

Homework Policy

(2014)

Homework Policy

Statement

Homework can be an invaluable tool within the context of students' learning to:

- develop independent learning;
- improve skill level eg. research, extended writing, project completion, personal time/work management, organisation;
- consolidate classroom learning;
- enhance knowledge and understanding.

Homework is also essential when it comes to students preparing for examinations or tests, whether at KS3, GCSE or equivalent, AS and A2 level.

Homework is only a successful part of learning when all the following three parties involved take responsibility:

- school;
- students;
- parents/carers.

Homework is not just about taking home a book or worksheet and doing some written work in an exercise book. Its value comes through a wide range of learning activities and experiences which should stimulate and motivate the student to help them take responsibility for their own learning.

Principles

The types of homework, length of time required to complete homework and resources needed will vary according to the subject area and whether the student is in KS3 (Years 7, 8, 9), KS4 (Years 10, 11) or KS5 (Years 12, 13).

Homework Timetable

A fortnightly timetable will be created annually for every year group. (Appendix A) This means that there is a specific evening when each subject's homework should be completed. Where possible, homework should be given to the students on the day indicated on the homework timetable. However, the date for the homework to be handed in is for each subject to decide.

Homework Quality

General expectations are as follows:

- Departments will have homework written into each scheme of work;
- Homework will include a range of meaningful activities. They should differ across the term, but be relevant to the skills required;
- Homework will be differentiated. This means that there should be different tasks that provide more stretch and challenge or more support;
- Departments will decide if students can be guided to these or allowed to make their own choices; but students will be challenged appropriately;
- Clear guidance will be provided for all homework, including success criteria and/or linked to levels/grades;
- Departments will decide if they want to have separate homework books/portfolios/folders. Alternatively, students will clearly label homework **HW**. Either way, homework will be clearly identifiable to students, parents and teachers.

Meaningful activities

Each subject area should ensure that a holistic approach to homework is taken so that over the course of a year a range of high quality activities and tasks are given to students. A (non-exhaustive) list of suggested activities includes:

1. Written Work

- Creative writing
- Reviews of books, films, TV programmes, artists and Musicians
- Reports based on research or interviews
- Text based comprehension
- Problem solving exercises
- Redrafting
- Extended writing pieces

2. Preparatory Work

- Reading a set or optional text
- Class preparation
- Revision for tests
- Learning vocabulary
- Rehearsing performance work
- Research work
- Preparation for controlled assessments

3. Other forms of work

- Visiting places of local interest
- Conducting interviews or surveys
- Using ICT software packages e.g. SAM learning
- Extended Open Learning Projects

4. Practical work

- Model making
- Poster or leaflet design
- Science experiments at home
- Composition (art, music, drama, dance)

KS3

Homework for Years 7-9 should take about an hour for the students to complete, and must be set once a fortnight for Foundation subjects, and twice a fortnight for Core subjects (English, Mathematics and Science).

Departments can choose to set a project across one half-term. However, for the rest of the school academic year, homework should be set in line with the fortnightly timetable.

Projects

Departments can choose to set a project for one half term. The projects should follow the general expectations above, in that they must broken down into fortnightly mini-deadlines each with clear guidance and success criteria.

The length of time spent completing the homework should correlate with the number of weeks within the half term e.g. if a six week period, then the minimum amount of time spent should be three hours.

Assessment of the project is in line with the expectations in the *Homework Feedback/Assessment* section below.

KS4

Homework for Years 10-11 should take at least an hour to complete, and will be set twice a fortnight for all subjects.

KS5

Homework for Years 12-13 should take at least three hours to complete, and will be set twice a fortnight. (This is based upon two teachers sharing an option.)

Homework Feedback/Assessment

There is an expectation that departments will set a range of homework. Schemes of work, will outline how each piece of homework will be assessed. Assessment should be in a range of styles, but all enable students to identify how they have performed and how to improve.

This list is not exhaustive but its purpose is to provide the point that assessment of homework does not always fall upon the teacher.

Some examples of assessment could be:

- at the start of a lesson using self-assessment, peer-assessment or group discussion using the previously provided success criteria;
- an online multiple-choice quiz with answers automatically provided;
- an oral question and answer session during a starter activity;
- a written quiz at the beginning of a lesson;
- a teacher assessing formatively through diagnostic marking.

