

INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

Member of Staff Responsible	Deputy Principal
Board of Directors' Committee Responsible	Teaching & Learning
Related policies	Exclusion Inclusion (D-SEN)
Implementation date	23 February 2016
Review date	23 February 2019

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1. "Students who regularly extend their own understanding do better in their examinations"
- 1.2. Developing learning outside the classroom is an important part in ensuring student progress and we expect all students at Silverstone UTC to complete the work that is set. Completing the work and handing it in on time is a valuable and essential part of a successful learning experience.

2. SCOPE

- 2.1. This policy applies to all students and their teachers.

3. INDEPENDENT LEARNING

- 3.1. Independent learning is set in order to:
 - revisit and review work done through completion of set tasks
 - check that the student has understood the work covered in the lesson
 - apply and practise skills, e.g. developing essay writing skills
 - extend knowledge through further research and additional reading
 - provide extra practice of what has been done in the lesson
 - catch up with missed work, if necessary
 - complete coursework assignments.

4. BENEFITS

- 4.1. The benefits of independent learning for students are:
 - to improve and develop personal organisation and time-management
 - to increase self-discipline and the ability to set realistic goals
 - to take responsibility for their own learning and encourage greater independence
 - to complete activities using resources from outside school, e.g. libraries/museums.

5. TIME

- 5.1. There is no fixed time allocated to independent learning rather it will depend on the needs of the course. Students will be supported to help them use PP time effectively to extend and develop their learning.
- 5.2. Subject teachers will publish possible independent learning activities to help students extend and develop their understanding.

6. SUPPORT

6.1. Role of Parents/Carers

- 6.1.1 Your son/daughter will record independent learning activities in their diary (online or written). Please talk about personal planning to support the effective use of PP time. If your son/daughter is regularly saying that they are not sure what independent learning can be completed to extend their thinking, please contact their form tutor.
- 6.1.2 If your son/daughter is absent from school, independent learning work that has been set must be caught up as well as class work.
- 6.1.3 Try to make sure that there is a suitable place for him/her to work at home (e.g. quiet, no television, no mobile phone, a table).
- 6.1.4 Take an interest in the tasks to be done rather than just insisting on its completion.
- 6.1.5 Help, where appropriate, including with time management so that learning is not left until the last evening before the deadline.
- 6.1.6 Give praise when work is completed and deadlines met.

6.2. Study support

- 6.2.1 The UTC Learning Resource Centre is open throughout the day and is there to support students with the successful completion of all work and supporting them to develop their independent learning skills.
- 6.2.2 Support for students who get behind with their work and/or need support to develop their independent learning skills:
 - 6.2.2.1 Extensions to the time limit may be allowed if the teacher feels that the reason for non-completion was an emergency.
 - 6.2.2.2 Lunchtime compulsory support sessions.
 - 6.2.2.3 SMART targets for PP time.
 - 6.2.2.4 Teachers/tutors guide the student to split their tasks into smaller chunks and praise achievement.
 - 6.2.2.5 Close monitoring of PP time.
 - 6.2.2.6 Ongoing liaison with parents/carers.
 - 6.2.2.7 After-school study sessions with senior leaders – 5pm to 6pm Fridays.

7. HOME STUDY (YEAR 13 ONLY)

- 7.1. In order to support our students to maximise their performance in their studies, there is an opportunity to work from home at times when it is appropriate to do so, in the same way as happens in many businesses.
- 7.2. The opportunity for employees in business to work from home is an earned privilege and always depends on the standard of work and character of the individual. By applying the same rationale at the UTC, we will extend the privilege to Year 13 students only for as long as certain conditions are maintained. We may remove the privilege at any time.
- 7.3. Acceptance Criteria
 - All work is up-to-date and signed off by teachers.
 - Student is predicted to achieve their minimum target grade (MTG).
 - Good behaviour is consistent: <10 negative points per term.
 - Attendance >97% and unauthorised absence < 0.5%.
 - Adherence to dress code, particularly on days of part home study.
 - No concerns over timekeeping.
 - No timetabled lessons missed as a result of home study.
 - Work completed during home study verified by staff as meeting appropriate quality and quantity measures.
 - Written parental consent.

**INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY AND PROCEDURES
Monitoring and Evaluation**

Who	How	When by
Students	To log the work that needs completing in an electronic or written diary and note completion	Daily
Subject teachers	O in mark book if work not handed in on due date	Every deadline
Subject teachers	Several compulsory independent learning tasks handed in late – formal discussion and record on SIMS the issue, monitor, contact parents/carers	As required
Subject teachers	All schemes of work must have differentiated independent learning tasks included	Ready for next year
Tutors	Check use of diary (online or written)	Fortnightly
Tutors	In mentoring sessions check students coping with completion of work and independent learning	Termly
Heads of Key Stages	To monitor the manageability and appropriateness for individual students, ensure any concerns have been communicated home and check independent learning across the UTC	As required
Heads of Department	Monitor the setting of appropriate independent learning tasks by: a) work schemes b) students' work c) supportive follow-up discussion with teacher d) quality of final product	Half termly
Heads of Department	Check home learning has a clear relationship and extends the class work – to solidify and extend learning	Half termly
Principal/Deputy/Senior Leadership Team	Evaluate quality by spot checking students' work	Termly

INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY AND PROCEDURES

Independent learning tasks should be set early in the lesson

- all students must write the task in their diary (electronic or written)
- identify vulnerable students and write for them if necessary
- tasks should be written on board with hand-in date
- set independent learning tasks as necessary throughout lesson

Appropriate independent learning tasks	Information for teachers
Independent learning tasks should be differentiated and appropriate	Extension material available to give additional knowledge/information to develop level of understanding. Set independent tasks to allow practice. Individual tasks for weaker students e.g. brainstorm rather than extended writing.
Open ended tasks	Ensure range of materials for all abilities available. Differentiate the quantity; more for extension. Ensure structure available to help weaker students – headings, paragraphs, writing frames. Baseline of resources should also be available in the classroom.
Examination questions – a range of activities Data response Extended writing response	Collate banks of questions grouped in topic areas. Use mark schemes for self-marking/group work activity. Encourage pairs of students to mark each other's work. Build a bank of exemplar answers to be used with groups in following years. Practice at unpicking questions – what do they mean?
Use textbooks to set core and extension tasks	For longer pieces of work e.g. coursework, other material as well as textbooks should be referenced.
Use of media e.g. directed TV viewing Reading tasks i.e. a number of pages in a book	Teachers to ask probing questions to check that activity has taken place.
Practical experiment tasks to be written up. Mostly on laptop, but some essays (e.g.) will need to be handwritten to develop handwriting skills for exams.	The structure needs to be explicit for weaker students. Where students need a scribe, this should be recognised in setting handwritten tasks.

Appropriate independent learning tasks	Information for teachers
Negotiated tasks set at different levels	Needs a great deal of planning and preparation – to ensure most able choose extension tasks
Independent learning in practical subjects	Students to use as part of in UTC learning.
Coursework	Break down tasks into short deadlines – giving briefing sheets – timetable to show how work will be organised across lessons and homework
Resources online	Students have a username and password to access online resources and independent study tasks

All teachers will take into account any student needing differential work and will follow their Individual Education Plan (IEP).

Independent learning tasks should be part of schemes of work and the development of these should be by subject teams to share good practice.

All teachers should be consistent and expect independent learning to be completed on time and should respond if it is not.