

# iSierra Online Academy: Independent Study Program Handbook and User Guide 2024-25

## GENERAL POLICIES

### Appointments:

- Mandatory: \*once per week with your \*\*Supervising Teacher; on a scheduled day and time.
- All assignments for the week are due by your appointment day and time.
- Appointments are virtual.
  - Your teacher will meet with you through Zoom or Google Meet
  - Your camera must be on and audio working.
  - You will be screen sharing
  - All school behavior expectations apply in a virtual classroom/meeting.

\*Completing more than 2 units per week may require an additional meeting day.

\*\*If you are struggling with a subject, expect to have meetings with your Course Teacher until the issues are resolved.

### Appointment Duration:

- Appointments will average 1-2 hours. Time may vary based on: completion of all assigned weekly work; need for instruction/remediation; test preparedness; quality of work; required state and district tests; completion of appointment assignments; guidance and attendance issues; teachers' discretion.
- Be prepared to work on your course in a virtual room until the Supervising Teacher can meet with you. ● Being late could result in: increased time spent in a meeting that day, a rescheduled appointment (*only if teacher's schedule allows*), or unexcused absences for the entire school week.
  - Reverse Blended Students: Campus class schedule will be taken into account in scheduling appointments and appointment duration.

### Appointment Assignments:

- Appointment assignments, if assigned, are required. These include, but are not limited to, completing state/college test preparation, completing Academy course activities, taking state and district tests, and/or redoing work that has not met the minimum pass rate.
  - Reverse Blended Students: *State/District tests are not applicable. These will be completed on your campus.*

### Attendance/Absences/Participation/Non-Participation:

- **Attendance** is earned by completing the assigned weekly work by your appointment day/time. ● **Absence** is a failure to complete the assigned weekly work by your appointment day/time. ○ Any week without meeting this requirement will result in 5 days of unexcused absences and \*escalating consequences (Tiered Re-engagement Steps).
  - **Participation** is earned by attending your weekly appointments.
  - **Non-participation** is a failure to attend your weekly appointment.
    - This will result in \*escalating consequences (Tiered Re-engagement Steps).
- \*See Tiered Re-engagement Steps (see page 6 )*
- Reverse Blended Students: *Absences are calculated differently from F/T Independent Study students. However, all other information in this section applies.*

## Assistance/Communication/Teacher availability:

- Please use the “Messages” tab in APEX. (Parents contact by phone or email)
- Be specific in your message.
  - In the subject line, type the reason for your contact (such as: BYPASS, Failed Quiz, HELP) and ALWAYS include the course name and activity number (English 3A - 1.4.5). ○ In the message field include any extra information needed.
- Your teacher is *generally* available by phone, email, or virtual conferencing during regular school hours.
- If your teacher is unavailable, you may call the site’s paraeducator. See our website ([www.fjuhsd.org/isierra](http://www.fjuhsd.org/isierra)) or your teachers’ Google Classroom for contact information. ● Check your school gmail, your APEX Announcements, and APEX Messages DAILY.

## Work Expectations:

- Full-Time Independent Study Students: **You are expected to work a minimum of 5 hours per day, five days a week (25 hours each week) in order to meet your activity due dates.\***
- **Reverse Blended Students: You are expected to work a minimum of 1.5 hours per day, 5 days per week in order to meet your activity due dates.\***

\*Additional work time may be necessary depending on your course and/or your scheduled timeline for completion.

## Academic Interventions/Tiered Re-engagement Steps:

- Phone calls, emails, Apex Coach Reports, Aeries Communication, or other automated systems will be utilized in communicating attendance issues, progress issues, testing dates, and behavior issues. ● Progress Reports, with comments only, may be sent home quarterly. These are determined by the student's progress compared to the percentage of time enrolled in Independent Study. ● If student issues cannot be resolved by the above means, a conference will be scheduled. ● If students are absent 4 times, for any reason, or, if satisfactory education progress goals are not met, students will be referred to counseling/administration for a placement re-evaluation meeting, and may be removed from the program. A parent/legal guardian needs to be present for the meeting. ● For specific Tiered Re-engagement Steps, please see page 5.

## District, State, and Federal Testing:

- Students are required to participate in District, State and Federal tests; student appointment times may be extended and/or students may be required to participate on an additional day to meet testing requirements.

## Academic and Other Supports:

- English learners, foster youth, McKinney Vento, students with 504’s or individualized educational plans, pupil’s requiring mental health supports, and individuals with exceptional needs will be provided support as specified during their team meetings.

