



Sixth Form Independent Learning Expectations

In our recent survey, different parents have indicated that their Y12 child is being set too much, too little, or just the right amount of work, even where different students are in the same classes. I thought it would be helpful, therefore, to reiterate how a students' learning is structured at A-level and how it will naturally adapt in the Sixth Form.

Normal expectations of student learning **per week** for a 3 A-level program:

- 15 hours of taught lessons (3 hours a day, on average)
- 20 hours of independent learning and homework (4 hours a day, on average – a "typical" student might do 1 hour at school in a study period, 2 hours a day at home in the evening, then 5 hours over the course of a weekend)

Lockdown expectations of student learning **per week** for a 3 A-level program:

- 15 hours of work set/learning activities (3 hours a day, on average)
- 15 hours of independent learning (3 hours a day, on average)
 - This might look 'less' but in general we experience that students get through work quicker when working at home than they do in lessons, and students will be set less 'homework' in many subjects because they will be producing more independent written work in 'lesson time' than they would have at school.

You might remember that in the talk I gave at the parents' conference at the start of Y12, about half of A-Level learning should comprise independent work – a transition that is often difficult to make when at GCSE, possibly only 10% might be independent. If your child has struggled with this transition, then it might currently appear that they are doing too little.

What should they be doing when they have finished work set by teachers?

- Consolidating previous material e.g. making revision notes or flashcards
- Working through practice problems they got wrong the first time round to see if they can improve
- Background reading e.g. in-depth research into ideas, places, eras, events, or authors mentioned in lesson material
- Actively revising - you might remember the strategies mentioned in various presentations to parents, but a review of some useful ones can be found at:

<https://www.learningscientists.org/downloadable-materials>.

I will be reiterating to Y12 in the first week back the need to continue to engage with the independent aspect of their learning, if they are not already, and whilst they should be familiar with the expression "20 hours" and what that entails in terms of the type of learning activity they should engage in, I suspect that some may have lost motivation for it.

As always, there will be some students who are trying to do too much and so there is a danger that information like this just encourages them to do even more, to their detriment. It is a balancing act when delivering messages like this in school, so if you feel that your child has not got the balance right, either one way or another, please do not hesitate to get in touch with their Form Supervisor in the first instance.

Mrs Naomi McGough

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