

Walsall Academy



Sixth Form Handbook 2025-26

For students and parents/carers

Introduction

Congratulations for choosing Walsall Academy for your Sixth Form study.

We are pleased to provide this handbook for Year 12 and Year 13 which gives you information regarding Sixth Form study and procedures. We work hard to ensure students have been enrolled on suitable courses and we hope, with parental support and the information contained here, that significant success is achieved by all our students.

At Walsall Academy we pride ourselves in delivering a high-quality education aimed at empowering young adults with the skills and knowledge needed for higher education or future careers. To ensure students have the best opportunities and achieve the best outcomes, the Academy has implemented a set of guidelines which we expect our students to follow. This Handbook will provide useful information for reference during your time at Walsall Academy.

Sixth Form Team

Director of Sixth Form: Mrs M Savage

Assistant Director of Sixth Form: Mrs J Hill

Assistant Director of Sixth Form: Mr A Singh

Strong communication between the Academy, student and parent / carers is a key part of achieving success in the Sixth Form. We will aim to keep you fully updated on how students are progressing and any upcoming events & opportunities. Please ensure that we have up to date contact information and that you take the time to read and discuss the information sent home.

Parent/Carer Contact

Each student has a Personal Tutor of which they see each day. The first point of contact is with the Personal Tutor. We encourage regular contact through the module reporting system and as and when any issues arise. Parents can contact the Personal Tutor at any time and can arrange for meetings with subject staff through the Tutor and vice versa. Should you need to you can also contact the Sixth Form Team on SixthFormTeam@walsallacademy.com

The Academy Day

	Time	
Session 1	8:30-11:30am (students are to arrive at 8:15am)	Includes 15-minute breakfast
PT time	11:30am-11:50am	
Session 2	11:50am -3:20pm	Includes 40-minute lunch
Session 3	3:20-5pm	Monday-Wednesday

The school calendar can be found at <https://walsallacademy.com/calendar/>

Lunchtime

We feel it is important that our Sixth Form students have additional privileges. Therefore, Sixth Form students are permitted to spend their lunch time off site and have an extra 10 minutes than lower school. It is vitally important that students are sat back in their learning areas on time at the end of lunch time. Repeated failure to do so will result in this privilege being revoked. When students leave the Academy at lunchtime they must sign in and out electronically using their badge. This is vital for health and safety reasons.

The Academy operates a cashless system using ParentPay. All students must have a working ParentPay account. If offsite privileges are revoked it is important that students have a ParentPay account set up and in operation so that food can be purchased in the school restaurant.

Independent Learning

There will be slots on a student's timetable called 'independent learning'. These sessions are located in the library. Students will have access to computers but are also welcomed to bring in their own device. This time is regarded as lesson time and students will be registered. Not attending these sessions will have a negative effect on a student's attendance data. Subject staff will set work to complete in this time. The student must approach this time with maturity and independence. They must endeavour not to distract other students. Your subject teachers will assign Independent Learning tasks on Sharepoint.

Home Study

There will be slots on a student's timetable called 'home study'. For these sessions students are given the responsibility to study from home. If the home study is in the afternoon students must stay until the end of personal tutor time and if it is in the morning students must arrive by 11:30am to be registered in personal tutor time. If students repeatedly miss deadlines or fail to follow standards and expectations, the privilege of home study may be revoked. If students prefer, they can attend the Academy during home study time on occasion, but this must be approved in advance by a member of the Sixth Form Team. If

they feel their time would be better placed in the library on a permanent basis, we can arrange for this to be changed on their timetable.

Attendance and Punctuality

Excellent attendance and punctuality are essential for successful progression into continued study or employment. 100% attendance should be the target for all students, and we do not expect absence unless there is a very good reason. If you feel that your child is unable to attend for any reason, it is important that the Academy is informed as early as possible by a parent or guardian calling 01922 493910, emailing attendance@walsallacademy.com or contacting the student's personal tutor. This will enable the absence to be recorded accurately. In the event of persistent unauthorised absence, the Academy will be in contact to arrange a meeting and help support.

The Academy will not agree to absence for holiday purposes. Whenever possible all dentist or doctor's appointments should be made outside school hours or during home study. This should also be the case for driving lessons and driving theory and practical tests. Parents/carers are expected to do all in their power to ensure that their child has full attendance.

If arranged with the careers team and Sixth Form Team well in advance students are permitted to attend university open days and university interviews.

Attendance Intervention

PTs and Sixth Form Team will regularly monitor student attendance and will use the following interventions to support the student.

<u>Attendance %</u>	<u>Intervention</u>
Below 96%	PT will meet with parent/carer and student.
Below 93%	HOY will meet with parent/carer and student.
Below 90%	Director of Sixth Form will meet with parent/carer and student.

Signing in and out

If in occasional circumstances a student is required to attend an appointment during school hours permission must be granted by their subject teacher and a member of the Sixth Form team. Students must complete a yellow signing out form which can be collected from student resources. This is to be signed by the subject teacher and a member of the Sixth Form Team. Evidence of the appointment will be asked for and required for approval.

