European Security and Defence College
European Union Military Secondary Schools Forum

EUMSSF
CSDP Olympiad

Regulation on how to author & evaluate Essays

EN

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1. Introduction and General Framework

Historical Background: On initiative of Cyprus Security and Defence Academy and by decision of the European Union Military Secondary Schools Forum, the EUMSSF CSDP Olympiad Regulation was approved in 2026.

Organiser: The CSDP Olympiad takes place every two years. EU Member States holding the EU Presidency are encouraged to conduct the CSDP Olympiad according to the rules agreed within the EUMSSF.

Participation:

- Each EUMSSF Member and Associate Network Partner (ANP) may nominate up to two students. Only institutions that nominate at least one evaluator for the essay evaluations have the right to nominate students. More evaluators are welcome, and they may also participate in the residential phase of the CSDP Olympiad.
- In the event that a country which offers to take over the organization of the Olympiad has no EUMSSF member, a chosen secondary school that is not a member of the EUMSSF may be proposed by the host to participate on an exceptional basis, subject to approval by the EUMSSF.
- Each institution may nominate one student for the cover page competition. This nominee can be one of the two existing competitors or an additional student. Only one cover page proposal is accepted per institution.
- The proposal must be submitted in a high-resolution format, both as a JPG and a PDF, to the ESDC Training Coordinator and the CSDP Olympiad's POC. The winning cover page will be chosen by a vote of the EUMSSF members during a regular meeting. The winner will be invited to attend the residential phase.
- All nominations must be submitted using the official nomination form by the deadline announced during the regular EUMSSF meetings. Late nominations will not be considered.

Pre-residential Phase

- For students, ear-marked to participate in the CSDP Olympiad, the first step is to pass and e-Learning pahse, provided by the Eurpopean Security and Defenc College. The e-Learning must be finalised positively by a given date announced during the meetings. The e-Learning is mandatory also for the students that will take part on the Cover Page Competition.
- The Students must write an essay referring to a selected CSDP topic. These topics are to be agreed within the EUMSSF and are to be announced before the nomination phase. It is not allowed to adjust these topics or hand-in other topics.
- For the essay, the regulation on ”how to author & evaluate Essays” is to be applied correspondingly.
- The essays must be submitted in both Word and PDF formats to the ESDC Training Coordinator and the CSDP Olympiad Point of Contact (POC) by the deadline announced by the EUMSSF. Late submissions will not be considered under any circumstances.
- According to current regulations, each essay is graded by two evaluators. If the difference between their scores exceeds 15%, a third evaluator will grade the essay. The final score will then be calculated using the two closest scores.

Residential Phase

- The essays must be presented also during the residential phase of the CSDP Olympiad. The regulations for the ”Residential Phase” outline the presentation procedures, evaluation criteria, and scoring system.
- The knowledge competitions will take place during the second part of the residential phase. These regulations for the ”Residential Phase” outline how those competitions will be conducted.
- The winner of the Cover Page, participates in the knowledge competition of the residential Plase

2. Purpose and Scope of the Regulation

The purpose of this regulation is to establish a uniform layout, citation style, and structure for essays authored by students participating in the CSDP Olympiad. By providing clear formal and textual guidelines, this regulation serves as a concise tool to build student confidence, particularly during the initial drafting stages. Ultimately, enforcing these standardized criteria aims to elevate the overall scientific quality of the submissions. To facilitate an easier understanding, this regulation itself is formatted according to the exact criteria required for the CSDP Olympiad essays.

3. Formal Guidelines

3.1 Margins, Headers, and Footers

3.1.1 Page Setup and Margins

Standard Margins: Top, bottom, and right margins must be set to 2.5 cm. The left margin must be set to 3.5 cm to allow room for binding if the essay is published or bound at a later stage.

Headers and Footers: The distance from the top and bottom edges of the page to the header and footer must be 1.5 cm.

3.1.2 Header Design and Rules

Content: The header must include the author’s last name (left-aligned) and the short title of the essay (right-aligned).

