



DOWNHAM MARKET
ACADEMY

Preparation for Academic Success Policy

1. What is “preparation”?

Preparation refers to tasks set by teachers to be completed outside of timetabled lessons (often referred to as “homework”). These tasks are typically carried out at home but there are also options for students to complete preparation tasks in school as outlined below.

2. Why is it important that students complete Preparation?

There has been extensive research, summarised by the Education Endowment Fund, into the impact of preparation (homework) on the academic progress of students in schools and the findings are conclusive:

Completion of preparation outside of timetabled lessons has a significantly positive impact to improve attainment and progress for students that complete it regularly and thoroughly.

3. How will preparation benefit students at Downham Market Academy?

All preparation tasks will ensure students are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to be successful for each of the formal assessment points that happen during the course of the year. The tasks will provide students with a structured revision programme of the content and also opportunities to practise exam technique – both of which are needed to be successful in the assessments.

- Research evidence shows that students make better progress by completing preparation
- Students develop the correct habits for study
- Teachers are able to devote more lesson time to collaborative study, practical work and discussion, if independent work can be completed outside the classroom
- Students are able to prepare for future learning in the classroom
- Students can be encouraged to enrich their classroom learning
- Parents and carers can be involved in their child’s learning

4. How will preparation be set?

Students will be provided with detailed instructions and all of the resources they need to complete preparation tasks, either in paper form or electronically via Teams. Brief instructions and a deadline will be provided via EduLink – both students and parents/carers will be able to see these details in their personal logins to the platform.

All preparation tasks will ensure students are fully equipped to be successful in assessments that will happen in defined weeks during the academic year. These will be shared with students and parents/carers.

5. What preparation tasks might be set?

The list of tasks below is not exhaustive but provides some examples of the type of tasks that are appropriate to be set as preparation. There is an expectation that students would receive a variety of tasks over time.

- Structured short-answer questions to consolidate learning in lessons
- Choice of tasks with varying levels of challenge
- Vocabulary or key-facts learning
- Extended project work – either completed as individuals or collaboratively
- Guided research
- Timed essays or extended pieces of writing
- Online tasks
- Revision aids such as mind maps, flash cards or timelines
- Reports of experiments or practical work
- Rehearsal
- Preparation for future learning (such as reading ahead and summarising or planning tasks for future tasks)
- Wider reading tasks for enrichment or consolidation

6. How much preparation will be set and how often will it be set?

Preparation tasks will structure revision for formal assessment points throughout the year. The tasks will build sequentially to provide students with opportunities to consolidate their learning before the assessments – effectively, the

preparation tasks provide scaffolded revision to maximise the chance of academic success. Deadlines will always provide sufficient time for students to complete preparation tasks to a high standard.

Year group	Subjects	Time to spend each week	Reading
7	English, Maths, Science, Geography, History, Languages & Computer Science*	30 minutes per subject	All students are encouraged and expected to read for at least 30 minutes every day
8		Attend a Club every week to enhance your experience and enjoyment in the subject	
9	Art, Drama, Music, Technology, PE, RS		
10	Every subject studied Except Core PE	45 minutes per subject minimum <i>plus</i> additional independent revision	
11		45 minutes per subject minimum <i>plus</i> additional independent revision	
12	Every subject studied	3 hour per subject minimum <i>plus</i> additional independent revision	
13		3 hour per subject minimum <i>plus</i> additional independent revision	

* KS3 Computer Science preparation tasks will be set fortnightly rather than weekly

In each Curriculum Overview document on the [website](#) there are also suggestions for additional reading that is not compulsory but will enhance the experience and foster enjoyment in the subject.

7. How will preparation be monitored?

Ultimately, if completed diligently, preparation tasks will increase the chance of success in formal assessments so attainment in line with potential grades provides the best evidence of successful completion.

However, completion of preparation task completion will be monitored by teachers in lessons as an ongoing process. This may take many forms including, but not limited to:

- Visual checks of exercise books
- Monitoring online platforms
- Setting small "formative" assessments during lessons that demonstrate learning
- Teacher, self or peer marking

There is no expectation on teachers to mark every piece of preparation completed. Detailed marking and feedback will be provided on formal assessments completed throughout the year and these will be retained in school as evidence of progress.

Teachers will however monitor preparation work as it is completed and support and/or challenge where this is not happening.

8. What support is there for students to complete preparation tasks?

Preparation tasks will be accessible and relevant to all students as they secure knowledge and skills for assessments. This may mean that the task or scaffolding provided to different students will vary according to their ability and need. Additional support is also offered to all students who require it:

- A quiet and comfortable space to work on their own or as a small group before or after the normal school day, this includes the library
- Supervised groups at the end of each day with our Progress Support Workers
- Further explanation, guidance or modelling with subject teachers and Curriculum Leaders
- Recommended resources will be provided for each task
- Recommended resources are shared in the Curriculum Overview documents on our [website](#)

9. What happens if preparation tasks are not completed?

All preparation tasks should be completed to meet the deadlines given. In exceptional circumstances and where the parent/carer has contacted the teacher, either via EduLink, email or a hand-written note, an extension will be given and a new deadline agreed.

Students who do not complete preparation tasks will be required to stay with their teacher over social times or outside of the school day to complete the work with support if needed.

Students who regularly do not complete preparation tasks and therefore are not giving themselves the best chance of success in assessments, will be required to complete the work in school, with support from staff, at the end of the day as part of their timetabled provision.

Students in Year 12 or 13 who regularly fail to complete preparation tasks to a high standard put their place at Athena Sixth Form College in jeopardy.