

Homework in the Secondary School

In promoting life-long and autonomous learning as an inherent value of Sacred Heart Education, we recognise that homework can support the learning process in ways not readily available in the classroom.

The main purposes of homework are:

- To reinforce the learning/concepts of the day's lessons
- To extend the learning for a unit of work
- To allow for sustained quiet time when reading or writing activities can be pursued
- To promote independence in learning
- To practise and develop skills
- To allow time for consolidation of notes, memorisation and revision
- To study for tests and examinations
- To work on longer-term assignments and projects
- To prepare for the next day's lessons
- To allow students to focus on their needs
- To facilitate cumulative/progressive learning
- To provide curriculum enrichment through time for research and information-gathering

Authentic and meaningful homework should never be "busywork". Consequently, homework requirements set by a teacher may vary from student to student according to their needs. Homework should be initiated by both the teacher and the student: a student who has a positive attitude to learning will always have homework to do. Parents are asked to provide a suitable, supportive homework environment, yet still encourage and allow their daughters to be independent, resourceful and self-reliant learners. We also commend to parents the many valuable learning activities which the home environment can provide: a list of such activities is provided at the end.

All teacher-initiated homework must be written in the student's diary. Strict adherence to dates is required for completing homework. Failure to do this will be followed up by the teacher and may have significant ramifications for the student, particularly at the senior level, and parents will be notified. For students in Years 7-10, the diary is used to record infringements of homework requirements. Parents of students in Years 7-10 are asked to check and sign their daughters' diaries regularly.

Computer failure is an unacceptable reason for work not being handed in on the due date. Students are required to:

- Keep hard copies of progressive versions of the work in progress
- Hand in their final version on the due date in hard copy (not on a disk)

If computer failure prevents the student from handing in the final copy on time, verification of the computer failure must be presented in writing from the parent or boarder mistress; the student must instead hand in hard copies of previous versions. The final version must be submitted when the computer failure is rectified. Plagiarism is clearly unacceptable.

Recommended Homework Times

YEAR 7

Students in Year 7 are provided with a homework timetable which allocates four or five subjects per night (over five nights), according to the subjects studied each day. When homework is set over a period longer than one night, students need to plan their homework sessions as per this timetable. Students should not need to spend more than 1.5 hours on homework each night.

YEAR 8

Students in Year 8 need to plan their own homework timetable. They should spend 1.5-2 hours per night (over six nights).

YEARS 9 & 10

Students in Years 9 and 10 also need to plan their own homework timetable. They should spend 2-2.5 hours per night (over six nights).

YEARS 11 & 12

Each senior student needs to establish a homework timetable which will ensure that the demands of senior studies are met adequately. Students should include both their school study periods and out-of-school time in the timetable, as well as set blocks of time at weekends and in holidays. Consistent preparation and careful use of study periods are significant in ensuring success in senior studies.

In general, they should be spending approximately 2.5-3 hours per weeknight, together with blocks of time on the weekend and in the holiday periods.

