



Bucks University Technical College

Literacy Policy

2016-17

Responsible Officer: Principal
Date: July 2016
Review date: July 2019
Procedure available: Website/Reception/Learning Centre
Authorised by: Governing Body

Literacy Policy 2016
Reading, Writing and Communication

Rationale

The Ofsted Framework places a renewed emphasis on literacy skills, numeracy and wider communication skills. When evaluating the achievement of students, inspectors must consider, 'standards in reading, writing and mathematics and...students' attainment in reading... by the time they leave the school'. In order for students' achievement to be judged as outstanding in this area they must 'develop and apply a wide range of skills to great effect, including reading, writing, communication and mathematical skill across the curriculum that will ensure they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education, training or employment'.

Similarly the quality of teaching is judged on 'how well teaching enables students to develop skills in reading, writing, communication and mathematics', where outstanding teaching is described as that in which 'the teaching of reading, writing, communication and mathematics is highly effective' and where 'every opportunity is taken to develop crucial skills, including being able to use their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects.'

Policy

At Bucks UTC we aim to ensure that all our students use language and communicate effectively in all forms by becoming:

- **confident and independent readers;**
- **effective and confident writers;**
- **articulate communicators and listeners in all situations**

All teachers are teachers of reading, writing and communication. As such, as a staff, we are committed to developing literacy skills in all of our students, in the belief that it will support their learning and raise standards across the curriculum, because:

- in order to succeed all students need to possess literacy skills which will enable them to access the curriculum in Key Stages 4 and 5;
- students need vocabulary, analytical skills, expression and organisational control to cope with the cognitive demands of subjects;
- language helps us to reflect, revise and evaluate ourselves and others;
- developing effective speaking and listening skills builds confidence;
- responding to higher order questions encourages the development of thinking skills and enquiry;
- reading helps us to learn from sources beyond our immediate experience;
- writing helps us to sustain and order thought;
- improving literacy and learning can have an impact on students' self-esteem, on motivation and behaviour, allowing them to learn independently;
- literacy skills are becoming increasingly important when entering the workplace with employers placing more emphasis on key skills;
- the emphasis on functional skills indicates that literacy is becoming more valued at industry level;
- improving literacy skills can have a direct positive impact on students' assessment data.

All schemes of work should include specific literacy objectives (appropriate for the subject). These objectives should focus on reading, writing and oral communication when appropriate. Activities that utilise reading, writing and oral communication skills should be built into schemes of work in order to provide a variety of opportunities focused on literacy.

Implementation at whole-college level

Roles and Responsibilities

- Subject Leaders lead and give a high profile to literacy
- Teachers of English
 - provide students with the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to read, write and speak and listen effectively
 - provide opportunities for students to become independent readers and confident users of the LSC/on-line websites
- **Teachers of subjects other than English**
 - display subject specific key words, and words needed for exam literacy in classrooms, and make active use of these in lessons
 - provide a consistent approach to students' development of language, since reading, writing and oral communication are, to varying degrees, integral to all lessons
 - mark students' work for the accuracy of their spelling, punctuation and grammar
- **Parents** should encourage their children to read at home and write with accuracy
- **Students** understand what strategies are being used in lessons, take increasing responsibility for recognising their own literacy needs, make improvements using such strategies and commit to reading widely
- **Governors** may meet with staff and students (e.g. during link visits and learning walks) and report progress and issues to the governing body

Each year a new literacy focus will be decided, key approaches and materials will be provided by the member of staff leading on literacy across the college. This will be implemented by staff through the BLT working group.

Across the college we will:

- identify the strengths and weaknesses in a students' work from a literacy perspective;
- adapt the identified literacy cross-curricular priorities for each year as students' literacy skills improve;
- seek to identify progression in the main forms of reading, writing, speaking and listening undertaken in each subject area;
- plan to include the teaching of the specified literacy focus for the term in own subject area;
- review this literacy policy annually.

