

Independent Learning Policy

Created: April 2013

Review due: August 2014

Chair of the Board of Governors signature:

.....

Print Name:

Date:



UTC READING

Independent Learning Policy

Introduction

At UTC Reading (UTC) students will be manage their independent learning time to meet their own individual targets. They will be supported by their Tutor to develop their skills to a point where they are able to self-manage their time.

Aim

We aim to promote Independent Learning as an essential part of the UTC experience. We want to develop in our students a work ethic that is characterised by an engagement in learning and a commitment to doing their best. Independent Learning will help to develop skills and attitudes students need to be successful in and beyond their time at the UTC.

Rationale

Independent Learning support learning by:

- reinforcing and extending the curriculum
- enhancing skills and overall attainment
- giving students a sense of achievement
- encouraging personal organisation and a sense of responsibility which are vital life skills for successful individuals
- promoting effective learning habits of enquiry and investigation

Independent Learning is most beneficial when:

- it is set and monitored effectively and contributes to the challenge of raising attainment
- students take responsibility for their Independent Learning, supported by their parents/carers
- Independent Learning tasks are differentiated and are appropriate to the needs of individuals
- Independent Learning is checked, monitored and/or marked promptly and feedback should be regularly provided to students

At the UTC the majority of Independent Learning is completed during the students' timetabled independent time. There will be occasions when some work will need to be completed at home, for example extra revision for an external examination.

When is Independent Learning set?

Independent Learning is set regularly in relation to projects. If a project or Independent Learning task is set, students should be given weekly tasks in addition to a final deadline. A 12-16 week project would typically include a number of discrete Independent Learning tasks that can be entered into the Student Outlook Calendar and Portal for students and parents / guardians.

Types of Independent Learning

Independent Learning tasks will be differentiated to enable access to the tasks set for students of a range of abilities. There are many different forms of Independent Learning tasks, depending on the subject, the scheme of work and the contents/skills being taught at the time. Below are some examples:

- completing a section of a wider piece of project work to feedback to the rest of the group at the next group meeting
- consolidation exercise e.g. answer a set of questions
- sketching, storyboarding, taking photographs or design work
- researching topics for a class unit of work, e.g. history, local news
- writing up class investigations
- learning vocabulary in a foreign language or key words in a subject
- revising information about a current topic, test or exam
- Video diary

Teachers' Responsibilities

- Setting, collecting, and marking or checking Independent Learning in accordance with subject area and UTC policies.
- Keeping accurate personal records of Independent Learning outcomes in their Teacher Planner [electronically].
- Ensuring that all students record Independent Learning accurately in their electronic diaries.
- Allow time in class for students to record the Independent Learning accurately into their calendars. It is better not to do this at the end of the lesson.
- Planning Independent Learning tasks in advance of the lesson and in line with schemes of work. Independent Learning tasks should be related to subject Programmes of Study and 'finishing off' class work should be avoided where possible.
- Monitoring and/or marking Independent Learning in a timely fashion (usually within a week), in accordance with the UTC Assessment Policy. If the work is marked the teacher's comment should indicate how well the student is doing, what aspect of their work reflects effective learning, what aspect needs improving, and what they need to do to improve.

- Use lesson time to celebrate successful Independent Learning contributions by providing the appropriate praise and UTC reward systems for exceptional work. Employees are encouraged to give rewards for all tasks that meet or exceed the students' target grades.

Students' Responsibilities

- Recording all Independent Learning tasks in their Outlook Calendar, noting its date of completion and marking their Calendar when it has been completed.
- Completing their calendars accurately.
- Asking staff for clarification if Independent Learning is not clear.
- Undertaking all Independent Learning tasks to the best of his/her ability.
- Meeting all Independent Learning deadlines for work to be handed in and accept the consequence if a deadline is missed.

If no Independent Learning task is set, students should use the time in a useful and sensible way, e.g. revision, reading, re-drafting work or recapping and consolidating previous learning.

Tutors' Responsibilities

- Monitor students Independent Learning via their weekly Action Plan.
- Devise a regular action plan to support the students learning and arrange extra support with subject teachers where needed.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Directors will be responsible for monitoring the Independent Learning within their subject areas.

This will be monitored by the Vice Principal annually.

Date created: April 2013

Date agreed: 20th May 2013

Date of Review: 31st August 2014