terminated during the examined period.

**EXAMINER COMMENT:**

In summary a very good conclusion drawing together a number of complex points and arguments.

### **Applied Behaviour Analysis and Early Intervention: The Extent of Recovery from Autism**

**Conclusion**

The DSM-IV characterizes autism as a disorder in which behavioral, social, and linguistic delays existed comprehensively.  The most renowned feature in association with autism is mental retardation (APA, 2000). By definition, the onset of autism must be prior to 3 years of age, however it is difficult to identify under 2 years old (APA, 2000). Since most signs of autism are present during infancy and will develop with growth, early detection of the disorder can occur, thus allowing treatment to begin.

Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is extremely successful, a result of highly personalized programs conducted by specialists (Maurice et al., 1996). Reinforcement is prominently used in order to achieve an acceptable behavior (Cooper et al.,1987; Green, Taylor, Luce, & Krantz, 2005). Applied Behavior Analysis instills the A-B-A-B design, to show that a specified independent variable precisely affects a specific behavior (Cooper et al., 1987).

Early intervention is important in successful intervention. From current studies, it is believed autism is related to abnormal brain development prior to the thirtieth gestation week (Niemann, 1996). With the identification of the problematic brain sections, two subclasses of autism were recognized, and the effects of early intervention could be explained (Niemann, 1996). The optimal age to begin intensive behavioural intervention is prior to age five, but best results came from children started between the ages of two and three (Maurice et al., 1996). Best outcomes have also been reported from intervention that occurs for at least two consecutive years (Maurice et al., 1996). Additionally, at least 30 hours per week of intensive behavioural intervention is necessary to achieve recovery (Maurice et al., 1996). Both Lovaas’ 1987 research project and the Maurice children showed that with these conditions, recovery is possible, although not in all cases. Therefore, when Applied Behavior Analysis is in unison with early intervention, there is typically a decrease in the severity of autistic characteristics. In extremely successful cases, a diagnosis can be removed because full recovery has been achieved. In approximately 90% of cases, intensive behavioral therapy has some positive impact on the child and there is a reduction in at least one of the autistic characteristics (Maurice et al., 1996). While Type 2 autistics have a better chance of recovery than Type 1 autistics, in 40 to 50% of cases applying intervention, autism was reversible (Niemann, 1996).

Applied Behavior Analysis appears to be a therapy that works well with the diagnosis of autism. Awareness of case studies, along with personal success stories, can give hope to parents and doctors. Although ABA should never be viewed as a cure, it can help alleviate characteristics of autism. Therapists and parents must be dedicated to the case at hand, and if so, some improvement can be made. ABA is a recommendable therapy because of the chance of recovery, which is every parent’s dream.

EXAMINER COMMENT: A good conclusion though it might have been better to give the most important finding about the combination of early intervention and the use of ABA its own paragraph for emphasis. Another slight criticism might be that the conclusion was rather long and had quite a few paragraphs. Arguably the first two paragraphs could have been cut down as no conclusions were being outlined. Though in summary a very good conclusion.

# TASK: Interim Reflection Session

You should now produce a draft of the conclusion of your essay. This should be kept within your researcher’s reflection space and shared with your supervisor when you agree it is relevant.

## **Preparing for the reflection session**

At this point you need to prepare for your second (interim) reflection session with your supervisor. This will last for 20 to 30 minutes. The session should be focused on the progress you have made up to this point and by the end of the meeting clear objectives should be set for moving forward with your research process. In this session you will:

* Demonstrate your planning
* Discuss what you are learning
* Evaluate your progress

To prepare for this meeting it is suggested that you have done the following:

* Significantly deepened your research and recorded pertinent evidence, information or data in the Researcher’s Reflection Space
* Reviewed and consolidated the methodologies you are using
* Formulated arguments based on the evidence that you have collected
* Added to the working bibliography for your research

[Source: IB Extended Essay website]

## **During the reflection session**

You will be expected to share excerpts from your researcher’s reflection space with your supervisor during this second (interim) reflection session.

The IB suggests that to make effective use of the session you should:

* Go prepared with issues to discuss – share excerpts from your Researcher’s Reflection Space
* Reflect on previous discussions and be prepared to show how you have progressed
* Do not expect your supervisor to do your thinking for you
* Use your supervisor as a sounding board for ideas and arguments

[Source: IB Extended Essay website]

**SUBMISSION TASK: After the reflection session**

As with the first reflection session, you now need to complete the relevant section of the Reflections on Planning and Progress Form on the interim reflection session and then ask your supervisor to check through it and sign. You should both keep a copy of the form. Your reflection should be about 150 words.

Make sure you also refer back to the notes in unit 2 lesson 3 about how you reflect and remember that the marks for criterion E are based on what you write.

* Download the form that you supervisor sends you and enter your comments and submit the completed form here as a PDF.
* Alternatively, you can submit a document containing just your reflection comments, for your supervisor to copy into their master copy of the form. This form will be kept as a record and used at each subsequent formal reflection session.

The supervisor will expect you to select the second option. Email your supervisor and provide a URL with the second reflection documentation.

(Note: This assignment is not graded - it will be reviewed by your supervisor and influence any reflection commentary posted on your RPPF submission..)