

Independent Learning Newsletter Tips

It's Goal Setting Time!

The start of the year is a great time to set yourself some academic goals along with any personal goals you might plan to achieve this year.

There are lots of great reasons to set goals:

- Setting goals gets you to think about possibilities.
- Goals give you a direction to work towards.
- Goals give you a clear picture of where you want to go.
- Goals help you to push yourself just that little bit more.
- Goals help you have a more fun and fulfilled life.
- Goals can give you motivation and focus.
- Setting goals helps you do all the things you want to do in life!
- Goals give us the motivation to do things that are difficult and challenging in order to reach a particular desired state.
- Goals help us achieve our dreams, hopes and desires.
- Goals help us look for an achievable balance between the different areas of our life.
- Goals make us feel good about ourselves and our achievements and help us to increase our self-esteem and sense of self-worth.
- Goals give us a greater feeling of control over our lives and experiences.
- Goals allow us to prioritise and create action plans.

There are different types of goals you can set based on the timeframe in which you want to achieve these goals:

- **Short-term goals:** are things you want to do today, tomorrow or within the next few weeks and sometimes months.
- **Medium-term goals:** are things you want to achieve in the next few months or sometime even within the next year.
- **Long-term goals:** are things you want to do later on in life, whether it is next year, two years' time, ten years' time or even longer.

You may decide to set a mix of these types of goals. To give yourself the best chance of achieving your goals, it is a good idea to make sure your goals are **SMARTIES** – so keep in mind these guidelines for setting effective goals:

- **Specific:** Make goals very detailed and specific. Exactly what do you want to achieve?
- **Measurable:** You want to be able to know when you have achieved your goal so make sure there is some way to measure your success.
- **Action-Oriented:** Your short-term goals should really be the action steps you need to take to achieve the medium and longer term goals.
- **Relevant & Realistic:** Goals change, so if your goal is no longer relevant, you need to change it.
- **Time-Based:** Your goals need to have a 'to complete by' date to give you something to aim for.

- **Interesting:** Make your goals about things that you find interesting and worthwhile.
- **Emotional:** Use powerful language to express the emotion behind the goals.
- **Success oriented:** Express your goals in a positive and success focused way.

And....

- Only use POSITIVE language in goals.
- Use PASSIONATE, enthusiastic and motivating language.
- Write your goal in the PRESENT tense.

Review your goals regularly to remind yourself of what you want to achieve and to stimulate your mind to think of other possibilities. Start taking specific actions that will help you achieve your goals, in particular your short-term goals. Putting together an action plan of the steps to achieve the goal and allocating timeframes for each action is a good place to start.

You can learn more about goal setting and many other topics to help you achieve your best at school by going to the links section in your portal and opening the ELES handbook:

