

HOMEWORK, MARKING AND ASSESSMENT POLICY

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Next review due:	May 2023
Reviewed by:	Deputy Head (Academic) at Years 7-11 Deputy Head (Academic) at Sixth Form Director of Studies at The International School Academic Director

1. Purpose of homework

Homework should be set as an aid to the learning process. All homework should be set with a meaningful learning goal (or goals) in mind. It should serve one or more of the following functions and not be set for its own sake:

- to develop habits of personal organisation, independent learning, resilience and resourcefulness;
- to consolidate and build on classwork by means of extension exercises, practice tasks or revision;
- to prepare for lessons through research, note-taking or guided learning from books and other appropriate sources;
- to develop skills, both those of general academic benefit and specific to examination demands;
- to encourage research and independent learning;
- to develop an appreciation of the range of resources available;
- to facilitate differentiation, including extension tasks for the more able;
- to provide parents with an insight into their son or daughter's learning, reaffirming their role as partners and strengthening home-school links;
- to test attainment levels of students;
- to allow the school to diagnose any learning issues and to put effective support in place.

2. Nature of tasks

The nature of tasks for homework set may include:

- Written tasks
- Collection and presentation of information
- Guided learning and active revising
- Extension of classwork activities
- Problem solving
- Reading set texts
- Research tasks
- Exam (and exam style) questions

3. Frequency and Amount of homework

3.1 Years 7-11

- Homework must be set in accordance with the published homework timetable. Year 7 and 8 students will normally have two subjects per evening, with 2/3 subjects as the norm for those in Year 9 and those following GCSE courses. However, homework must also stem naturally from the topic under discussion. There is no point setting homework just for the sake of it, so staff should feel empowered, on rare occasions, not to set specific homework if they feel it does not hold particular value.
- In Years 7-9, homework should be set for submission at the next appropriate lesson. Extended homework may be set for occasional projects and more frequently in subjects such as art, but for the majority of subjects this should be the exception as younger students find this kind of work more difficult to manage.
- To provide some flexibility in the homework programme, for instance, when the school production is underway, each term in Years 7-11 will feature a 'reading week' in which students are given reading tasks to do in place of formal written homework. This is not a 'no homework' week, but an opportunity to undertake wider reading and provide a breathing space in a busy school life. Homework Club is suspended for the duration of these reading weeks.
- It is impossible to specify precisely how long students should spend on their homework but excessive homework is usually counter-productive. Each homework subject is expected to take students approximately 30 minutes to complete in Years 7 and 8, 40 minutes in Year 9 and 45 minutes in Years 10 and 11. However, please note that in the first term of Year 7 homework should consist of shorter tasks designed to acclimatise students to the homework regime of a senior school.
- It is the parents' prerogative to decide when their child has done sufficient work for one evening and parental messages to that effect should be accepted but the Deputy Head Academic should be informed if this becomes a regular occurrence.
- Be aware of family or other circumstances which may require a degree of flexibility in submission.

3.2 The International School

- Homework must be set in accordance with the published homework timetable. Students in all years at the International School will have two subjects per evening. Homework should be set for submission at the next appropriate lesson.
- Considering that excessive homework is usually counter-productive, each homework subject is expected to take students approximately 30 minutes to complete in Year 9i, or 45 minutes in Years 10i and 11i.
- In the case of students in Years 9i, 10i and 11i who are boarders, teachers need to be alert to feedback from a Head of House or host family which may suggest that a student is having to work late into the evening to complete set homework.

3.3 **Sixth Form**

- Homework must be set at least once a week in each subject. It should amount to approximately 4 hours 30 minutes per subject per week in Year 12, and 6 hours per subject per week in Year 13.
- Teachers will set a rich variety of homework tasks which reflect the nature of the subject and the types of assessment used in the A level examination.

4. **Administration and monitoring of homework**

4.1 **Years 7-11**

- Students will record all homework set in homework diaries.
- All staff should ensure that all homework is also available online.
- Where homework has not reached the required standard, students should be asked to re-present it. Non-production of homework will be reported by subject teachers to form tutors via brown slips and will be subject to the follow-up procedures contained in the Behaviour, Rules, Rewards, and Sanctions policy, which is available from the [school website](#).

4.2 **International School**

- All students at the International School are given a homework planner at the start of the year, which they use to record all of the homework that they are set.
- Class teachers are responsible for setting, marking, recording and reporting on homework, and so it should always be the class teacher who addresses concerns about production of work with the student, and then takes appropriate action to ensure work is completed to a high standard, in the first instance. Class teachers should raise any persistent issues regarding sub-standard or late homework with form tutors, who will then discuss with their tutees. It is the form tutor's role to then raise these issues with the student's parents and, where relevant, head of boarding house.
- All communications received from Heads of House and host families regarding homework should be passed to the relevant teacher(s) and Head of Department.

4.3 **Sixth Form**

- In the Sixth Form Students will be required to take more personal responsibility for the recording and organisation of their homework than in the lower years. Homework set will be recorded online.
- Teachers will take responsibility for the setting, marking, recording and reporting of homework. They will address any concerns about production of work directly with the student and take appropriate action to ensure that work is completed to the best of the student's ability. Directors of Studies regularly receive updates on homework progress for their students, including any concerns about non-completion, lateness or inadequate quality.
- Directors of Studies will assist students in organising their weekly private study programmes and will monitor them regularly.

- Should issues such as the late or non-production of homework or sub-standard work persist, teachers and the relevant Directors of Studies will work together to agree on a plan of action which the Directors of Studies will address with the student and, where necessary, the parents – and keep the subject teacher and Head of Department informed.
- A variety of measures and sanctions will be used as appropriate. These may include compulsory attendance at scheduled private study sessions, compulsory attendance at the end-of-the-day Friday work club and periodic review meetings with parents and the Deputy Head Academic or Head of Sixth Form.
- All communications received from parents regarding homework should be passed to the relevant teacher(s) and Head of Department. The same should apply to feedback from Heads of House and host families regarding boarders.

