

Doncaster UTC: Teaching and Learning Policy

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Author	Principal
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Doncaster UTC Teaching and Learning Policy

“A good teacher can inspire hope, ignite the imagination, and instill a love of learning.” – Brad Henry

1. Ethos

Doncaster University Technical College (UTC), specialising in engineering and creative & digital technologies, will provide an inspiring environment where young people can develop and reach their full potential. Working collaboratively with major employers, the University of Sheffield and Sheffield Hallam University, Doncaster UTC will produce the next generation of highly skilled engineers and designers to ensure that businesses can continue to thrive and grow in the 21st century.

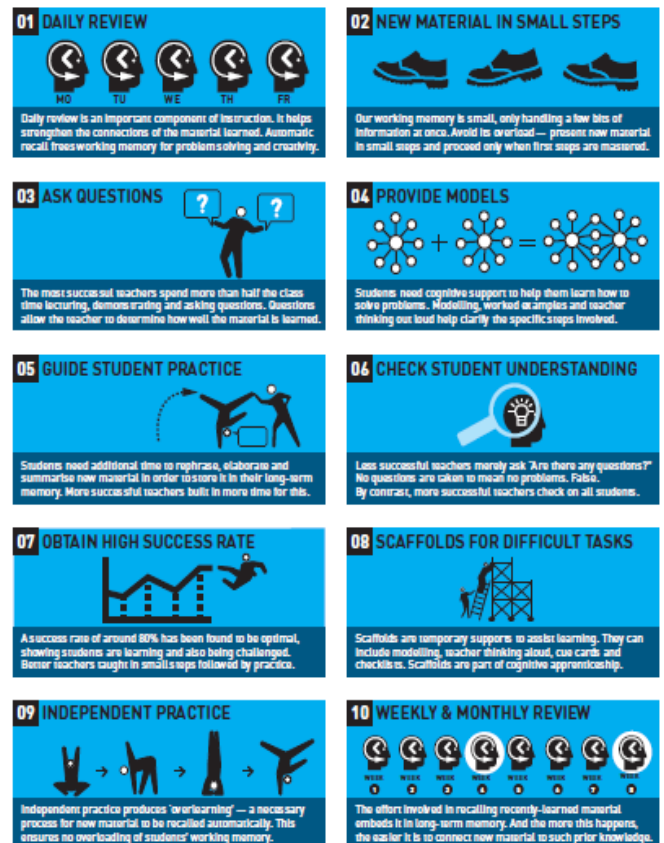
This policy is underpinned by the Core Values of Doncaster UTC – Create, Learn, Innovate. As a community we are relentlessly focused on raising the attainment and progress of all our students and preparing them for the future. We recognise that the most influential way we can do this is through high quality classroom practice, a journey of continual improvement and a commitment to always wanting to be better.

As reflective practitioners we strive to be expert teachers. We understand that this requires continual practice and an openness to feedback. We value honest and supportive feedback from our colleagues as part of our ongoing development as professionals and our relentless drive to achieve excellence. This involves being accountable for our actions, growing as a result of feedback, sharing of good practice and the celebration of successes together.

2. Research

The core purpose of Doncaster UTC is to maximise the learning of all our students. Direct instruction best lends itself to achieving this. We can all recall a times when we were learning something for the first time – from driving a car to a new language. In all these situations it is unlikely that any other method would have been considered. Our learning environments will contain a range of students with different abilities, knowledge and experiences. Approaches with less direct instruction result in increased frustrations from students, an increased likelihood of recalling something that is incorrect, and the whole learning process being more time consuming (Clark, Kirchner, Sweller 2012).

Doncaster UTC will therefore be developing practice based on the work of Barak Rosenshine. This will include research on how the brain acquires and uses new information; research on the classroom practices on those teachers whose students show the highest gains, and findings from studies that taught learning strategies to students. It will be underpinned by the ten principles of instruction opposite.



While we value diversity and creativity in learning and teaching, we also acknowledge that we need consistency in some aspects of our practice. This is especially important for our most vulnerable learners. We have a set of non-negotiable expectations that all teachers must follow.

3. Non-Negotiables

To start

- Staff meet and greet at the door
- 'Do Now' activity distributed/ displayed – to be completed in silence. A 'Do Now' is a task that can be done by students as they enter the room without explanation or intervention from the teacher. It should be handed to the students as they enter or be displayed for them to access. The 'Do Now' should be an individual task completed in silence and should usually involve a written element. It is helpful to use the 'Do Now' to check previous learning or preview new learning.
- Complete register in silence. 5 minutes to arrive to lessons without late mark.
- Review 'Do Now'.
- Learning outcomes must be shared with students in all lessons. They should be clear, student-friendly and high challenge. They should be referred to throughout the lesson, where appropriate.

