Homework and assessments are an important part of a student’s learning experience while at school. Homework and assessments affirm the partnership in learning between parents and teachers and develop in each student the ability to focus, concentrate and work independently. This policy also recognizes the importance of family and leisure activities as well as co-curricular commitments by regulating the amounts and type of homework that is set.

The purposes of homework and assessments are:
- to consolidate the day’s classwork
- to practise new skills which have been taught in the classroom
- to train students to plan and organize their time
- to train students to focus and concentrate
- to develop in students the ability to work independently
- to develop self-discipline
- to develop study habits which will lead to future academic success in the senior years of High School
- to reaffirm with parents and students that there is a learning partnership in the education process

Homework and assessments: General Principles
- Homework and assessments are most beneficial when they reinforce and consolidate what has been recently taught
- Homework and assessments are to be designed so that they can be done independently by the student
- Homework and assessments are to be qualitatively designed to meet student learning needs
- Homework and assessments will take into consideration possible constraints such as lack of universal access to the internet and computers for all students
- Homework and assessments will take into consideration the fact that boarders may not have ready access to equipment for making models, for example
- The issuing and timing of homework and assessments will take into account the school’s support of co-curricular activities
- The issuing and timing of homework and assessments will take into account the need for students to have downtime and time with families
- Note: Assessments for Years 7 - 9 are advocated by the Board of Studies as part of the process to promote individual learning
Homework and assessments: Specific Principles

Homework

- Teacher expectations for homework should be clearly explained and communicated to students for recording in their class exercise books and through the student diary.
- In Years 7 and 8 teachers will set about 15 minutes of homework per subject taught over the day; this means that homework could vary from 1 to 1.5 hours per night dependent on the mix of practical and theoretical subjects taught throughout the day.
- In Years 9 and 10 teachers will set about 20 minutes of homework per subject taught over the day; this means that homework could vary from 1.5 to 2 hours per night dependent on the mix of practical and theoretical subjects taught throughout the day.
- Homework extension is available for families who request it.
- If you are having problems completing homework for whatever reason, contact through the student diary to Tutors or class teachers is needed.
- Further, if you are having problems completing homework on a regular basis for whatever reason, contact with the Head Tutor is needed.
- Homework will not be set in the week prior to examinations - guided revision suggestions will be substituted.

Assessments

- Assessment notification for all subjects for the entire year is to be distributed to all students in the first week of term 1.
- Conscious effort is made to spread assessments across the term by the Head of Studies for all students prior to the school year - check the term planner at the end of the assessment schedule.
- Teacher expectations regarding assessments should be clearly explained and communicated to students via an assessment notice.
- Assessment notices have a standard format across faculties, including details on the outcomes being assessed, the task itself and marking criteria (see Appendix).
- Teachers should have students record the date assessment tasks are due in the student diary.
- Assessment notices must be given with a 'reasonable' lead in time allowed for the task - usually a minimum of two weeks, but this is dependent on the task being set.
- In the two week period prior to an assessment being due, minimal homework will be given in that subject as the expectation is that students will be working on their assessment.
- Assessment tasks should have clear maximum page limits and/or word lengths.
- Assessment tasks should indicate the amount of time the teacher expects that a student needs to be spent on the task.
- Homework and assessments must be the student's own work - an 'All My Own Work' statement will need to be signed for most assessment tasks (see Appendix).
- Assessments may be re-scheduled from time to time owing to unforeseen circumstances: students will be given ample notification of this and asked to record the change in the student diary.
- If for some reason a task is unable to be completed or is submitted late, an explanatory note will be needed from parents for students in Years 7 - 9; in Years 10 - 12 a doctor's certificate will be required.
- Penalties for unexplained late tasks will be imposed at a rate of 10% a day.
Assessments are taken into account with examinations for the award of the Common Grade Scale, reported on twice yearly at the end of each semester. The awarding of the Common Grade Scale is a federal government requirement of all schools and allows schools to compare students against national benchmarks from state to state.

The Common Grade Scale:

A  The student has an extensive knowledge and understanding of the content and can readily apply this knowledge. In addition, the student has achieved a very high level of competence in the processes and skills and can apply those skills to new situations.

B  The student has a thorough knowledge and understanding of the content and a high level of competence in the processes and skills. In addition, the student is able to apply this knowledge and these skills to most situations.

C  The student has a sound knowledge and understanding of the main areas of content and has achieved an adequate level of competence in the processes and skills.

D  The student has a basic knowledge and understanding in a few areas of content and has achieved a limited level of competence in the processes and skills.

E  The student has an elementary knowledge and understanding in a few areas of content and has achieved very limited competence in some of the processes and skills.

Assessments, as well as examinations, are also used as a guide for placing students into classes for the following year.

This homework and assessment policy is designed to clarify procedures and expectations for parents and students and to maximize the benefits of homework and assessments for students in our busy learning environment. Parents, staff and students are welcome to air their views on this policy to Louise Brand (Head of Studies) at lbrand@kws.nsw.edu.au