If a student becomes unwell at school the school nurse will see the student. If she feels the student should go home, she will either sign the students signing out form or contact home to arrange for the student to be picked up.

Punctuality

Lessons begin at 8:30am. Students should aim to be sat in their classroom at 8:15am. If a student is on home study for a morning session, they should aim to be in school for 11.15am to be sat in PT for 11:30am. Punctuality for all students including Sixth Form is managed by the pastoral team. Students will complete Punctuality Reviews for repeat offenses of poor punctuality.

Punctuality will then also be monitored by personal tutors and the Sixth Form Team. Meetings with parents/carers will be arranged if punctuality is a concern. Alongside this other Sixth Form privileges will be revoked. Please see below the different stages for Sixth Form Punctuality intervention:

Stage 1 PT Intervention	Students are highlighted as having poor punctuality if they receive more than 5 lates. PT to call home.
Stage 2 HOY Intervention	Further repeat in poor punctuality will result in HOY student discussion and HOY contact home.
Stage 3 HOY Intervention	Further repeat will result in a parent/carer meeting to be held with HOY. Student, parent and HOY will sign a punctuality contract.
Stage 4 Director of Sixth Form Intervention	If punctuality issues do not improve, a parent meeting will be held with Director of Sixth Form to offer further support if needed. Students' place at Sixth Form may be revoked if there are no substantial improvements.

Paid Employment

Some students take on a part-time job (evenings or weekends) during their time in the Sixth Form. Whilst this brings financial rewards and a valuable insight into the world of work, it does come with a warning. Courses post-16 are demanding and require consistent effort and application. If students are applying for part-time employment, they must avoid excessive or late hours. Students should not be working more than a maximum of 16 hours a week, any hours above this will directly impact academic performance. Under no circumstances are students permitted to do paid employment during the school day or undertake any paid work that interferes with the school day.

Sixth Form Dress Code

At Walsall Academy we believe that smartly dressed students create a positive image of themselves and of the Academy. This in turn can help students obtain employment or a place in further education or training. Students should be dressed ready for an interview.

Common sense has to prevail. Students who fail to adhere to the Sixth Form Code of Dress may be sent home to change if their clothing is not in line with the uniform policy.

- ✓ Name badge and lanyard (provided by the Academy)
- ✓ Students should wear Business Dress
- ✓ Blazer/Suit Jackets for all students
- ✓ Shirt and tie or blouse
- ✓ No jeans, trainers, or polo neck jumpers
- ✓ No leggings or strappy tops
- ✓ Skirts should be on or just above the knee. These should be worn with black or clear tights.

Uniform Plus:



Senior Grey Pencil Skirt
£15.99 – £20.99



Senior Twin Pleat Skirt
£16.99 – £19.99



Senior Grey Medway Straight Skirt
£17.99 – £19.99

Clive Marks:



TRUTEX PENCIL SKIRT

From £18.99



TRUTEX TWIN PLEAT SKIRT

From £15.99



Marks and Spencer:



£29

FINERY LONDON
Knee Length Pencil Skirt



- ✓ School shoes are to be worn at all times – trainers, flip flops, wedges, sandals and stiletto heels are not allowed
- ✓ No outdoor coats to be worn inside the Academy building at any time
- ✓ Coats and other outdoor clothing may **not** be worn in classrooms or whilst eating in the Restaurant
- ✓ Caps or hats cannot be worn on the Academy site
- ✓ Hooded tops are not allowed and cannot be worn on the Academy site
- ✓ Hair colour and style must be appropriate for the Academy and not be extreme
- ✓ All students must wear their name badge whilst in the Academy building. We advise this is removed when students leave the Academy site
- ✓ Tattoos are not permitted

PE, Sport and Performing Art courses have their own kits. Subject staff will advise on how to purchase these. These kits are classed as official Academy uniform. Special considerations will be given regarding religious dress.

Jewellery

Due to Health & Safety regulations the Academy must insist upon students following the rules, which are:

- ✓ Students are allowed to wear ear studs but not ear stretchers, bars, or dangly earrings
- ✓ Nose studs and other body piercings such as tongue studs are not allowed
- ✓ A watch may be worn

Expectations

As a member of Walsall Academy's Sixth Form, it is important that students always strive to achieve their full potential. Students have a vital role to play in the wider community, both by setting an example to our younger students and by taking on responsibilities within the wider Academy community. Students are expected to take responsibility for their own learning, and we expect them to work alongside staff, by being committed to their learning in order to achieve their full potential. If this is going to occur, it is important that students abide by the following terms:

- ✓ Attend all lessons, including independent learning sessions.
- ✓ Be punctual to all lessons.
- ✓ Be fully prepared and equipped for all lessons and take individual responsibility to catch up on any missed work through absence or illness by proactively contacting/visiting subject teachers.
- ✓ Complete work by the deadlines that are set by subject teachers and tutors.
- ✓ Be prepared and have work to do when you do not have formal timetabled lessons.
- ✓ Work quietly and do not disturb other people in the library.

