



Vocational Learning Policy

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Vocational Learning Policy

Vocational learning relates to core skills and knowledge which supports students to be able to envisage themselves as working adults.

Government guidelines

In 2006, the Department for Education and Skills published a Work-Related Learning and the Law document, which stated that;

‘Since September 2004, there is a statutory requirement for schools to include work-related learning within the curriculum for all young people during Key Stage 4. Work-related learning is defined as:

Planned activity designed to use the context of work to develop knowledge, skills and understanding useful in work, including learning through the experience of work, learning about work and working practices, and learning the skills for work.

It is an element of the National Curriculum, which is compulsory, but has no programme of study.’

Due to the complex learning needs of our students, we have incorporated Work-Related Learning (WRL) guidelines into our Vocational Learning Policy. Through this policy, we also recognise that in order to meet the needs of our students we introduce concepts earlier than KS4 and the aims from the guidance are adapted.

Aim of vocational learning at Orion Academy

The aim is for students to feel confident, knowledgeable and competent in using a range of core skills needed to be a working adult. These core skills may include the ability to apply for a job, to communicate with a variety of people and to prepare items needed in order to attend work for the day. The level to which this is attainable will depend on the individual needs of each student.

Vocational learning at Orion Academy

The curriculum at Key Stage 3

Our KS3 curriculum comprises a thematic, cyclical approach to the curriculum coverage to provide a meaningful context for the development of each student’s basic skills, knowledge and understanding, whilst delivering the relevant National Curriculum requirements. This ensures a broad and varied curriculum that remains interesting and stimulating for all our students. Each term the class groups work around an agreed topic and cover four subject areas from the following list: science, geography, history, art, music, design and technology and religious education. Each topic has a vocational learning aim which could involve students learning about careers associated with that particular topic (e.g. for *Space*, students explore jobs and careers in the space industry) or could involve an employer or employee visiting the school to give information about their job (e.g. for *Oxford* an employee of Oxford University). Each topic also aims to involve trips and additional experiences which will give students the chance to further explore the world of work beyond the school.

The curriculum at Key Stage 4

During KS4 students complete specific Vocational and Life Skills lessons in addition to their core National Curriculum lessons. A key focus of the National Curriculum lessons is to further develop relevant accreditation levels to support students in reaching their long-term work goals and ambitions.

Vocational and Life Skills is taught as a separate lesson and provides opportunities for students to gain further accreditation and for vocational learning to gain formal recognition. All students in Key Stage 4 complete a suite of accredited courses which are based on their needs, interests and plans for Key Stage 5. In addition, core Life Skills are further developed including communication with a range of people in different contexts, showing independence in a variety of settings, use of self-regulation, demonstrating an ability to engage in identifying their ambition as a working adult and exploring how to achieve this.

Students also develop skills through independent travel, work experience placements (if appropriate), cooking lessons, career exploration, guest speakers and off-site learning.