

A BRIEFING FOR PARTNERS AND STAKEHOLDERS

Information Briefing Pack

Advancing the Science of Learning



Institute for Advanced Learning & Metacognition

A charity registered in England and Wales, no. 1189445

WELCOME

A word from our Chair

Thank you for taking the time to learn more about the Institute for Advanced Learning and Metacognition.

We are an educational charity with a simple but ambitious belief: that every child has the potential to achieve far beyond what they imagine. Most do not lack ability — they lack the strategies, the guidance and the confidence to unlock it. Through our national training programme, delivered directly in schools, we give young people powerful, evidence-informed memory and learning techniques that change what they believe is possible.

This briefing pack sets out who we are, how we have grown, the work we do, and the difference we are making to the lives of school pupils across the country. I hope it gives you a clear picture of our purpose — and of why our work matters.

“A highly able child is rarely one age at a time: reasoning like an adult; feeling like a toddler; and asking questions older than the rest of us. Identification begins the moment we stop expecting those ages to match.”



Fabian Lord

Chair of Trustees

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Introducing IALM

The Institute for Advanced Learning and Metacognition (IALM) is a UK-registered educational charity dedicated to advancing the science and practice of learning.

We are best known for our national training programme, which goes into schools to teach pupils enhanced memory and learning techniques — helping them study more effectively, perform with greater confidence, and discover just how much they are capable of.

Around that programme we are building a wider institute: conducting and sharing research into how people learn, championing evidence-informed practice, and bringing together a professional community. We are also a professional membership body, authorised to confer recognised post-nominal designations on our members.

In short, we work where education, cognitive science and practice meet — turning what research reveals about learning into real benefit for young people.

Educational charity

A CIO registered with the Charity Commission (no. 1189445).

National programme

Memory & evidence-informed learning techniques delivered directly in education settings.

Professional body

Recognised membership and post-nominal designations.

Our purpose & charitable objects

Our purpose, as set out in our governing document, is to advance education and training for the public benefit.

We pursue this purpose by:

- Promoting high standards in learning strategies, metacognition and cognitive development;
- Advancing research into learning, memory and how people think;
- Delivering education, training and workshops — for children, young people and adults, and for the educators & carers who support them;
- Deepening public understanding of effective learning.

Public benefit, measured in young lives

As a charity, everything we do must deliver public benefit. For us, that benefit is measured above all in the confidence, attainment and prospects of the young people we help.

Vision, mission & values

OUR VISION

A world in which every learner understands how to learn — and is empowered to reach their full potential.

OUR MISSION

To advance the science and practice of learning — equipping young people with the techniques to succeed, advancing research, and championing effective, evidence-informed learning for the public benefit.

OUR VALUES

Rigour	Evidence-informed, intellectually honest work.
Reflection	The power of the deliberate pause.
Collaboration	Stronger together than apart.
Inclusion	Widening opportunity for every learner.
Impact	Measured by the difference we make.

Every child has the potential to achieve far beyond what they can imagine.

Most young people are not held back by a lack of ability. They are held back by not knowing how to learn — how to remember, how to revise, how to think about their own thinking. Given the right help and guidance, what once felt out of reach becomes possible.

- How we learn matters as much as what we learn.
- The best learning is deliberate — built through reflection and conscious thought.
- Evidence should shape practice, reaching classrooms and not just research journals.
- Effective learning should widen opportunity for every child, whatever their background.

How we've grown

From a focus on memory and study skills for young people to a national institute for the science of learning — our ambition has grown, but our founding question has not changed: how can we help people learn more effectively?

2018

Founded as Young Active Minds



Helping young people strengthen their memory and study skills.

2020

Registered as a charity (CIO)



Formally registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales.

2026

Relaunched as IALM



Broadening our remit to research, advanced learning and a national schools programme.

The challenge we address

Too often, what we know about how people learn never reaches the people who need it most — pupils sitting in classrooms, revising for exams, trying to make sense of how to study.

Decades of research show that specific, teachable techniques — for memory, retrieval and metacognition — dramatically improve how well young people learn and remember. Yet these methods are rarely taught explicitly in schools.

IALM exists to close that gap: to put proven learning and memory techniques directly into the hands of pupils, and the educators who teach them.

