

Retford Post 16 Centre

Learning Policy

Last reviewed March 2017

Introduction

Retford Post 16 Centre offers a wide range of courses, and experienced staff who will guide and support students to make the right choices and decisions for the future. Students choose to study here because they are confident that their teachers and tutors will track and monitor their progress and ensure that they are successful. This Learning Policy is in place to ensure that students understand that they, too, must make a serious commitment to Post-16 study, to secure excellent progress.

Post 16 education offers both huge rewards as well as challenges. Rising to these challenges, and maximising the use of time, will lead to a successful sixth form experience for students studying at the Centre. Whilst at Retford Post 16 Centre students will be equipped with the necessary skills and qualifications to help them achieve their career aims, be it further study or employment.

1. Progression from The Elizabethan Academy and Retford Oaks Academy

For students in Year 11 at The Elizabethan and Retford Oaks, progression into the Sixth Form is automatic, providing that there is a suitable course and the student meets the criteria for study at that level (Appendix 1). The process will be managed by an effective transition programme.

2. Admissions Criteria for External Students

Students who are not currently studying at The Elizabethan or Retford Oaks are subject to the Admissions Criteria published by each of the Academies (Appendix 2).

3. How to Apply for a Place at Retford Post 16 Centre

'External' students wishing to enrol in Year 12:

- will be interviewed by the Centre's support team. Students will be given a 'provisional offer' of a place if, in the judgement of the interviewer, a suitable course is available for them that is appropriate and meets their needs;
- must be able to supply a character reference that demonstrates good behaviour and a commitment to study in their previous school or college;
- must be able to demonstrate appropriate nationality or residency entitlements to be eligible for funded education in a UK maintained school;
- must enrol on a full-time course. A full-time course comprises of a minimum of either a Level 3 BTEC or OCR National course, a minimum of three AS or A level courses, a Level 2 BTEC or OCR National course;
- have their applications approved by the Principal of the enrolling Academy;



- meet the minimum course requirements for their intended course (Appendix 1);
- must complete an 'induction period' of 4 weeks at the start of the first term. This is to ensure that they are enrolled on appropriate courses and can demonstrate a strong commitment to their learning.

'External' students wishing to enrol in Year 13 or Year 14:

- will be subject to the above criteria;
- in addition, will need to discuss with the Centre staff whether the syllabus and the structure of their previous course have prepared them appropriately for A2 study at Retford Post 16 Centre.

4. How to Enrol into Year 12

- Students are enrolled on the day of release of GCSE results in August or in the first few days of the Autumn Term.
- Students need to meet the entrance criteria for each subject, and then the over-subscription criteria are used to ensure fairness.
- Because it is impossible to gauge demand for particular subjects, a student's combination of courses will be confirmed at enrolment in September.
- Courses may not run if the number enrolling is small and deemed to be unsustainable.
- Students can, on occasions, enter the Post 16 Centre after the end of the normal interview and enrolment process, but this will be at the discretion of the Leadership Team.

5. Progression from Year 12 to Year 13, or into Year 14

- As all exams will be linear from September 2017, students are expected to make a two year commitment to a course.

It is not in students' interest to continue into Year 13 if their progress and work ethic are questionable. Anyone not achieving a Grade D or above in the end of Year 12 exams can expect to be interviewed by the Centre's Leadership. If they are unconvinced by the interview they reserve the right to remove students from the course.

Exceptional circumstances may be taken into account when considering a student's suitability for Year 13. These include serious medical conditions and bereavement.

6. Private Study

Private study periods are an important part of a student's programme and, therefore, students are expected to remain on site during these sessions.

There is a well-stocked Learning Resource Centre and a cyber café resource for students to use.

In Year 12, students will remain on site, at all times, with the exception of lunchtime, during the Autumn and Spring Terms. In the Summer Term, students who have demonstrated a positive work ethic and are performing well across all subjects may spend non-contact periods at home or on work placement with the prior agreement of the Leadership Team and parents/carer. There will be a review of each student's performance at Easter and a learning contract put in place if necessary.

In Year 13 there will also be an opportunity for students to negotiate flexibility, with the agreement of the Leadership Team. Students must attend timetabled lessons.

7. Attendance Policy

All students must attend and be on time to all timetabled lessons, including tutor time, unless a prior arrangement has been agreed. The Centre's minimum attendance requirement is 95%.

Procedure for phoning into the Centre if you are ill or off school:

You must phone the attendance monitor at school on 01777 861400 by 8.40 am and report your absence if you are ill. You will also be required to provide confirmation of your illness, by a parent or carer. Proof of medical appointments will be required.

Authorised Absences.

Prearranged absences must be agreed in advance and are authorised, at the discretion of the enrolling Academy by the Leadership Team.

Absences which can be agreed are:

- An absence caused by illness, supported by evidence
- A work experience placement that is directly relevant to a student's career aspirations and which cannot have been arranged to take place in holiday time
- Bereavement of a close family member
- An event that is part of a student's involvement in a sporting or cultural activity that cannot take place in holiday time and that is part of a pre-arranged study plan
- University Visits and interviews
- Job interviews

- Religious observance

8. Changing courses at Retford Post 16 Centre

Whilst we aim to be as flexible as possible at the Retford Post 16 Centre, it is important to appreciate that changing courses will result in missed learning and is disruptive to teaching. Consequently, we aim to keep course changes to a minimum.

The option to change courses at the end of Year 12 is no longer viable, and as courses are linear and the Centre has chosen not to sit AS Levels, these do not count to the overall A2 grade.

Course change criteria:

Courses can only be changed if:

- a student is strongly recommended to change by a department because they are expected to be unlikely to be successful in that subject;
- and
- it becomes evident that there is a serious mismatch between a student's course choice and their career aspirations. Course changes, in these circumstances, can only be agreed in meetings with the student's parent/carer.

8. Exam Entrance Policy

Students undertaking qualifications at the Centre will be entered for appropriate examinations with the prior agreement of the subject teachers and the Leadership Team.

Where a student's attendance falls below acceptable limits and reasons for absence are not authorised, they should expect to be charged for exam entries. Exam fees may be refunded if a student achieves their target grades.

Criteria for resits (Summer 2017 only):

- Resits must be agreed by both the Curriculum Leader and the Leadership Team.
- Students will only be entered for resits if they attend a structured resit programme
- Additional resits and those necessary due to unacceptable attendance/commitment to learning may be charged for

Please note - help and support is available for those parents who request it

Appendix 1

Course-specific criteria. – see current prospectus

Appendix 2 (a) : Admissions Policy for The Elizabethan Academy and Retford Oaks Academy

A copy of the school Admissions Policy can be found on the respective school website.

Nationality Eligibility Criteria

Entrance into Post 16 Centre is subject to the regulations regarding nationality, residency status and eligibility for study in UK school sixth forms that apply at the time.

Currently, students can be admitted if:

- They are British Citizens and / or EU nationals.
- Non-EU nationals can be admitted into the sixth form if, for example:
 - they have 'Exceptional' or 'Indefinite Leave to Remain' in this country;
 - they have refugee status;
 - their residency is a condition of parental legal employment status in this country.
- Students who are classified as 'Overseas Learners' or who have 'Student Visas' may be admitted to Retford Post 16 Centre through our Partnership with North Notts College.