HELSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE

ASPIRATION · AMBITION · ACHIEVEMENT



# HOMEWORK POLICY

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**To be read in conjunction with:** Teaching and Learning Policy

## Introduction

The Helston Community College Homework Policy builds on the central TPAT Home Learning Strategy which states that home learning is carefully planned to promote memory and recall, independence, organisation, time management and persistence. Research from the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF, 2017) highlights that well-designed home learning can significantly enhance pupil progress.

We believe that homework is an important part of the academic life of a child and is proven to have a positive impact on progress in secondary schools. Establishing a positive study habit at home is vital in helping students towards their academic goals and success in the direction they choose. It is important that parents and carers support their children and the College in this regard.

## Homework in Key Stage 3

Key Stage 3 builds a strong foundation for future examination subjects, so the majority of homework tasks in this key stage are knowledge-based. The purpose of these tasks is to encourage students to memorise and build the core knowledge required for each subject. Research shows that students have increased success in complex tasks (e.g. challenging exam questions, problem solving etc.) when they have a detailed knowledge of a subject's content and the skills required to apply this knowledge. By committing important subject knowledge to long term memory, it frees up working memory so that processing of information is easier when solving complex problems.

In Years 7, 8 and 9 tasks are set centrally by the Subject Leader/Head of Department and monitored through ClassCharts by SLT.

Teachers should make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND; provide clear instructions, additional resources where required, resource sheets or website links for research tasks, and remain vigilant regarding plagiarism and inappropriate use of AI.

## What should every student do?

Self-help and self-responsibility are values that are essential in helping our students to become successful learners and in preparing them for life after College. Building good work habits is a vital part of this. To that end every student should:

- Listen carefully to homework instructions in class
- Check their Class Charts every evening so that any additional tasks are completed on time
- Attempt all work to the best of their ability
- Inform the class teacher/tutor of any difficulties (a note from parents/carers is advisable).

## What can parents/carers do to support with homework?

The role of parents/carers is crucial if a child is to gain success from homework. Reinforcing its value through positive feedback will give students confidence to persevere, work hard and reach high standards of achievement.

Parents/carers are kept updated on the work that has been set (via ClassCharts) and the dates by which work must be completed. Parents/carers are expected to support completion of home learning.

**Parents/carers can help by:**

- Reading with your child on a regular basis or discussing with them the book they are currently reading
- Providing a quiet place to work
- Checking presentation and content of all homework being returned to the College
- Negotiating with your child when homework is to be done as free time is important too
- Ensuring that extra-curricular clubs and activities do not hamper a child's quality of work and put a child under undue pressure (in exceptional circumstances, parents/carers would be advised to liaise with their child's form tutor)

**Frequency of homework tasks in Key Stage 3**

The frequency of homework tasks will vary from subject to subject depending on how often a class is taught. English, maths and science should set weekly homework tasks. History, geography and French or Spanish set fortnightly. Other subjects will set homework as appropriate. Some homework tasks may be linked to knowledge organisers (available on the website) but subjects have discretion to set tasks which they feel bests reinforces the skills or knowledge covered in their recent curriculum.

ClassCharts is the universal platform for setting and monitoring home learning. Sparx (Maths, Science and Reading), Language Gym and Showbie should be used where appropriate. Low-value tasks such as word searches, finishing classwork, or vague research/revision tasks should not be used.

**Homework in Key Stage 4**

In Key Stage 4, homework is an essential element of your child's journey towards GCSE and other examinations, and is a stepping-stone for success in Post 16 courses and/or training. Homework tasks are designed to support and embed the learning in a variety of ways. These can be broken down into four broad categories:

- To prepare for learning, e.g. read an article to introduce a topic before the lesson
- To practise or reinforce what has been taught in a lesson, e.g. to do some questions similar to those done in class or to revise for a test
- To use and apply knowledge or information that has been covered in a lesson, e.g. to write an essay where you apply what has been learned to a different or broader question
- To demonstrate learning through coursework or extended projects that supplement the examinable components of courses (particularly in practical subjects).

In Years 10 and 11, teachers of examination subjects will set approximately 45-60 minutes of homework each week. These are guidelines only but we know that students who adopt a conscientious attitude to their studies and complete the tasks set are more successful. Some students may also supplement this learning with additional consolidation of learning and revision, for example, they might create revision cards or resources as they complete topics, or units of work.

Homework is posted in Class Charts for each subject and additional supporting materials and study materials may also be found here, or via the link provided in the homework to Showbie.

