



## **Policy: Years 7-12 Homework and Independent Study Policy**

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**We Act Safely   We Aim High   We Show Respect   We Value Our Community**

### **Rationale**

Consistent with the mission of Manor Lakes P-12 College, Homework and Independent Study program encourages students to take responsibility for their own learning. It encourages engagement with family and community, while recognising the many interests/activities that individuals and families pursue outside of school hours. Designed to be a positive experience for all involved, independent study and homework provides children with the opportunity to:

- develop a balanced lifestyle;
- develop regular study habits;
- take responsibility for their own learning;
- work independently in a self motivated way;
- make links to wider community activities.

### **Definitions and References**

#### **Independent Study:**

Independent study refers to the directed homework set in class and the self-directed work students do at home. Both of these are guided by the content they are studying in class to reinforce their own understanding. This can include revision for tests and exams, revising readings, notes and Cornell Notes, as well as completing Cornell Note reflections. These may be recommended by the teacher, but not enforced. Students should also include independent reading within their time outside of school.

#### **Homework:**

- Directed homework is set regularly by the classroom teacher, and relates to classroom learning. These tasks are aimed to encourage independence, positive work habits, organisational and time management skills. Homework tasks will prepare students for new topics via research, or reinforce essential learning via practice.
- Differentiated homework is modified homework requested by families, in consultation with the student and teacher, to individualise the learning and support the individual student's needs. The purpose of targeting a particular need may replace directed homework in some cases.
- Independent homework is initiated by the student, with support of their teacher and family, to complete work based on their own interests; school tasks and/or projects. As such tasks are not school requirements, they will be in addition to the directed homework and are not corrected by the teacher, unless the teacher chooses to, or it is part of the subject requirement. Independent homework should not add undue time or pressure to interfere with a student's balanced school program.

#### **Independent Reading:**

Manor Lakes encourages all students across 7-12 to complete approximately 30 minutes of sustained reading daily on a text of their choice. Students are supported at school at Years 7 and 8 with a period dedicated to an independent reading session in English each week. Families should reinforce this at home. Text can be any reading material of the student's choice i.e. newspaper, online articles, blogs, novels, magazines, etc.

## **Guidelines**

Manor Lakes P-12 College implements its 7-12 Independent Study and Homework Program in line with the DET Homework Guidelines and Expectations. Study and homework will include an array of different activities to support the learning taking place within the classroom. Manor Lakes P-12 College recognises that many of our students and families engage in after school activities, so tasks set are designed primarily to encourage students to pursue their own learning.

Independent study and homework at Manor Lakes P-12 College takes into account the need for a flexible schedule that accommodates students' commitments after school, fosters the development of the students' planning and time management skills.

Independent study and homework at Manor Lakes P-12 7-12 College encourages communication between teachers, parents/carers and students about their learning. Activities complement the learning happening within the classroom and support the development of skills and knowledge for all students. Tasks are designed to be challenging yet achievable, and to consider the diverse range of students' individual learning styles and abilities.

### **Differentiation of Tasks (Negotiated Homework):**

The positive effects of study should be the same for all children. However, study and homework should be differentiated where possible, to suit individual needs. Teachers and parents are to work together to ensure that all children understand the tasks before attempting them.

## **Implementation**

Study and homework expectations will be provided to students on a consistent basis and will be expected to be completed and returned by the due date.

The nature of homework and study tasks may change from class to class, reflecting the curriculum and different emphasis in the teaching program. However, homework and study activities will be designed to provide students with opportunities to practise skills, review content and deepen understanding of concepts learned.

\*Tasks which have not been completed in school within a reasonable time may require completion at home as an additional homework activity.

### **Consequences:**

Students are encouraged, and will be supported, to complete work on time. Where students have not completed work in a timely manner, there will be a consequence. Depending on the task, students may be given the opportunity to complete the work at a redemption session after school, or during a lunchtime, as determined by the classroom teacher. Where a student consistently shows a pattern of unfinished work, they may be given a detention and the family will be contacted to establish a support network for the student.

### Teachers can support students by:

- providing prompt feedback to the student, as per DET Homework Guidelines, and communicate how this feedback will be provided back to parents.  
<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/Pages/guidelines.aspx>
- differentiating study and homework, where possible, to suit individual needs.
- ensuring that all students understand the tasks before they attempt it.
- setting reasonable due dates and classtime for students to complete work.
- ensuring students write homework into their diaries; they may also wish to contact parents about due dates through email and Compass
- setting redemptions for students that need extra homework support
- setting detentions for students and contacting families to inform them of continual unfinished homework

- Communicating procedures and expectations regarding homework to families

Students can take responsibility for their own learning by:

- clarifying homework with the teacher
- writing all homework in the diary
- informing parents of homework
- setting aside homework and independent study time each night
- negotiating due dates with the teacher if there has been an illness (provide medical certificates)
- using classtime appropriately
- when no directed homework has been set, or it is finished early – completing independent study and reading

Families/carers can support their children by:

While most students should not need the help of adults at home when they complete homework, families do have a role to play:

- developing a positive and productive approach to homework;
- creating a home environment that facilitates the student’s homework;
- offering moral support and be positive;
- reporting any difficulties to the teacher;
- allowing ample time to play and engage in all activities assigned as homework (including the more informal tasks);
- reinforcing the idea that learning the balance between work and play is a lifelong skill;
- contacting teachers to negotiate due dates due to illness etc... (provide medical certificates)
- checking the student diary and Compass

If a pattern of homework avoidance develops, the class teacher will work with the child and their family to foster improved homework routines.

Homework Recommendations As stated in the DET Homework Guidelines

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/school/principals/spag/curriculum/Pages/guidelines.aspx>

Year Level	Approx Time Per Day	DET Homework Recommendations
7	60 minutes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• should include daily independent reading</li> <li>• should be coordinated across learning areas in secondary schools to avoid unreasonable workloads for students</li> <li>• may extend class work, projects and assignments, essays and research</li> <li>• should include studying notes, Cornell Notes and readings</li> <li>• may extend class work, projects and assignments, essays and research should include studying notes, Cornell Notes and readings</li> <li>• please refer to the VCE/VCAL/VET (Senior Years Handbook) for study guidelines, tips and techniques (available on College website). Please note that Year 12s are also given Study Hall time to complete part of their study</li> </ul>
8	80 minutes	
9	90 minutes	
10	120 minutes	
11	150 minutes	
12	180 minutes	

**Evaluation**

- Ongoing feedback from teachers, families and students, including Staff and Parent Opinion Survey and Attitude To School Survey.
- This policy will be reviewed as part of the school’s three-year review cycle, or as required due to changes in relevant Acts, Laws or should situations arise that require earlier consideration.