



# HOMEWORK AND STUDY POLICY

## Introduction

St Columba's College is a Mary Aikenhead Ministries College in the tradition of the Sisters of Charity. We are called to develop in each member of our community a contemporary understanding and application of the charism of Venerable Mary Aikenhead and the spirituality of the Sisters of Charity, and the Mary Aikenhead Ministries' mission and vision, and values of justice, love, compassion and hope.

## Purpose and Objectives

As a learning community, St Columba's College views learning as the central activity of both individuals and the College as a whole, and is committed to life-long learning and seeks continuous improvement in all aspects of its work.

Homework and study are the amalgamation of a variety of activities that students complete outside the formal classroom. This work is an essential component of life at a secondary school as it allows students time to deepen and extend their learning by complementing and reinforcing classroom learning. Homework and study foster good lifelong learning habits and provide an opportunity for students to become responsible for their own learning.

## Policy

At St Columba's College, we seek to guide faith-filled discernment and empower learners who are compelled to action, in our hope for a just world. The St Columba's College Learning and Wellbeing Framework encourages every member of our community to be known and valued, and actively engaged in building an inclusive community. We believe that learning is transformational and optimises our opportunities for lifelong success.

In valuing learning we:

- challenge students to develop a strong sense of self and adopt a resilient mind frame
- set high expectations for all learning
- aim to develop independent and critical thinkers
- provide experiences that encourage curiosity, explore possibilities and promote a love of learning
- challenge students to take risks and celebrate growth
- accept change and support each other as we encounter its challenges
- promote ownership of learning through goal setting and reflective practice.

As such, in order to 'challenge students' and 'aim to develop independent and critical thinkers', the nature of the learning and teaching programs at St Columba's College allows for deep thinking and intellectually challenging tasks and activities, some of which require further exploration at home.

Current evidence and research show that the quality of homework assigned is likely to be more important than the quantity. Overall, the effectiveness of homework is enhanced by providing students with choices among homework tasks, which will result in higher motivational and performance outcomes, students' autonomy, and intrinsic motivation (Patall et al., 2010). Hattie (2015) shows that an effective study routine and program has an effect size that supports student growth.

## Principles

The St Columba's College Homework and Study Policy is based on research conducted into the benefits of home study and is underpinned by the following principles:

- teachers set high expectations for students, leading to excellence
- all students are capable of achieving their personal best
- achieving one's personal best takes effort and commitment
- home study can enhance classroom learning, especially in the senior years of secondary school where revision can link content and skills in preparation for future assessments
- by undertaking home study, students also improve their skills of time management, study habits and work values.

## Aims

The St Columba's College Homework and Study Policy aims to:

- develop and refine effective study habits, work values and time management skills
- promote life-long learning by engaging the students in learning activities that cross the school-home divide
- assist students to take responsibility for their own learning
- assist students to reflect on what they have learnt and the learning strategies they employed to gain this new knowledge.

## Implementation

It is important that homework provides students with opportunities to practice skills, review content and deepen their understanding of concepts learned. Homework and practice can also help students to develop self-regulation processes, such as time management and study skills.

St Columba's College recognises that as part of a holistic approach to home learning, students should engage in a balanced lifestyle. An integral part of study timetables is finding time for self and the 'other'. Students should look for opportunities for regular exercise, prayer and/or meditation and time spent with others in rich discussions.

The nature of home study:

- consolidate ideas covered in class
- practice and refine new skills
- provide students with the opportunity to make new and meaningful links with their knowledge and the wider world
- review other thinking and research related to the work covered in class
- completion of activities started in class, as required
- fostering good lifelong learning and study habits
- providing an opportunity for students to become responsible for their own learning
- developing self-regulation processes such as goal-setting, self-efficacy, self-reflection and time management

- supporting partnerships with parents by connecting families with the learning of their children.

The following is a suggested timeframe for homework and study times for each learning band. Students are expected to use SEQTA to develop study and activity timetables to support their learning and wellbeing. These suggested times do not take into account the build up to exams or other assessment times, but are designed as a consistent approach to study and homework. The time frames below should be a mixture of subjects and should not be seen as total per subject:

#### Years 7-10

Year level	At least 5 times per week
Year 7	30 mins - 1.5 hours
Year 8	30 mins - 1.5 hours
Year 9	1.5 hours - 2 hours
Year 10	2 hours - 2.5 hours

#### VCE

VCE (Unit 1 & 2)	3 - 4 hours of largely self-directed learning per subject per week
VCE (Unit 3 & 4)	4 - 5 hours of largely self-directed learning per subject per week
VCE Vocational Major	As instructed by subject and TAFE teachers

Based on student feedback, teachers will take into consideration the amount of homework study that students are given in total at any one time and set realistic goals.

When homework has not been completed, teachers should log those issues on SEQTA and will also use this information when making judgement on Learning Dispositions in school reports. For individuals that need support with their study processes, students are encouraged to work with their House Group Teacher and House Leader to support their holistic techniques. Where there is a need to support an individual subject, students are encouraged to work directly with that teacher.

#### Evaluation

This policy will be evaluated as per the usual policy evaluation schedule.

## Related Policies and Procedures

Assessment and Reporting Guidelines  
Learning and Wellbeing Framework

## References

- Hattie. J., (2015), Hattie Ranking: Backup of 195 Effects Related to Student Achievement, <https://visible-learning.org/hattie-ranking-backup-195-effects/>
- Patal, E., Cooper, H. & Wynn, S., (2010) The Effectiveness and Relative Importance of Choice in the Classroom, in Journal of Educational Psychology 2010 American Psychological Association 2010, Vol. 102, No. 4, 896 –915
- George Lucas Educational Foundation, 2020, Effective Studying Techniques. <https://www.edutopia.org/article/5-research-backed-studying-techniques>

- Parent Handbook

#### POLICY HISTORY AND SCHEDULE

Date of Approval: October 2023

Approval Authority: College Leadership Team

Delegated Contact Person: Head of Learning and Teaching

Next Review Date: October 2026