

Rationale

At Da Vinci Academy, we believe passionately that students are entitled to the very best provision in relation to their academic studies. Our curriculum is intended to be remembered for life, rather than encountered and quickly forgotten and, as such, it is vital that we support our learners to embed and maintain knowledge in their long-term memory. During lessons, our teachers employ teaching and learning strategies which promote the retention of knowledge, and they structure lessons in ways which strengthen students' knowledge and understanding. Self-study (i.e. 'homework') is a vital addition to the learning which occurs in school, and getting into good habits of personal study sets students up for success as they reach Key Stage 4 and begin to prepare for public examinations. Engaging in regular self-study:

- Helps students to develop responsibility for time management, which is a vital skill both in education and employment.
- Helps students to improve their recall of important knowledge, as well as its maintenance in the long-term memory, which is vital to ensuring examination success at the end of Year 11.
- Gives students the opportunity to develop their skills and expertise.
- Offers parents, carers and families the opportunity to be involved in their child's learning.
- Promotes improved academic outcomes in all year groups, not only those approaching the public examinations.

Research Findings – Self-Study

The benefits of undertaking self-study have been recorded in many research studies. The findings below represent just some of the benefits of developing strong habits of self-study.

- 'Homework' is linked with significantly increased progress for students in secondary education, with those who complete homework working at levels greater than 5 months beyond those who do not. This increase is even greater when self-study is completed using digital technology.
- Self-study, when based in retrieval practice (the act of bringing previously-studied information back into working memory) strengthens memory and increases retention of knowledge.
- Self-study is most impactful when it is directly linked to what has been studied in school, rather than homework which is set as an 'add-on' activity.
- Students who are successful at A Level and at GCSE are those who have highly-developed independent learning skills. Getting into good habits of self-study helps to promote independent learning skills.
- Regular, low-stakes retrieval quizzes are highly effective both in promoting active learning and also in ensuring that the knowledge that we have learned builds over time, rather than being 'lost' or forgotten.

Mechanisms For Self-Study At Da Vinci Academy – All Students

At DVA, all students in years 7-11 are set self-study on the online platform Carousel. Using this platform, our staff set regular knowledge quizzes and associated revision of subject content, facilitating both rehearsal and retrieval practice, which are known to be vital processes linked to the long-term retention of knowledge. Students do not require login details to access their homework – they simply access their knowledge quizzes via the DVA website. A video guide to accessing homework is located on the DVA website here - <https://www.davinciacademy.co.uk/home-learning-2/>, - and a guide to using the platform as a student is also available at the same address.

Additional Mechanisms For Self-Study At Da Vinci Academy – Key Stage 4 Students

In Years 10 and 11, students will receive additional self-study that further prepares them for their GCSEs. This may include, but is not limited to, use of additional online platforms, examination-style questions or papers, and essay writing.

Roles & Responsibilities Linked To Self-Study

a. Academy Staff

Teaching staff are responsible for setting weekly tasks on Carousel, and ensuring that it is based in knowledge that has been learned both within and across the years of the DVA curriculum. Teaching staff will also review all homework, and will use their findings to inform the teaching that follows, addressing any misconceptions and / or gaps in knowledge.

b. Students

Students are responsible for completing all self-study tasks set on Carousel (all students) and for the completion of any additional tasks set at Key Stage 4 linked to GCSE study and preparation. We acknowledge that not all students will have daily access to technology at home, and the Academy runs a homework club in N11 on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday after school, allowing students to access and complete homework whilst supervised by our Learning Support team.

c. Parents, Carers & Families

We know that you will wish to support your child with their homework, and you can do this by encouraging them to complete their homework each day, rather than leaving it all to complete the evening before a deadline. Sitting with your child and supporting them to complete their homework can be a great way to establish routines, and you can use the 'flashcard' facility on the platform to quiz your child, too.

Rewards Linked To Self-Study

Whilst learning is, in itself, the reward of hard work, we also reward students for completing self-study (whether completed at home or during homework club) with A points for meaningful engagement with their self-study tasks.