



HOMEWORK POLICY

Definition

This policy addresses the issue of work expectations for students outside of scheduled class time.

Rationale

Mount Liliydale Mercy College values a curriculum that offers a dynamic, challenging, rich and diverse range of learning experiences stimulating each student to strive for personal excellence. So as to encourage a high level of motivation, independent learning, perseverance, initiative and creativity, additional study is required outside of scheduled class time. Personal responsibility and pride in performance will help students to reach their potential.

Aims

This policy aims to enable students to:

- successfully achieve the total set of educational objectives involved in Catholic secondary schooling;
- become confident and independent in their approach to study;
- consolidate the various learning styles developed through the curriculum; and
- develop good habits and skills in the areas of time management, organisation, short term goal setting and concentration.

This policy recognises the need for quality family time so the purpose of homework is not to fill up time or increase pressure on students. It exists to help students ensure that College life is happy, fulfilling and productive. This Homework Policy is intended to ensure that the demands placed on students are CONSISTENT and MEASURED at a level necessary for achievement of the aims above.

Principles

In order for homework to be a helpful, positive and fulfilling experience for students, the nature of homework should be:

- **GOAL DIRECTED:** the homework tasks are to be clear from the point of view of the objective of the set task and what is actually required to be done by the student. Directions as to the presentation, length, time required, are to be clear;
- **MANAGEABLE:** the nature of tasks set for homework should be manageable by the student (e.g. at times students with advanced skills or more limited skills may have alternate tasks set). If a student, after attempting to complete the homework, finds it unmanageable he/she must notify the teacher at the next lesson and see appropriate assistance;
- **COURSE RELATED:** the nature of tasks set for homework is to be clearly related to the course objective; and
- **EVALUATED:** in general terms any specific tasks set for homework are to be seen as part of the educational program and should be assessed as such. Deadlines for set tasks are to be strictly adhered to and appropriate penalties for late work applied when there is no legitimate cause for late work (see Assessment Policy). The skills required for students to successfully complete homework tasks are incorporated into the set of skills taught in the College curriculum.

Implementation

This Homework Policy requires students to:

- use the College study planner to carefully and neatly record all homework tasks set. Directions as to the correct use of the study planner are contained in the planner itself;
- write out a schedule of homework times. There will be occasions when teachers will give very little or no set homework tasks. On these occasions it is recommended students spend a short time of homework checking and re-organising notes and files, revising for skill tests, reading for more breadth and depth;
- make effective use of class time to complete set tasks, therefore reducing the amount of time required on homework;
- create the most suitable study environment possible within the home situation. Particular care must be taken when it comes to homework time to ensure that:
 - pens, paper, glue, computer or iPad are readily available;
 - television, radio games, Internet surfing, computer games and telephone calls are at a minimum;
- consider the following time allocations as a general guideline as to the amount of time that should be spent on homework. Some students may achieve the aim of homework with a little less time while others will require more time. If there are excesses in either direction, this matter should be discussed with the homeroom teacher.

Year 7:	4 hours per week with no homework given on weekends or holidays.	During Term 1
Year 8:	5 hours per week with no homework given on holidays	
Year 9:	8 hours per week with limited homework given on holidays	

Year 10:	10 hours per week
Year 11:	15 – 18 hours per week
Year 12:	20 – 25 hours per week

The Educational Support Department will recommend appropriate homework activities for students receiving education support from Learning Support Aides to their teachers. For this special cohort undergoing transition no homework will be given in the month of February. For the remainder of Term 1, students will be required to undertake Literacy and Numeracy homework.

Study periods

Senior students are expected to make good use of the allocated study periods. Resources (including books, journals, newspapers, media files, Internet and computer facilities) are available in the Barak Library and a supervised study area has been set aside specifically for this purpose. Year 11 students are timetabled into rooms with supervising teachers for a double period each week. Year 12 students who have study periods scheduled in an afternoon and wish to study at home must ensure that appropriate study structures are in place to ensure that they make maximum use of this time.

Term holidays/Student free days

Senior students are expected to use the term holidays and student free days to complete Learning Outcomes, Assessment Tasks and to revise and prepare for examinations. Some preliminary work set during the Transition Program will be required during the December/January break.

Students in Year 10 may be required to finish Learning Outcomes and Assessment Tasks during term holidays.

Homework tasks may be set for correction days, staff professional development days and student progress interview days.

Guidelines for teachers

Teachers will endeavour to:

- set homework tasks that are manageable;
- acknowledge students' other subjects and work demands when setting tasks;
- allow sufficient time for students to complete tasks that are more extensive and more time consuming;
- spread homework tasks by avoiding a number of major tasks being due at approximately the same time; and
- keep a daily record via the classroom whiteboard schedule or timetable (Year 7 and Years 8, 9 and 10 for core subjects), of the homework tasks set during the day in order to maintain an even and consistent program.

Homework program for parents

Parents are encouraged to give full support to their children in keeping with this policy. Parents should carefully monitor the quality and amount of homework being done by their child/children. It is part of this policy to encourage parents to communicate with the College whenever they judge that homework is either too demanding or not demanding enough. Use the planner to communicate with subject teachers.

Homework whilst on family holidays during term time

It is appreciated that scheduling family holidays is not always easy and some families cannot arrange their holidays during the school holiday period. However, it should be acknowledged that this may have an impact upon a student's academic progress. Parents are asked to avoid holidays during the school term and it is very important that students are not taken on holiday when exams are being conducted. Parents are asked to refrain from requesting teachers to set work for students who are going on a family holiday during the term. If there is no alternative to a holiday during term time and parents want their child to continue with some school related work, it is suggested that they participate in activities associated with the holiday itself. This could be calculations of distance travelled, costs involved or the populations of towns etc. A travel journal could be maintained to include the religious and cultural background, the history and the geography of the places visited. The geography could include the major industries of the region/s and some sketches could also be drawn.

Students need to take responsibility for advising their teachers of the extended absence in advance and for submitting any activity/work that they wish to have assessed as soon as they return to school.

Policy Development and Review

This policy was originally developed in 1999. After reviews in 2005, 2007 and 2009 modifications and alterations were made in keeping with the evolving nature of the learning needs of students. This policy will be constantly monitored and was reviewed in 2009 and 2011. It will be reviewed again in 2014.