

# The Leigh Academy

## Modular Learning Culture Operating Procedures



### Modular Learning

#### Rationale

Modular learning provides students with short-term goals, which increases student motivation. It also enables teachers and students to maximise the use of ICT in teaching and learning. This will be enhanced by regular feedback to students and parents on attainment and progress, after every module.

Modular Learning should involve the identification of clear learning objectives and outcomes in the first lesson of each module that are shared with the students. Learning should be reviewed and progress measured on a regular basis by teachers in each lesson and throughout the module.

Modular Learning will involve subject teachers and tutors engaging in a dialogue with students about their learning. This will take the form of setting clear targets for learning and giving regular feedback on previous performance and targets. Modular Learning ties in with the half termly (every six weeks) reporting system and revised academic year structure in operation at the Academy. The Tutor discusses progress with each student and agrees learning targets for the next module. Parents will be invited to the Academy, in order to discuss progress throughout the year at published times.

Tutors and students maintain an overview of Module grades and these are monitored by pastoral and subject staff, in order to identify trends, and use interventions to improve progress.

#### The Modular Process

Each module follows the same process

- Planning
- Teaching and Learning
- Assessment and reporting

#### 1. Planning

- At the start of the module, the teacher outlines the content for the next six weeks along with the learning goals. This may be paper based, digital, oral or a combination, but **students must be clear** about their learning objectives.
- There should then follow a discussion of the possible learning and teaching strategies that can be used to make the knowledge accessible to, and then

understood by, the students. This discussion will be limited with Year 7 students but should be detailed with Year 10, Year 11 and Post 16 students.

- If the Learning Area is not using a standard assessment for the end of that module then the way the learning is to be assessed should also be discussed, This should usually take account of progress over time including, classwork and Home Learning.

## **2. Teaching and Learning**

The learning and teaching of the curriculum material then commences and guidelines discussed/agreed with the class, during the first lesson. A significant number of milestones and checkpoints are needed if the module is to be studied using a learner-centred approach. The teacher will deliver a number of lecture and Q & A sessions, during most modules, regardless of the amount of research-based learning that is happening. Students need direction, as well as creative space. Getting the balance right between the two is important.

## **3. Assessment and Reporting**

This process allows review of work and reflection on learning.

At the end of the module the assessment requires one lesson and should involve:

- All work to have been marked in accordance with The Academy Marking Policy
- Grades to be discussed with student and understood
- Progress towards targets to be discussed
- New targets agreed for the next module
- Grades to be given for attainment and progress and comments/targets to be written on the report, if needed
- Student to record new targets
- Tutor to collate grades and comments, with students, and to discuss progress
- Prioritise new targets for next module

The key components of the Modular Curriculum which must feature in all Modular Learning are summarised below and given in detail overleaf:

- Guidance for students on the module
- Guidance for teachers on the module
- Differentiation of work in Modular Learning
- Curriculum enhancement, ICT, economic and industrial awareness/input/SMSC
- Module tasks
- Shared assessment criteria in “student friendly” language
- Feedback to students on performance in each module and target-setting.

## **4. A Student Guide**

This is a summary for the student giving an overview or map indicating to students what the module will involve and what they will learn.

The module summary map will give an overview of:

- The ways in which students will learn in the module
- The activities they will engage in
- The kinds of work or evidence that they will produce
- The methods used to assess the learning and give students feedback

Students should be given this information **at the start of a module**, but this **need not** be paper-based.

Learning Areas could:

- Issue a module map as a one page outline, at the start of the module,
- Simply inform students how the module will unfold, as long as the outline contains the points above
- Alternatively an outline of the module could be written on a student Learning Contract which Learning Areas could issue at the start of a module, if they choose to do so.

Students **must be clear at the outset** about the contents of the module, the key activities, assessment methods and the expected learning outcomes.

## 5. Teacher Guide

It is vital that all staff delivering a module have a common understanding of what is involved. A simple teacher guide can achieve this. The guidance given need **not** be paper-based. It could be given verbally at a Learning Area meeting (if guidance is issued at a meeting this should be briefly included in minutes).

Guidance for teachers should include:

- An overview of where the module fits into the overall programme (where it fits into year and key stage plan).
- Highlight National Curriculum programme of study coverage/GCSE
- Highlight key assessment opportunities, which activities are essential for students to do in order to demonstrate achievement and which level descriptors are covered
- Reference to stimulus materials available, including Learning Area resources such as fact sheets, worksheets, texts, ICT resources, web-site addresses etc.
- Access to equipment, including ICT
- Access to other resources
- Advice on how to run the assignment, including advice on Home Learning
- Indication on the kinds of tasks and activities that should be given
- Deadlines for completion and assessment

## 6. Differentiation

Modules should recognise that students of different abilities will require differentiated contexts, language and presentation of materials.

