

## Homework and Study Policy

*“Homework appears to provide more academic benefits to older students than to younger students, for whom the benefits seem to lie in non-academic realms, such as in improving study skills and learning structure and responsibility. The amount of homework provided to younger students may therefore be less important than simply assigning something to help them establish routines and learn personal responsibility.”* (Center for Public Education, 2007) Research Review: What Research Says About the Value of Homework. Retrieved January 13, 2012, from <http://www.centerforpubliceducation.org> quoted in Blazer, 2009).

### The value of Homework

In summary

- The ‘more homework the better’ view has no research support (Cooper, H, 2001). Homework for All – In Moderation, *Educational Leadership*, 58(7), cited in Queensland Government Department of Education and the Arts, 2004)
- The quality of the homework assigned is likely to be more important than the quantity (Canadian Education Association, & Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 2010)
- Homework must be purposeful and relevant to student needs and should not jeopardise the right of children to enjoy a balanced lifestyle (Dixon, 2007)
- The amount of homework and time spent on it should accord with the student’s age and developmental level (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009)
- Effort spent on homework is a stronger correlate of academic achievement than time spent on homework (Canadian Council on Learning, 2009)
- Year level appears to be a determinant of homework’s academic effectiveness (Blazer, 2009; Cooper, 1989).

The Baldivis Secondary College community recognises the value and importance of homework and study as integral to supporting students to achieve to their full potential.

### Homework and Study;

- Bridge the gap between learning at school and learning at home. It reinforces work done in class. It helps develop skills such as research and time management.
- Help to establish the habits of study, concentration and self-discipline. Parents/caregivers have the opportunity to see and monitor the progress of their child.
- Provide opportunities for consolidation and has the potential to challenge and stimulate students.

The effective use of their e-diary is critical to students maintaining a regimented homework and study routine. Students are required to write ‘due dates’ immediately in class to ensure they meet deadlines.

**Homework** should:

- Be part of a planned approach by teachers;
- Be appropriate for each student’s age and ability;
- Be interesting, challenging, and where appropriate open-ended;
- Be purposeful, meaningful and relevant to the curriculum;
- Be assessed by teachers with feedback and support provided; and

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- Take into account students' other commitments, such as sport, part-time employment and home responsibilities.

**Study** is self-directed revision of class work, allowing for material to be reviewed and consolidated so that long term learning is enhanced. This can include concepts taught in class and long term review of concepts. An example is a concept learned in Mathematics in Term 1 or a text studied in English.

## Types of Homework

- Practice Exercises help students to remember and practise newly acquired skills – such as memorising mathematical rules, essay writing, reading, practising and playing a musical instrument.
- Preparatory Homework requires students to source and read background information to prepare them for future lessons on a specific subject- such as reading background material for history.
- Extension Assignments encourage students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively. Assignments may include writing a book review, researching local news or retrieving items from the Internet.
- Completion of missed or unfinished work.

## Purpose of Homework/Study

- Fosters the development of planning and organizational skills
- Enables students to practice and develop their skills independently
- Allows for practising, extending and consolidating work done in class
- Develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources
- Establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline which will serve the student for the rest of their lives
- Provides parents and caregivers with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children and
- Challenges and extends all children

## Recommended Time

The amount of time students should spend on homework is a contentious and complicated issue.

Overall, it appears that some homework is preferable to too much or none at all, but the time devoted to homework must accord with the student's age and stage of development (Queensland Government Department of Education and the Arts, 2004).

At Baldivis Secondary College we believe that in order for students to achieve to their full potential, it is important that students devote some time to homework and/or study on a regular basis. The amount of time will vary and should be balanced with other commitments and responsibilities. It would not be healthy for a student to spend the bulk of their time on homework and study at the expense of enjoying time with family and friends. Balance is the key!

**As a general rule of thumb, Year 8 and 9 students should be expected to be engaged in homework and/or study for approximately one hour per school day.**

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## How much is enough?

The Queensland Department of Education, Training and the Arts (2012) suggests the following times

- Years 8 and 9 could be up to but generally not more than 5 hours each week.
- For Years 10, 11 and 12 times vary according to the learning needs and individual programs of learning.

The UK Department of Education and Skills (2012) provides the following suggested hours for school children:

- Years 7 and 8 – 45 to 90 minutes per day
- Year 9 – 60 to 120 minutes per day
- Years 10 and 11 – 90 to 150 minutes per day.

US researchers conclude that the ideal amount of time students should spend on homework is between one and a half and two and a half hours per night for high school students, and about one hour per night for middle school students.

The Victorian Department of Education and Early Development (2012) stipulates the following indicative hours:

- (Years 5-9) 30 to 45 minutes per day in Year 5 to 45-90 minutes per day in Year 9
- For later Years (Years 10-12) from 1 to 3 hours per night a week and up to 6 hours on weekends during peak examination periods.

## Expectations of Students

Students can help themselves by:

- Writing down all details of homework they are set in their e- diary (including due dates);
- Being aware of the importance of homework/study;
- Being aware of the college's homework/study policy;
- Ensuring homework is of a high standard and completed within the given time frame;
- Alerting parents or caregivers to homework/study expectations;
- Seeking assistance from teachers and parents or caregivers when difficulties arise;
- Organising their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to completing homework within set deadlines - not leaving work until the 'last minute';
- Organising their time to ensure sufficient time to study prior to assessments and exams; and
- Review aspects or concepts on a regular basis and setting up an appropriate study program.

## Role of Parents & Caregivers

Parents and caregivers can assist by:

- Taking an active interest in homework/study;
- Ensuring that there is time set aside for homework/study;
- Encouraging and supporting students to complete homework/study;
- Providing, where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework/study;
- Encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events;

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- Assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work where requested and being aware of the amount of homework set;
- Communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to homework;
- Alerting the college to any domestic or extracurricular activities which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or corrected; and
- Monitoring Student Diary.

### **Role of Class Teachers**

- Balance the homework load of students to ensure it is reasonable;
- Ensure that homework is marked and returned to students in a timely manner;
- Provide formative feedback on all completed homework;
- Ensure that homework does not take the place of classroom instruction and teaching;
- Ensure that all learning programs are not dependent on homework to achieve learning objectives; and
- Inform students and parents of structured homework deadlines in advance.

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