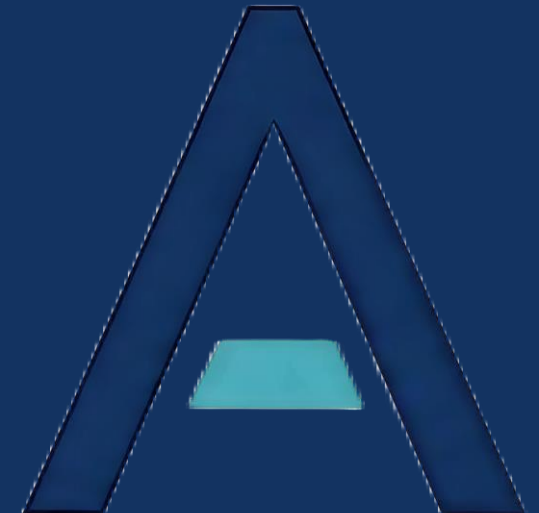
“The methods that help us learn best are rarely taught — so we teach them.”

The deliberate pause

Our identity is built around a single, deliberate idea — the pause.

Look closely at the “A” at the heart of the IALM mark. Its crossbar does not run all the way across; it stops short, leaving an intentional gap. That gap is the whole point: it represents the pause — the brief, deliberate moment of reflection at the centre of how we learn and think.

Metacognition is, in essence, the practice of pausing to notice our own thinking. The unfinished crossbar makes that pause visible — a reminder that understanding is built in the spaces where we stop to think. It is the moment where thinking becomes visible.



Our strategy

Our work rests on four connected pillars. Each is distinct, but together they reinforce one another.

01

Advance the evidence

Conduct, support and share rigorous research into learning, memory and metacognition.

02

Translate into practice

Take proven techniques into schools through our national training programme.

03

Build a community

Bring together members, advisers and partners committed to better learning.

04

Champion learning

Raise public understanding and make the case for learning well.

Strategic objectives

Our objectives translate that strategy into action — the priorities we are working towards as we grow.

- Extend the reach of our national training programme to more schools and pupils.
- Build a credible research presence and partnerships with academics and institutions.
- Develop resources and professional development for educators and Gifted & Talented Coordinators.
- Grow a thriving professional membership and advisory community.
- Become a trusted, evidence-informed voice on learning and metacognition.
- Strengthen our governance, foundations and informing government policy.

What we do

Our work spans three connected areas — with our national training programme at its heart.

National training programme

Enhanced memory and learning techniques delivered directly to education settings.

Research

Conducting and sharing research into memory, metacognition and how Gifted & Talented people learn.

Public understanding

Raising public understanding of effective learning among parents, carers and educators.

Our national training programme

At the heart of IALM is our national training programme — taking enhanced memory and learning techniques directly into schools.

Working with pupils in the classroom, we teach the practical, evidence-informed methods that the best learners use: techniques for memorising, retaining and recalling information, and for studying with purpose and confidence. These are not tricks; they are skills — and once learned, they stay with a young person for life and build their confidence levels.

The results go beyond grades. Pupils who learn how to learn, gain something more valuable: the realisation that they are capable of far more than they thought. Every child has the potential to achieve far beyond what they imagine — they need only the right help and guidance, and that is what our programme provides.

In education settings

Delivered face-to-face with pupils where it matters most.

Evidence-informed

Grounded in the science of learning and metacognition.

Life-long skills

Techniques pupils keep long after the session ends.

Research & public understanding

Research

Our programme is built on evidence. We conduct, support and share research into memory, metacognition and how people learn — ensuring that what we teach is grounded in the best available understanding, and continually improved. As we grow, we are forging partnerships with academics and institutions to strengthen the evidence base for effective learning.

Public understanding

We work to raise public understanding of effective learning — sharing insight with parents, educators and the wider public so that more young people can benefit from what the science of learning makes possible. Helping families, carers and teachers understand how children learn extends the reach of our work far beyond the classroom.

Where we stand

As an institute dedicated to learning, we set out considered, evidence-informed positions on the questions that matter. Two examples:

Position statement

Metacognition

We regard metacognition — a learner’s awareness and command of their own thinking — as one of the most significant factors in effective learning. It is not an innate gift but a capacity that can be taught, and helping learners become more reflective should be a central aim of education, not an optional extra.

Position statement

Effective study strategies

The methods learners use to study matter a great deal, and many rely in good faith on approaches that feel productive but deliver little. Learners benefit from becoming more deliberate about how they study — examining their habits, understanding why some methods work better, and building from a clear baseline.

Recognition at the highest level

In recognition of the difference our work is making, the Institute's trustees were invited to 10 Downing Street to meet the Prime Minister, who praised our national training programme and the positive effect it is having on the lives of school pupils.

For a charity of our size, this was a significant moment — and a welcome affirmation of a simple conviction: that teaching young people how to learn can transform their confidence, mental health, resilience and what they go on to achieve.

The difference we make

We measure our success not by activity, but by the difference it makes — above all, to the young people we exist to serve.

