

# Homework Policy

## 1. Background

The purpose of this policy is to outline to students, parents/carers and school staff the beliefs about homework and at-home learning endorsed by Melton Secondary College. The policy and homework guidelines recommended by Melton Secondary College are informed by the research of Robert Marzano and Debra Pickering and modified to suit our school context. Teachers at Melton Secondary College embody the following beliefs about homework and home study (asserted by Marzano and Pickering) as important elements for a successful homework routine.

Melton Secondary College expects students to further develop and consolidate their independent learning skills by completing homework tasks and home study. A successful homework routine is vital for learning because the repeated or spaced practice of skills and knowledge improves memory acquisition. For this reason, homework has a positive effect on learning growth and achievement, and is an important part of reinforcing the concepts that are introduced in class. Homework also plays a significant role in building work ethic, self-discipline and responsibility.

*Home study can be defined as the self-directed work that students do to improve their understanding or skills related to a subject. Home study becomes increasingly important as students move into senior secondary education.*

Regular reading for enjoyment is a key predictor of academic achievement and success. Wide reading builds vocabulary which, supports improvements in the comprehension of new concepts and skills. For this reason, students are encouraged to read for enjoyment each night. In collaboration with the College, parents/carers should seek to create a positive association with reading with their children.

## 2. Guiding Principles

At Melton Secondary College, homework assigned across different learning areas will be coordinated by Heads of Years and supported by a homework timetable at junior years.

Homework is timetabled at junior years to meet the following outcomes:

- avoid unreasonable workloads for students
- reinforce the importance of a homework and home study routine to improve acquisition of skills and knowledge, and build confidence in learning
- develop self-regulated learning mindsets and organisational skills in students
- reinforce a predictable, consistent routine that will make parent/carer involvement and encouragement as straightforward as possible.

## 3. Implementation

### Reading for enjoyment

Melton Secondary College has an established Independent Reading Program where students build stamina in their reading, enhance their vocabulary and develop the use of comprehension strategies to critically analyse what they are reading. Regular reading for pleasure allows students to practice these skills and work towards achieving the personal reading goals they have set with their teachers.

Students are expected to have a book to read with them each day. They have access to borrowing books at the College library during class, at lunchtime and afterschool, as well as the digital library collection at Melton City Library.

### Homework Timetable

All Year 7, 8 and 9 students will follow a designated homework timetable. Teachers will distribute and explain allocated homework so that students can complete it on their scheduled day. All tasks will be uploaded to Compass for both parents/carers and students to access. Students are encouraged to complete homework on the evenings assigned. On these nights, targeted support will be available at homework club.

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday/weekend
Year 7	Maths	English	Science	Humanities	Any specialist homework or ongoing assignments
Year 8	Maths	English	Science	Humanities	Any specialist homework or ongoing assignments
Year 9	Maths/Health and Physical Education	English/ Arts	Science/Technology	Humanities/LOTE	Any specialist Homework or ongoing assignments

When planning homework teachers follow these guiding principles:

- **Assign purposeful homework** – Teachers may assign homework tasks that introduce new content, allow students to practice a skill or process that students can do independently but not fluently, elaborate on information addressed in class or give students opportunities to explore topics that interest them.
- **Assign homework at the right difficulty and interest level** - so that students can do it independently and with a high level of success.
- **Involve parents/carers in appropriate ways** - Teachers should send home clear guidelines via Compass, that tell parents the ways they can be most helpful. One best practice is having parents act as a sounding board to help students summarize what they have learned from their homework. *Parents are not expected to act as teachers.*
- **The amount of homework assigned should be age appropriate** - The amount of homework should be appropriate to students' ages and allow time for other home activities. Melton Secondary College outlines guidelines for the amount of homework expected from students at each year level in the table below.
- **Follow up with students** - Homework will be checked and students will receive prompt feedback and, if necessary, remediation.

### How long should students spend on homework or home study each night?

As noted in Marzano's 'Classroom Instruction That Works', students at different levels of the schooling benefit from spending different periods of time on their homework. Further, research argues that independent reading for half an hour a night enhances the development of literacy skills.

