



**THE
HASTINGS
ACADEMY**

Independent Study Policy

PRIDE THROUGH SUCCESS

Policy statement

The Academy believes that Independent Study plays a vital role in raising attainment of all students from Year 7 onwards. Research has shown that five years of independent study is the equivalent to an additional year at school.

For our students to be successful it is essential that:

- They regularly extend their learning beyond the classroom independently
- They extend and consolidate learning in the classroom, providing a bridge that ultimately links to independent private study so they are ready for the next phase in their learning post 16
- Their parents are able to encourage and support them in seeking the highest possible levels of achievement

Objectives

- To give students at The Hastings Academy the opportunity to enjoy learning, develop independent learning skills and achieve to the best of their abilities in line with our shared Academy value of PRIDE THROUGH SUCCESS
- To improve students' attitudes to learning outside of the classroom, allowing them to be more responsible for their own learning and facilitate graduation from The Hastings Academy 'Passport to Success', through areas such as resilience, teamwork, active participation and creativity.
- To consolidate and reinforce skills and apply understanding developed in lessons
- To provide students with the opportunity of showing what they can do by producing high quality independent work
- To develop student self-confidence, initiative and self-awareness of the subjects they study
- To provide parents with the opportunity to share in their child's learning and to be informed about the type of work undertaken as part of their school experience at the Academy

Our expectations are that:

Independent study tasks will be set regularly and students will be encouraged to establish a good routine from the beginning of their school career. Assessment of tasks or assignments will form part of the overall assessment policy procedures. The schedule for each year group can be found on Fox and the website. Independent study tasks should not penalise students who do not work as quickly as other students for reasons related to individual needs, nor should it result in higher ability students receiving less than other students.

Years 7 and 8 – up to 45 minutes of independent study per day

Years 9,10 and 11 – up to 1-1½ hours of independent study per day

Recording Independent Study

It is the student's responsibility to ensure they refer to the tasks that they have been set by their teachers using Fox. All pupils can log onto the system from home using their normal log in and password. An overview of all tasks can be seen by using the appropriate section from the Academy's home page and selecting the appropriate sections for the student in question. If independent study is set over an extended period of time, teachers will ensure that they remind the student on a regular basis.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Importance of feedback and follow-up

Independent study provides an ideal opportunity for a focussed dialogue between student and teacher. Students value formative feedback which not only comments on the work that they have done, but also tells them what to do to improve and work towards the next level or grade. Completion of independent study will form part of the assessment on a student's 'Passport to Success' that leads to graduation each year.

Responsibilities

The student is responsible for completing independent study. Should a student not bring in evidence of their independent study, one warning will be issued by their subject teacher. If a second warning is necessary, parents will be contacted by text, phone or email. If students then fail to complete their independent study they will be required to attend Study Club after school until all work is completed.

The subject teacher is responsible for setting independent study tasks or assignments that are varied in content, sufficiently differentiated and which is seen by students as being of value. Subject teachers are responsible for supporting and managing feedback linked to independent study. It is expected that independent study is regularly and promptly assessed by the subject teacher. Subject teachers will also liaise with parents where necessary.

Curriculum and subject leaders are responsible for making sure that teachers within their area know, understand and implement this policy. They are also responsible for the monitoring of independent study work set by their team, feedback and follow-up for students who do not complete tasks. Follow-up includes liaising with the subject teacher, the student concerned and parents.

Tutors are responsible for supporting the completion of independent study and ensuring our students understand this is an integral and important aspect of their learning.

Parents

The Hastings Academy greatly appreciates the supportive role that parents play.

Successful independent study can be achieved together by:

- Encouraging and praising effort and achievement
- Encouraging the use of research and support facilities, such as after-school clubs, libraries, websites, catch-up sessions
- Providing suitable facilities for independent study at home
- Communicating with the Academy to discuss any problems

Rewards

Completion of independent study tasks will be rewarded through the Academy's reward system (Passport to Success VIVOs). Where there will be additional windows for doubling and tripling the amount given.

Facilities to support students

The Hastings Academy will provide opportunities for students to learn beyond the end of the school day and complete independent study, by enabling access to the Academy's ICT network, learning resources in the library and after-school Study Club on Monday-Thursday until 4:00pm. Staff must encourage students to return for help if they seem to be spending excessive amounts of time on independent study. The Academy is committed to ensuring that all students have access to ICT, Fox and the Internet at breaks and after school Study Club in order to assist the completion of tasks.