Font Style: Header text must be set to 10 pt font with normal/regular styling.

Visual Separation: A horizontal line must separate the header text from the main body text. To ensure proper spacing, include a 6 pt "Space After" paragraph setting below the line so that no manual formatting is required within the main text.

Scope: This header format begins on the Table of Contents page and must appear on every subsequent page to ensure each page of the scientific paper can be clearly attributed to the author.

3.1.3 Footer and Pagination Rules

Font Style: Footer text must be set to 10 pt font with normal/regular styling.

Visual Separation: A horizontal line must separate the footer from the main body text, using a 6 pt "Space Before" paragraph setting above the line.

Page Numbering Format: Footers must include the specific page number alongside the total page count (e.g., "Page 1 of 25").

Unnumbered Pages: All pages preceding the Table of Contents (such as the title page and abstracts) must remain unnumbered.

Numbered Pages: Sequential pagination begins with "Page 1" on the Table of Contents page and runs continuously through to the final page of the essay.

3.2 Font, Font Size, Line Spacing, and Section

Font Selection: The entire essay must be written in Calibri. The only exception is for copied illustrations (such as pictures, graphs, and tables) taken directly from an original source. Because these function as literal citations, their original fonts must not be altered.

Font Size: The standard font size is 12 pt (regular). Exceptions to this rule include headings, block citations, footnotes, and captions below figures, graphs, or tables.

Line Spacing: The body text must be set to 1.5-line spacing.

Paragraph Spacing: Do not add manual blank lines between paragraphs. Instead, configure paragraph settings to include a 6 pt "Space After" (or "Space Before") property to automatically format paragraph transitions.

Alignment: All body text must use full justification (justified alignment).

3.3 Depth of Structure, Headings, and Enumerations

3.3.1 Heading Hierarchy and Structure

Structural Depth: The essay allows a maximum structure depth of four levels for numbered headings (e.g., 3.3.1.2). If further sub-sections are necessary, they must be formatted using unnumbered bullet points (dashes or dots) rather than additional numbers.

Heading Style: All chapter and section headings must be formatted in bold. The distinct hierarchical levels must be differentiated using font sizes, as specified below:

(Note: You can insert your font size list directly below this point).

3.3.2 Indentation and Alignment Rules

Alignment of Numbers: The chapter number must be aligned flush with the left margin (0 cm indentation).

Spacing to Text: For the first and second heading levels, a 1.0 cm tab stop must separate the chapter number from the heading text. For deeper sub-chapters (the 3rd and 4th levels), this distance may be increased in 0.5 cm increments to accommodate the longer numbering strings.

Consistency: The author must ensure that the indentation and formatting remain strictly consistent for all headings of the same level throughout the entire essay.

Each chapter heading is to be formatted with bold. The different levels of chapter headings are to be expressed with the font sizes, according to the following:

1st level	**(main chapter):**	**(example:**	**3.)**	**16 - bold**
2nd level	**(sub-chapter):**	**(example:**	**3.4)**	**14 - bold**
3rd level	**(sub-sub-chapter):**	**(example:**	**3.4.1)**	**13 - bold**
4th level	**(sub-sub-sub-chapter):**	**(example:**	**3.4.1.2)**	**12 - bold**

3.3.3. Heading Placement and Spacing

First-Level Headings: Every first-level heading (e.g., 1.0, 2.0) must begin on a new page, positioned at the very top without any additional spacing before it.

Sub-chapter Headings: Subsequent sub-chapter headings must be separated from the preceding text by a 12 pt "Space Before" paragraph setting (the equivalent of one blank line of 12 pt text).

Page Breaks for Sub-chapters: A sub-chapter heading may naturally begin at the top of a new page without any top spacing if the text flow requires a page break.

3.3.4 Logical Hierarchy and Subdivision Rules

Sub-chapter Sequence: Sub-chapters must follow a strict logical sequence. A heading level cannot be subdivided into a single sub-chapter.