YEAR LEVEL	RECOMMENDED TIME SPENT PER WEEK NIGHT	RECOMMENDED TASKS
Year 7	30 minutes + 40 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>30 minutes of reading per night</b></li> <li>• Up to <b>40 minutes</b> to complete set homework based on homework timetable</li> </ul>
Year 8	30 minutes + 50 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>30 minutes of reading per night</b></li> <li>• If homework is provided, spend up to <b>50 minutes</b> completing assigned tasks based on the homework timetable</li> <li>• If homework is not provided spend up to 50 minutes revising and summarising class notes</li> </ul>
Year 9	30 minutes + 60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>30 minutes of reading per night</b></li> <li>• If homework is provided, spend <b>60 minutes</b> completing assigned tasks (Year 9 based on timetable)</li> <li>• If homework is not provided spend <b>60 minutes</b> revising and summarising class notes</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: Homework and home study may increase prior to exam period</i></p>
Year 10	30 minutes + 70 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>30 minutes of reading per night</b></li> <li>• If homework is provided, spend <b>70 minutes</b> completing assigned tasks</li> <li>• If homework is not provided spend 70 minutes revising and summarising class notes</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: Homework and home study may increase prior to exam periods</i></p>
Year 11 and 12	Up to 180 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1 hour</b> of revising class notes and updating subject summary book</li> <li>• <b>Up to 2 hours</b> completing tasks assigned by the teacher</li> </ul> <p><i>Please note: Homework and home study will increase prior to exam periods</i></p>

### Homework Club

Students will be able to access teacher support at homework club Monday – Thursday each week. Students are welcome at any time and will not need to enrol prior.

### What happens if a student does not complete their homework?

In the event that a student does not complete their homework teachers may access consequences such as the following:

- A teacher may require a student to attend a recess, lunchtime or after school detention
- A teacher may require that a student attends Homework Club until their homework is complete
- A teacher may call home to notify parents of un-submitted or incomplete homework
- A teacher may require a student to complete homework at recess and/or lunchtime.

Homework completion and submission will be reflected on student progress reports.

### Shared expectations and responsibilities

Homework is a shared responsibility between the school, teachers, students and their parents/carers. In order to get the most out of homework tasks, it is important that everyone understands their obligations and responsibilities.

Melton Secondary College will support students by:

- fostering lifelong learning and connecting families with the learning of their children, as part of a comprehensive and balanced curriculum within Victorian schools
- ensuring the school's homework policy is relevant to the needs of students
- advising parents/carers of homework expectations at the beginning of the school year and provide them with a copy of the homework policy

It is expected that **teachers** will:

- set varied, challenging and meaningful tasks related to class work to suit the students' learning needs
- give students enough time to complete homework, considering home obligations and extracurricular activities
- assess homework and provide timely and practical feedback and support
- help students develop organisational and time-management skills
- ensure parents/carers are aware of the school's homework policy
- develop strategies within the school to support parents/carers becoming active partners in homework
- offer a wide range of opportunities for families to engage in their children's learning.

It is expected that **students** will take responsibility for their own learning by:

- being aware of the school's homework policy
- discussing with their parents/carers homework expectations
- accepting responsibility for the completion of homework tasks within set time frames
- following up on comments made by teachers
- seeking assistance when difficulties arise by attending homework club
- organising their time to manage home obligations, participation in physical activity and sports, recreational and cultural activities and part-time employment.

It is expected that **parents/carers** will support their children by:

- developing a positive and productive approach to homework
- ensuring there is a balance between the time spent on homework and recreational activities
- talking to teachers about any concerns they have about the homework
- discussing homework with their child in their first language, if English is not the main language spoken at home, and linking it to previous experiences
- linking homework and other learning activities to the families' culture, history and language, linking with relevant services, clubs, associations and community
- ensuring there is a quiet study area for students to complete their homework tasks.

#### Support for students, parents and carers

Teachers at Melton Secondary College understand that students have different learning styles and interests, and may approach learning activities and homework differently. If you are concerned that your child may not understand the homework tasks that have been set for him or her, or is spending a long period of time completing their homework, we encourage you to speak to the relevant classroom teacher, STARR connect teacher or Year Level Team Leader

Students who may benefit from support completing their homework tasks are encouraged to attend homework club.

#### 4. Evaluation and Review

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<b>Author</b>	BARR
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