Reading, Writing and Communication Skills

Reading

We aim to give students a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the increasing demands of reading in all subjects in terms of specific skills, knowledge and understanding and also ways of responding to texts. This applies to the reading of a variety of texts including fiction and non-fiction (including the use of ICT). **We will teach students strategies to help them to:**

- **read with greater understanding;**
- **locate and use information;**
- **follow a process or argument;**
- **summarise, synthesise, challenge and adapt what they learn from their reading.**

Writing

We aim to give students a level of literacy that will enable them to cope with the demands of writing in all subjects. **We will teach them specific writing skills, develop their ability to write in different styles and also teach them to recognise the importance of audience.** It is important that we provide for co-ordination across subjects to recognise and reinforce students' language skills, through:

- **making connections between students' reading and writing, so that students have clear models for their writing;**
- **using the modelling process to make explicit to students how to write, without scaffolding;**
- **being clear about audience and purpose;**
- **providing opportunities for a range of writing, including sustained writing;**
- **using and referring to evidence to support and reinforce thinking;**
- **enabling students to respond critically to texts through effective and clear writing approaches.**

Communication

We will teach students to use language precisely and coherently. **All students should be able to listen to others, and to respond and build on their ideas and views constructively. We will develop strategies to teach students how to:**

- **participate orally in groups and in whole class activities, both formally and informally;**
- **use talk to develop and clarify ideas;**
- **identify the main points to arise from a discussion;**
- **listen for a specific purpose;**
- **discuss and evaluate.**

Dissemination of the Policy

This policy is available on the school website, on request to parents, the LA and OFSTED through the Principal.

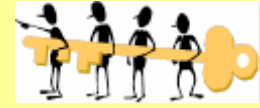
Other policies that have relevance are:

Teaching and Learning

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Date for review: July 2019



Speaking and Listening



Punctuate every lesson with opportunities for student talk (e.g. talk partners, group work, responding to questions, etc.)

Encourage students to offer more extended oral responses

(e.g. through reporting back group findings, probing questions, asking for justifications, etc.)



Reading



Give brief but regular opportunities for students to read both privately and aloud

(e.g. from textbooks, their own work, to a partner, as part of the plenary, etc.)

Allow students to engage actively with reading materials

(e.g. text marking, labelling paragraphs, identifying topic sentences and key words, etc.)



Writing



Write key words for the lesson on the board

(and explain them and refer to them)

Provide good examples of writing to act as models

(and analyse and share WHY the work is effective)

Demonstrate the writing to the students

(and verbalise what you are doing so students can see how an expert operates)

Display subject specific key words and make active use of these in lessons

Strategies: How to...

All subjects must:

- use displays in classrooms to highlight spellings of common words, subject specific key terms and exam literacy words;
- mark and assess students' work for literacy skills – spelling, punctuation and grammar – according to the college's marking policy;
- include literacy objectives in schemes of work and on lesson plans;
- devote a page of the subject handbook to ways in which literacy can be developed in the subject, including key words.

Most subjects/lessons should:

- display key words for the lesson, using the whiteboard or display boards;
- provide a range of opportunities for students to develop punctuation, paragraphing and sentence construction;
- provide a range of opportunities for students to improve reading for purpose and writing for audience;
- provide a range of opportunities for students to develop high level thinking and discussion skills;
- share their good practice in developing literacy skills by saving examples of resources and activities onto staff files.

Across the school we will:

- within the BLT group, create a forum to share good practice and set whole college priorities;
- develop corridor and open space displays which focus on literacy skills;
- ensure thorough proof-reading of all assemblies and other staff-led presentations to ensure a high level of literacy in order to be good literacy role models for students;
- improve access to on-line and hard copy dictionaries and thesauruses by ensuring that all classrooms have copies, and that departments have a subject specific dictionary/glossary of key terms;
- ensure access to training for staff on areas of literacy as identified on an annual basis.