## **APPOINTMENT INFORMATION**

### **Appointment Behavior Expectations:**

- Be on time. Late arrival means you might not be able to test that week.
- Please work quietly until the teacher can meet.
- Do not chew gum, eat, or drink in front of the camera.
- School appropriate attire, please.
- Be respectful to everyone, and the equipment, at all times. No hand gestures or inappropriate language.
  - This includes vocabulary, body language, as well as no derogatory comments about: race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues.

### **Appointment Procedure:**

- Make sure your chromebook is charged.
- Cameras must be turned on.
- Test your audio and video before joining the Meet/Zoom.
  - YOU WILL NEED AN EARPIECE WITH A WORKING MICROPHONE.
- Do not leave the Meet/Zoom until you have met with the teacher.
  - Students may go to the restroom as necessary, **except** once a test has been started.

### **Appointment Supplies:**

- Chromebook with a working camera:
- Working earbuds/headphones with microphone:
- Wifi access/Connectivity:

If you need assistance with any of this equipment, to replace existing equipment, or to obtain assistance in case of temporary connectivity issues, please contact the library technician at 714-447-5519.

### **Streaming/Cell Phone** (during the appointment):

- No interaction on social media that is not contained within the iSierra digital curriculum.
- Cell phone use is severely restricted; Students are not to have their cell phones out at all during a test - consequences apply.

### **Disciplinary Consequences:**

- School Academic Honesty Policies and Codes of Conduct will be followed.
- Parents/Guardians, counselor, and administration will be contacted about negative behavior and a note will be placed into your AERIES file.
  - AERIES *follows you throughout high school, so counselors or admin can see your file.*

## **COURSEWORK INFORMATION**

### **Course Instructions:**

- Complete the assigned units; complete all unit activities in order.
- Follow the Course Instructions for your course. These will be communicated to you by your Course Teacher by email and/or posted in the course Google Classroom upon enrollment into your course.

### **Assignment Due Dates:**

- Help you stay on track with your course(s) and reach quarter/semester credit goals.
- Must be followed to: maintain attendance and satisfactory educational progress; meet graduation goals.

### **Assessments:**

- Assessments consist of Quizzes and Unit Tests.
- All unit tests are proctored (taken under teacher supervision). You may:
  - take your unit test at your appointment,
  - request a bypass (see page 8), or
  - contact your Supervising Teacher for an alternate day/time to test. .
- All unit work, including Study Guides or guided notes, must be completed and submitted to take the unit test or request a bypass.
- Electronics are not allowed during tests. If seen, it can result in an automatic score of “0”.
- Assessments have a minimum pass rate of 60%.
  - You are allowed two attempts to pass Quizzes and CST’s.
  - If you fail both times, APEX locks down your progress, so the next lesson will not appear.
- Resolve the situation with your teacher as per directions in your course instructions.
- If completing a full course, you must take the Final Exam for course credit.

### **Grading:**

- Points possible for graded activities are listed on: activity/quiz/test pages and the Enrollment Details Report. See the iSierra website for an explanation of the Enrollment Details Report. ([Student Resources / User Tutorials](#))
- For overall course points/grade weights, see the Course Syllabus in the Resources section.
- Teachers may assign the following scores for the listed reasons:
  - “0”: It was plagiarized, or given a quiz and/or Unit Test Bypass.
  - “1”: the activity was received and the grade is pending.
  - “2”: the activity needs to be redone.\*

*\*The deadline for redoing/re-submitting work will be determined by your course teacher. Activities submitted after the given deadline will retain the original score.*

### **Course Completion/ Last Day to take Work:**

- Complete your units and course(s) by the assigned due date(s).
- Teachers will relay their last day to accept work, and their course Final Exam date via APEX Announcements, and/or the Enrollment Details Report, and/or physical paperwork, and/or email. This will be considered the same as relaying the information through a course syllabus. It is the students’ responsibility to make sure they understand and communicate to their parent(s)/guardian(s) the last day to submit work and the day of their Final. No work or tests will be accepted/graded after the given deadline.

- **ALL COURSEWORK MUST BE COMPLETE TO TAKE THE COURSE FINAL/BE GIVEN A FINAL GRADE/BE ELIGIBLE FOR UNIT OR COURSE CREDIT. STUDENTS CANNOT CHOOSE TO “TAKE A ZERO” ON AN ASSIGNMENT.**

## **Course Content Assistance/Apex Technical Support:**

Help with course content:

- See your Supervising/Course Teachers' Google Classroom Resource sections for specific support information.
- During school hours:
  - Contact your Course Teacher
  - Go to the iSierra website > [Student Resources](#), for independent learning sites and subject area support.
- After school hours: tutor.com
- Problems accessing assigned course/units: contact your teacher ASAP
- Apex technical issues (i.e. error messages, inability to play videos):
  - [Contact APEX Support](#) or [Apex Technical Support Information](#)
- Forgot your Apex password: Select “Forgot password” from the Apex login page.
- Computer problems are not an excuse for incomplete work.
- See “Supplies” on page 3 for chromebook/wifi/connectivity issues.

