

North Halifax Grammar School

Homework Policy



This policy was considered and recommended to the Leadership Group for approval on:	February 2020
To be reviewed annually. Next review:	Autumn Term 2021
Owner:	Vice Principal (i/c Teaching and Learning)

HOMEWORK

Why is it important?

Homework is important for a variety of reasons, which all contribute to achieving the school's aims, including:

- encouraging students to develop the self-discipline, confidence and motivation needed to study effectively on their own;
- improving their resourcefulness, responsibility, resilience and reflection;
- developing their capacity for lifelong learning and adaptability;
- consolidating and reinforcing knowledge, skills and understanding developed at school;
- extending school learning, for example through research and additional reading;
- building students' "Cultural Capital" and understanding of the wider world
- extending effective learning time;
- providing feedback to the student and teacher of the student's knowledge, skills and understanding;
- preparing for future work;
- allowing teachers to concentrate in lessons on using school based resources;
- enabling differentiated tasks to be set which match the abilities of students;
- sustaining the involvement of parents and carers in the management of students' learning;
- keeping parents and carers informed about the work students are doing;
- undertaking work which cannot be completed in school;
- using resources which may not be available in school;
- encouraging closer liaison and co-operation between the home and the school.

Homework presents opportunities for students to develop and consolidate their competence as independent learners. This is achieved through the use of the Student Planners, Monitoring and target-setting. The effectiveness of homework, in this process, depends essentially on quality. Teachers at NHGS are required to set high quality homework which:

- has clear curricular objectives;
- encourages independence, research, creativity and initiative;
- demands high standards of accuracy and presentation;
- may exploit resources available outside the school;
- may promote the involvement of parents and other adults outside school.

Homework activities will involve a range of tasks and activities and may include:

drafting, writing, reading, evaluating, learning, analysing, applying, revising, researching secondary sources, investigations, recording practical classwork, fieldwork, problem-solving exercises, collecting data, drawing, modelling, collecting materials, making artifacts, practising, composing, drawing, sketching, preparing a talk, coursework, interviews, simple experiments, essay writing, public library visit, report writing, projects.

Use of ICT with homework

The use of ICT is encouraged, but parents and students should not be disadvantaged if access at home is non-existent or limited. Computers can be accessed at school in the ICT room and in the LRC at lunchtimes and after school. Teachers are encouraged to use Google Classroom to remind students of homework tasks and provide further resources and support materials.

How much homework should be set?

The time required for the homework will depend on the particular task. . At secondary level, studies indicate there is an optimum of between one and two hours per school day (slightly longer for older students), with effect diminishing as the time that students spend on homework increases beyond this point. (Education Endowment Foundation, Working With Parents' to Support Students Learning, 2018). Extended tasks such as projects may need a number of homework sessions over several weeks. Deadlines will be made clear and work will be monitored over the period.

How long do students have to complete homework?

Students should have at least 48 hours to complete homework tasks. When homework is set, it will be in accordance with the published schedule for each year group. Students will be directed to record all homework including deadlines in their Student Planner. Students should usually expect feedback within a week of the homework deadline. This can be in the form of teacher feedback, peer or self-assessment. If homework is a longer project; feedback may understandably take longer than one week.

Independent Study

In addition to homework set by subject teachers, students are expected to work independently outside of the classroom. Students should be taking the time at home to review previous learning in all of their subjects on at least a weekly basis. This ensures students are committing knowledge to their long term memory. For example, a student might revisit topics completed earlier in the year by reading back over their notes, creating revision notes or diagrams, memorising information using Knowledge Organisers, self-quizzing or completing some practice questions on the topic. Students are responsible for initiating this independent reviewing of previous learning themselves - subject teachers will not direct them in exactly what to do, only remind them periodically that they should be reviewing prior learning. This independent reviewing of previous learning is a vital skill to develop ahead of GCSE and A level studies.

Periodically throughout the year and during the school assessment periods, students will sit summative assessments. These assessments enable the student, the subject teacher and parents to see what the student is already able to do and to identify areas for development and set SMART targets. In addition, they enable the student to practise revising akin to GCSE and A level exam revision needed later on in their school career. The timings of these assessments are outlined in the school's assessment calendar ([available on the website](#)). Prior to these assessments subject teachers will ensure students know what will be assessed and will set the students revision as homework. Students should then use appropriate revision strategies to prepare thoroughly for the assessments. The expectation is that students will complete an appropriate amount of revision for each assessment to allow them to give of their best.

Homework during examination periods

During exams season, the giving of regular homework should be carefully considered. **It is recommended that in the 3 weeks leading up to internal exams (Y7-9 and 12) and the 5 weeks leading up to external exams (Y11 and 13) structured revision should be set to allow students to ready themselves for those upcoming examinations.** Teachers should use their discretion and knowledge of the students to make appropriate demands at this time.

The intrinsic value of homework activities is far more important than the precise amount of time devoted to them. Broad expectations about how much time it is reasonable for students to spend are established by the Government which act as a framework for schools and as a guide for parents and students. The school publishes its own expectations for the length of time to be spent on homework in the student handbooks which are revised and published annually.

Homework and the Student Planner

The Head of Section co-ordinates and publishes the homework timetable for each year group (main school only) in the first week of term which students can then record in their Planner. Students should find the Student Planner a very helpful aid to study. Students must record details of homework set in the Planner; this enables the Student Progress Tutors, Pastoral Staff and parents to check that the work given has been completed. Homework timetables are also published on the school's website.

Parents and carers are asked to support their child by monitoring the Student Planner regularly and by communicating with school in case of difficulty, contacting the subject teacher or Student Progress tutor in the first instance via a note in the planner. Help will be given if staff know it is necessary.

Quality of Homework

The quality of homework is monitored by Heads of Department, Pastoral Leaders and the Leadership Group through work scrutiny, during lesson observations and through student voice activities. Governors monitor homework through receiving reports from the relevant middle and senior leaders.

Further information and guidance is available in the Lower and Upper School Handbooks and homework timetables are published on the website.