

Independent Learning at St Benedict's Sixth Form



There are periods in every week where a St Benedict's student will have Independent Study. They will sign in to a study room or the sixth form and utilise the time and facilities to progress their studies. Independent study is an important part of academic life at St Benedict's and it is expected that you will spend a minimum of 15 hours a week studying outside set lesson times.

Independent Study is important as it helps develop the good habits that will be needed at University. It develops self-discipline and self-management skills. Furthermore, both A-Level and BTEC courses contain too much material to get across using lesson time alone so students need to review and rework material in order to embed it and develop their understanding as well as exposing areas of weakness- these can then be followed up in lessons or intervention sessions

At St Benedict's you can expect your teachers to:

- Push you to achieve your full potential.
- Plan lessons that meet your needs and allow you to make progress.
- Provide you with appropriate materials for your course.
- Mark your work in a prompt fashion and give you with feedback that shows you how to improve.
- Support you in preparing for examinations.
- Offer support and advice when you are struggling with your work.

At St Benedict's your teachers will expect you to:

- Want to achieve and set high expectations for yourself.
- Prepare for lessons and engage with lessons by making contributions and asking and answering questions.
- Bring all appropriate materials to lessons and be ready to study.
- Hand work in on time and respond to feedback.
- Prepare yourself for the examinations by thorough and systematic revision.
- Seek and act upon help and advice when you have problems with your work.

We offer support subject by subject for each of our students through a guided independent study programme each half-term. Students have access to an independent study timetable and are able to work in the dedicated Sixth Form Learning Centre. Furthermore, students have daily support through our Academic Support Team.

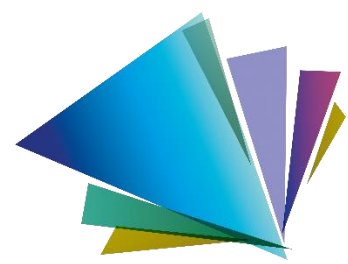
REVIEWING THE LESSON

After every lesson you need to go over what you have just covered. This is important as;

- It will embed the knowledge from the lesson ready for future work. One lesson will lead on to the next and eventually to the exam.
- It gives you a chance to find out what you do not understand – this gives you a chance to close the gap before the next lesson.

Tips for success

- **ALWAYS review the lessons in your study periods. This is vital to success.**
- Do it as soon as you can after the lesson.
- Rewrite your notes – make them into revision cards, spider diagrams etc.
- Re-read the notes before the next lesson.
- If there is something you do not understand, get help. Other students or your teachers are a good source of help. Remember, if you do not understand it, others are probably having the same issues.



Independent Learning at St Benedict's Sixth Form



PREPARING FOR THE NEXT LESSON

On a regular basis you will be asked to do some preparation for the next lesson. This will usually involve some reading followed by some form of task. This develops and tests your understanding of the subject and allows the teacher to make effective use of lesson time.

Tips for success

- Make sure you do not leave this until the last minute – things can go wrong and then you are not prepared for the next lesson. Students who do not prepare put themselves at a disadvantage and let down the rest of the group.
- Ask for advice before the lesson if you have difficulties or problems.
- Make sure you are in a position to discuss the material and make contributions to the lesson. This allows you to develop the deep understanding of the topics needed for success in the exams.

WRITING ANSWERS TO EXAM QUESTIONS

Sometimes you will be set an exam question to complete in your study time. These questions will give you a chance to learn the knowledge and develop the skills needed for the exam.

Tips for success

- Look at the question as soon as you get it. Make sure you know the demands of the question and how to approach it. Seek help ASAP if you are unsure.
- Write a draft of the essay and then leave it for a while. After a few days, check the essay. Get someone else to check it for you. Does it make sense? Do any sections need re-working? Have you met the success criteria for that question?
- Make sure you have a finished essay ready before the deadline. Late essays slow down the feedback process for you and the other members of your group.

PLANNING FOR TESTS AND EXAMS

You will eventually start doing test essays in class. This will mean having to learn your notes so you can answer a question under timed conditions. These activities are aimed at getting you ready for the real exams.

Tips for success

- Start your revision early. Spread it over time and keep re-testing yourself.
- Select the revision technique that works best for you. You are a successful student who has done well at GCSE – make sure you draw upon the skills you used to get onto your Sixth Form course.
- Practise writing essays under times conditions during your study periods.

Useful Links

<http://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills>

[Splash - Welcome to skills4uni \(bham.ac.uk\)](http://www.bham.ac.uk/skills4uni)