For pupils

More effective learning, greater confidence, and belief in their own potential.

For educators

Techniques and understanding to support learners in the classroom.

For institutions

Evidence-informed practice embedded across a school or college.

For society

Widening opportunity and a culture that values learning well.

Reaching those who stand to gain the most

We are especially committed to reaching the pupils who stand to gain the most. Our programme has supported underrepresented and economically disadvantaged students — for whom the right guidance can be genuinely life-changing — helping to ensure that effective learning widens opportunity rather than reinforcing disadvantage. This contributes directly to United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 — inclusive and equitable quality education for all — and, as a member of the United Nations Major Group for Children and Youth, we add our voice to the global movement for children and young people.

Who we're for

Everything we do begins with the student. Our work serves everyone with a stake in how young people learn — but it is students themselves whom we aim to benefit most. They are the reason the Institute exists.

Students

The heart of our mission — the young people we help to learn, remember, and believe in their own potential.

Teachers

Embedding effective learning strategies and memory techniques in the classroom.

School & college leaders

Adopting evidence-informed practice across the institution.

Tutors, trainers & coaches

Supporting learners beyond the classroom.

Parents & carers

Helping families support confident learning at home.

Researchers & academics

Advancing and sharing the evidence base.

Policymakers

Informing decisions that shape how the nation learns.

Recognising expertise

As well as delivering our programme, IALM is a professional membership body. We recognise the standing of those who advance the science and practice of learning, and authorised to confer designatory post-nominal letters on our members at the appropriate grades.

Grade	Letters	Who it is for
Student	—	Those studying a relevant subject (proof of study required).
Affiliate	—	Those beginning their journey, or with a keen interest in the field.
Associate Member	AIALM	Early-career educators, tutors, coaches and practitioners applying learning methodologies.
Full Member	MIALM	Established professionals with a proven track record and real expertise.
Fellow	FIALM	Senior leaders, distinguished academics and recognised experts; our highest individual grade.
Institutional Member	IMIALM	Schools, colleges and organisations aligning with our mission.
Corporate Member	CMIALM	Companies and organisations seeking a deeper relationship with the Institute.

Concessionary and retired grades are also available, so that cost is never a barrier to participation.

Governance, integrity & independence

How we are governed

IALM is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (charity no. 1189445), registered with the Charity Commission for England and Wales and governed by a board of trustees. The trustees hold ultimate responsibility for the charity's direction, integrity and good management, supported by specialist advisory boards, patrons and ambassadors.

Integrity & independence

- We are independent and evidence-led, guided by what serves learners.
- We work with partners on a basis of recognition, not endorsement.
- We are committed to safeguarding, with robust policies and safer-recruitment practice.
- We are committed to equality, diversity, inclusion and openness to talent.
- We handle personal data responsibly and in line with data protection law.

Advisory boards

Our advisory boards bring specialist expertise to our work. As the Institute grows, the following boards advise on their respective fields.

Research & Academic

Research direction, rigour and academic partnerships.

Neurodiversity & Learning Support

Inclusive practice and support for diverse learners.

Schools, Teaching & Family Learning

Classroom practice, school engagement and learning at home.

Metacognition, Memory & Learning Science

The science underpinning our techniques.

Digital, AI & Learning Technology

The role of technology in learning.

Policy & Public Affairs

Engagement with policy and public debate (non-partisan).

Legal, Ethics & Safeguarding

Legal, ethical and safeguarding matters.

Equality, Diversity & Inclusion

Equity, access and inclusion across our work.

University Access & Admissions

Supporting progression to higher education.

Patrons & ambassadors

Alongside our trustees and advisers, patrons and ambassadors lend their support and standing to the Institute.

Patrons

Distinguished individuals who lend their name and standing to the Institute as honorary figureheads, championing our mission at the highest level. Patrons are a mark of credibility and esteem rather than an operational role.

Ambassadors

Active champions who help promote and advance our work — raising awareness, opening doors and representing the Institute — over a defined, renewable term.

Our credentials

A summary of the standing, regulation and safeguards behind the Institute.

Registered charity (CIO)

No. 1189445, Charity Commission for England and Wales.

Fundraising Regulator

Registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

United Nations engagement

A member of the UN Major Group for Children and Youth.

Governance & policies

A full suite — safeguarding, safer recruitment, data protection, conflicts of interest and more.

Professional body

Recognised membership and designatory post-nominal letters.

Continuing professional development

CPD opportunities for our members.

Evidence-informed programme

A national training programme delivered in schools.

Advancing the Science of Learning

Helping every child discover what they are capable of.

GET IN TOUCH

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Registered with the Fundraising Regulator.

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