



INDEPENDENT LEARNING POLICY

Ratified by Governors/Principal:	Principal
Current ratification date:	Autumn 2017
Review frequency:	Annually
Next review date:	Autumn 2018
Responsibility of:	Rachael Newton

INTRODUCTION

At Freebrough Academy, independent learning is designed to support students to develop, consolidate and extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. It also gives students opportunities to develop effective learning habits and independent learning skills beyond the classroom to support achievement. Research shows that effective independent learning can support students in making the equivalent of five months progress across an academic year.

At secondary level, the recommendations of the time spent on Home Learning are:

KS3 (Y7 - Y8)

- Equivalent of at least 30 minutes per week **for each** Core subject
 - English
 - Maths
 - Science

- Equivalent of at least 30 minutes per fortnight **for each** Foundation subject
 - Business and Enterprise
 - MFL
 - ICT
 - Technology
 - PE
 - Art
 - Drama
 - Dance
 - History
 - Geography
 - Philosophy and Ethics

KS4 (Y9 - Y11)

- Equivalent of at least one hour per week **for each** Core subject
 - English
 - Maths
 - Science

- Equivalent of at least one hour per fortnight **for each** Option subjects
 - Business and Enterprise
 - MFL
 - ICT
 - Computer Science
 - Textiles
 - Catering
 - Resistant Materials
 - Engineering
 - Health and Social Care
 - Psychology
 - Sport

- Art
- Photography
- Drama
- Dance
- History
- Geography
- Religious Studies

HOME LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Independent learning activities should be varied and give students the opportunity to reinforce concepts learned in the classroom; explore and investigate topics in more depth; extend learning to enrich the understanding of key concepts or complete assessment tasks such as coursework or exam papers at KS4. The purpose of independent learning is not to finish work left incomplete during lesson time.

Independent learning tasks are planned by the faculty as a collaborative and standardised process or by the class teacher to enhance the standardised materials. Activities are presented in a booklet format, examples of tasks may include:

- Research and investigation
- Exam questions
- Revision
- Flipped learning – preparation for topics in lessons
- Directed reading
- Extended writing
- Drafting work
- Projects including coursework
- Preparing presentations
- Practising vocabulary/basic skills
- Rehearsing
- Creating a piece of art
- Product design

All activities have a clear purpose, deadline and expectations for presentation and follow the five hallmarks of effective independent learning:

1. **Purpose** – all independent learning tasks are meaningful, so that students understand the purpose of the assignment and why it is important in the context of their academic experience.
2. **Efficiency** – independent learning tasks are effectively structured so that time spent on them is used efficiently.
3. **Ownership** – independent learning tasks provide students with the opportunity to take ownership of their own learning outside of the classroom, and where appropriate provides a choice of activities for students to choose from.
4. **Competence** – independent learning tasks are differentiated and the tasks are explained and scaffolded to support students in completing them.
5. **Aesthetics** – independent learning tasks are presented clearly in booklet form with guidance on the nature of the tasks and how they should be completed.

FREQUENCY

Independent learning tasks are set to support a phase of learning; this may be over half term period or accommodate the length of a topic being studied. The independent learning booklet will include weekly tasks to accommodate this phase of learning.

All independent learning tasks are provided in paper form to all students at the beginning of the phase of learning. All tasks will then be available on FROG and/or the website. Each independent learning booklet is given a deadline for completion which is also available on FROG.

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS COMPLETING HOME LEARNING

All independent learning booklets and activities have a specific deadline that gives a reasonable amount of time for students to complete the tasks. If necessary, students should seek further guidance and support from the class teacher prior to the deadline; this could include access to ICT facilities.

The Learning Resource Centre provides a supportive, working environment with ICT facilities for students to complete independent learning during lunchtime and both before and after school.

Students are also encouraged to use some of their time during tutorial to work collaboratively with others on independent learning tasks.

Completing independent learning on time is rewarded at Freebrough Academy and is an important part of the criteria which assesses the daring greatly learner qualities. Completion of independent learning activities is rewarded through rewards system via class charts. Non completion is recorded by teachers in both planning folders and via class charts. As part of tutor monitoring independent learning completion is monitored by tutors and where there is non-completion the tutor will support the student to complete activities and if necessary contact home.

ASSESSMENT AND MONITORING OF INDEPENDENT LEARNING

There is an interim and final assessment opportunity for each independent learning activity. At the interim review this can be assessed in a variety of ways:

- Peer assessment
- Self-assessment
- Teacher assessment

Time to complete an interim review will be built into teachers planning.

Final assessment is carried out by the class teacher and returned to students within a week. Students will receive feedback on their independent learning regarding the accuracy and quality of their work.

Directors of Learning/Assistant Principals monitor the quality, setting and completion of independent learning activities to ensure that it is in line with Academy policy. Monitoring independent learning is a key feature of the Academy's quality assurance processes when monitoring, evaluating and reviewing teachers' planning and carrying out student voice.

A GUIDE TO INDEPENDENT LEARNING 2017 - 2018

NON NEGOTIABLES

PURPOSE

- Independent learning activities should be varied and give students the opportunity to reinforce concepts learned in the classroom.

EFFICIENCY

- Independent learning activities should support the delivery of a phase of learning/half term or unit of work.
- Tasks included should allow all students to complete at least one task per week during that phase of learning.

OWNERSHIP

- Independent learning can be completed at home or as part of the school day through tutorial, before and after school and in independent learning club in the LRC.
- All tasks should be uploaded to FROG and/or the website to ensure students can access the tasks after being given a paper copy. A final deadline will be given on FROG.

COMPETENCE

- Activities should be differentiated or provide opportunities for extension.
- All tasks should be explained so that students know how to complete them.
- Students should be able to seek guidance on how to complete tasks before the deadline.

AESTHETICS

- All tasks should be presented in booklet form clearly showing the subject and topic/phase being studied.
- Tasks should be accessible to all, with clear font, text size and quality.
- Ensure SEND students have independent learning tasks printed on coloured paper where appropriate.
- Where completion of tasks is through an electronic system e.g. language perfect the vocab and tasks should be provided in a booklet before the task is set.

ASSESSMENT

- There is an interim and final assessment opportunity for each independent learning activity. At the interim review this can be assessed in a variety of ways and is built into planning: peer/self or teacher.
- Final assessment is carried out by the class teacher and returned to students within a week. Students will receive feedback on their independent learning regarding the accuracy and quality of their work.
- When completing an interim assessment in class work should be provided for students who have not completed their task. This should not be the independent learning task, support should be offered but this should be an additional task.