



St Clair High School

Homework Policy

Homework is defined as any task assigned by school teachers intended for students to carry out during non-school hours designed to meet specific learning goals (Department of Education & Communities NSW).

Homework helps students by adding to and reinforcing classroom learning, fostering good habits of lifelong learning, self-discipline, concentration and study; and by providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning. Homework is a valuable part of schooling. It provides training for students in planning and organising time and develops a range of skills in identifying and using information sources. Students need to revise each day's work as well as completing set homework.

The regular setting of homework by teachers is school policy. Homework will generally range from 45 - 90 minutes a day in Years 7* - 9. In Years 10 to 12, homework will generally increase, and require from 1-3 hours per week night, with up to 6 hours on weekends during peak assessment periods. It needs to be balanced with family, social and extracurricular activities. Homework tasks are coordinated across teachers in different faculties to avoid unreasonable workloads being placed on students. Teaching practice should comply with the following guidelines set out in the *Homework Policy*.

Types of homework:

- **Practice exercises** - providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge, or to review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, such as:
 - completing consolidation exercises
 - practising for mastery
 - practising words or phrases learnt in a Language Other Than English
 - reading for pleasure
 - writing essays and other creative tasks
 - practising and playing musical instruments
 - practising physical education skills
 - writing up practical work or process diaries
- **Preparatory homework** - providing opportunities for students to gain background information so they are better prepared for future lessons, such as:
 - reading background material for History
 - reading English texts for class discussion
 - researching topics for class work
 - collecting newspaper articles
 - revising information about a current topic.
- **Extension assignments** - encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, such as:
 - writing something eg. a book review
 - making or designing something eg. an art work
 - completing Science investigation exercises
 - researching local news
 - finding material on the Internet - information and retrieval skills
 - monitoring advertising in a newspaper.
 - multimedia projects
- **Assessment Tasks** – formal tasks and activities designed to provide an assessment of student achievements' in each course.

* Homework for Year 7 is structured differently to allow for the smooth transition to the High school setting involving multiple subjects and multiple expectations. Year 7 students will be required to complete formal Assessment Tasks at home, however day to day practice or preparatory homework will be phased in over the first semester to allow students to develop good habits so they are able to balance homework commitments with family, social and extracurricular activities.

Parents and caregivers can help their children by:

At home

- encouraging them to take increasing responsibility for their learning and organisation;
- providing a quiet place for homework and study;
- observing and acknowledging their success and asking how their home and class work is progressing;
- encouraging them to set aside a regular daily session to read and complete homework on time;
- setting an example by reading themselves;
- helping them to complete homework by discussing key questions or directing them to resources.
- helping them to balance the amount of time spent completing homework and engaging in leisure sporting or recreational activities;
- checking whether homework has been set and ensuring they keep a homework diary;
- reading texts set by teachers; discussing their child's response to the texts and asking to see work they complete in relation to these texts; and
- discussing homework in their first language, where English is not the main language spoken at home, and linking it to their previous experiences.

At school

- attending school events, displays or productions in which their children are involved;
- contacting the relevant teacher to discuss any problems their children are having with homework;

Teachers can help their students *before homework is set by:*

- indicating clearly the purpose of the homework;
- assessing resources in advance and submitting a copy of research assignments to the Librarian;
- specifying assessment and assignment expectations at the beginning of a unit of work;
- setting varied, challenging and meaningful tasks related to class work that are appropriate to the students' learning needs and to the intended outcomes of the unit of work being taught;
- giving students enough time to complete drafts and provide timely feedback giving clear guidance on how to improve their task related learning;
- homework, taking into account home obligations and extracurricular activities;
- coordinating the allocation of homework by different teachers through use of the school calendar;
- consulting with students before setting discretionary homework tasks;
- helping students develop the organisational and time-management skills needed for them to be responsible for their own learning;
- teaching revision and study skills explicitly; and
- ensuring that students have good information-gathering, analysing and reporting skills.

Once homework is due by:

- keeping accurate records of homework set and submitted;
- defining and enforcing penalties for late submission of assessable tasks and not altering due dates;
- assessing homework and providing timely and practical feedback and support within two weeks;
- making effective use of homework diaries;
- monitoring progress on major assignments several times before the due date; and
- developing strategies to support parents to become active partners in homework.

Students can help themselves by:

- writing down all details of homework they are set in their school diaries;
- being aware of the importance of homework and of the school's homework policy;
- recording due dates for tasks and major assignments in their diaries;
- planning their homework task completion appropriately - not leaving work to the last minute;
- seeking assistance from teachers, parents or caregivers when difficulties arise;
- ensuring their homework is completed to a high standard;
- showing their homework commitments and teachers' expectations to their parents or caregivers;
- developing an effective individual study timetable; and
- submitting assigned work punctually.

The school can help by:

- ensuring that parents and caregivers are aware of the school's homework policy;
- limiting homework set for completion over holiday periods or weekends (except for Stage 6);
- setting no homework the week before assessment periods except for revision exercises;
- integrating major assessment tasks within the school's calendar;
- having Year Advisers monitor the homework load of their students;
- notifying parents if homework is not submitted or is unsatisfactory or incomplete; and encouraging staff, students and parents to communicate any homework related concerns to the Head Teacher Welfare.