

MOUNT ANNAN CHRISTIAN COLLEGE

SECONDARY HOMEWORK POLICY

VISION STATEMENT

The vision of Mount Annan Christian College is to provide a Christ-centred learning environment that empowers each individual to enjoy a life of purpose.

INTRODUCTION

In promoting life-long and autonomous learning within Secondary, we recognise that homework can support the learning process in ways not readily available in the classroom. Homework is a valuable part of the learning process. It is intended to supplement and support in-school experiences. Homework encourages the development of self-discipline, good work habits, positive attitudes towards independent study and lifelong learning and assists students in preparing for subsequent planned learning activities.

HOMEWORK PRINCIPLES

Well planned and meaningful homework is an essential part of the learning process. However, as advised in current research, every effort should be made to avoid homework that is too lengthy, overly repetitious or too demanding. There are many types of homework tasks and activities. These include:

- Completion and consolidation of class work in order to reinforce or extend skills and knowledge
- Short term and long term assignments that foster sustained engagement and deep learning
- Practical work using home and community resources
- Research and reading of texts, articles and novels
- Preparation for class tests and common tests

Homework should be:

- appropriate for each student's age and ability
- relevant to each student's needs
- purposeful and designed to meet specific learning goals
- built on knowledge, skills and understanding developed in class
- clearly stated to students and parents

The main aims of homework are to:

- consolidate and complement class work
- deepen and extend understanding
- develop good organisational skills
- encourage responsible research and study habits.

Some purposes of homework are to:

- reinforce the learning/concepts of the day's lessons
- extend the learning for a unit of work
- promote independence in learning
- practise and develop skills
- allow time for consolidation of notes, memorisation and revision
- study for tests and examinations
- work on longer-term assignments and projects
- prepare for the next day's lessons

Authentic and meaningful homework should never be "busywork". Consequently, homework requirements set by a teacher may vary from student to student according to their needs. Homework should be initiated by both the teacher and the student: a student who has a positive attitude to learning will always have homework to do. Parents are asked to provide a suitable, supportive homework environment, yet still encourage and allow their children to be independent, resourceful and self-reliant learners.

ALLOCATION OF HOMEWORK

Students may work on short term or long term assignments simultaneously. However, it is also recognised that students, especially in Years 7 – 9 have social and leisure needs that legitimately occupy substantial out of school hours. A balance must be maintained between these and homework expectations.

In estimating the time required to do regular homework, teachers will use the following guidelines of total minutes per night.

Year 7/8:	Approx. 60 - 90 minutes
Year 9/10:	Approx. 90 - 120 minutes
Year 11/12:	Approx. 120 - 180 minutes

All students need to regularly revise their work and practise the skills appropriate to each subject studied. A cyclic process of review and note-making is encouraged in which students:

- read through the material covered each week for each subject
- make summary notes of the material, complete problems and/or revise skills
- develop a revision folder or booklet in which the summaries, tests, revision exercises and related materials for each subject are kept for future reference
- set aside time each week for reviewing material from the previous month.

Students should use their summaries and refer back to their class notes and texts wherever necessary. This helps to keep skills and knowledge current and increases the depth of their knowledge. These notes also become extremely valuable prior to formal examination periods.

GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

- Record homework in their diary.
- Complete homework in the given timeframe. Homework will only be excused with a note from a parent.
- Seek assistance from teachers when difficulties arise during school time.
- Email or online contact with teachers on weekends or school holidays can only be made with prior arrangement.
- Students should not expect teachers to be available for practical work after school hours or during holidays unless prearranged with the teacher.

GUIDELINES FOR STAFF

- Homework should generally be set on skills taught in class and where these are assumed, staff need to check that all students are equipped with the skills necessary to complete the homework.
- Homework should clearly relate to class work and the purpose and relevance of it should be readily understood by students.
- Homework should not be used as a disciplinary measure or as a means of controlling a difficult class or student.
- Homework should not be used to cover topics which cannot be covered in class time due to time constraints.
- Feedback on homework should be timely and appropriate to the nature of the task.
- Homework and diary entries should be checked on a regular basis by teaching staff.
- Teachers will communicate with parents promptly if there is a problem with homework.
- Teachers should not agree to mark practice work from students in classes other than their own, unless prior arrangements with fellow staff have been made.
- Staff must be mindful of the guidelines for homework.

PARENTS AND CARERS can assist by;

- Supporting students in completing their homework.
- Providing, if possible, a dedicated space and desk for homework and study.
- Monitoring homework and signing the student diary.
- Communicating with teachers about any concerns with homework or their child's approach to homework. This can be arranged by phone through Student Services.