

# **BLACKTOWN BOYS' HIGH SCHOOL**

**"Preparing Boys for their Future since 1959"**

**A Partially Selective Boys High School**



## **HOMEWORK POLICY**

**2022**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The transition and consolidation into a high school learning environment requires a student to both study and do homework when required. Homework is an essential component in the learning process and consolidates and reinforces material learned in class. As a student progresses from Year 7 into Year 8 and so forth, the amount of homework will more than likely increase. It is important that your child completes all homework that is assigned to him. Hand in hand with homework regular study becomes a critical and important aspect of your child's learning at Blacktown Boys High School. Study time is completely different from homework and involves the regular review of work covered in class, the summary of key ideas and concepts and additional reading, research and practice on specific topics, essays and problems. This policy will cover homework and study separately.

## **PURPOSES OF HOMEWORK**

### **Homework:**

- is a valuable part of schooling
- allows for practising, extending and consolidating work done in class
- provides training for students in planning and organising time
- develops a range of skills in identifying and using information resources
- establishes habits of study, concentration and self-discipline which will serve students for the rest of their lives
- strengthens home-school links
- reaffirms the role of parents and caregivers as partners in education
- provides parents and caregivers with insights into what is being taught in the classroom and the progress of their children
- challenges and extends high potential and gifted students.

## **GENERAL PRINCIPLES**

### **Homework is most beneficial when:**

- it reinforces and extends classwork and consolidates basic skills and knowledge
- it is challenging and purposeful, but not so demanding that it has adverse effects on the student's motivation
- parents or caregivers are involved in the formulation and implementation of the school's homework policy
- students take responsibility for their homework, supported by their parents or caregivers
- it is well co-ordinated and teacher expectations are well communicated
- it is set on a regular basis and establishes a routine of home study
- teachers set suitable amounts of homework which are varied and at an appropriate level considering the age, stage of schooling and capabilities of students
- it takes into account students' home responsibilities and extra-curricular activities such as clubs, sport, part-time employment and leisure
- it is marked promptly and accurately
- feedback and follow-up are provided regularly to students
- it develops and extends the core learning skills of inquiry and independent study.

## **TYPES OF HOMEWORK**

The amount of time that students are expected to spend on homework will depend upon the age, year group, ability, home environment and extra-curricular activities and cultural obligations. It is important that students of all ages have opportunities for free time, leisure and physical activities outside of school.

## **The three main types of homework are:**

### **Practice exercises:**

Providing students with the opportunities to apply new knowledge or review, revise and reinforce newly acquired skills, including:

- consolidation exercises, e.g. maths
- practising to master an area of something, e.g. spelling words
- revising information about a current topic
- practising words or phrases learnt in a language other than English
- reading for pleasure
- essay writing

### **Preparatory homework:**

Providing opportunities for students to gain background information on a unit of study so that they are better prepared for future lessons, including:

- background reading
- reading, e.g. English text for class discussion
- researching topics for a class unit of work
- collecting items, e.g. geometric shapes

### **Extension assignments:**

Encouraging students to pursue knowledge individually and imaginatively, including:

- writing, e.g. a book review
- making or designing something, e.g. an art work
- investigations, e.g. science, social science
- researching, e.g. history, local news
- information and retrieval skills, e.g. finding material on the internet
- monitoring, e.g. advertising in particular newspapers.

## **SUCCESSFUL PRACTICE**

### **High School Years 7 - 12 (Stages 4, 5 and 6)**

It is expected that homework will be set on a regular basis in each subject. However, the type and amount of homework will vary across subjects.

Co-ordination across faculties is essential to accommodate competing demands in regard to homework, assessment tasks, assignments and examination preparation. This is particularly important in the senior years of high school. There are extraordinary times when students should be provided with the opportunity to negotiate the amount, type and timeframes of homework.

Blacktown Boys' High School finds homework diaries and study planners useful to develop students' organisational skills and time management, and to improve home-school communication. As students move into the senior school homework demands will increase. The school also facilitates seminars and study days to provide students with expert advice on how to better organise homework and study if required.