The Rule of Two: If you create a sub-chapter, there must be at least a second sub-chapter at that same level to justify the division.

Example: If a section is divided to create sub-chapter 3.3.1.1, a sub-chapter 3.3.1.2 must also be included. If there is no content for a second sub-chapter (3.3.1.2), the standalone sub-chapter (3.3.1.1) must be removed, and its text integrated back into the parent section (3.3.1).

3.4 Citation System

3.4.1 General Remarks

3.4.1.1 Citation and Quotation Rules

Citation Style: The European citation system must be used throughout the essay.

Direct/Literal Quotations: Any text copied directly from a source must be enclosed in "quotation marks and written in italics."

Using and Explaining Quotes: Do not use quotations without explaining them. Quotes should be used to either support or contradict your arguments, and you must comment on them.

Example: As expert Smith stated in 2020: "Global temperatures are rising rapidly." Based on the data presented in Chapter 2, the author agrees with this viewpoint because...

Images, Graphs, and Tables: Visuals copied from other sources must be treated like direct quotations. You must comment on them and explain how they connect to your text. (For details on formatting captions below visuals, see sub-chapter 3.6).

3.4.1.2 Avoiding Plagiarism and Giving Credit

Footnotes: To avoid plagiarism, every single source that is not your own original work must be credited using a footnote at the bottom of the page. This rule applies to text, ideas, pictures, graphics, and tables.

Your Own Visuals: If you created a picture, graph, or table yourself, you must state this in the caption below the item.

Example: Figure 1: Climate data map (Created by the author).

Your Own Sections: If an entire section or conclusion is purely your own original thought and analysis, note this clearly in text or a footnote.

Example**:** Author's note: Conclusions based entirely on the author's own arguments.

3.4.1.3 Rules for Using Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Fact-Checking AI: If you use Artificial Intelligence (such as ChatGPT) to help with any part of your essay, you are responsible for checking the facts. You must ensure that all AI-generated statements are backed up by proven evidence from reliable sources.

Citing AI: Every source used to verify AI information—and the AI tool itself if required by your teacher—must be fully documented both in the footnotes and in the final bibliography (list of literature).

3.4.2 Use of Citation and Footnotes

3.4.2.1 Managing Footnotes and the Bibliography

First-Time Citations: The very first time you reference a source in your essay, you must provide the full citation (the complete source details) along with the specific page number(s) in the footnote. (For exact formatting rules, see sub-chapter 3.4.3).

Page Alignment: The footnote number in your main text and the corresponding source text at the bottom of the page must always appear on the same page.

Building Your Bibliography: To save time, it is highly recommended that as soon as you add a new source to a footnote, you immediately copy the master citation into your bibliography at the end of your essay.

Organization: Your bibliography must be organized in a single, unified list sorted alphabetically by the author's last name. Do not separate your bibliography into different categories by source type (such as books vs. websites), as this makes it difficult for readers to find your sources.

Formatting Clean-up: When moving a source from a footnote into the bibliography, you must remove specific page references (e.g., p. 5). The bibliography only lists the overall source, not the specific page you looked at.

3.4.2.2 Citing a Source Multiple Times

If you use a source that you have already cited earlier in the essay, do not write out the full citation again. Instead, use a Shortened Note. Modern academic guidelines no longer use Latin abbreviations like Ibid. or Op. cit. because they can confuse readers. Instead, follow these two clean rules:

Shortened Citations: If you cite a source, you have used before, simply write the author's last name, a shortened version of the title (if it's long), and the new page number (e.g., Porta, Stress & Burnout, p. 12).

Indicating Quotes vs. Paraphrases: Ensure your footnote clearly communicates how you are using the source material. If you are quoting word-for-word, use quotation marks in your text. If you are paraphrasing or summarizing an idea, write the citation cleanly without adding extra words like "compare" or "Cf."

