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TOWNSVILLE GRAMMAR SCHOOL

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# SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY & GUIDELINES

## (P-12)

Townsville Grammar School views homework as important for the continued development of skills, habits and experiences which promote independent and effective learning. To ensure that homework is purposeful, productive and appropriately challenging, we have:

- A Homework Policy
- Recommended times for homework for each Year Level
- After school Tutorials program
- Hints on how to study
- Suggestions about where to seek help with any difficulties which arise in students' attempts to establish an effective and productive approach to homework
- 'Twelve Steps to Success with Homework', a guide for students to follow in order that they establish an effective routine for the completion of homework
- A School Diary
- Moodle – availability of online subject course material and resources.

## SCHOOL HOMEWORK POLICY

### The purpose of homework

**We set homework in order to achieve a number of goals.**

- Homework helps students by complementing and reinforcing classroom learning, fostering good lifelong learning and study habits, and providing an opportunity for students to be responsible for their own learning.
- Students benefit from completing homework regularly. Homework helps them develop organisational and time-management skills, self-discipline, skills in using out-of-school resources, and personal responsibility for learning.

There are obvious reasons why the extent of homework should be increased as students move through the School but we also need to make sure that there are appropriate limits. Homework needs to be appropriate to the phase of learning (Junior, Middle, Senior) and appropriate to the capability of the student. TGS recognises the need for a balanced life and that students must have time to pursue other activities.

### Types of homework

- Literacy focus – reading and spelling (Years P-2)
- "Homework Menu" and regular reading (Years 3-6)
- Completing classwork
- Work which reflects what has been taught in class, such as revision questions or revision worksheets, and note taking activities
- Completion of a step or stage in an assignment currently being facilitated by the class teacher (Years 7-9)
- Assignments
  - In the Junior and Middle School years, completion of assignments should occur through a combination of classwork/class time and individual time
  - In the Senior School years, completion of assignments may be done almost entirely out of class time

## Guidelines for homework time allocations

Homework is an important part of an effective study routine. The following hours are listed as a guide for parents and students.

Actual times will differ from week to week, according to many variables such as; effective use of class time, speed and efficiency in particular subjects, and whether students have paced themselves effectively to complete tasks which are set over a week or more. However, if students are routinely spending well in excess of the time recommended, parents may wish to speak to individual teachers.

### GUIDELINES FOR HOMEWORK TIME ALLOCATIONS

Prep – Year 2	20-60 min per week	5-15 minutes each week night (Mon – Thur)	Reading, Spelling and other activities as required	For Years 1 & 2, a reading log is to be completed and signed each evening recording the pages and books students have read	
Years 3-6	1-2 hours per week	15 – 30 minutes each week night	“Homework Menu”*	It is an expectation that students spend additional time each night reading for enjoyment. For Year 3 a reading log is to be completed and signed, each evening recording the pages and books students have read	
Year 7	4½ hours per week	About 45 minutes each week night	At least 45 minutes per week each for English, Maths and Humanities	Up to 30 minutes for each other learning area per week: Science, Modern Languages & HPE	Homework related to the completion of classwork is required at various times in the Semester for remaining subjects
Year 8	5½ hours per week	About 60 minutes each week night	At least 60 minutes per week each for English, Maths and Humanities	Up to 30 minutes for each other learning area per week: Science & Modern Languages	Homework related to the completion of classwork is required at various times in the Semester for remaining subjects
Year 9	7.5 hours per week	About 90 minutes per week night	At least 75 minutes per week each for English, Maths and Humanities	Up to 45 minutes for each other learning area per week: Science & Modern Languages	Homework related to the completion of classwork is required at various times in the Semester for remaining subjects
Year 10	10 hours per week	About 120 minutes per week night	At least 120 minutes per week for Maths	Up to 90 minutes for each other subject area	
Year 11	12 to 18 hours per week	About 150 minutes per week night	Time should be spread across all learning areas		
Year 12	15-22 hours per week	About 150 minutes per week night	Time should be spread across all learning areas		

\* The completion of various enriched, Academic, cultural and sporting activities