## **Removal/Withdrawal From Course:**

- Removal from a course and/or disqualification from earning course credit may occur when a student:
  - Fails to complete assignments and/or make progress as assigned.
  - Violates the Code of Conduct/Academic Honesty Policy.
- You have **3 weeks to withdraw** from a course without penalty. Email the request to withdraw to your counselor and cc your course teacher.

## **Transferring/Returning to Comprehensive High Schools:**

- Independent study operates on an alternative schedule which does not align with the comprehensive high school traditional schedule. This could result in credit deficiencies if moving between schools mid semester. Contact the iSierra counselor if you wish to return to a comprehensive high school.

## **UC/CSU and NCAA:**

**UC/CSU:** While most iSierra courses are UC/CSU approved, a few are not. It is up to you, your parent/guardian, and your counselor to make sure that your online courses match your post high school goals.

**NCAA:** The iSierra course(s) you are taking will be posted under La Sierra High School, an approved NCAA institution. If you are pursuing a sport at the NCAA level, your Transfer Request Form should indicate which courses need to be NCAA, so we can make sure all guidelines are being met. While many iSierra courses are NCAA approved, a few are not. It is up to you, your parent/guardian, and your counselor to make sure that your online courses match your post high school goals.

## **Tiered Re-engagement Steps**

### **Level 1**

#### **Student has not earned attendance for 1 week**

- Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the Supervising Teacher and/or Paraeducator via phone call.
  - If the student has another unproductive week, then move to Level 2.

### **Level 2**

#### **Student has not earned attendance for 1 week\***

- Administration will be notified.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the Supervising Teacher and/or Paraeducator via Aeries Communication and/or email.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the Counselor via phone to discuss the lack of progress. If the counselor is unable to reach a parent/guardian, a home visit will be scheduled. ● If the student has another unproductive week, then move to Level 3.

### **Level 3**

#### **Student has not earned attendance for 1 week\***

- Administration will be notified.
- Parents/Guardians will be contacted by the Intervention Specialist/Administration. ○ If the student continues to be unproductive there will be a meeting held to review the signed written agreement and discuss a potential return to the student's home school. Students will have 1 week to get back on track with their coursework.
- If the student has another unproductive week, then move to Level 4.

### **Level 4**

#### **Student has not earned attendance for 1 week\***

- Administration will be notified.
- Administrator/Counselor/Intervention Specialist will set up a meeting with the parents/guardians to review the signed written agreement and discuss potential return/create a plan to have the student return to their home school.

**\*Unproductive weeks DO NOT need to be consecutive.**

**\*\*If there is no parent contact made after several attempts via phone and home visit, students will automatically be returned to their homeschool.**

# **STUDENT CODE OF CONDUCT/ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

All technology used must be appropriate, and adhere to the district *Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement*.

The following rules apply to all activities conducted by students enrolled in iSierra's Online Academy courses. Failure to abide by these rules may result in revoked access to Apex courses as well as consequences determined by LSHS and/or FJUHS administrators. If you witness any violations, please contact your teacher.

## **Accountability: DO NOT:**

- Publicly post your personal contact information or anyone else's.
- Publicly post any messages that were sent to you privately.
- Post anonymous messages except for the express purpose of collaborative writing.
- Impersonate another person.
- Submit "blank" documents to trick the system into registering an assignment was completed.

## **Passwords: YOU AGREE TO:**

- Maintain the secrecy of your login information, and to use only your own.
- Not help anyone gain unauthorized access.

**Netiquette** - Know that communications can be retrieved and printed by the instructor at any time. • Avoid sarcasm and slang. Swear words are unacceptable.

- **Never use** derogatory comments (including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues), insults, threats or attacks of any kind against another person
- Focus responses on the questions or issues being discussed, not on individuals involved.
- Be constructive with your criticism, not hurtful.
- Review your messages before sending them.
- Remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for typos.

## **Plagiarism and Source Citation**

Plagiarism is copying the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another writer and passing them off as your own original work. Do not engage in plagiarism when submitting your work. Failure to abide by these standards will be reported to the appropriate school authorities and may result in loss of credit, revoked access and/or additional consequences as outlined in the La Sierra Student Handbook.

