

Homelearning and Homework Policy 2016

Overview

At TC our aim is to develop great thinkers, inventors, entrepreneurs, scientists, writers, craftspeople, critical thinkers and questioners, not just workers. Thus for student not studying VCE subjects we do not set homework which serves only to take up time, creates tension at home and can extinguish a student's curiosity, sense of autonomy and natural love of learning. Counter to what might seem logical, research consistently shows that highly structured homework produces little or no academic benefit before the senior secondary years and instead can actually have some significantly negative consequences!*

Instead, we wish to support families in fostering a love of learning in their children that extends beyond the school day by suggesting a range of academic and extra-curricular activities, which based on current research is far more likely to produce positive outcomes for students both behaviourally and academically.

For those students moving onto VCE (where there is homework), the skills learnt through self-directed homelearning have been invaluable in helping to form productive study habits.

The issue of homework as opposed to HomeLearning is a very complex issue and those wanting more information and advice on this topic are encourage to read a longer document (14 pages long produced back in 2012) called HomeLearning @TC prepared by the Principal which is available on the College website.

What Classes have Homelearning and which have home work?

Level or type of curriculum	Homelearning or Homework?
VCE Unit 1 -4	Homework
Student Led Electives	Homelearning
Pre VCE subjects	Homelearning
Curriculum Specified Electives	Homelearning

Recommendation of amount of Homelearning

For those students not studying VCE subjects our recommendation is for students to complete a **minimum** of 10 hours of quality self-directed homelearning over the week. For those studying a proportion of their subjects at VCE level the time working on VCE subjects could contribute towards the home learning time. Each student's HomeLearning Plan will be different based on the student's areas of interest, level of skill development and their individual plans and ambitions.

Homelearning tasks may include;

- Discussion of work completed at school
- Finishing off learning tasks started at school
- Reading ahead the next lessons in a subject
- Carrying out pre learning tasks from learning bites
- Preparing revision & study notes
- Planning for the next lesson
- Test preparation
- Carrying out stretch activities from learning bites
- Carrying out preparation for Mastery Tasks
- Reviewing feedback from tasks in class
- Updating the students ILP

- Completing extended tests
- Working on their record of work
- Personalised learning tasks negotiated with staff
- Reading, reading & more reading
- Carrying out work on Maths Pathway
- Listening to audio books
- Rehearsing Presentations
- Working on their own HomeLearning Projects*
- Timetables & Basic Mental Maths revision
- Extension Ideas
- Touch Typing
- Spelling & Grammar Revision
- Completing Real Jobs & Real tasks for others
- Shopping & Cooking a meal
- Discussing ideas & values & Current Events
- Exercise
- Sports training
- Dance, Martial arts or other physical activities
- Hobbies
- Music Practice
- Clubs, Scouts, Youth Group
- Watching documentaries

HomeLearning Projects

Students are encouraged to design and prepare their own HomeLearning Project in an area of their interest. At the student's discretion this project can be presented to a panel comprising friends, parent, teacher, even outside experts in the particular field to receive feedback and encouragement as well as including it as part of their electronic record of work. This allows students to be recognised for their efforts, to explore an area of their own interest and not to have their creativity and passion stifled by a set of predetermined criteria. Such a project could be a model, a film, a collection of photos, a summary and presentation of information on a topic and is really only limited by the students imagination. It may relate to an area the students are covering as part of the curriculum or be something totally new.

Recording Homelearning Completed

All students are emailed a one note page that they can use to record their homelearning in, should they wish to use this format. It is the choice of the student, supported by their parent, on how they record their own homelearning as different students will find other forms that are more appropriate to them. It is the responsibility of the student to record what they do, but a record should be kept. Remember to include photos, screenshots or videos of projects as part of these records.

Student, Parent & School Responsibilities

It is the student's responsibility to;

- Plan their Homelearning activities to maximise their learning given their own plan and goals.
- Set tasks that are challenging and motivating
- Keep an honest and accurate record of their activities
- Ensure a balance between homelearning activities
- Discuss their home learning with their parents/guardian and their learning mentor

It is the parent/guardian's responsibility to;

- Negotiate and regularly review the HomeLearning plan with their son/daughter

- Assist the young person to evaluate the balance between various activities given their plans and goals
- Encourage and support the young person to develop their own HomeLearning Assignments
- Assist the student to monitor and assess their own HomeLearning performance
- **Verify that the Weekly Home Learning Log is correct each week and give constructive feedback.**
- Contact the Learning Mentor if the process is not working effectively

It is the Learning Mentor's responsibility to;

- Talk with the student about their HomeLearning plan and their progress
- Evaluate the balance between various activities in regard helping the student achieve their plans and goals
- Discuss the student's HomeLearning Plan with the parent /guardian
- Encourage and support the student to develop their own HomeLearning Assignments
- Refer any questions or concerns that are not able to be resolved to the student's Head of House or Classroom Teachers or other staff member as appropriate
- Ensure each student has a current HomeLearning Plan

Conclusion

This policy is a significant departure from what occurs in most traditional schools. It should NOT be seen as a "soft option" but rather as an attempt to cater for students with a wide range of interests, plans and personal goals. The policy has the flexibility to support the student aiming for the very highest level of academic achievement as well as for the student whose primary talents and interests lie in other areas.

It is vital that if the student, parent/guardian or staff member has a concern that the HomeLearning Plan is not working that they raise these as soon as possible and continue to do so until the matter is resolved. At TC we are only satisfied when our students and their parents and guardians are also satisfied.