The core citation styles required for your essay format are summarized in the table below:

Citation Type	What it means	Example (APA Style)
Direct Quote	Word-for-word text from the source. Requires quotation marks and a page number.	"Stress is a biological response" (Porta & Hlatky, 2009, p. 27).
Paraphrase	Putting the author's idea into your own words. No quotation marks but still needs a citation.	Chronic stress can eventually lead to severe burnout (Porta & Hlatky, 2009).
Secondary Source	Citing a source that you read about *inside* another book.	Selye (as cited in Porta & Hlatky, 2009) argued that...

Table 1: Core citation styles required for your essay

3.4.3 Full Citation of a Source

When referencing a source for the very first time in your essay, you must write out the full citation in the footnote at the bottom of the page.

3.4.3.1 Core Formatting Rules

Punctuation: To keep formatting simple, separate each distinct part of the citation using a full stop (period).

Online Books & Articles: If you read a book or a scientific journal article online, cite it as a physical book or journal article. Do not include the URL or download date. You only use web formatting for actual websites.

Access Dates: For standard websites, include the date you accessed the site in square brackets at the very end of the citation. Use a clear, written-out format (e.g., [Accessed: 7 November 2025]) to avoid any confusion between day and month formatting.

3.4.3.2 Anatomy of a Full Citation

Every first-time footnote must follow this exact sequence:

Author(s):

Who wrote it?

Write the author's family name, a comma, and their first initial followed by a full stop.

If there are multiple authors, separate them using an ampersand (&)

Example: *Smith, J. & Doe, R.*

Year of Publication:

When was it published?

Place the year the source was published in round brackets, followed by a full stop.

Example: *(2024).*

Title:

What is it called?

Write the complete title of the work in italics, followed by a full stop.

Example: *Digital Research Methods.*

Publisher & Location:

Who produced it and where?

State the publisher name and the city of publication (or the name of the institution/university), followed by a full stop.

Example: *Oxford University Press. London.*

Additional Details:

Editions or Source Types.

Add any extra identifying details if applicable, such as the edition number, the volume/issue of a magazine, or the specific type of document (e.g., 2nd edition or master's thesis), followed by a full stop.

Location Reference:

Pages or URL.

Conclude the footnote with the exact page number(s) you are referencing, or the direct URL and access date if it is a website.

3.4.3.3 Master Examples for Students

The table below gives examples of entire citations of various sources. Citation abbreviations and source's pages are not mentioned – they are to be added to the respective entire citation.

Type of Source	Formatting Template & Example
Book	Author Last Name, First Initial. (Year). Title of Book. Publisher. City. Page number. **Example:** *Porta, S. & Hlatky, M. (2009). Understanding Stress and Defeating Burnout. Medical Publishing Company. Vienna. p. 45.*
Website	Organisation or Author. (Year). Title of Web Page. URL: website link. [Accessed: Day Month Year]. **Example:** *World Health Organisation. (2025). Mental Health in the Workplace. URL: https://www.who.int/news-room . [Accessed: 14 January 2026].*
Journal Article	Author, A. (Year). Title of Article. Title of Journal. Volume Number. Issue Number. Page number. **Example:** Smith, H. & Porta, S. (2010). The Role of Electrolytes in High-Stress Environments. Journal of Advanced Medicine. Vol. 27. No. 2. p. 88.
News Article	Author or Newspaper Name. (Year). Title of News Article. Name of Newspaper. Date of publication. Page number (if print). **Example:** *The New York Times. (2024). Global Climate Solutions Enacted. The New York Times. 12 November 2024. p. A4.*
Report / Document	Author or Institution. (Year). Title of Report. Type of Document. Location of Institution. **Example:** *Kluge, N. & Sonnenmoser, M. (2001). Modern Relationship Ideals. Research Study Report. University of Landau.*
Video / Media	Creator or Channel. (Year). Title of Video or Broadcast. Platform or Network. Date of broadcast/upload. URL if online. **Example:** *BBC News. (2025). The Future of Renewable Energy. Television Broadcast. BBC One. 18 July 2025.*

Table 2: Most-used entire citations for scientific papers.[1]

1 Table formulated by the author of the regulation with AI collaboration, based on modernized academic citation standards

3.5 Footnotes

Footnotes must always be placed at the exact bottom (the footer) of the page where the reference number appears. The entire text of the footnote must fit completely on that same page.