### **Setting homework: successful strategies teachers employ**

- The “Homework Menu” program encourages – student ownership and choice; the empowerment of students to become self-directed learners and, fosters a sense of curiosity and love of learning (Years 3-6).
- Time for class feedback and sharing of the homework experiences that adds meaning and purpose to the exercise (Years 3-6).
- Writing all homework on the board, in the same format as students write it in their diaries e.g. English 26/4 Complete questions 3 and 4 on Wide Reading sheet.
- Check that students have entered homework completely and correctly in their diaries.
- Indicate the length of time students are expected to spend on the task or assignment e.g. 10 minutes.
- When homework is not done, take steps to ensure it is completed. i.e. record of non-completion, lunch detention, contact parents – write a note in the diary or phone/email home.

### **Holidays and homework**

Students are very busy during term-time. This means that for students, holidays should present an opportunity for a break from many of the pressures of study. Teachers may recommend that students undertake some reading pertinent to their study (Years 10-12 only).

### **Year 7 Term 1 – Special Arrangements**

The beginning of secondary school represents a new chapter in students’ lives. At Townsville Grammar we recognise that students need time to understand and respond to our expectations and arrangements. Part of this relates to homework. During first term in Year 7, all teachers follow the following arrangements:

- No assignments are completed entirely or substantially outside class: teachers will ensure sufficient class time so that students do not need to undertake excessive hours of independent work outside class time.
- Teachers check that homework has been entered accurately by students in their diaries.
- Teachers include an indication of the time they estimate students should spend on the set task.
- Parents are asked to monitor students doing their homework, and if necessary, write a note when a student has spent the allotted time on homework and it remains incomplete.

### **After School Tutorials**

During term time, TGS offers after school tutorials to students from Years 7–12. Year 7 students may attend tutorials for general assistance on Monday afternoons and students in Years 8–12 may attend subject specific tutorials for assistance with class work and homework on a specified afternoon (*see Moodle for the current version of the Tutorial Timetable*).

## TUTORIAL TIMETABLE

(An example only)

DAY	SUBJECT	ROOM NO AND TIMES
Monday	Drama	PA Space, 3.30–4.45pm (by appointment)
	Supervised Homework (Year 7) (English, Humanities, Science, Maths)	MS2 & 3, 3.30–4.30pm
	French (Years 7-9) Week A)	AD4, 1.00-1.40pm (sign up by morning tea)
	French Week B	MS11, 3.30-4.30pm (sign up by 1.30pm)
Tuesday	Design and Technology/Graphics	DAT4, 3.30–4.45pm
	Hospitality	HOS2, 3.30–4.30pm (by appointment)
	Music	Music Centre, 3.30–5.00pm
	Mathematics (Years 10-12)	GH1, 3.30–4.30pm
	(Years 7-9)	SP3, 3.30-4.30pm
	Italian	MS12, 1.00–1.40pm (sign up by morning tea)
Wednesday	French Week A	MS13, 3.30-4.30pm (sign up by 1.30pm)
	Science	RH2, 3.30–4.30pm
	IPT	GH3, 3.30–4.30pm
	Music Extension & IB Music	Music Centre, 3.30–5.00pm
Thursday	Senior Japanese	MS14, 3.30–4.30pm
	Art	ART2, 3.30–4.30pm (by appointment)
	Business & Humanities Subjects	
	Year 8 Humanities Year	SP1, 3.30–4.30pm
	9 Humanities Years 10-12 Humanities	SP3, 3.30–4.30pm (By appointment)
Middle School Japanese	MS14, 1.00–1.30pm	
French Week A	MS13, 3.30-4.30pm (sign up by 1.30pm)	
Friday	7-9 HPE/10 PE/11-12 PE	Gymnasium, (by appointment)
	IB Spanish	MS11, 7.40–8.20am (sign up by Thursday 3.20pm)
	English	TB Whight Room, 1.00–1.40pm

