



Independent Study Policy

Audience	STUDENT
Requirement	EXTRA
Policy Owner	HEAD OF Teaching & Quality
1st Delegation	SMT
Last Delegation	SMT
Review Cycle	Every 2 years
Last Review	Sep-18
Due for Review	Sep-20

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The Purpose of Independent Study

The Independent Study Policy is intended to provide learners with regular opportunities to:

1. extend, develop and practise what is learned in class;
2. prepare for work in class;
3. acquire the ability, confidence and organisational skills to work independently;
4. gather information, ideas and skills from a wide range of sources and stimuli outside of the College;
5. work at their own pace and ability level, particularly in tackling longer term projects;
6. revise and reinforce skills and knowledge learnt in the class work;
7. act on feedback given by teachers.

Through Independent Study, lecturers can:

1. enable learners to master underpinning knowledge outside the classroom, so activities within it can focus on the higher level skills of application, analysis, evaluation, synthesis and creativity;
2. encourage learners to explore complementary topics which enrich the study programme;
3. apply their learning to different contexts.

Scope

The Independent Study Policy applies to learners at all levels and on all types of course, although lecturers may wish to take into account the following when designing Independent Study tasks:

1. Differentiated to meet the differing abilities and needs of individuals;
2. the level of the course;
3. the type of learner (e.g. working adult learners in an evening class);
4. reasonable timescales given the nature and size of the Independent Study;
5. Independent Study being set by other lecturers on the course;
6. how the Independent Study links into the Scheme of Work.

Form

Independent Study should not just be about completing assignment work for summative assessment; rather it can fulfil a great many purposes that support the formative learning process. Independent Study can take many forms beyond traditional written work including planning, preparing, revising, reading, discussing, interviewing, designing, drawing,

photographing, collecting, experimenting, investigating, re-drafting, improving, researching, testing, listening, imagining and so forth. Independent Study should include some variety so learners don't always see it as more written work. Independent study is designed to help learners develop their independent study skills which will benefit them both on course and with their progression onto a higher level course, HE, an apprenticeship or employment.

An element of independent study will be timetabled and directed (Directed Independent Study). Directed Independent Study (DIS) work will be set and agreed by the lecturer with deadlines set for completion. Learners will be expected to fulfil the allocated DIS time and work set to them on a weekly basis, this will be checked by the tutor and feedback given as appropriate.

Facilities and Resources

The College will provide resources both during the College day and afterwards, including iLRC facilities, so that learners have access to a suitable study environment for doing Independent Study at College as well as at home. Students have access to computers, the Internet, the College virtual learning environment, books, magazines and articles. The iLRC staff maintain an up to date list of all available resources on the college VLE. Other support available outside the classroom includes iLRC staff who can support with research and academic study techniques and Study Facilitators who can help learners with their individual needs.

Responsibilities

Learners are responsible for:

- making a note of the Independent Study required and the deadline;
- asking for any clarification well in advance of the deadline;
- completing the work set to the best of their ability;
- handing the completed work in on time in the agreed format (which may include online);
- giving the lecturer advance notice where possible if, for whatever reason, they don't think they will meet the deadline.

If the learner is 14-18, parents are responsible for:

- providing a suitable place for the learner to do the Independent Study;
- taking an interest in the Independent Study and discussing it;
- encouraging the student to complete the Independent Study on time;
- contacting the College via the tutor or subject lecturer if there are any concerns.

The College is responsible for:

- Timetabling Directed Independent study and monitoring student attendance;
- Monitoring quality and timeliness of completed work;
- setting regular and appropriate Independent Study for the level of the course;
- setting a date for completion;
- helping learners to identify time to complete Independent Study;
- giving helpful and constructive feedback in written or verbal form depending on the nature of the Independent Study;

- enabling the learner to appreciate the relevance of the Independent Study to the lessons and understand how it can be linked to ongoing activities;
- returning marked written work within three weeks of submission;
- taking appropriate action to support learners who fail to complete Independent Study, including contacting parents.