When formatting your footnotes, apply the following word processor settings:

Font Size: 10 pt (Regular / Normal text).

Line Spacing: Single spacing (1.0).

Paragraph Spacing: Add a 6 pt space after each footnote.

Alignment: Fully justified (text aligns evenly along both the left and right margins).

Indentation (Tabulator): Set a 0.5 cm tab stop after the footnote number so the text aligns neatly.

3.6 Labeling Images, Graphs, and Tables

Every image, graphic, or table you include in your essay must be clearly labeled with a centered caption directly beneath it.

3.6.1 Formatting the Caption

Font Style: Use a 10 pt font size.

Numbering: Begin each caption with a consecutive serial number based on its appearance in the essay (e.g., Figure 1, Figure 2, Table 1). This label must be bolded and end with a colon.

Alignment: Center both the visual element (image/table) and its caption on the page.

Citing the Source: If you did not create the image, graph, or table yourself, you must credit the original creator at the end of the caption using the standard citation rules.

Spacing: Leave one clean blank line between the caption and the regular essay text that follows it.

3.6.2 Caption Template

Figure [X]: Brief description of what the image shows. (Source: Citation details).

Example of Modern Layout

Below is an example of how an image and its caption should look when correctly centered and formatted in your essay:

Figure 1: Group Photo, EU History and Core Values Course, Lisbon, April 2026.[2]

Tip for Students: If you created the graph or took the photo yourself, simply write (Source: Created by author) at the end of the caption.

3.6.3 Using Visuals Effectively

Images, graphs, and tables should always be used to directly support and strengthen the arguments in your essay. Just like a direct word-for-word quote, you must never just drop a visual into your paper without context. You must introduce, explain, or comment on the data in the visual in the body paragraphs right before and/or after it appears.

3.7 Length and Quality of the Essay

3.7.1 Length and Word Count

Word Count Target: The essay must be approximately 2,000 words in length. You are allowed a 10% margin, meaning your final draft must fall strictly between 1,800 and 2,200 words.

Page Estimate: This word count equals roughly 10 pages of text. This count starts after the Table of Contents and ends before the Annexes. Please note that pictures, graphs, tables, footnotes, and long block quotations do not count toward this total.

2 Picture created by the Colegio Militar during the EU History and Core Values Course, 20-24 April 2026

3.7.2 Language and Spelling

Language: Students must author their essays entirely in English.

Dialect: All spelling and grammar must strictly follow British English rules (e.g., organise instead of organize, behaviour instead of behavior).

3.7.3 Mandatory Quality Check

To ensure proper academic quality, you must minimize spelling and grammatical mistakes.

Submission Requirement: Before handing in your essay, you must select your entire text in your word processor, set the proofing language to English (United Kingdom), and run an electronic spelling and grammar check. Essays will only be accepted if this electronic check has been completed.

Evaluation: Grammar, spelling, and the correct use of the English language are a formal part of your grade. The specific criteria for how language quality is assessed can be found in the Essay Evaluation Paper (Annex 4).

4. Structure and Sequence of the Essay

4.1 General Remarks

To build a coherent, logical argument, often called the "golden thread" of an essay, students must organize their paper using the structural sequence outlined below. This layout matches standard research guidelines and ensures all academic prerequisites are met.

4.2 Title Page

Every essay must begin with a standardized title page. For the exact layout and required information, follow the template provided in sub-chapter 5.1. (Annex 1).

4.3 Abstract and Keywords

Immediately following the title page, you must include an Abstract.

The Abstract: This is a brief summary of your entire paper. It should take up approximately 75% of the page.

Keywords: At the bottom of the abstract page, list exactly five keywords that represent the core themes of your essay. These must be listed in alphabetical order and separated by commas.

The abstract and keywords together must not exceed a single page.

