

LFA Procedure 5.3

Encouraging Independent Learning

1. Introduction

There are many definitions of '*Independent learning*'. The term is often used to include such concepts such as critical thinking and learning without direct tutor contact. However, London Film Academy (LFA) considers independent learning to incorporate both self-directed learning and autonomous learning, with study support and tutor direction, as required.

Knowing that there is support and advice available, is central to helping students to grow their capacity to work in ways that allow them to identify and utilise key information sources, including the confident use of digital resources.

2. Aims and objectives

LFA aims to foster and support all students to become independent learners. Course Teams and tutors assist through providing guidance, references and formative assessments as well as tutorial support. Students are encouraged to question, enquire and seek support in developing skills to interpret and apply information sources, developing arguments and solving problems.

3. Operational description

The following list provides some suggestions about how independent learning can be fostered. This work can form a part of standard teaching sessions as well as tutorial or additional workshops.

- Talk to students about their previous learning and teaching experiences
- Find out what students expect from the course and how they are expecting to be taught and assessed
- Find out how students can facilitate their own learning and what they understand by managing their own learning
- Provide a perspective on the course requirements and independent learning
- Reach a shared understanding of expectations
- Talk about independent learning in the context of 'communities of learners' and provide students support and opportunities for developing study groups (through group work, online discussions, etc.)
- Students can be supported into new ways of learning by the provision of formative assessment
- student learning can also be supported by working with peers and elements of peer and tutor feedback
- Recommend online and multimedia sources and texts
- Encourage and build students' confidence in the early stages of the course by providing opportunities for students to bring questions and observations to class which have arisen from their independent reading
- Remind students of the various support systems available to them especially a few weeks after induction when this useful information may have been forgotten
- Provide un-assessed opportunities to test out students' independent learning with tasks set between classes
- Gradually, move over time from a role as teacher to that of a learning facilitator as students become more confident independent learners.



4. Tools for independent learning and self-organisation

- e-Portfolios (collections of multimedia including text, images, audio, blogs) can be assembled by students to demonstrate their learning over time
- Study skills sessions (goal setting, time management, working to deadlines, self-appraisal, reading)
- Training and support in using online information
- Ongoing support in the classroom, tutorials and academic skills sessions to help students use strategic approaches to find the information they need by defining the scope of their searches.

