



CHRIST'S COLLEGE
CANTERBURY

Homework Policy

Responsibility for Policy: Centre for Teaching Excellence & Research

Approving Authority: Executive Principal

Applies to: Teaching staff and students

Last Review Date: December 2022

Next Review Date: December 2025

PURPOSE:

Christ's College recognises that meaningful and purposeful homework will complement and support classroom learning and strengthen academic skills. The following homework policy uses a balanced approach and is underpinned by the notion of *akō*, which acknowledges reciprocity in teaching and learning.

1. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

In designing homework for students, teachers must ensure the following guiding principles are upheld:

- Academic Purpose - tasks should have a clear purpose and natural link to the teaching and learning
- Efficiency - tasks should improve understanding or knowledge with a balanced approach to time and energy required
- Competence - tasks should positively influence a student's sense of competence
- Ownership - tasks should be relevant and customised to promote student ownership

Students have a responsibility to utilise homework tasks to support their learning by completing it within the expected timeframe and to a high standard. If students have difficulty or require support after demonstrating a reasonable attempt at the task, they should communicate with their teacher as soon as possible.

2. TYPES OF HOMEWORK:

For the purpose of this policy and its implementation, there are five main types of homework that teachers will use to guide their planning.

1.1 *Pre-learning*

- *Pre-learning* homework is used to introduce a topic, provide background for a more in-depth lesson or discover prior knowledge.

1.2 *Diagnostic*

- *Diagnostic* homework is used to inform teaching and learning by identifying where students are in their skills or knowledge.

1.3 *Checking for understanding*

- *Checking for understanding* is used as a valuable way to gain insight into student learning and how well they can communicate their understanding of it.

1.4 Application Practice

- *Application Practice* is used to complement *checking for understanding* homework by ensuring students have mastered a specific skill. This type of homework is more effective when it is distributed over time and once misconceptions have been addressed and worked through.

1.5 Processing (reflection, application, analysis, synthesis)

- *Processing* homework is used to allow students to reflect on concepts discussed in class, think of new questions to ask, apply skills or knowledge learned, synthesise information, or demonstrate understanding of the big picture.

3. DIFFERENTIATING HOMEWORK

The positive impact of homework relies upon student engagement and success with completing the task, along with the ability of teachers to design tasks that match students' learning needs.

Differentiating homework tasks acknowledges that successful use of homework to support learning is not dependent upon the amount of time taken with homework, but the degree to which it engages students, connects to the students' individual abilities, and links to the work undertaken in class.

Teachers should plan differentiated homework to ensure students are able to complete the task independently or with minimal support. To meet the needs of learners, there are three different ways to differentiate homework:

- by difficulty or amount of work or;
- by the amount of structure or scaffolding provided or;
- by learning preference or interest.

4. RECOMMENDED HOMEWORK TIME

To recognise the importance of personal and co-curricular demands, students may only have homework workloads based on the timeframes noted below. Whilst this may be through allocated homework tasks, it is important to note that no set tasks doesn't indicate the students have nothing to do; rather, students should be guided to review learning material or read for pleasure. At the senior level, students should be encouraged to prioritise independent study to build personal responsibility for learning.

Maximum per school night for a student to complete across all classes:

- Year 9 → 60 minutes (2 x 30 minute blocks)
- Year 10/11 → 80 minutes (2 x 40 minute blocks)
- Year 12/13 → 120 minutes (2 x 60 minute blocks)

To allow students to manage their homework time each night, tasks should be designed to be completed across several days rather than overnight, unless it is a simple task that will be used to inform the next lesson or act as immediate feedback for the students.

5. HOLIDAYS & WEEKENDS

Research indicates that students need down time from learning. Wherever possible, homework should not be assigned over long weekends or holidays. Discretion is to be used to ensure homework assigned over regular weekends fits into one of the types indicated above and is differentiated to reflect varying student needs. **NCEA students are expected to self-manage their study and consolidate learning over weekends and holidays as appropriate.

6. CONCERNS ABOUT HOMEWORK COMPLETION

If there is a pattern of incomplete homework starting to emerge, a conversation with the student should take place in the first instance to determine if additional support is required. If the student continues to have incomplete homework, this will be considered a Level 2 offence under the Discipline Policy. A pattern of incomplete homework is considered 3 recurring incidents within close proximity.

This policy is based upon the following research:

References:

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3. Fernández-Alonso, R., Álvarez-Díaz, M., Suárez-Álvarez, J., & Muñiz, J. (2017). Students' achievement and homework assignment strategies. *Frontiers in Hattie, J. (2009). Visible learning: A synthesis of over 800 meta-analyses relating to achievement*. Corwin.
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6. Kohn, A. (2006). *The homework myth: Why our kids get too much of a bad thing*. Da Capo Press.
7. Núñez, J. C., Suárez, N., Rosário, P., Vallejo, G., Valle, A., & Epstein, J. L. (2015). Relationships between perceived parental involvement in homework, student homework behaviors, and academic achievement: Differences among elementary, junior high, and high school students. *Metacognition and Learning, 10*(3), 375-406. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11409-015-9135-5>
8. Patall, E. A., Cooper, H., & Wynn, S. R. (2010). The effectiveness and relative importance of choice in the classroom. *Journal of Educational Psychology, 102*(4), 896-915. <https://doi.org/10.1037/a0019545>
9. Vatterott, C. (2018). *Rethinking homework: Best practices that support diverse needs (2nd ed.)*. ASCD.