

Aim

As a college, we aim to enhance student learning by providing a positive learning environment for students in order to allow them to flourish. Homework is an integral part of the education provided by RCHK and an area that requires the co-operation of all members of the community in order to be effective. The aim of this document is to provide a clear structure for all members of the community to alleviate any concerns and maximise the effectiveness of homework and therefore student performance.

The Purpose of Homework

Homework is set for the following purposes...

- to review and consolidate what students have learnt in class;
- to extend and develop what student have learnt in class;
- to research or prepare for the next lesson or topic;
- and above all, to develop habits of self-directed learning.

Homework is appropriately set when...

- the level of challenge matches what students are capable of doing;
- the connection and relevance to classroom lessons is clear to students;
- the quantity and nature of the homework does not interfere unreasonably with the student's leisure time and extra-curricular activities.

Homework is done well when...

- the student achieves a regular routine – with sensible time, in a well-organized space and quiet environment;
- the student reflects actively on what was learnt in class and uses the opportunity to demonstrate to the teacher what they have understood;
- the student applies his/her own effort and ideas and obtains guidance and support from parents or tutor when needed;
- the student completes assignments as required and on time.

Homework is assessed well when...

- the teacher's comments identify strengths and the student's achievement is commended;
- the teacher's comments suggests areas and strategies for improvement;
- the student is motivated to maintain and raise his/her own standards.

Time Allocation

Year 7-9

Each subject can set **1 hour** per week. This averages out at approximately 90 minutes of homework per evening.

If the task set exceeds 20 minutes then students will be given more than one night for completion. This prevents excessive load on any one evening.

Year 10-11

Each subject can set **80 minutes** of homework per week. This averages out to approximately 120 minutes of homework.

If the task set exceeds 25 minutes then students will be given more than one night for completion. This prevents excessive load on any one evening.

DP students

Given the variable demands of the Diploma Programme, homework load varies. Students should, by this stage in their education, have developed effective independent learning strategies which they should employ to manage their workload. Students are expected to work at weekends and during holidays in order to maximise time available and minimise periods of stress.

All Years

Extra homework should not be set for holiday periods. Any work outstanding can be completed during the holiday and work which has been set as part of the weekly cycle of homework can be done in the holiday. However, teachers should not increase the load beyond the stated allocations simply because of a holiday. The workload at DP level means that students are expected to use their holidays for school work.

It is important that students maintain effective dialogue with their teachers, advisor and Head of Year to avoid misunderstandings should the workload become impractical.

Non-completion of Homework

1. Homework that is late will not have achievement grades deducted for being late, (e.g. a 5 is not reduced to a 4 because homework is late). Work marked against

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specific criteria will reflect a valid assessment of the criteria and not measure the lateness of the work.

2. Failure to hand in homework should only affect the student's overall Effort and Commitment grade.
3. Under extraordinary circumstances and at the discretion of the teacher a student may negotiate an extension to complete the homework. For the extension to be considered it must be requested in advance of the scheduled due date. Students who were absent due to illness should receive an automatic extension.
4. If homework is late and no extension has been granted the teacher should write a note in the student organizer. This note should be signed by a parent and checked by the teacher in the subsequent lesson or on a subsequent day. The late homework should also be handed in at this stage.
5. If a student fails to submit homework on time on three occasions (without extension), per semester, an Academic/Behavioural Concern (ABC) Form should be sent. The issue will therefore then be brought to the attention of the relevant Head of Year.
6. Problems continuing beyond this will be dealt with by disciplinary procedures and will involve consultation with parents and/or after school homework sessions. Students will also be required to outline goals they will set in place to address the issue.
7. There is no point at which student academic grades are affected by the late submission of work. Whenever work is received it should be marked by the teacher and noted in their grade book, except in instances where there is an external deadline. If a teacher is planning to provide feedback about work while some students have work outstanding, the student should work outside of the class to complete the task, if possible, so that the student can complete the work before feedback is given.

Student Advice

Students should inform their teachers if they are finding it difficult to cope with the homework demands. As stated above, any consideration of extension of deadlines requires advanced warning. If you simply do not complete the work then it will be recorded as not completed.

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If you find it difficult to understand what is expected of you when the teacher sets the homework in class, it is your responsibility to ask them to clarify the task.....they cannot expect you to complete it if you don't understand it so they will not mind!

Where work is set with a deadline that is several days or week away, you are advised to record not only the deadline in your organiser but also the days that you are going to use to complete it. This will prevent you leaving it to the last minute and having a large amount of work to complete.

If it takes you a long time to complete your homework - because you work slowly, or need to take longer with the language used, then use common sense. Students may need to go beyond the stated time allocations, but this should not happen every night and should not mean that students are consistently up late working.

Maintain a good balance - sport, music, drama and other interests are all important parts of your education. However, school work takes precedence over tutorials or work set by external tutors.

Speak to your teacher - they need to know what is going on! Remember that speaking to your teacher is different to complaining!

Parent Advice

Wherever possible, make sure that you have a set time when your child completes their homework, and monitor this period. Students who are distracted by other activities (such as computer, games etc) and start their homework late will finish it late.

Try to remove distractions during this time - make sure that students have a quiet, well-organised space to complete their work.

Try to discuss your child's homework with them - discuss deadlines, how they are going to meet them, what is expected etc. Not only will this allow you to understand the demands of the curriculum, but you will also be better placed to help them if they run into trouble. All students should maintain an effective record of their work in their organiser.

Try to avoid overloading your child. External lessons and tutoring are very helpful, but many students complete several hours of lessons between school and homework. It is vital that the students have the chance to focus on their school work.

Encourage a balanced lifestyle. Students that have an opportunity to express themselves or to keep fit by playing sport are more likely to be able to focus on their work at home.



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Contact the teacher if you have any concerns. The best way to avoid problems is to open up dialogue sooner rather than later.