



University of
St Andrews

Independent learning week (ILW)

Document type	Policy
Scope (applies to)	Staff and students
Applicability date	30/07/2018
Review date	30/08/2026
Approved date	24/05/2024
Approver	Learning and Teaching Committee
Document owner	Administrative Officer
School / unit	Education and Student Experience
Document status	Published
Information classification	Public
Equality impact assessment	None
Key terms	Academic policies/Learning and teaching/Independent learning week
Purpose	This policy relates to the principles of Independent Learning Week (ILA), activities permitted during ILA and communications with students during ILA.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1.3	Policy reviewed and updated following the approval of the new academic calendar.	Updated	Academic Policy Officer (Taught Degrees)	May 2024

UNIVERSITY OF ST ANDREWS
POLICY ON INDEPENDENT LEARNING WEEK (ILW)

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Independent Learning Week (ILW) is designed to provide appropriate time for students to enhance and consolidate their learning.
- 1.2. ILW will take place independent of teaching staff.

2. Principles

- 2.1 ILW is an independent learning enhancement week, not a holiday, is distinct from vacation week, and must be appropriately integrated into the curriculum.
- 2.2 No mandatory events or classes should be scheduled during ILW (with the exception of fieldwork or similar activities). Schools should pay attention to potential conflicts with other fieldworks a student might have when scheduling mandatory fieldwork or similar activities.
- 2.3 Optional activities designed to support and enhance learning may be provided but these will not be mandatory teaching activities.
- 2.4 ILW provides students with an opportunity to consolidate and enhance their learning to date, as well as preparing and forward-planning for the rest of the semester.
- 2.5 Staff should support students to use this time effectively ahead of ILW, but there is no expectation that student meetings with academic staff will take place during this time. This does not preclude meetings between PGR students and their supervisors.
- 2.6 Students are not required, but strongly encouraged, to stay in St Andrews during ILW.
- 2.7 The library and other University resources will remain open and students should be strongly encouraged to make the most of the opportunities available for effective academic study.

3. Activities permitted during ILW

- 3.1 Independent learning tasks, if set during ILW, can include revision, forward planning and preparation for assessments, enhancement of academic skills, fieldwork, and extra-curricular activities.
- 3.2 Assessment submission deadlines may be set during ILW, provided that arrangements are in place to support students in relation to the assessment in question in the period leading up to the submission date.
- 3.3 Schools may add subject specific activities to their handbooks.
- 3.4 On occasion, to support students with extenuating circumstances, Schools may conduct in-house deferred examinations during ILW.

4. Timing of ILW

4.1 ILW will take place in accordance with set semester dates.

5. Exceptions

5.1 Any exceptions to any of the above must be discussed with student representatives in the School and approved by the Assistant Vice-Principal (Dean of Learning & Teaching).

5.2 ILW only applies to courses that follow the standard academic year structure.

Version number	Purpose / changes	Document status	Author of changes, role and school / unit	Date
1	Changes to titles/contact details to reflect decanal restructuring	Updated	-	February 2021
1.1	Changed review date to end of academic year	Updated	-	February 2023
1.2	Added Section 6.2 to account for programmes in the University that do not follow the academic year calendar.	Updated	Academic Policy Officer (Taught Degrees)	July 2023
1.3	Policy reviewed and updated following the approval of the new academic calendar.	Updated	Academic Policy Officer (Taught Degrees)	May 2024