5. Submission

Completed homework must be submitted on time unless there are extenuating circumstances which need to be conveyed to the relevant teacher at the earliest opportunity.

6. Marking, assessment and grading

Marking is always an opportunity to help students to improve. Feedback should be aimed at promoting student development, providing appropriate comments which allow a student to clearly understand how to reach higher standards. This feedback will encourage a dialogue between teacher and student which allows the student to take control of future learning. Marking will detail what is positive in a student's work as well as giving specific comments on aspects which can be improved.

Students will typically receive written and oral feedback on work set.

While the purpose of marking varies according to the nature of work set, it may serve one or more of the following functions:

- to ensure that work has been completed according to instructions;
- to ensure the student has understood the work and to correct error and misunderstandings;
- to enable student progress through good quality formative feedback;
- to assess the student's level of achievement;
- to encourage and reinforce effective effort, progress and attainment.

Marking should be formative and comment-based. Comments should be legible and easily understood. Comments should specify what is good about a piece of work and make suggestions about how the student can make progress. In the case of audio feedback, it should be clear.

Staff should mark work regularly with the following best practice in mind:

- effective formative comments are specific about what is good about the work and make specific suggestions for improvements;
- it is essential to give students time in lessons to read and absorb their comments and/or have the opportunity to discuss this directly with the teacher;

- students are more likely to take notice of comments if they are asked to respond or take action in some way. For example, they may transfer advice to a target sheet in their book or answer a question or simply write back to the teacher;
- where appropriate, there should be specific action points for a student to address as well as targets for future learning. There is an expectation that students should respond to action points and correct mistakes where indicated. There should be explicit evidence of engagement with developing the quality of their work: for example, students could be asked to write their action points and/or targets at the top of subsequent work before it is written.

Teachers should record the level / grade of the work in their mark book. The information gained from marking/assessment should be used alongside other information to adjust future teaching plans. Information about student progress should be shared with the Head of Department and among members of the department. The record of marking and assessment must be designed to maximise the ability of teachers and Heads of Department to assess and respond to the needs of the individual and the group. It should also provide an objective and easily accessible record of students' progress which is available to senior staff and parents as and when necessary.

Peer marking can, from time to time, be an effective learning tool, but should never form more than a very small proportion of child's assessed work.

Plagiarism is regarded as seriously as cheating. Plagiarism is copying someone else's work and claiming it as your own. If a student is found to have plagiarised for classwork or homework they may be required to re-do a piece of work. If a student plagiarises for coursework, assessments or exams their work will be disqualified. For further details see the Plagiarism policy available from the [school website](#).

7. Grading

grades or marks may be given at the discretion of the teacher where this is appropriate (in a test, for example) or where this is likely to enhance student learning and progress (when students tackle exam-style questions, for example). Equally teachers may adopt a non-grading policy for some work, based on evidence that students are more likely to pay attention to feedback and apply suggestions for progress if a specific mark or grade is not given. In such cases teachers should keep a record of any grade (or a review of the work) they have privately ascribed to that work.

That said, it is important that students in Key Stage 3 and 4 are made aware of their progress relative to public examination board standards on a regular basis. Such awareness can be gained through examination grading. It is essential that these students have a clear sense of how they are being assessed and have an understanding of how a grade has been determined. Detailed reference to examination board standards should be provided to students, allowing students to appreciate fully the assessment criteria used by the relevant examining body.

Students should have a clear sense of what success looks like in order to make effective progress. Exemplar material and model responses can be useful in showing students what is required for a particular grade or mark.

8. Frequency and speed of return of marking

Marking should be returned as quickly as possible and sufficiently swiftly to enable students to apply any necessary correction to subsequent tasks.

8.1 Years 7-11

In most cases it will need to be marked ready for handing back in the next appropriate lesson with appropriate individual feedback. Books should be marked on a regular basis, preferably weekly.

8.2 International School

Homework will usually be marked ready for handing back in the next appropriate lesson with appropriate individual feedback. Books should be marked on a regular basis, preferably weekly. Where it is the class teacher's practice to set work via Teams assignments or One Note, teachers should check and provide feedback on their students' notes and work on Teams on a weekly basis.

8.3 Sixth Form

Students should have their work marked by teachers at least once a week in every subject. This may be supplemented by oral feedback from teachers or by peer assessment. Marking will be returned as quickly as possible. This maximises both the learning impact of the task as well as student motivation. We aim in all cases to return marked work within five working days of submission.

9. Work Scrutiny

In order to maintain standards, a selection of student work should be scrutinised by Heads of Department on a regular, though not necessarily frequent, basis to evaluate the quality of marking and feedback. Advice should then be given to staff as appropriate.

In addition, and at least once a year, the Academic Director will organise work scrutiny on a school-wide basis to provide a broader understanding of standards of student work and staff assessment, with findings being fed back to Heads of Department as a necessary.

10. Departmental policies and the responsibilities of Heads of Department

Each department has its own homework, marking and assessment policies which give details of the specific needs of that subject and the approaches adopted by the department. Heads of Department are responsible for the development, review and consistent implementation of the policy in their department.

All departmental policies must be consistent with this overarching school policy. They should include specific reference to the types of assessment used and the purpose of that assessment, alongside the main strategies and approaches used in the department.

Associated policies, available from the [school website](#) or upon request from the school office.

- Behaviour, rules, rewards and sanctions policy
- Curriculum policy
- Disability inclusion policy
- Plagiarism policy
- SEND policy