- **Do not:**
  - Copy or rephrase another student's work
  - Have someone else rewrite an assignment or rephrase any part of an assignment
  - Copy answers from a 3rd party site (e.g. Course Hero, Chegg, StudyPool). *We run documents through a plagiarism checker.*
- Have someone else rewrite an assignment or rephrase any part of an assignment
- Copy content from student aids (for example, Cliff Notes), critical sources, reference materials, or other materials, in part or in whole, from any source other than yourself, without acknowledgment (including by rephrasing ideas borrowed from such materials).

★ Any quotations from a source require full citations as per MLA or APA guidelines.

## **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**

Students may use AI as a tool to enhance their learning, ensuring that it *complements their own critical thinking and creativity rather than replacing it*. The importance of originality in your work cannot be overstated. Any use of AI to generate assignments will be considered an academic integrity violation and will result in appropriate consequences. Please discuss the use of AI with your teachers to understand its appropriate and responsible application.

## **Cheating**

Cheating of any kind is not tolerated. If caught cheating, students will be held to the consequences laid out in the LSHS Handbook and/or their campus's Handbook (if applicable). Please see the schools' websites for the cheating explanations/consequences and Handbook Details.

# APEX USER GUIDE

## Understanding Apex Course Activities

Each Apex unit is divided into lessons; each lesson is divided into “**Activities**”. Each activity has a specific title and number, (e.g. **Study 2.1.1**). The first number is the unit, the second is the lesson, and the third is the activity. So, Study 2.1.1 is *in* unit 2, *in* lesson 1, and it *is* activity 1.

**All activities are divided into three categories: “Non-Graded,” “Graded,” and “Interactive.”**

- Non-Graded Activities: Complete and submit to the teacher electronically.
- Graded Activities: Complete and submit to the teacher electronically.
- Interactive Activities: Click and complete within the course. *Do not print or submit to the teacher.*

**The following unit work must be completed and submitted BEFORE taking your unit test:**

1. Non-Graded Activities- (these are your course notes and may be used during assessments)
  - **Study Guides or \*Guided Notes, Reading Guides** (English), **Check-ups** (may be required for math)
  - **All interactive exercises within each unit**
  - **Unit Review** (may be required - check Course Instructions).

*\*As permitted by course teacher*

### 2. Graded Activities

- **Quizzes**
- **Discuss** (Discussion Posts)
- **Writing Activities** (titles vary by course - see your Course Instructions)

**The following must be completed for credit consideration (course grading scales apply):**

- The unit work listed above and as directed in your Course Instructions.
- Unit Tests: These are proctored tests; completed only under staff supervision.
- Final Exam: For 5 credit courses.

## UNIT TEST BYPASS

- If you complete a unit and cannot test right away, you may request a bypass\*. This will allow you to continue onto the next unit until you can test in a proctored setting.

### **UNIT TEST BYPASS INSTRUCTIONS:**

- After submitting **all** “Activities” electronically, message a bypass request by following [these instructions](#).
- *Bypasses are limited to **one per course per week**. Meet with your teacher to test at the very next opportunity or your next appointment, whichever comes first.*



## **Submitting APEX Graded Activities**

*Activities with “Points Possible” or points listed next to them in the Apex Table of Contents are Graded Activities.*

### **Graded Activities:**

**Quizzes:** Complete and submit independently at home. The score posts to your Enrollment Details Report.

**Discuss Activities:** Considered “class discussions”. [Click here](#) for posting directions. **Writing Activities:**

**Formatting** (Activities will be returned with a “0” if these are not followed)

- English: Always use MLA format
- All courses: Use 12 pt, Arial or Times New Roman font; 12 pt font - double space.
- All courses: Your responses **must be in [blue](#)** font for readability.

### **Submitting**

- **Check your teachers’ Course Instructions for submission directions.**

### **Non-Graded Activities:**

- Non-Graded activities, such as Study Guides/Guided notes, are also to be submitted electronically. See your Teachers’ Course Instructions for submission directions.

### **FOR ALL ACTIVITIES:**

- If you do not select the correct activity title in Apex Messages, the assignment will not go to the correct assignment “mailbox”. You are responsible for misdirected assignments.
- Assignments may not be pasted into the message of an email - follow the Course Instructions.
- All Graded/Non-Graded activities must be completed & submitted prior to testing. You may not take unit tests without turning in all of the unit work.
- **The practice of submitting “blank” assignments to appear as if all assignments are completed will be considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct/Academic Honesty Policy.**
- **Irresponsible use of AI tools and the practice of plagiarism in the submission of work that is not your own is considered a violation of the Student Code of Conduct/Academic Honesty Policy.**