

Review Date: October 2024

Review Officer: Sayed Kazemi

Secondary School - Homework Policy

Rationale

RGSGQ believes that homework is an essential part of each student's education. As such, it is the school's responsibility to help its students to derive maximum benefit from guided work done outside of the classroom, so that a sense of academic responsibility and awareness of deadlines may be fostered.

Although RGSGQ recognises the important role that homework plays in providing students with opportunities for consolidation and wider independent study, the school also recognises that not all students have equal access to support when working at home. This external but determining factor must therefore be considered when setting and reviewing homework.

Ultimately, RGSGQ firmly believes that no amount of work outside of school replaces the benefits of attending lessons in school under the direct guidance of our teachers.

The guidelines below provide a framework under which RGSGQ approaches homework. It is emphasised that the specific nature and structure of homework will vary between departments and within departments according to the age and ability of students.

Research has found homework to be valuable for the following reasons:

- ✓ It can help students to make more rapid progress in learning;
- ✓ It allows students to develop the practice of working on their own without the constant presence of the teacher or other students, and away from the structured environment of timetables.
- ✓ This is essential to develop learning habits outside of the classroom, and onwards towards the later stages of secondary and tertiary education;
- ✓ Working at home can provide the quiet and private conditions needed for creative and thoughtful work of all kinds;
- ✓ It can allow valuable practice of skills learned in the classroom;
- ✓ It can allow students to use materials and other sources of information that are not always available in the classroom;
- ✓ It can involve parents and others in the students' work for their mutual benefit;
- ✓ It gives students valuable experience of working to deadlines;
- ✓ It forms a link with the methods of study that are crucial to success in higher education.

Aims

This policy aims:

- To support and raise academic achievement
- To promote independent learning skills
- To enhance students' study skills e.g. planning and time management
- To consolidate and extend class work or prepare for new learning activities
- To clarify the roles of students, parents, subject teachers and Form Tutors
- To support a healthy personal life – school life balance for our students

Procedures

General approach

We believe that homework is an important part of school life that should be beneficial, aid the learning process and reinforce student achievements. Types of homework set at RGSGQ are diverse and all should add value to a student's school experience.

As such, homework will be set regularly and when relevant, to support academic progress and holistic development. It should be noted that there will be a greater amount, frequency and level of complexity of homework tasks as students progress through the Key Stages.

Teachers set all homework electronically as an Assignment on MS Teams.

Students will submit all homework tasks on MS Teams.

There will be appropriate resources available to support; as well as the date on which the homework is due. Please note all homework tasks will have a minimum one-week deadline on MS Teams.

Parents can monitor the subject classes' MS Teams page with their child's login details.

It is important for students to set aside short and manageable periods of time in the afternoons or evenings to complete homework in a timely manner and giving the homework the appropriate amount of time to complete to the best of their ability.

However, a healthy work-life balance, including plenty of exercise and time with family and friends is also recommended for students of all ages. Form Tutors will engage their tutees in discussion on this, offer guidance and communicate with parents during parent-teacher meetings on successes, concerns, strategies and overall performance.

To support effective time management teachers at RGSGQ Secondary School will do their utmost to adhere to a weekly homework schedule for Key Stage 3. This schedule will rotate between Week A and Week B and can be found below.

This will support parents and students to manage time spent on homework more effectively. Teachers of externally examined subjects will set appropriate homework assignments as per the demands of subject examination specifications for Key Stage 4 as and when required.

Week A	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Year 7	Maths	English	DT	Geography /Spanish	Science
Year 8	Science	Maths	English	DT	Geography /Spanish
Year 9	Geography /Spanish	Science	Maths	English	DT

Week B	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
Year 7	Maths	English	Art/PE	History /French	Science
Year 8	Science	Maths	English	Art/PE	History /French
Year 9	History /French	Science	Maths	English	Art/PE

*Arabic, Islamic, Qatar History will assign homework as per the demands of the local requirements and may not employ use of MS Teams.

