

Homework Guide for Students, Teachers and Carers

This document aims to set out the purpose for, expectations of and support with homework as a student progresses through Henlow CofE Academy, finally fully preparing them to sit their GCSE examinations at the end of year 11.

This document has been prepared as a result of consultation with all stakeholders (students, teachers and parents/carers) during the first half of 2025. The views expressed via the questionnaires and the subsequent stakeholder events were wide and varied, all views have been listened, acknowledged and taken into consideration, this document seeks to place individual students at its core and allow for success to be achieved for all.

Why do we set homework:

There are many reasons why homework is set by the school to practise skills, to learn key vocabulary, to read more widely around a topic, to prepare for an exam, to foster a sense of responsibility and independence: the list is extensive.

The last task of a school career is for students to be able to work independently for up to 1hr 45 minutes and within that time, understand the questions that they are being asked, pull on the knowledge they have, plan their response and deliver it in a subject specific way. Good home learning throughout their secondary journey can really support this.

Therefore at Henlow we adopt an approach whereby students can learn skills and attitudes towards self study as well as learn and retain curriculum knowledge and content.

Types of home learning task:

Our homework tasks will then fall into one, or more, of these categories:

- provide a pre learning task or pre reading task
- post learning consolidation
- allow in-depth, guided, research on a topic
- practise skills
- learn subject/specific vocabulary

- revise/review a topic
- preparation for an assessment or exam
- curriculum enrichment

What subjects will have homework set:

This will change throughout the secondary journey due to the different demands of each key stage. There is also a distinction between core and non core subjects. We also recognise that all subjects should carry equal weight as all can be studied to GCSE level and students' area of interests can only grow and develop with exposure to good teaching and learning opportunities across the widest possible curriculum.

Years 7, 8, 9 Core: English, maths and science

Regular (weekly/fortnightly) tasks will be set to allow the continued development of core knowledge and fluency in fundamental skills, for example, reading, comprehension questions, times tables, working with measures, drawing graphs etc. Opportunities will also be given to enrich the curriculum, this will be provided via a subject specific termly menu grid. Additional tasks to prepare for assessments will also be given.

Years 7, 8, 9 Non-Core: All other subjects

A termly grid of homework tasks will be provided to allow students choice in the tasks that they undertake. These tasks will be presented in a 'menu' style which will have inbuilt differentiation. By nature the tasks will be more open-ended allowing students to extend their learning to the level they are comfortable working at.

Year 9: Options subjects

The purpose of our curriculum design is to give students in year 9 the opportunity to start to hone their curriculum ahead of taking GCSE courses, therefore homework will be set in all subjects, however discretion will be applied, particularly in the summer term, if students are no longer going to take these subjects forward.

Key Stage 4: All subjects

With the exception of statutory PE all subjects will set homework.

At this stage homework tasks will be a combination of tasks set by the teacher and tasks set by the students themselves; a distinction between homework and homelearning, or student-led revision or self-study.

Students will be provided with a clear understanding of the GCSE specification and how the subject is assessed. Revision materials will be provided and signposted throughout the course.

If courses have a Non Exam Assessment (NEA) clear communication will be provided to students and families so they can be prepared. Homework will take a very different form across subjects in KS4 due the very different nature of the course content and assessment methods at GCSE.

How much time should be spent on homework:

Broadly speaking students in year 7 should be spending approximately 4-5 hours per week on homework, rising to approximately 8-10 hours per week in years 10 and 11.

How will homework be communicated to students and families:

EduLink is our communication tool and should act as a student to do list. All students have an EduLink account which can be accessed via a mobile app or a web browser. Parents and carers also have an EduLink account and can therefore see the homework tasks their student(s) have been set.

EduLink is 100% a communication tool and homework will never be completed on this platform.

Training will be provided to students at the start of the academic year. Additionally parents will have access to training at the year group information evenings hosted each September.

All EduLink messages will be clear and offer all information to make the expectations clear, understandable and achievable. Posts will include how the homework is to be presented, what resources have been provided to support, submission dates etc. One word posts such as 'see Google classroom' will not be permitted.

Some resources such as curriculum maps, knowledge organisers and homework menus will be posted for reference on the school website.

What will the tasks physically look like:

Some tasks will be paper based and come home in worksheet/booklet format.

Other tasks will be provided electronically - to do this the school uses Google classroom. Training will be provided to students at the start of the academic year. Additionally parents will have access to training at the year group information evenings hosted each September.

Google classrooms will be clearly named so students can find each 'room', additionally each classroom will be appropriately organised so students (and families) can easily locate homework assignments or resources.

The Feedback Loop

Students will be expected to tick completed assignments in EduLink to show that they have completed their core tasks.

Teachers will be expected to acknowledge all homework assignments that are received. Feedback will be given to all students, however the type of feedback will be task dependent. Feedback could come in the form of teacher marking, self marking, a next challenge, a teacher demonstration of a core skill or concept, provision of modelled answers, a 'pavement' show in the classroom.

How will homework engagement be monitored:

The expectation will be that students are responsible for the completion of their homework and therefore they should be held accountable. However we do acknowledge that this is aspirational and students may need some support to achieve this, therefore we have adopted a positive support, rather than a punitive approach.

Students will receive merits, rewards and positive praise for each homework task that is completed to at least a satisfactory standard.

To support this the school will provide a free to access homework club each evening after school until 5.00pm. Opportunities to complete homework each lunchtime will also be provided.

Teachers will reach out to parents where students are not completing homework and joint support will be offered. In some cases bespoke arrangements will be made to support individual students, this could be to support specific living arrangements, SEN needs, student attitudes and beliefs.

The school will not use detentions or reflections as a consequence of noncompliance with homework. This includes if a hand in deadline is missed. At Henlow we pride ourselves on knowing our students and families and encourage all colleagues to build strong relationships which allow for open communication between school and families.