

Barker

Inspiring Tomorrow

Homework at Barker

Years 7 to 12

Homework at Barker (7 - 12)

What is the purpose of homework?

While contemporary debates arise from time to time about the efficacy of homework, at Barker we believe that it is an essential part of the learning process. Homework assists students in three key ways:

1. **Promoting good cognitive functioning and memory.** Short-term ("working") memory is limited. Therefore, knowledge and skills need to be rehearsed if they are to be transferred to more secure, long-term memory. Retrieval of information while completing homework can help students achieve this transfer, strengthening their learning.
2. **Developing self-efficacy and confidence.** Appropriate homework tasks help students to build confidence in their own abilities. This is especially crucial for students who feel very capable when their class teacher is present, but feel less confident on their own. Conversely, homework can also help students to self-assess and identify areas that need to be strengthened.
3. **Enhancing self-regulation skills.** While setting homework in and of itself will not automatically grant these skills to students, in the long run a student's approach to homework can promote better self-discipline, organisational skills and executive functioning.

How is homework managed at Barker?

Homework is managed through Canvas. Canvas has a range of functions including a calendar to assist students in planning and managing their workload. Parents are also able to view their child's homework in Canvas.

On the whole, you should expect your child to receive homework on a daily basis. Individual subjects may have differing

patterns of homework; some subjects may set regular amounts of work to be completed daily, while project-based subjects may set homework of a larger scale with longer timelines. However, the following is a rough guide to the overall amount of homework your child can expect each week:

Year 7: 6-7 Hours per week

Year 8: 7-8 Hours per week

Year 9: 9-10 Hours per week

Year 10: 12-14 Hours per week

Year 11, 12: A good guide for Year 11 and 12 courses is that students will need to do as much work out of class as they have class time. Typically, this is seven hours per 2 unit subject, per fortnight. This time will include homework, preparation for assessment events, consolidation of classwork and additional note-taking.

There will be occasions when students are not able to meet homework deadlines set by teachers. If this occurs, please encourage your child to speak with his or her teacher to explain themselves and request an extension before the work is due. Parents can support this process by adding a short note in the student's diary. If your child is spending time on homework well in excess of the hours indicated above, please contact their Head of House.

In cases of formal assessment tasks, class teachers are unable to grant extensions. Students must see the relevant Dean of their year group to apply for an extension.

How can I help my child manage their homework?

One of the benefits of homework is that it helps parents understand more about their child's schooling. We encourage you to have

high expectations of your child's completion of homework and to support them to meet these expectations. You may wish to consider the following:

- Provide an environment that allows your child to concentrate and focus.
- Encourage good routines and work habits, emphasising the principle of "delayed gratification" - work first, before play.
- Consider the placement of technology in the home. Some homework will involve the use of technology; keeping computers in a shared space will encourage your child to concentrate on the work at hand.
- Encourage your child to ask their teacher if there is anything of which they are unsure.
- After-school help is available in most subjects – make sure your child is aware of these opportunities and support them to attend these if needed. Details about these sessions can be found in the "Middle School Documents" or "Senior School Documents" section of the School Portal.

What should I do if my child says they have no homework?

Occasionally there will be times when students do not have any formal homework set. Students should use these times to revise, consolidate, and work ahead. Through programs like Focus On, O Week, and HSC Orientation, Barker continues to emphasise the importance of good study habits, self-regulation, and organisational skills. If your child says they have no homework, you might encourage them to do some of the following:

- **Check, update and summarise their notes.** Barker advocates the use of Cornell Notes as a simple and effective note taking structure. One of the features of the Cornell approach is that it encourages students to review their notes and add a summary of key points. Further information on the Cornell system can be found at <http://lsc.cornell.edu/notes.html>.
- **Practise retrieval.** Research tells us that retrieving information at ever increasing time intervals aids in long term memory. Students should review what was covered in that day's lessons and then again a week later, two weeks later and so on. Flash cards, quizzing and elaborating on notes can be used to do this.
- **Revise past topics by writing practice responses.** Past papers and test questions for most subjects are available online and can be used to solidify knowledge and skills. For example, students may wish to submit a practice essay to their teacher for feedback on how to improve their essay-writing skills.
- **Read ahead.** Spend 20 minutes looking at what is coming up next.
- **Extend themselves.** Think about aspects of their current studies that they find interesting and seek out extra material on these topics.

Many students will not naturally think about doing these activities if they are not set as formal homework. However, they are useful strategies that can help to consolidate material covered in class, build confidence and promote independent learning.



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