



# Grace Academy

## Homework Policy

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Authors	Reviewed by Meena Gabbi
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## 1. Introduction

The aim of the Independent Learning Policy is to promote learning. Independent Learning (IL) reinforces classroom learning, and also helps students to develop skills and attitudes that they need for successful work place and life-long learning. It supports the development of independent learning skills, including the habits of enquiry and investigation, encourages good organisation, time management and the confidence to think for oneself. IL also provides teachers with further evidence to ascertain how much of the work in class students have understood and can apply, so that they are better able to plan for progression.

## 2. The Purpose of Independent Learning

The purpose of IL is to:

- (a) Encourage students to develop the skills needed to learn independently.
- (b) Develop self discipline in work habits including working to deadlines.
- (c) Consolidate, reinforce and extend the skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the classroom.
- (d) Open up areas of study or sources of information that are not accessible in the classroom.
- (e) Enable students to meet the demands of GCSE and other controlled assignments.
- (f) Prepare students for school and public examination.
- (g) Encourage parents/carers to be involved in students' learning.
- (h) Foster a partnership between home and school by providing parents/carers with an opportunity to share in their child's learning.

## 3. The Format of Independent Learning Tasks

IL may include the following:

- (a) Reinforcement of class work.
- (b) Research topics and investigations.
- (c) Preparation for topic/class work.
- (d) Reviewing, redrafting or summarising a piece of work.
- (e) Activities related to personal and social development.
- (f) Preparation for a presentation.
- (g) Activities to support learning vocabulary, concepts and key words.
- (h) Preparation for topic test.

In general, learning projects should be planned to complement (not just to complete) classroom learning.

## 4. Independent Learning and Study Support – The Role of Parents/Carers

Most students will complete their learning projects at home. Parents/carers are therefore in a position to offer vital support and encouragement in this area. Parents/carers can provide this support and encouragement by:

- (a) Providing an appropriate learning space in which their son/daughter can work.
- (b) Talking with their son/daughter about their Independent Learning, the standards they are achieving and the importance of carrying out learning projects.

- (c) Checking deadlines via the Portal and helping their son/daughter manage their time successfully so that these deadlines are met.
- (d) Praising their son/daughter for a successful completion of Independent Learning.

## 5. The Nature of Independent Learning

IL tasks will vary but will have the following in common:

- (a) The IL should be clearly related to the scheme of work.
- (b) The purpose of the IL given should be clear to students and the task itself should be fully explained.
- (c) IL should be organised in a clear structure, this enables students to plan their learning task pattern.
- (d) IL tasks should be varied, developing different skills and involving a range of activities.
- (e) IL tasks should be manageable, overburdening students with learning projects often proves to be counterproductive.
- (f) The IL's level of difficulty should be carefully gauged and should take account of students' needs and abilities; it should challenge students but not be so difficult that it is beyond their capabilities.
- (g) IL should be clearly differentiated – extending to all but providing increased challenge for the most able, and appropriate support for those who need it.
- (h) IL tasks should allow students to exercise initiative and creativity.
- (i) IL should promote self-confidence and understanding e.g. work prepared for a class, particularly when this work is for presentation by the student to the class, can promote self-confidence and understanding.
- (j) There is a need for appropriate feedback to the student about their performance, a long delay between submission of learning projects, assessment and a response from staff is not desirable and is often demoralising for students.
- (k) Additional Needs should have an advisory role in the setting of learning projects and an active role in preparation of learning projects tasks where appropriate.

## 6. Independent Learning Support

The following forms of support are available to students in their learning project tasks:

- (a) The Learning Centre, books and computers are available.
- (b) The public library.
- (c) IT rooms.
- (d) School website (for certain subjects).
- (e) Teaching staff.
- (f) Independent Learning Club
- (g) Doodle

## 7. Assessment and Feedback

A variety of methods of assessment and feedback can be used examples include:

- (a) Self-assessment - student assesses work himself/herself.
- (b) Peer-assessment - work is assessed by another or other students.
- (c) Teacher-assessment – marking is detailed.
- (d) Teacher-assessment - aspect marking concentrating on one facet of the work.

(e) Doodle quizzes

The nature of the assessment used should be appropriate to the task being done. There is a need for assessment and feedback to be as immediate as possible to provide information to students and to motivate them. It should include what students have done well and identify their next steps.

## **8. Roles and Responsibilities of Academy, Teacher, Student and Parent**

The designated person is responsible for reviewing this policy and for monitoring its implementation.

### **8.1 Heads of Faculty**

Heads of faculty are responsible for ensuring that curriculum lead in their faculty are setting appropriate learning project and assigning a suitable method of assessment. IL should be checked half-termly as part of the faculty's quality assurance process. This will form part of the head of faculty's line management meetings.

### **8.2 Curriculum Lead/Teacher/TLC/Head of Department**

The Curriculum Lead is responsible for setting appropriate learning projects. The Curriculum Lead will give clear instructions on what method of assessment will be carried out for individual learning project. A variety of methods of assessing students and giving feedback can be used. Subject teacher is responsible for ensuring students complete IL tasks. Class teachers are responsible for sanctions/behaviour points and detentions in line with the policy if deadlines are not met.

### **8.3 Form Tutor**

The form tutor is responsible for checking the student's progress during tutor time.

### **8.4 Student**

Students are responsible for checking IL tasks via the Portal or Doodle and for completing the learning tasks on time to the best of their ability, for seeking help if they experience difficulties, and for taking note of teacher feedback in order to improve their work.

### **8.5 Parents/Carers**

Parents/carers should support students with their learning tasks, show that they value learning, and support the academy in explaining how it can help students to progress. Parents/carers should encourage students and praise them when a learning project or task is completed.

## **9. Communication of the Policy**

This policy will be issued to all staff and to governors on a yearly basis with any changes highlighted. Parents will be informed through the issuing of IL guides for Key Stage 3 and 4.

## **10. Monitor and Review**

### **10.1 Monitoring**

- (a) Students should regularly check the Portal for homework tasks.
- (b) Subject staff will monitor completion of learning tasks, applying sanctions in accordance with GA policy.

- (c) Heads of Faculty will arrange sanctions and monitor the setting of learning projects, its marking, and teacher feedback to students on a half termly basis as part of their quality assurance procedures.
- (d) The Academy Leadership Team will, in their role as line managers, monitor the quality assurance procedures of faculty heads.
- (e) The person designated will monitor the policy on a termly basis, using parental/student questionnaires, the feedback from faculty quality assurance, student voice, and planner checks.