- ✓ Correctly use computer facilities. Save work on SharePoint or OneDrive. Misuse of computers leads to the loss of access rights.
- ✓ Look after and respect all the Academy environment
- ✓ Abide strictly to the published Sixth Form Dress Code, which includes wearing a student badge
- ✓ Be engaged in study for approximately 35-40 hours per week.
- ✓ Take on the responsibilities of being senior members of the Academy community by abiding by all aspects of the Academy's code of conduct and being a role model to younger years.

Smoking/Vaping

A no-smoking policy operates throughout the Academy buildings and grounds. Students are not allowed to leave the site to smoke during the Academy day at any point. Smoking on the Academy site (including e-cigarettes/vaping) will not be tolerated and will result in action being taken and the student potentially losing their place at the Academy. Vapes and cigarettes are prohibited items and should not be brought onto Academy site.

Drugs

Parents/carers, students, Governors and staff are united in adopting a zero tolerance to the possession or use of drugs on the Academy site. This ensures that the children will be kept safe whilst at the Academy. Drugs on the Academy site will not be tolerated and will result in a student losing their place in the Sixth Form.

Mobile Phones

Mobile phones are not to be used in the Academy and if brought in should be switched off and not seen. This includes during breakfast and lunch time. Students who do not follow this will be asked to give in their phone for collection at the end of the school day. Headphones and ear pods are not to be worn around the Academy or in lessons and phones cannot be charged on-site.

Conduct Issues

In the event of subject staff reporting poor behaviour, lack of co-operation, poor attitude, disruption to learning, unacceptable absence etc, the Sixth Form Team will meet with parents. If repeated the Director of Sixth Form will withdraw the place if it is deemed necessary.

Assessment and Reporting

Students will receive regular module reports. These will identify the grade that the student is working at, a target grade and for most part a comment from the subject teacher explaining the students' strengths and areas to improve.

There are 3 formal internal examination points in the academic year, December/January, March and June. Following the January exams parents/carers are invited to meet with the

student's personal tutor. This meeting is called a 'Student Led Conference' and the student will take the lead to discuss their pleasing achievements and make targets for improvement.

The results of formal internal examinations are collated by the Sixth Form Team. These are analysed and where appropriate intervention strategies are put in place. On occasions course choices may be amended to ensure the best possible outcome for the student. It is an expectation that for A-level courses students are working at grade D minimum by the end of year 12 and for BTEC/T-Level students a merit. This is to safeguard the students into year 13. Meetings will be held with students and parents/carers where expectations are not met and, in some cases, alternative programmes of study will be arranged.

Careers

Walsall Academy Sixth Form are lucky to have an onsite dedicated careers team. Careers staff will meet with students throughout their time in the Sixth Form to discuss career aspirations. They will also support through university and apprenticeship applications. In order to do this well it is an expectation that students check their emails regularly and respond when required to.

Work experience

Students will complete a compulsory two-week work experience placement after their internal exams in June/July of year 12. The careers team will assist in arranging this placement. Once arranged it is the student's responsibility to communicate with the employer to arrange working times etc... This is a fantastic opportunity for students to experience the world of work and is very successful when support is provided by the students and parents/carers.

Session 3 and Enrichment Opportunities

Walsall Academy prides itself on providing a very well-established enrichment programme. Session 3 activities will be available through the academic year in all subject areas. These will be published on the school website and advertised during personal tutor time. We encourage students to prioritise personal development to help university, apprenticeship and job applications alongside becoming a well-rounded citizen. Attending session 3 activities is a great way to do this. Sixth Form students can also develop leadership by assisting staff in the delivery of session 3 for younger students. They are also encouraged to lead citizenship activities during PT time.

At Walsall Academy we also have a comprehensive trips programme, for example Outward Bound Leadership courses, Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award and many trips arranged by subject staff. We very much encourage students to attend these. Financial support can be provided for students that receive 16-19 bursary, please find more information below.

An enrichment programme tackling issues like mental health, drugs, managing a budget etc... will also be delivered a points throughout the year. Attendance to this is compulsory even if a student would usually be on home study or independent learning.

Financial Support 16-19 Bursary

The 16-19 bursary provides financial support for students where combined household income is less than £30,000. The financial support can be used towards a number of things including uniform, food, trips and travel to and from the academy. Students can collect more information and an application form from student resources or via the school website (<https://walsallacademy.com/policy-and-procedure/>).

Mental Health and Wellbeing

We understand that Sixth Form study comes with added pressures. Mental Health and Wellbeing is vitally important, and we endeavour to support students. Students should speak to their personal tutor or a staff member they trust about any concerns they have. They also have access to staff wellbeing champions and an onsite school counsellor. We also encourage students to eat a balanced diet, to participate in physical activity and stress the importance of getting a good night's sleep. Sixth Form students can also provide support to younger students by joining a team of students called SPECTRUM.