



Birmingham Ormiston Academy
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BOA

Independent Learning Policy

Date of Issue: September 2016
Date of Review: September 2017

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Core Purpose

To ensure staff, students, parents and governors recognise the academy's clear commitment to independent learning and to familiarise them with independent learning practices and procedures across the academy.

Rationale

At BOA all students are expected to undertake independent learning on a regular basis in the belief that it supports students when consolidating the knowledge, understanding and skills acquired during lessons, as well as providing the opportunity for investigation or research in preparation for new topics. Its purpose is, therefore, to extend and reinforce learning. As an integral part of the curriculum, it is planned and prepared alongside all other programmes of learning.

Practices and Procedures

There are many forms of effective independent learning tasks, some of which may not always involve producing a written piece of work. All of the following are legitimate forms of independent learning which encourage students to be responsible, self-governing learners:

- investigations
- extension work
- reading
- research
- revision
- projects
- drafting or re-drafting
- planning or preparation
- self-evaluation

The amount of independent learning set will vary according to the needs of the subject and the age of the student. A degree of flexibility must be allowed as some tasks, including coursework, may take longer. The quality, purposefulness and challenge of a task are more important than the length of time it takes to complete.

At Key Stage 4, all subjects and pathways will set independent learning tasks on a regular basis, ranging from short reading or revision tasks to more substantial pieces. At BOA, we encourage students to be self-governing learners and therefore expect all students to carry out research in support of their studies. Where learning is progressive, tasks should be set 'little and often'. For project work or assignments, which are extended pieces of work, a longer time period may be set.

Independent Learning is an important aspect of BOA's partnership with parents. We ask parents to support by providing suitable spaces and times for their children to complete tasks, and by monitoring the quality of work produced. Parents can play an invaluable role in encouraging their children through longer, extended tasks, which may take several weeks. Since all independent learning is recorded by students in their planners, it is expected that parents will regularly inspect and sign these and that they will support the academy in taking action against students who do not complete tasks satisfactorily or who regularly miss deadlines.

Students will be able to access revision and study support, which will run from 4.15 to 5.15, when they will be able to take advantage of the academy's facilities.

Roles and Responsibilities

- Line Managers of pathways / departments will monitor the quality, relevance and regularity of task setting across the academy and each pathway's / department's mechanism for self-regulating independent learning.
- Pathway / Department leaders will monitor the setting of effective regular tasks within their curriculum area and ensure the development of innovative independent learning practices which reflect developments within education and across a range of learning styles.
- The class teacher will set purposeful, challenging tasks, differentiated to suit the needs of individuals. Teachers will ensure the heading 'Independent Learning' appears in exercise books and that details of the work set, together with deadlines for completion, are recorded in students' planners. All independent learning should be marked according to the pathway or departmental marking policies. Effective independent learning tasks will be acknowledged and rewarded through the academy's rewards system.
- Students will complete work appropriately and on time, or will be required to attend catch-up sessions (4.15 to 5.15pm).
- The Independent Learning Policy will be reviewed annually by SLT through departmental review procedures.