4.4 Table of Contents

The Table of Contents lists all chapters and headings with their corresponding page numbers.

Page Numbering: Your official page numbering (formatted as Page 1 of XX) must begin on the first page of the Table of Contents. However, this page does not count toward your final 10-page text total.

Layout: Main chapter titles (1st level headings) must be formatted in 12 pt bold font with 1.5-line spacing and a 1 cm tabulator indent (as demonstrated on page 1 of this regulation).

4.5 Text Sequence and Structure

The body of your essay must follow a strict logical sequence. The table below outlines the recommended structural modules, chapter numbers, and estimated page budgets required to successfully reach your 10-page text target.

4.5.1 Master Structural Framework

Chapter Number	Section Text Module	Page Budget (Estimates)[1]	Purpose of the Section[2]
-	Title Page	1 Page	The cover page of your essay.
-	Abstract & Keywords	1 Page	A one-page summary of your entire paper.

Chapter Number	Section Text Module	Page Budget (Estimates)[1]	Purpose of the Section[2]
1	Table of Contents	1 Page	The map of your essay's layout.
2	Preface	0.5 Page	Personal opening remarks and motivation.
3	Introduction	1 Page	Introduces the topic, background, and scope.
4	Current State of Research	1.5 Pages	Summarizes what current experts say about the topic.
5	Research Gap & Question(s)	0.5 Page	Explains what is missing from current research and sets your goal.
6	Methodology	0.5 Page	Explains how you gathered your information or data.
7	Research Findings & Analysis	4 Pages	The core of your essay: your main arguments and evidence.
8	Discussion & Conclusion	2 Pages	Evaluates the pros and cons and shares your final conclusions.
-	Annexes Appendices	Variable	Documents, charts, or raw data attached at the end.
Final Page	Mandatory Appendix: Affidavit	1 Page	A signed statement confirming the work is entirely your own.

Table 3: Master Structural Framework.[3][4][5]

4.6 Student Essay Appendices (Annexes)

The Annex section is located at the very end of your essay. It is used to store supplementary information that supports your research but is too long or detailed to include in the main text.

You only include an annex if you actually have that specific type of material. For example, if your essay does not contain any images, you do not need to create a List of Figures. Appendix pages are numbered, but they do not count toward your final 10-page text total.

3 Note on Page Budgets: These numbers represent the minimum pages required for *pure text*. If you include pictures, graphs, or tables—which is highly encouraged to improve the quality of your essay—your overall page count will naturally increase.

4 Detailed Guidelines: For a deep breakdown of what to write inside each specific text module (from the Preface to the Discussion), please consult the detailed reference guide found in Annex 5.3.

5 Table formulated by the author of the regulation with AI collaboration, based on modernized academic citation standards

4.6.1 Required Sequence of Student Appendices

Appendix Section	Type of Appendix	Rules and Formatting
Appendix A	List of Abbreviations	If you used specialized acronyms or abbreviations frequently in your essay, list them here in alphabetical order with their full meanings.
Appendix B	List of Figures	A chronological list of every image, graph, or chart used. You must include the figure number, its caption/ description, and the page number where it appears.
Appendix C	List of Tables	A chronological list of every data table used. You must include the table number, its title/description, and the page number where it appears.
Appendix D	Bibliography / References	Mandatory. A complete, single list of all sources cited in your essay, arranged in strict alphabetical order by the author's last name. Do not split this list by source type.
Appendix E	Expert Interview Transcripts	If you conducted a personal interview with an expert for your research, you must include the full written transcript here. The transcript should be signed by both you and the expert to verify its accuracy.
Appendix F	Supplementary Documents	Any raw data sheets, survey questionnaires, or unique primary documents that you analysed but could not fit into your main body paragraphs.

Table 4: Required Sequence of the Annexes.[6]

4.7 Affidavit

The final page of your document, placed immediately after the last annex, must be the signed Affidavit confirming that the essay is entirely your own original work (see template in Chapter 5.3 (Annex3).