## **EXPECTATIONS**

### **Students must:**

- be aware of the importance of homework
- be aware of their school's homework policy
- complete homework within the given time frame
- alert parents or caregivers to homework expectations
- seek assistance from teachers and parents or caregivers when difficulties arise
- show their homework to their parents or caregivers (this is perhaps not so important in senior high school years)
- ensure homework is of a high standard
- organise their time to ensure that sufficient time is given to quality homework within set deadlines

### **The role of the teacher is to:**

- explain to students and their parents or caregivers the purpose and benefits of homework
- ensure students and parents or caregivers are aware of the school's homework policy
- provide quality homework activities related to classwork
- set a suitable amount of relevant homework which is appropriate to the ability of each student
- ensure that students are aware of what is expected of them, and how their work will be assessed
- give students sufficient time to complete their homework, taking into account, as far as possible, completing home obligations and extra-curricular activities and homework set by other teachers
- mark homework promptly and appropriately, maintaining homework records and providing feedback to students and parents or caregivers
- alert parents or caregivers of any developing problems concerning their children's homework and suggesting strategies that they can use to assist their children with their homework

### **Parents and caregivers can help by:**

- taking an active interest in homework
- ensuring that there is time set aside for homework
- encouraging and supporting students to complete homework
- ensuring that all subjects receive appropriate allocated time
- providing where possible, a dedicated place and desk for homework and study
- encouraging their children to read and take an interest in current events
- assisting teachers to monitor homework by signing completed work if requested and being aware of the amount of homework set
- communicating with teachers any concerns about the nature of homework and their children's approach to the homework
- alerting the school to any domestic or extra-curricular activities which may need to be taken into consideration when homework is being set or corrected
- carefully considering the impact of coaching / tutoring before involving their children.
- Ensuring that coaching/tutoring does not have a negative impact on school commitments

## **HOMEWORK CENTRE**

To help students with their study, Blacktown Boys' High School offers a Homework Centre each Tuesday and Thursday for 50 minutes after school. This facility is free of charge and is staffed by two fully trained teachers. Students can bring any form of homework or assignments, or simply use the facility for private study. Parental permission must be obtained before a student can attend. Permission notes are available at the school office.

## **STUDY**

Once in high school, regular study becomes more important. Study time is completely different to doing set homework. Students should regularly review work covered in class, summarise key ideas and do additional reading and research on topics, as well as practise tasks such as essays and maths problems.

### **Suggestions for effective studies**

There is no 'best' way to study. Students often find different methods and times to study to suit themselves. The key is regular study, not cramming before a test or exam.

### **Some suggestions for effective study time include:**

- no mobile device use – no social media, messaging or calls during study time
- finish any homework for the day before starting study – remember they are separate
- focus on one topic at a time
- highlight class notes or handouts
- prepare summaries in your own words to revise concepts and skills learnt in class
- draw diagrams, mind maps or brainstorms to show the main ideas and links between them
- explain a topic or key concept to someone else
- prepare glossaries of technical language for the topic or course, include examples of appropriate use
- memorise short quotes
- read summaries aloud – you can record yourself and play them back while travelling
- write key concepts on flash cards with an explanation on the back to use for quick recall testing
- read widely about topics being studied – add any new information or quotes to your summary (remember, when you use words or passages from a source such as a book, article or website you must reference them and use quotation marks).

The best study is active study – not just reading pages and pages of notes. Try creating summaries and lists, drawing mind maps, practising answering questions, teaching someone else about a topic and so on. Active study helps move content from short-term to long-term memory. When reading over notes, try to read them aloud.

### **Study timetable**

A study timetable can be useful to help high school students plan time each week revising work covered in class.

## **Draw up a study timetable**

- Fill in regular activities such as school, sport, part-time jobs and so on. Don't forget to include meal times and time to travel to activities.
- Students should discuss how much time to spend studying with their teachers. Older students will be spending 1 to 2 hours on each subject each week. This will increase as they get closer to the HSC.
- Think about the best time to study. Some kids prefer to get straight into it after the after-school snack, to get it out of the way. Others like to chill before dinner and get into their school work in the evening. Identify the most effective time.
- Block out chunks of time on the Study timetable to study at the identified most effective times. Some subjects will require more time than others – use the advice of the class teacher. Don't forget to consider the school timetable when you are creating a study timetable – it might be a bit much to do 2 hours of physics on the same day as a double period. Don't forget any subjects – even the 'easiest' will require revision in Years 11 and 12.
- Colour code the chunks of time for different subjects.
- Allow a break of at least 5 to 10 minutes each hour.
- Trial the study timetable for a fortnight and see if it is realistic. There's no point having a study timetable that isn't followed.
- Be realistic, some days there will be a pile of homework or family events which means a day off study. If your child can stick to their study timetable 70 to 80% of the time, they are on their way to success.