Throughout

- Classroom doors are open.
- Checking for understanding is crucial to ensure that no student is left behind. When questioning students, a 'no hands up' rule applies, this is to ensure all students are taking part in the lesson and the lesson is not dominated by a few students.
- Differentiation should be evident in all lessons to ensure all students make progress, with high emphasis on differentiating up.

To finish

- We work to the bell to make maximum use of lesson time.
- At the bell books and equipment are stacked into neat piles.
- Students stand to be dismissed in silence.

4. Planning

There is no prescribed written format to the planning of lessons nor do staff have to produce lesson plans for quality assurance purposes. It is a more effective use of teachers' time to ensure they are planning learning and producing high quality resources for students than completing a prescribed format. All planned learning should follow the 10 principles of direct instruction in order to maximise the learning of as many students as possible.

High challenge medium-term plans should be the basis of designing effective lessons and sequences of learning. Effective planning is informed by knowing our students and using a full range of data. This enables teachers to personalise the learning. It is expected that, if asked, staff would be able to demonstrate evidence of planning and that their planning has been tailored to maximise the progress of each specific group of students and go beyond following a medium-term plan.

Seating plans are required for all classes. These should be printed and available in all lessons. The seating plans must clearly identify Pupil Premium students and any students with special educational needs. These should be updated at each assessment point. Seating plans should be used to inform the planning of lessons. Best practice will identify all significant groups, be designed to promote good behaviours for learning and encourage effective collaboration.



5. Assessment and Feedback

There is a separate policy which covers this in greater detail. The core expectations are that:

- A piece of work will be marked and corrected/redrafted a minimum of every 12 lessons and teachers will use their professional judgment as to which tasks are most appropriate for this and to accelerate student progress.
- Marked work should include specific praise of what students have done well and clear instructions for improvement. Students should then be given an opportunity to complete their responses. There should also be a brief check and acknowledgment by the teacher to ensure misconceptions have been corrected.
- Live marking should be completed in lessons in order to pick up on misconceptions.
- Teachers mark in green.
- Students respond, peer assess and self-assess in red.
- Verbal feedback should be a feature of all lessons, should be ongoing and is a vital part of checking for understanding and addressing misconceptions. This is particularly important in practical subjects.
- Literacy marking should follow the 'PROUD' expectations

6. Behaviours for Learning

High standards of behaviour are expected. Disruption to learning is not to be tolerated by students. Where students are not displaying effective behaviours for learning, in particular passivity and not attempting work, this should be firmly challenged. The UTC behaviour policy should be followed to avoid wasted learning time.

Good behaviour for learning should include the following:

- Active student engagement in discussion and thinking
- Students asking questions and taking risks in their learning
- All students working hard throughout the lesson with no time wasted

High quality planning and teaching is the most effective way to promote good behaviour. This should be complemented by positive affirmations for students who are working hard, demonstrating resilience and contributing to their own learning and to that of others. Students should be visibly rewarded and celebrated for positive learning behaviours through the Doncaster UTC behaviour policy.

7. Quality Assurance processes

It is important that teaching and learning is monitored in order to ensure that all students receive the best education that can be provided.

“Interventions at the structural, home, policy, or school level is like searching for your wallet which you lost in the bushes, under the lamppost because that is where there is light. The answer lies elsewhere – it lies in the person who gently closes the classroom door and performs the teaching act –the person who puts into place the end effects of so many policies, who interprets these policies, and who is alone with students during their 15,000 hours of schooling.” Prof J. Hatti



The monitoring of teaching and learning

Lesson observations will take place once per turn during our “Deep Dive” curriculum review and will be part of the performance management cycle. Staff will receive constructive feedback on their performance. Feedback will highlight areas of strength as well as any areas that may need attention.

Other informal observations may take place during the year. These may be more informal observations, peer observations to aid professional learning, or subject leaders monitoring the teaching and learning taking place within their curriculum areas.

During lesson observations the observer will also scrutinise students’ work to ensure that the quality of teaching and learning can be assessed over time.

Learning Walks are a means for the Principal, and others who have delegated responsibility for teaching and learning, to assess the standard of learning that is taking place in the school. These classroom visits are ‘drop-ins’ to inform monitoring of the quality of learning. They are not a lesson observation of teaching and focus on student learning.