The expectation is that homework is assessed within a two week period of the homework's submission date, and at least one piece of homework a half term is assessed formatively by the teacher.

Where a teacher does assess the piece formatively - diagnostically – this means that the teacher will provide reference to the homework's strengths and will offer targets and next steps to improve in relation to the previously set success criteria. There is an expectation that students will engage in a written dialogue with the teacher's comments.

Implementation

The school will ensure that:

- teachers will plan and set homework according to the principles above and the department's scheme of work;
- a timetable will be produced annually for all year groups outlining the homework days;
- teachers will allow sufficient time in the lessons when homework is being set to make sure students understand the requirements and to check students have recorded it in their journal;
- teachers will provide clear information and guidance to students on homework involving research/project work;
- teachers will publish the homework set using Show My Homework;
- teachers will use a range of methods to provide feedback to students on the work given in and how to improve it, within two weeks of its submittal. At least one piece of work will be marked in accordance with the school Marking Policy and should be conducted within two weeks of the work being submitted by the students;
- teachers will notify parents/carers if homework is not given in;
- form tutors will check and sign journals every two weeks and monitor the setting of homework;
- heads of department will monitor the setting of homework across their subject areas.

Students will:

- fill in the homework timetable in their journals at the start of the year or topic;
- record their homework in their journal and ask their teachers if they are not clear about what to do;
- complete homework set, and hand it in on the correct day.

Parents/Carers will:

- check with their children, and on Show My Homework, whether homework has been set;
- encourage and ensure homework is completed;
- sign or initial the journal each week.

Monitoring and Evaluation

It is the responsibility of Heads of Department to both monitor the setting of the planned homework within the schemes of work by teachers in their subject area, and monitor that teachers are providing appropriate feedback in line with the aforementioned expectations. They will also carry out regular evaluation of the quality of homework being set to ensure that it is meeting the needs of the students.

Heads of House and Form Tutors will both monitor homework being set in line with the annually produced timetable, and completed by students through looking at student journals.

Parents should contact the Head of Department of the relevant subject area if there is any problem regarding any aspect of homework.

Appendix A

An example of a Year 8 homework timetable:

Year 8 homework timetable				
WK1 Monday	WK1 Tuesday	WK1 Wednesday	WK1 Thursday	WK1 Friday
English Geography	Science DT	Maths IT	ECS	Drama Citizenship
WK2 Monday	WK2 Tuesday	WK2 Wednesday	WK2 Thursday	WK2 Friday
English PE	Science	Maths History	Music	Art MFL

An example of a Year 10 homework timetable:

Student timetables will indicate which subject is in the relevant block e.g. 10J/Ar is art in Block J.

KS4 homework timetable				
WK1 Monday	WK1 Tuesday	WK1 Wednesday	WK1 Thursday	WK1 Friday
Option K ECS	Option J	Option M Science	Maths	English
WK2 Monday	WK2 Tuesday	WK2 Wednesday	WK2 Thursday	WK2 Friday
Option K ECS	Option J	Option M Science	Maths	English

An example of a Year 11 homework timetable:

Student timetables will indicate which subject is in the relevant block e.g. 11J/Ar is art in Block J. (Year 11 currently has four options – this will only last for one year.)

KS4 homework timetable				
WK1 Monday	WK1 Tuesday	WK1 Wednesday	WK1 Thursday	WK1 Friday
Option K ECS	Option J Option N	Option M Science	Maths	English
WK2 Monday	WK2 Tuesday	WK2 Wednesday	WK2 Thursday	WK2 Friday
Option K ECS	Option J Option N	Option M Science	Maths	English

An example of a Year 12 homework timetable:

KS5 homework timetable				
WK1 Monday	WK1 Tuesday	WK1 Wednesday	WK1 Thursday	WK1 Friday
Option C	Option D Option B	Option C Option A	Option B	Option A Option D
WK2 Monday	WK2 Tuesday	WK2 Wednesday	WK2 Thursday	WK2 Friday
Option C	Option D Option B	Option C Option A	Option B	Option A Option D