

Sydenham School Homework Policy

Updated October 2018



Homework as Practice

High attainment is achieved through sound teacher instruction and sustained student practice. Practice must occur in and out of the classroom in order for students to gain durable and secure knowledge. Expertise, in any discipline, is brought about through repeated practice. Independent study at home is an opportunity for learners to do this.

However, not all practice is of equal value. Without direction or feedback, practice can ingrain errors or misconceptions. It is a teacher's responsibility to make sure that students receive guidance on what to do and how to do it, and to ensure that there is some mechanism for students to evaluate their progress. Note that teacher 'marking' is only one way in which students could receive feedback on their Homework. Other options include peer and self-marking or whole class feedback. Faculty Feedback policies have further guidance.

The Education Endowment Foundation suggests that HW has a positive impact on learning with on average 5 months of extra progress. (<https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/evidence-summaries/teaching-learning-toolkit/homework-secondary/>). This Policy sets out Sydenham School's guidelines to ensure that homework constitutes a meaningful learning experience that accelerates progress.

Other Benefits of Homework

- HW is the main channel by which education becomes a shared responsibility between home and school.
- Through independent study, students can develop the VAA's resilience and perseverance as well as ACP meta-thinking skills such as meta-cognition and self-regulation. Ultimately, leading to independent study becoming a habit.
- Having to meet deadlines prepares students for the world beyond education when they will need skills such as personal organization and time management.

Good Quality Practice

HW should have a well-defined purpose, which will usually fall into one of the key areas below, and should be linked to learning going on during school time.

1. Retrieval Practice

The purpose of Retrieval Practice is to commit knowledge to long term memory through bringing information to mind. Rather than set a HW to 'learn the definitions of these key terms' good quality retrieval practice will be arranged so that students are instructed in effective retrieval methods-

Possible activities will include: Creation *and use of* flash cards or mnemonics; use of VLE's such as Quizlet; mindmaps and short quizzes.

2. Deliberate Practice

The purpose of Deliberate Practice is to improve in a specific skill. Any task will have a definite goal, a degree of challenge, repeated (but slightly varying) practice of the skill, opportunity for feedback and, ideally, a stage in which students internalize a new conception, or mental schema, for that skill. This last stage may well be part of follow up activities in lessons.

Deliberate practice activities will often take the form of a set of closely related questions or problems to solve. In subjects such as art, deliberate practice would be an extension of the skills developed in class, for example; use of shading to create depth.

3. Academic Literacy

Using well-chosen source material and texts students can be supported to develop understanding and comprehension or to expand their vocabulary. So that students develop more sophisticated research strategies (than simply copying and pasting from a google search) good practice is to direct them to particular reference material and carefully scaffold research questions. *Similarly, creative tasks, such as extended writing, need to be focused with a well-defined learning purpose linked to progression through the Scheme of Work.*

Responsibilities

Students

- To write details of homework and deadlines in planner.
- To ensure that the homework task is fully understood.
- To seek to resolve problems before deadlines and, if necessary, see the member of staff concerned for help.
- To ensure that homework is completed to the best of their ability and to follow the study skills and conditions of practice advised by your teacher.
- To submit all homework by the deadline set.
- To ensure that feedback, in any of its forms, is acted upon.

Teachers

- To set HW in line with the Faculty Policy guided by the principles set out in this policy.
- To use merits, postcards and phone calls to reward and celebrate students whose HW is of an exceptional standard or who consistently exceed basic expectations.
- To ensure that homework is appropriately accessible but also challenging for all students. *Teachers need to be considerate of the various needs of different students (including SEND) but differentiation does not have to mean distinct tasks for various groups.*
- To ensure that homework tasks are fully understood by all students, with clear expectations and deadlines, *that can be understood and checked by parents.*
- To give students time to write homework details down in their planners and *then check student compliance in this process (5 to finish)*
- To follow school procedures when a student fails to meet expectations. Currently: first HW missed is logged with an alert; second missed HW warrants a demerit and 10 min teacher detention; subsequent missed HWs are followed up with a demerit, contact home and a faculty detention.

Parents and Carers

- To check their daughter's planners for Homework tasks.
- To make sure that their child has well defined times and space when they can do their HW.
- To understand the key concepts of retrieval and deliberate practice as explained in the Sydenham School Study Guide.

SLs, CLs and YLCs

- To support students consistently failing to meet HW deadlines with the involvement of their parents.
- To monitor the implementation of the school and faculty policy through learning walks, planner checks and student voice.

Guidelines for Volume of Homework

To support them being able to meet deadlines, and also so that they get used to managing their time, students should be given at least two evenings to complete HW tasks.

	Year 7	Year 8	Year 9	Year 10	Year 11
<i>Performing Arts</i>	<i>Half termly Up to 90 mins in total</i>	<i>Half termly Up to 90 mins in total</i>	<i>Fortnightly 45 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 60 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 60 mins</i>
<i>Visual Arts</i>	<i>Fortnightly Up to 30 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 30 to 45 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 45 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 120 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 120 mins</i>
<i>RE PSHE Computing</i>	<i>Fortnightly Up to 30 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 30 to 45 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 45 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 60 mins</i>	<i>Fortnightly 60 mins</i>
<i>English Maths Science History Geography Languages</i>	<i>Weekly Up to 30 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 30 to 45 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 45 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 60 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 60 mins</i>
<i>Human Sciences</i>			<i>Fortnightly 45 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 60 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 60 mins</i>
<i>Triple Science (KS4)</i>				<i>Weekly 90 mins</i>	<i>Weekly 90 mins</i>

In Sixth Form, students are expected to complete the following amount of homework/independent study:

Year 12 – 5 hours per subject per week

Year 13 – 6 hours per subject per week