On the last page of the essay an affidavit is to be added and signed personally by the essay author.

The wording of the affidavit is presented in sub-chapter 5.3 of this regulation.

6 Table formulated by the author of the regulation with AI collaboration, based on modernized academic citation standards

5. Annexes (Appendices)

5.1 Regulation Template 1: Title Page

Full title of the Essay (font size 14 pt-bold)

Essay

created for the CSDP [Insert Year of Olympiad, e.g. 2027]

in Paphos – Cyprus

Author:

Forename Family name, (font size 14 pt-bold)

Student of the (add your institution)

(add your country)

(add your city), November 2026

5.2 Regulation Guide 2: Breakdown and Contents of Essay Chapters

This guide explains exactly what information belongs in each section of your essay. Use this as a checklist while writing to ensure your chapters meet academic standards.

Name of	What to Write (Your Objectives)
Preface	• Explain your personal connection to the topic (why did you choose it?). • Provide a brief space for acknowledgments (thanking teachers, mentors, or parents). • Hook the reader's interest and explain why this topic matters.
Introduction	• Set up the main problem your essay is trying to address. • Provide a brief overview of how you plan to investigate the issue. • Define any core terms or specialized concepts the reader needs to understand before moving forward.
Current State of Research	• Summarize what current experts, books, and articles already say about your topic. • Outline the major facts and existing data that are already widely accepted. • **Goal:** Show that you have done your background reading and understand the subject.
Research Gap	• Identify what is *missing* from current research or popular knowledge. • Explain what specific sub-topic or angle hasn't been fully explored yet. • Prove why your essay is necessary to help fill in that missing piece.
Research Question(s)	• State the main question your essay will answer. This acts as the "anchor" for your entire paper. • **Rule:** Your question *cannot* be a simple "yes" or "no" question. It must start with **"How..."**, **"Why..."**, or **"To what extent..."**. • You may include up to 5 smaller sub-questions to guide your chapters.
Methodology	• Explain exactly how you gathered your information (e.g., analyzing existing literature, conducting survey questionnaires, or analyzing specific case studies). • Show the step-by-step approach you took from start to finish. • Feel free to use a flowchart or diagram to visually outline your process.

Name of	What to Write (Your Objectives)
Research and Results of Research	• This is the main body of your essay. • Present the evidence, arguments, and data you uncovered in a logical order. • Directly answer your main research question using the facts you discovered.
Discussion of Results (pros and cons) and personal Conclusions	• Critically analyse your findings from different angles (look at the pros and cons or contrasting opinions). • Share your personal, educated conclusions based entirely on the evidence you presented. • Summarize the final takeaway of your essay

Table 5: Breakdown and Contents of Essay Chapters.[7]

5.3 Regulation Template 3: Master Affidavit Text

The affidavit below must be copied word-for-word onto the absolute last page of your essay. You must assign it the heading: "Final Appendix: Affidavit"

Signature Rule: This statement must be signed by your own hand.

Parental Co-Signature: Because secondary school students are legally minors, a parent or legal guardian must also co-sign this document to confirm they have reviewed these academic honesty guidelines with the student.

The sending institution is **responsible for ensuring that** a scanned, signed version is provided to the ESDC before the evaluation phase.

7 Table formulated by the author of the regulation with AI collaboration, based on modernized academic citation standards

FINAL APPENDIX:

AFFIDAVIT

I declare that I have written this essay independently and entirely on my own. I have clearly marked any language, data, or ideas borrowed from other sources as not my own and have fully documented their origin in the footnotes and bibliography. This essay does not contain any work that I have submitted or had graded for a previous class or academic assignment.

I am fully aware that any failure to do so constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's thoughts, words, or images as if they were my own—even if I summarize, paraphrase, condense, cut, rearrange, or otherwise alter the original material.

I am aware of the serious academic consequences and sanctions that plagiarism entails. Consequences will include the immediate nullification of this essay, a failing grade, and potential disciplinary action by the school administration. These consequences apply retrospectively if plagiarism is discovered after the essay has been accepted and graded.