Differentiation may be reflected in the different

- Information presented
- Tasks and questions set
- Supporting stimulus
- Deadlines

In some modules, or core parts of modules, all students will do the same tasks. Other activities will require support, consolidation and extension materials, for use by different groups of students.

Three levels of materials should be produced, where it is appropriate for students to do different tasks/activities (that is, where appropriate, **not** for every piece of work). These could for example be organised as covering three bands of National Curriculum levels/GCSE grades, or alternatively, as providing consolidation of new learning for some, extension to new learning for others and re-visiting previously covered material for students who require additional support.

Key questions to ask here include

- Does the module contain material which is appropriate for students of different ability? If the module is in use for different groups, in what ways will differences in ability be recognised? By support? By outcome? By task? By resource?
- If different provision is made, is it by differentiated contexts, language, presentation or other?

## 7. Curriculum Enhancement

Modules should reflect the Academy's curriculum priorities including

- ICT integrated in a progressive way
- Industry Links
- Economic and Industrial Understanding (EIU)
- Specialisms
- SMSC

All of these need not be evident in every module, but across the year and key stage there should be clear evidence of The Academy's added dimensions.

Key questions for Learning Areas to ask here are

- Is there significant evidence of the Academy's added dimensions? If not, how can these be incorporated?
- What is the picture for delivery of these elements across the year and key stage?
- Are The Academy's dimensions built on progressively?

## 8. Module Tasks

These can take a wide variety of forms. Whatever form these take they should at some point require students to:

- Reproduce evidence of achievement for assessment
- Produce evidence which is valid, reliable and sufficient for National Curriculum/GCSE coverage
- Complete tasks which are appropriate for independent learning

A wide variety of tasks are appropriate for Modular Learning including open-ended projects, essays, tests, a collection of smaller pieces of works including works out of the classroom etc. Not all assessment need be written assessment. Some could be oral presentation, video or audio-tape, computer-aided, multi-media etc.

It is important that the learning and teaching methods are discussed, with the class, at the beginning of the module. The first lesson thus becomes a joint lesson planning session with the class. The students help you to write your lesson plans for the next six weeks. The involvement of the students in this process increases the older they become.

## 9. Assessment Criteria

Modules are motivating because they provide short term targets. A key part in creating this motivational gain is in students knowing in advance how they will be judged.

Modules should **make clear to students exactly how** they will be assessed.

- This can be explained at the start of the module
- or be given during the module
- or be available via the website/VLE

Every student should be able to go about his or her work knowing in advance precisely what is required to achieve a particular level or grade.

Some Learning Areas choose to make students familiar with generic grade criteria, others write grade criteria in the context of tasks set. The precise method is up to the Learning Area to select.

**10. Review Points** should be built into modules in particular tasks, especially significant tasks requiring students to review their work done with the teacher. (As well as more regular review points within each lesson.)

Depending on the results of the review, a student may progress onto tasks at a higher or lower level of difficulty, or return to the previous task using support or consolidation materials.

Review Points are therefore cross-over points, where students may change level and go on to use different materials. Review Points provide the opportunity to up-grade or adjust student work, based on their performance.

## **11. Tutoring and Feedback to Students**

Teachers should provide feedback to students on their performance throughout and at the end of each module. Some Learning Areas do this very effectively using a Learning Contract. The contract is issued at the start of the module outlining what the student will learn and how she/he will be assessed. At the end of the module the teacher assesses the work and gives written and verbal feedback.

Students also write comments on how they performed and together, students and teachers agree learning targets for the next module.

Learning Areas need not use a Learning Contract, but where it is not used a similar process to the above, involving student/teacher review, should be carried out.

Subject teachers will then grade module performance for:

- Progress
- Attainment
- Attitude to Learning

There should be discussion with students about performance, allowing reflection and review to be carried out. Students should be encouraged to challenge the grades and negotiate new learning targets.

Tutors will complete the review through academic mentoring and target setting in tutor time.

Based on a review of module grades tutors will briefly set targets for improvement in particular subjects.

Subject teachers monitor who has been set targets by simply asking students at the start of each module who has had a particular target set for that subject by their tutor.

Senior Leaders and Student Services Managers will sample/review tutor target setting, during each module, in order to identify trends or issues needing intervention. Tutors should also identify these and involve the Student Services Manager.

- The modular process aids the learning culture because it forces specific habits to be developed.
- It demands new approaches to teaching.
- It provides formalised, regular assessment and therefore monitoring.
- It means that no student can develop learning problems for more than six weeks without being detected and interventions being put in place.

Updated by JCO on 29/07/15 next review FMC due 01/05/17