



CALGARY ARTS ACADEMY

POLICY MANUAL

LEARNING CONTRACTS

A learning contract is a written plan that describes what an individual will learn as a result of some specified learning activity. It serves as a tool for communicating learning intentions between the learner and the instructor. Learning contracts can take many forms and there are a number of terms that are used interchangeably in reference to them such as learning plans, study plans, performance agreements or self-development plans.

At the Calgary Arts Academy the majority of classroom instruction and many co-curricular activities are presented to students as learning contracts between the student and the educator. Students can be involved in learning contracts in all of the major subject areas as well as in areas of behaviour and co-curricular sports, etc. While the student is responsible for the completion of a learning contract, parents and guardians can expect to be involved in supporting and monitoring their child's progress through a number of learning contracts at any one time. Parents will participate in the development and implementation of learning contracts, and will celebrate their successful completion. Learning contracts provide the basis for communication between parent, student and teacher, both at formal learning conferences and on an ongoing basis during the school year.

A learning contract typically consists of five major elements that specify the following: 1) the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values to be acquired by the learner (learner objectives); 2) How these objectives are to be accomplished by the learner (learning resources and strategies); 3) the target dates for completion; 4) what evidence will be presented to demonstrate that the objectives have been completed (evidence of accomplishment); and 5) how this evidence will be judged and validated (criteria and means for validating evidence).

Learning contracts 1) provide a means for dealing with the wide differences among any groups of learners; 2) enhance individual motivation for learning; 3) facilitate the development of mutual respect between the instructor and the student; 4) provide for a more individualizing instructional mode; and 5) foster the skills of self-directed learning. The power of learning contracts comes from their capacity to individualize learning activities, time, methods, and standards for evaluation.

Sources:

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