

## **Sixth Form Study and Homework Expectations**

Sixth Form students must strive to become increasingly autonomous learners who can manage their time, solve problems independently, and demonstrate higher order thinking skills to meet new challenges. These skills are absolutely crucial, not only for A level study, but in order to make the successful transition to Higher Education or the world of employment.

### **Overview:**

A level courses are intensive, and students cannot expect to fulfil their potential without devoting a considerable number of hours each week to self-study and homework. Sixth Form students are given the responsibility for organising and managing their own time so that all subjects deadlines are met, and they are expected to develop strong independent work and study skills.

**As a rough guide, every hour spent in the classroom should be matched by another hour spent in self-study.**

Self-study time and homework tasks encourage students to develop independent practices, reinforce knowledge and skills learned in class, enable teachers to assess students' progress and identify possible areas for improvement, and give students the opportunity to read more widely around their subjects and pursue their academic interests. Students are also expected to use homework and self-study time to complete any actions and reflection tasks arising from staff feedback on their work.

### **NEA (Coursework):**

Several subjects at A level, especially more practical subjects and BTEC courses, require students to complete coursework assignments or NEA portfolios which contribute to the final grades awarded. To access the higher grades, students must spend many hours researching, planning, developing and producing their coursework with ever increasing autonomy and independence, guided by their subject teachers. This is what makes A level coursework very different from that done at GCSE.

For those students intending to move on to Higher Education, developing these effective working habits and research skills in the Sixth Form are critical. Potential university students need to demonstrate these skills and schools are asked to comment on a student's independent work and study skills in the academic reference.

### **What can students expect from Sixth Form study at NSB?**

Taking a subject at A level involves 4.5 hours per week of teaching time. During lessons teachers will cover the required examination content detailed in the specification and will set homework and extension tasks on a regular basis over and above this time allocation. Sometimes teachers will arrange extra after-school lessons/revision classes or lunch-time workshops to ensure that students are fully prepared for examinations and NEA components; students are expected to take full advantage of these sessions.

Assignments and tasks set for homework in Years 12 and 13 will be many and varied. Not all will be written tasks; not all will be formally marked or assessed. Students must realise that non-written assignments/research tasks and pre-prepared presentations are just as essential and valuable to their academic progress as a piece of writing or essay that receives formal written feedback and a mark/grade. Wider reading and note-taking is crucial and in some subjects, there will be a heavy essay commitment. If students fail to complete homework, they are jeopardising their own chances of examination success and can expect to receive sanctions in line with the Behaviour Policy.

### **How much homework will students receive in the Sixth Form?**

Students should expect **around 4 hours homework per subject per week**, although some practical subjects may have slightly different demands.

When teachers set homework/independent study assignments/planning tasks/reading etc. they take into account the fact that students have self-study time in school.

There is no set homework timetable in the Sixth Form as students need to become more flexible in their work and study routines. **Teachers will ensure sufficient time is given to complete homework (this may be less than a week depending on the nature of the task) and to support students in planning and managing their time effectively.** However, students must recognise and accept that at certain times of the year there may be additional pressures, especially if they take several subjects that demand coursework and particularly around the Trial Examination season in January (Year 13) and May (Year 12).

**Students are expected to use their self-study time each week productively and efficiently to meet the requirements for their particular subjects.**

### **How much wider reading are students expected to complete?**

**There should never be an occasion when a student says that all their work is done.** Reading around each subject increases understanding and both broadens and deepens students' knowledge and which often generates a particular interest in a subject which in turn increases motivation. For those students planning on moving to Higher Education, wider reading is crucial as many universities will expect them to write in some depth about their subject interests on the UCAS application form, showing how they have widened the scope of their academic reading beyond that required for the examination.