



Homework Policy

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Contents :

- Rationale
- Key Stage Three Homework
- Key Stage Four Homework
- Appendix (with schedules and examples)

RATIONALE

Homework is an important part of every student's education. It is an opportunity not only to extend the learning that goes on within the classroom but to develop independent learning skills which better prepare students for future success. As a school which is serious about learning, regular homework develops habits in students which encourage them to work under their own steam and deepen their understanding. The nature of homework tasks also develops students' abilities to explore, research and respond in creative ways to supplement the taught curriculum.

At Unity College, the style of homework that we set is tailored to suit each key stage and is designed to support the overall curriculum experience.

At Key Stage 3, homework takes the form of Independent Learning Activities' (ILA).

At Key Stage 4, homework is set more traditionally, by each subject.

Key Stage Three Homework Schedule

Independent Learning Activities (ILAs)

In Years 7 and 8, students are set ILAs as homework each week. An ILA represents a significant piece of independent work ranging from 3 to 5 hours each week. Whilst the ILA should be the student's own work – we encourage parents to get actively engaged with their children by discussing the ILA and providing encouragement and advice.

In Year 7, some subjects work together across a thematic curriculum – this is called iXL. Homework for iXL lessons will take the form of an independent learning activity which must be completed in the student's Learning Log. These iXL ILAs will be marked by the student's PD Tutor and time devoted in PD sessions to discuss and share the completed Learning Logs. Other subject areas (outside of iXL) will set their own ILAs as per the published schedule and these will be marked by the student's class teacher.

All iXL ILAs will link to the current theme for the term / half term. In Year 7, all iXL subjects share a common theme. In Year 8, the Expressive Arts subjects work together on one theme which runs for the whole term while the other iXL subjects continue to share half-termly themes. (This is highlighted by the coloured sections of the schedule).

KEY POINTS:

- ILAs must only be set according to the published schedule to avoid overloading students with too much homework
- ILAs must be differentiated to enable all students, regardless of ability, to complete them to the best of their ability
- There should be a range of tasks including a **literacy** and numeracy or ICT focus
- ILAs must contain success criteria
- All ILAs must be marked and returned to students within 7 days
- ILAs should not just be 'more of the same' class work - but should extend the students' learning, providing genuine opportunities for independent problem solving, research, design and creativity
- ILAs should be accessible to students (and parents) without being dependent on prior class learning
- Year 7 iXL Learning Log ILAs should allow the students freedom to respond in a variety of ways
- Time must be built into PD sessions to discuss Year 7 Learning Logs and iXL ILAs. This will allow the PD Tutor to feed back to students, share examples of excellent work and enable students to conduct peer evaluation
- Year 7 iXL Learning Log ILAs take the format of two pages of A4 – the first outlines the task and is stuck into the Learning Log before the work and the second outlines the success criteria and provides spaces for feedback which is stuck in after the work
- All other ILAs take the format of A5 booklets
- All ILAs are uploaded to the VLE so that students and parents can access them from home / replace or reprint if lost / access any additional resources / know which ILA is current for the week
- ILAs should be substantial enough to equate to 5 hours work over the week
- ILAs must be checked for accuracy and quality before issuing

Key Stage Four Homework

Following a curriculum structure change in June 2012, Key Stage Four now includes students in years nine, ten and eleven.

At KS4, students are working towards specific qualifications and, as such, homework is set more traditionally by each subject area. We still have a responsibility to ensure that homework is spread fairly throughout the week so that students are able to plan their time accordingly. The complexity of the KS4 options based curriculum makes a simple homework timetable difficult to implement successfully. Instead, we publish a timetable showing which night of the week is set aside for students to **complete** each subject's homework.

KEY FACTS :

- Students should write up a personalised version of the homework timetable, replacing 'Opt1' etc with their own subjects – this should be copied into their planners
- Subjects can set homework **max** once weekly (and wait 7 days for hand in) so that students have a scheduled day to complete. (It doesn't matter therefore which day it is set).
- Some subjects might want to set homeworks with a quicker turnaround. Core subjects teach students 4 days out of 5, so can simply set homework just before their scheduled night in order to get a quick completion (this would then constitute that subject's homework for the week)
- Parents often like to know what the expected amount and frequency of homework should be. In general, the frequency of homework can range from one piece of extended homework per half term to one shorter piece each week (depending on need throughout the year). A general guideline for shorter weekly homework is around one hour per subject per week.
- All homework will be logged on the VLE so that students and parents can clearly see what has been set and when it is due to be handed in

Key Stage Four Homework Timetable (showing allocated night of completion)

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
English Opt 2 subjects (excluding iD)	Opt 1 subjects	Maths Opt 4 subjects (excluding iD)	Opt 3 subjects	Core Science Opt 5 subjects

NB: Opts 2 and 4 lined up with English & Maths as these are the opt columns where students will do core iD / ICT where students are less likely to receive regular homework.