## HINTS ON HOW TO STUDY

<b>TIME MANAGEMENT</b>	<p>Routine is essential. It is extremely important to have a regular study time and to stick with it. The first step to good time management is to plan ahead – weeks, months and entire semesters. Develop short and long term time management plans to organise your study as effectively as possible. Planning ahead saves time, worry and energy.</p> <p>The next step is to prioritise your tasks – decide which tasks are most important and should be completed first.</p>
<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<p>Use your school planner to stay organised. Fill in things you must do (classes, work, practice – things you cannot change) at the beginning of each term. down appointments and class assignments. Make a daily checklist. Set priorities.</p>
<b>DISTRACTIONS</b>	<p>Choose a place to study where you can minimise distractions. Think about noise and lighting. Also consider how you will manage interruptions from others and your electronic devices.</p>
<b>LEARNING EFFECTIVELY</b>	<p><b>Levels of processing:</b> Find out the difference between deep and shallow processing. Information is more effectively stored in long term memory if you use deeper processing strategies such as summarising, explaining to others and elaborating.</p> <p><b>Summarising:</b> This is a really important skill. Work out what form best suits you (mind maps, written summary, diagrams) – plenty of space and a minimum of words is usually best. Keep your summaries together in a notebook or electronic folder.</p> <p><b>Revision:</b> Revision of summaries at regular intervals will save you time and having to restudy the topic in detail. Forgetting occurs fairly quickly after learning. Therefore, it is important to revise a new piece of work within twenty-four hours. Try and connect where possible with previous knowledge. Well prepared summaries can be of great assistance in revising for tests and exams.</p>
<b>SLEEP</b>	<p>Good sleep habits are essential for learning and wellbeing. Studies show that those who skip on sleep retain less of what they have learnt the previous day and concentrate less effectively the next.</p>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<p>People who maintain a balance between school, work, social activities and self-care are more productive, happier and successful.</p>

## HOMEWORK – HOW TO GET HELP

### WHO TO CONTACT WHEN HELP IS NEEDED ABOUT HOMEWORK

#### Homework is too difficult?

Contact the Class teacher (P-6) or Subject teacher (7-12). If this is happening in more than one subject, speak to the Year Level Co-ordinator (7-12).

#### Disorganised? Unsure of how to go about homework?

Speak to the Class teacher (P-6), Form teacher or Year Level Co-ordinator (7-12), after first working with the **Twelve Steps to Success With Homework: A Guide for Students**.

#### Too much homework?

If it is in one subject only, the first person to talk to is the Class teacher (P-6) or Subject teacher (7-12). If the issue is across a number of subjects, speak to the Assistant Head of Junior School (P-6) or the Year Level Co-ordinator (7-12).

#### Were not able to complete the task in the set time?

Write a note in the diary, signed by parents, explaining to the subject teacher that a problem has arisen which prevented the completion of the task by the due date.

Family commitments or special circumstance do take priority at times. Please advise the Director of Studies in advance if assessment timelines will not be met.

#### Will not be able to complete the task by the due date?

The student should speak to the Class teacher (P-6) or Subject teacher, in advance, and outline reasons why an extension of time should be granted. Student to seek extension from Head of Faculty (7-12).

#### When all else fails?

- Head of Campus (North Shore)
- ➔ Assistant Head of Junior School (Annandale)
- Director of Studies (North Ward)

### TWELVE STEPS TO SUCCESS WITH HOMEWORK – A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS

1. Use your diary in class to enter all work to be completed each day.
2. Develop your Time Management Plan (in diary) at the start of each term.
3. Write your name on everything.
4. File all loose sheets in your folder in their subject sections.
5. Check your diary and assessment calendar regularly, to ensure that you have covered all work which has been set by your teachers.
6. Pack your schoolbag carefully.
7. Decide which tasks are most urgent/prioritise.
8. Complete set homework tasks.
9. Work on long-term projects and assignments.
10. Revise for tests and other assessments.
11. Read all your handouts and regularly check Moodle for subject updates.
12. Edit your written work.

If you encounter difficulties, please seek assistance from your Class Teacher, Head of Faculty or Year Level Co-ordinator.

*Reviewed May 2020*