Student’s Signature: _____

Student's Full Printed Name: _____

Parent/Guardian’s Signature: _____

Parent/Guardian’s Printed Name: _____

Location (City, Country): _____

Date of Submission: _____ / _____ / 2026

5.4 Regulation Paper: Official Evaluation Rubric

This rubric is used by the official evaluators to grade the essay. It is split into two distinct parts: Part A focuses on the structural depth and academic method, while Part B focuses on formatting accuracy, language compliance, and word count rules.

Evaluation – Page 1

Student:

Rank, Academic degree(s), NAME, Forename, Academic degree(s)	Student's home institution

Type and Topic of the Essay:

Essay for the CSDP Olympiad	
Type	Full title of the essay

Evaluator's Data:

Rank, Academic degree(s), NAME, Forename, Academic degree(s)	Evaluator home institution

Points achieved according to the evaluation – page 2:

Achievable points	Points achieved
100	

Evaluation – Page 2

Part A – Scientific Approach & Method:

No.	Description	Achievable points	Points achieved
01	**Title Page:** The cover page strictly matches the formatting requirements outlined in the regulation.	1	
02	**Abstract and Keywords**: The abstract covers all essential parts of the essay, and exactly 5 keywords are listed in alphabetical order.	2	
03	**Table of Contents**: All headings and sub-chapter levels are organized logically and formatted according to the spacing and font guidelines.	1	
04	**Preface**: The author clearly describes their personal relationship to the topic and engages the reader's interest.	2	
05	**Introduction**: The core problem is well-defined, and the author outlines a clear plan for how the essay will address it.	4	
06	**Current State of Research**: Thorough background research is displayed. The text accurately summarizes existing knowledge and expert opinions on the topic.	6	
07	**Research Gap**: The author clearly identifies what specific aspect of the topic is missing from current research or popular understanding.	2	
08	**Research Question(s)**: The central question directly addresses the research gap and cannot be answered with a simple "yes" or "no".	2	
09	**Methodology**: The author clearly outlines the step-by-step approach and methods used to gather data and answer the research question.	2	
10	**Research Findings & Analysis:** The core arguments and evidence are thoroughly developed in a logical sequence. The research directly answers the central question.	25	
11	**Discussion & Conclusion**: The findings are evaluated from different perspectives (pros and cons), leading to well-supported personal conclusions.	10	
12	**Annexes:** All required appendices (Abbreviations, Figures, Tables, Bibliography, etc.) are included and correctly structured.	2	
13	**Affidavit:** The signed anti-plagiarism statement (including the required parent/guardian co-signature) is included on the final page.	1	
	Total	60	

Remark for part A: Each divergence equals 1 point less – negative points are not possible.

Part B – Grammar and Formal Aspects:

No.	Description	Achievable points	Points achieved
14	**Word Count Compliance:** The essay meets the target length of ~2,000 words. A ± 10% margin is allowed without penalty. **Penalty:** Every 200 words over or under the allowed margin results in a 1-point deduction.	5	
15	**Academic Integrity & Citations:** All citations are formatted correctly according to the regulation. If AI tools were used for drafting, reliable external academic sources must be cited (AI tools cannot be cited as sources). The essay is completely free of plagiarism. **Penalty:** Every single missing or incorrect citation results in a 1-point deduction.	25	
16	**Layout & Formatting:** Document layout (margins, font sizes, line spacing, image captions, and footnote appearance) strictly follows the guidelines. Penalty: Every 10 minor layout mistakes equal 1 major formatting error, resulting in a 1-point deduction (negative scores are possible in this category).	5	
17	**Spelling, Grammar, and Dialect:** The essay is written cleanly in British English with minimized mechanical errors. ***Penalty:*** Every single spelling/grammar mistake, or every group of 4 comma mistakes, counts as 1 major error and results in a 1-point deduction (negative scores are possible in this category).	5	
	Total	40	

	Total (sum of A and B) ➔ please fill in also on page 1.	100	