**ICT will assign homework tasks as and when required as MS Teams skills form a component of the ICT curriculum.

The length of homework

Keeping the objective of setting relevant and purposeful homework at the forefront of our practice, it is practically impossible to set an exact length or frequency for homework tasks. It is indeed appreciated that there will be some inevitable variations based on the subject-specific needs, the characteristics of the task set and the 'ability' of individual students.

Teachers' professional judgement is therefore absolutely key in the success of this policy. The research on homework demonstrates that the impact of homework decreases as the time spent on it increases as such all teachers will strive to set homework tasks which do not exceed 25 minutes for Key Stage 3, and 35 minutes for Key Stage 4, however this may not always be possible.

If a student is spending excessive time on a homework, parents are advised to contact subject teachers via Class Dojo or email.

The nature of homework

The nature of homework will vary between year groups, different classes and topics of study. Homework may involve the following:

- Subject-specific reading / writing / spelling
- Basic exercises (quizzes on MS Forms for example) to recall learning, reinforce understanding or practise skills
- Watching a television programme or researching on the internet
- Carrying out a project. This may involve research, collection of information for an individual or group project
- Observing / recording
- Making a model to exemplify an item or work; e.g. a musical instrument, circuit games, the digestive system. Materials are either provided or involve the use of 'household junk' items. The majority of students thoroughly enjoy this type of challenge and commit more than the allocated time to the task
- Completing an exercise to practice, enforce or apply aspects of the classwork; e.g. writing up practical work
- Corrections are, where appropriate, carried out by the student. Parents may take an active role to support this activity

Feedback on homework

All pieces of homework will be recorded by teachers (for example: completed, on time/late, incomplete, missing), and not all pieces of homework need to receive a grade or be teacher-marked. Some homework tasks may include feedback as per the marking and feedback policy considerations for each department. When a piece of homework is marked by the teacher, the teacher will return the marked homework to the students as soon as possible on MS Teams, to use it as reinforcement/formative next steps.

Teachers will ensure that homework is a purposeful activity, whose objective is made clear to the students. Sufficient lesson time must be allowed to make homework instructions clear. Students must be instructed and shown how to complete the homework during classroom time.

Responsibilities

Students are responsible for:

- Accessing homework tasks and resources on MS Teams using their personal login information
- Managing their time to complete the homework to the best of their ability by the deadline

Teachers are responsible for:

- Setting purposeful homework tasks as assignments on MS Teams and giving feedback in a timely manner
- Ensuring the distinction between 'core' and 'optional' homework is explicit on MS Teams and in the Secondary School Planner
- Planning their lesson so that time is kept for students to be shown how to complete any homework tasks.
- Uploading all necessary tasks, instructions, resources and a clear deadline on MS Teams
- Following up on homework completion as per the Positive Education Policy and communicating with parents through constructive conversations about subject-specific homework requirements, in order to build a strong, purposeful relationship between classroom learning and homework.

Form Tutors are responsible for:

- Ensuring their tutees can access MS Teams effectively and have their login details
- Engaging their tutees in informative and supportive conversations on the impact of homework
- Engaging their tutees in informative and supportive conversations on study skills and methods as per the PSHE programme
- Following concerns evidenced in a round robin, engaging in constructive conversations with parents if homework is a general obstacle to a student's overall performance

Parents are responsible for:

- Ensuring students have a quiet and dedicated space to study at home, and a learning-conducive environment
- Ensuring family life is organised in such a way that it supports prompt and effective completion of homework tasks
- Managing all outside-of-school factors that could prevent their child from completing the homework set to the best of their ability and by the deadline
- Making an effective use of MS Teams to support their child to complete the homework as per the expectations set
- Contacting subject/form teachers via Class Dojo or email regarding any homework concerns

Note to parents

Parents are not expected to be experts in the content of each homework Assignment. The role of parents is to encourage and reassure students, to provide a suitable environment that promotes a healthy study atmosphere and to ensure students meet all assignment deadlines for each subject.