



INDEPENDENT AND PERSONAL LEARNING

A Statement of Policy

Statement

All students are entitled to regular, appropriate independent learning assignments and personal learning tasks to support the work they do in class, which are assessed promptly. It is important that students, parents/carers, teachers and governors understand the reasons for setting independent learning assignments and personal learning tasks, the procedures that are in place at Wolgarston and the rewards and sanctions that will apply.

Aim

To provide guidance for students, parents/carers and teachers on the way independent learning assignments and personal learning tasks should be approached at Wolgarston.

Definition

Independent learning assignments are designed to take substantial periods of time and will help students to develop key skills. They will be undertaken mainly in an environment away from the classroom and outside normal school hours.

Independent learning assignments are any task that is to be completed without direct supervision from the teacher.

Personal learning tasks involve students taking responsibility for learning key information necessary for progress in their subjects.

Purposes of Independent Learning Assignments

To raise standards of achievement by:

- Encouraging students to develop independent study skills useful for lifelong learning;
- Encouraging students to take responsibility for their own learning;
- Developing perseverance and self-discipline in work habits;
- Allowing time to practice skills learned in the classroom;
- Providing opportunities for extension work;
- Encouraging parents/carers and other adults to be involved in students' work;
- Encouraging students to prepare for future lessons;
- Encouraging students to extend their own areas of interest.

Purposes of Personal Learning Tasks

To raise standards of achievement by:

- Encouraging students to learn material such as key words, vocabulary, symbols, etc essential for their progress in all subjects;
- Developing skilful revision habits;
- Encouraging students to prepare for future lessons.

Guidelines

Year 9

- At the start of each half term, each student in Year 9 will be provided with an independent learning timetable, detailing when they will be set independent learning assignments during that half term. This information will be communicated with parents by letter and will also be available on the school website.
- Departmental documentation **must** include details of the Year 9 independent learning assignments including agreed deadlines and expectations of assessment and feedback.
- The independent learning assignments must be appropriate to the age and the ability of the students and must be assessed and feedback given within two weeks of handing in the work.
- Written feedback must be in line with procedures laid out on the Written and Oral Feedback Policy.
- Assignments must be designed to provide opportunities for students to create different types of product.
- Each independent learning assignment will have a generic front cover sheet (adapted for each department) detailing the success criteria and giving an appropriate structure for written feedback.
- Personal learning tasks will not generally require written feedback.

Years 10 and 11

- Students in Years 10 and 11 will be given information about coursework deadlines and modular examinations.
- Department documentation must make reference to GCSE coursework deadlines, curriculum collapse sessions and modular examination dates.
- Independent learning assignments will mainly take the form of coursework.
- There will be personal learning tasks as in Year 9.

Post 16

- Students in Post 16 will be set independent learning assignments.
- There will be personal learning tasks as in Years 9, 10 and 11.
- BTEC students will be required to spend a considerable amount of time developing their portfolio.
- AS/A2 students will need to spend time each day on independent and personal learning activities for each subject.

General

- Clear instructions must be given to students about each independent learning assignment and personal learning task, and time must be allocated in the lesson for recording this information in organisers.
- Students are expected to complete independent learning assignments and personal learning tasks and hand them in as requested to allow for prompt feedback.
- The amount of time spent on independent learning assignments and personal learning tasks will inevitably vary from student to student. The government recommends that the time spent on such tasks should fall within the following ranges:

Year 9 - 1 to 2 hours per day

Years 10 and 11 - 1.5 to 2.5 hours per day.

There may be occasions in Year 11 when revision for examinations is taking place that the amount of work set will increase.

For Years 12 and 13 it is impossible to issue exact figures but, in general, all non-timetabled periods at school should be devoted to study, together with one hour of independent work at home for each hour of lesson time.

- The amount of work set and completed will be monitored during each term through student organisers and through focus groups of students who will be asked to keep a weekly diary of tasks set and time devoted to study.

Procedures for Supporting Students with Independent Learning and Personal Learning

- An organiser will be provided for each student at the beginning of each academic year. Post 16 students will be given a diary.
- A timetable will be provided for each student during the first few weeks of September.
- The subject teacher should check periodically that the details of the independent learning assignments and personal learning tasks are recorded accurately in the students' organisers when the work is set. Some students will require specific support with this.
- House tutors should monitor the use of organisers on a regular basis and will be expected to support all students by monitoring their progress against published independent learning deadlines.
- Subject Curriculum Leaders will monitor the quality of independent learning assignments set by colleagues in their departments and the quality of written feedback.
- We will also encourage parents to play an important role in ensuring that students have good conditions in which to carry out their independent learning.
- The emphasis will be on rewarding students who complete independent learning assignments. Departments should agree on their own reward policies.
- Year 9 students who do not complete their independent learning assignments to a given standard agreed by the department will be sent a letter by the Key Learning Area (KLA) Leader for that subject, expressing disappointment and offering support for the next assignment.
- Failure to meet requirements will result in sanctions being applied.
 - Sanctions will be applied according to each department's own internal policy;
 - Students will be notified of these at the start of the academic year;
 - Parents should be notified quickly if the student consistently fails to meet deadlines or consistently hands in poor quality work. A standard letter will be produced which should be used by all departments so that a central, electronic record can be kept of defaulters.
 - Pieces of work that are deemed to provide evidence of work over and above that which is specified will be rewarded according to each department's own internal policy.

Commitment

As a school, we are committed to making continuous improvement in all aspects of school life. This statement of policy is dynamic in that it is subject to monitoring, evaluation and modification. It will be reviewed on an annual basis.

Responsibilities

Ultimate responsibility for this policy's introduction and implementation lies with the Head Teacher in consultation with the Governing Body. It is important to recognise that all staff, students and parents/carers have an active part to play in the evolution, development and maintenance of this policy.

Date adopted by Governing Body: July 2008

Frequency of Review: Annual Next Review: May 2009

Location: *H:\Policies\Current Adopted Policies\WHS Policy Independent and Personal Learning.doc*
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