

Staffordshire University Academy: Literacy Policy

Literacy at SUA

At Staffordshire University Academy we strongly believe that all teachers are teachers of literacy. We are committed to developing the literacy skills of every student in the confidence that it will support their learning across the curriculum, enhance their understanding of the subject matter delivered, raise standards of teaching and learning within our academy and prepare them for life after education.

As such, we ensure that:

- All teachers mark for literacy using whole class feedback sheets (see academy *Marking and Feedback Policy*)
- All subjects plan opportunities for literacy development such as extended writing or verbal literacy
- Teachers encourage the development of their students' emotional literacy by helping them to understand complex issues
- All staff model high standards of literacy

Key underlying principles of our practice:

A wide-ranging vocabulary is essential to academic and personal success

- Students need a varied vocabulary, confident expression and organisational control to cope with the required levels of learning that subjects demand to make good progress. As such, we promote the acquisition of challenging vocabulary across all curriculum areas through shared practice, knowledge organisers, consistent revision of key terminology, and detailed curriculum planning.

Reading helps students learn and understand the wider-world

- Reading confidently is an essential life skill. We want to develop students' confidence to be able to approach challenging texts independently, develop opinions and identify bias or subtext. As such, our curriculum documents make clear links to wider reading. The English department's Reading Challenges celebrate extracurricular reading and provide the chance for students to build on their class room learning. Additionally, the SUA library provides a safe and stimulating environment in which students can discover new texts and explore their reading preferences.

Improved literacy impacts on students' self-esteem, motivation and behaviour

- The ability to communicate clearly and confidently is key to the life chances of our students; it empowers them to learn independently and express their ideas in the wider world. Our staff model high levels of literacy to our students. We are committed to providing additional literacy support to students who would benefit from it whether this be through the class room teacher or our Inclusion Team interventions.

Student reflection time must be regular to ensure a consistent focus on literacy

- SUA's marking policy requires regular feedback in the form of whole class feedback sheets. This facilitates students' autonomous review of their work in a supportive and productive manner. Students' literacy misconceptions are addressed clearly and subsequently facilitates greater self-awareness of their strengths and weaknesses.

Verbal literacy is an intrinsic part of the SUA environment

- At SUA, we actively and regularly promote student voice and leadership. The ability to articulate confidently on both a small and large scale helps to prepare our students for the wider world and builds upon their cultural capital. Lessons provide clear and regular opportunities for students to respond to questions and receive instant feedback. Students are encouraged to participate in the leadership of assemblies and school councils in order to prepare them for the formality of life in the workplace. In lessons, students are taught how to participate in group talk, learning how to listen and respond appropriately.

Development of students' emotional literacy is a vital part of the SUA provision

- The capacity to articulate complex emotions and thoughts can be challenging for everyone at times. SUA encourages students to think and reflect upon complex issues and formulate their own opinions therefore developing a sense of self. Our CHARACTER lessons are key to this provision and teachers make explicit links to the CHARACTER principles. Students who need support with expressing themselves are supported carefully through our pastoral and student support teams.

Monitoring and evaluating literacy across the curriculum:

- Up-to-date data is available to every teacher to allow us to monitor progress and set targets that stretch and challenge.
- Typicality walks take place across the academy and explicitly check that marking and feedback is in line with the marking policy.
- Display work promotes subject specific core vocabulary and examples of strong student work.
- Peer support is in place to encourage an openness about reading and literacy; our sixth formers visit Year 7 form groups to model reading for pleasure and support less confident readers.

Additional notes:

Whole academy Literacy codes:

SP (spelling)
P (punctuation)
G (grammar)
CL (capital letters)
// (paragraphs)

Within some subjects, subject specific terminology can take priority where it is essential to the delivery of the content e.g. science and maths.