Teachers should make reasonable adjustments for pupils with SEND; provide clear instructions, additional resources where required, resource sheets or website links for research tasks, and remain vigilant regarding plagiarism and inappropriate use of AI.

Some students may be involved in extra-curricular sports, creative arts or have other commitments that will impact upon the time dedicated to homework. We believe that enrichment activities like these are very important and hugely beneficial, but we expect students to take responsibility for managing their time and workload, and to communicate with their teachers regularly to discuss any issues they may have with meeting deadlines. However, it is important during this examination phase of their education journey that studies take priority.

For the vast majority of tasks, teachers will allocate more than one evening to complete the work set. Where homework runs over a number of weeks, e.g. a project, teachers will set weekly deadlines for completion of 'chunks' of work. Students of all abilities are expected to complete homework and teachers will make sure that all students are set tasks appropriate to their level of need and which challenge students appropriately.

We feel that it is important that students develop good study habits and the personal organisation skills to complete homework and meet deadlines. There may be the odd occasion when a student has a valid reason for missing a deadline, and in such cases, they must produce a note from their parents/carers with a good reason for not completing the task. If homework is not completed on time and no note produced, a consequence will be applied.

**Frequency of homework tasks in Key Stage 4**

All examination subjects will set one piece of homework per class on a weekly basis. Subjects that see students more frequently such as double award Science and English would set homework more frequently. Subject is generally set centrally by the subject leader.

Years 7, 8 and 9

| Subject | Home Learning (per week) |
|---|---|
| Reading | Sparx Reader: Sparx Reader: XP target set by school (minimum 300 XP per week) |
| Maths & Science<br>Year 7<br>Year 8<br>Year 9 | <br>Sparx: 30 minutes<br>Sparx: 40 minutes<br>Sparx: 50 minutes |
| MFL | Language Gym: 20 minutes |

Academies will provide a phased transition to Home Learning expectations for pupils joining in Year 7.

Years 10 and 11

| Subject | Home Learning (per week) |
|---|---|
| Maths & Science | Sparx: 50 minutes |
| English | 50 minutes |
| Option Subjects | 30-50 minutes per subject |

**Homework and revision for checkpoint assessments (KS3 and KS4)**

**Two or Three** weeks prior to the calendared assessment windows all homework will be designated revision tasks. This is not simply 'revise for test' but relates to the tasks outlined in the preparation booklets sent home to parents/carers.

Assessment preparation activities should be purposeful and linked directly to revision, recall and readiness for assessment.

| | |
|---|---|
| Assessment Preparation | Preparation starts 2 weeks prior to assessment window; all other homework suspended; revision tasks set on Showbie |
| Mocks (Year 11) | Revision/preparation starts 3 weeks prior to assessment window; all other homework suspended; revision tasks on Showbie |

**Consequences for missed homework (KS3 and KS4)**

Homework is set to support the learning and develop an effective work habit. Where homework is not done this will impact on learning and therefore consequences will be applied to support this. Unless there are genuine mitigating circumstances, the following process will be used:

- The missed homework is recorded in Class Charts
- A lunchtime detention is issued (to enable the outstanding work to be completed to an appropriate standard in the detention).
- Students who complete the homework before the lunchtime detention must report to the detention room. However once they hand in the homework to the member of staff running the detention they can leave.
- Non-attendance to a lunchtime detention will be followed up in line with the College's behaviour policy.

If a pattern of missed homework emerges, additional support measures will be considered at faculty level or via the year team. The aim of this is to support students in organising their time, to help them develop good working habits and to catch up in areas where they are falling behind.

If a lack of homework continues to be an issue, the student will be referred to the pastoral support team and/or the Head of Year, who will enlist the support of parents/carers.

**Homework in Post 16**

In Post 16, it is expected that 3 hours of independent study per subject per week will be set. Teachers primarily set homework tasks on the subject's Showbie, although Maths use a bespoke package called Integral Maths. Homework may take many different forms for example:

- Project work or coursework
- Set exercises from sheets or textbooks
- Wider reading for example in History and Philosophy
- Research for later class work
- Learning vocabulary, formulae, spellings
- Study in preparation for class work, assessment, or examination

- Practising examination style questions including the longer essay style questions.
- Listening practice or rehearsal

Tasks may be completed at home or in supervised study sessions in the College day, depending on the resources and level of support needed to complete them to an appropriate standard.

Not all homework tasks are suitable for written feedback, but those that are should be marked and returned in a timely manner. Most subjects require students to act on the feedback from these assessed pieces of work.

Staff should email home, copying in the Head of Post if students do not meet deadlines or the quality of homework raises concerns over progress.