



# CLONGOWES

CLONGOWES WOOD COLLEGE SJ

## STUDY ASSIGNMENTS POLICY (SEPTEMBER 2017)

The mission of Clongowes Wood College is to educate its students according to the best traditions and highest standards of Jesuit schooling and the values of the Gospel, as expressed in The Characteristics of Jesuit Education.

Clongowes aims to create an open, happy, stimulating, mutually respectful community in which young people are able to develop the full range of their talents and abilities in a balanced, integrated and generous way.

The pursuit of excellence is a core objective and the College seeks to maximise the development of each student's competencies in academic and co-curricular areas.

The undertaking of assignments in study time contributes to the pursuit of academic excellence. The College actively promotes assignments that require cooperative learning as these develop valuable skills and emphasise the importance of a learning community within the College.

### RATIONALE: WHY ASSIGNMENTS

Assignments can take many forms depending on the subject and topic in question. They help students to reinforce and reflect on learning that has taken place in the classroom or to encourage further research. Assignments are the out-of-class tasks that a student is assigned as an extension of classroom learning.

Regular assignments:

- are a valuable aspect of the learning process contributing to the reinforcement of sound learning skills.
- develop cognitive, logical, intuitive, creative, presentation skills and improves memory skills
- consolidate and supplement the learning done in class,
- assists students to revisit and reflect on learning that has taken place in the classroom
- extend class learning, for example through additional reading
- encourage the skills needed for students to study effectively on their own and promote independent learning
- have the ultimate aim of enhancing academic achievement.

Four types are commonly assigned: practice, preparation, and extension and cooperative.

### Practice Assignments

Practice assignments reinforce newly acquired skills or knowledge. These assignments are most effective when carefully evaluated by the teacher, when matched to the ability and background of the individual student, and when students are asked to apply recent learning directly and personally.

### Preparation Assignments

Intended to provide background information, these assignments can include readings in the class text, library/online research, collecting materials for a class demonstration, and other activities requiring the gathering or organizing of information before a class discussion or demonstration.

Effective preparation includes guidelines on why and how the assignment should be completed. In addition, accurately estimating a task's level of difficulty and coordinating the assignments among various courses may help teachers avoid overburdening students.

### Extension Assignments

These assignments encourage individualized and creative learning by emphasizing student initiative and research. Frequently long-term, continuing projects that parallel class work, extension assignments require students to apply previous learnings.

### Co-operative Assignments

These assignments encourage cooperative learning between students during study and facilitate the students in the use of the full range of learning skills as they work in a collaborative fashion with their peers. These assignments may also be any of the types indicated above.

## **GOALS OF THIS POLICY:**

- To ensure consistent approaches to the setting and reviewing of assignments across the school curriculum
- To ensure an equitable distribution of study-time for each subject
- To reduce pressure on students from assignment overload
- To promote the development by students of good learning habits
- To enable students to develop a capacity to organise their own learning
- To enhance the academic achievements of students

- To ensure a consistent approach from teachers to the assignment and review of homework/study across the school.
- To promote student awareness of the value of assignments to their overall progress in their subject fields.

## POLICY: CONTENT

- Assignments set will be purposeful and meaningful to the work of the class or to some future work.
- Extended exercises may form part of an on-going assessment of each student.
- Students are expected to present assignments on the date specified by the teacher.
- Students absent due to school related activities (e.g. matches, music lesson etc.) must ensure that assignments set in their absence are completed.
- A student absent for a period of time is expected to make every effort to complete assignments missed while absent.
- A student absent for an extended period should contact the Academic Year Head for a record of assignments set during this period.
- The number of assignments given in each subject area will be specified and agreed by the subject department
- Assignments given will be monitored to ensure that students are not overloaded
- A rough time guide will be suggested for each year group
- A balance will be maintained between written/practical assignments and oral/learning assignments
- Teachers will correct assignments and give feedback to students in accordance with afl(assessment for learning) best practice
- The teacher will employ differentiated assignments to accommodate all learning styles and aptitudes
- Students will be given specific training in homework/study skills and cooperative learning
- Parents will be informed by the AYH when students consistently neglect to carry out set assignments and detention may be arranged to enable the student to complete the work under supervision
- Extended assignments may form part of an on-going assessment of each student
- Records of assignments will be kept by each teacher.
- Each student must keep a record of all assignments given in his Journal. Journals will be monitored regularly.
- Each student should have the required copy books for each subject and should enter written assignments into the correct copy. It should be dated e.g. assignments for day/month/year. Assignments should be presented clearly.

## ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### **Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, Director of Studies and Academic Year Heads**

- To establish structures and procedures for the implementation of the policy
- To monitor the implementation of the policy
- Academic Year Heads and/or Assistant Academic Year Heads may periodically check students' diaries to ensure they are using them well and to observe notes from teachers.

### **Subject Teachers**

- To implement the policy, review assignments and provide feedback to students
- To have a subject-specific assignment plan outlining minimum frequency for assignments
- To ensure that an appropriate mix of afl and aol (assessment of learning) assignments are given to the student to maximise their learning in the subject
- To inform students clearly of their assignments well before the end of class. In many cases it is advisable that assignments be given to students at the start of class.
- To check that assignments are done, corrected/graded and records kept
- To regularly instruct students in homework/study skills.
- To ensure, where essays are being given, that the assignment is given a number of days prior to the deadline.

### **Pastoral Care Personnel (Prefects, AYHs, Chaplains, Guidance and Learning Support Teachers)**

- To monitor the effects of the policy and to identify students experiencing difficulty
- To provide support and guidance, especially for those experiencing difficulty
- To liaise with subject teachers, especially in relation to consideration for students with special educational needs

### **Parents are encouraged**

- To support College policy
- To ensure students who are absent from the College, at home, undertake their assignments

### **Students are required**

- To make their best effort to maximise their learning in the classroom and study halls
- To write their assignments into their school diaries
- To organise their time to ensure their assignments are completed on time and to the best of their ability.
- To do assignments set, both oral/learning and written/practical
- Assignments should be completed on time, presented on time in an organised and tidy fashion and to the best of the student's ability.

- If a student has been absent from class, the onus is on him to discover what assignments have been set and to try to complete them
- From the beginning of Elements each student is expected to establish good learning habits.
- Present assignments neatly in correct copy

## **IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURES**

- Each Subject Department will develop agreed guidelines on the amount and frequency of assignments and the balance between written/practical assignments and oral/learning that is desirable for each year group and for each subject
- Each Subject Department will develop guidelines on the learning/study skills appropriate for that subject. Teachers will advise students of these requirements.
- Each Language Department will decide on the minimum number of essays per year group per year
- The Academic Year Head and Assistant Academic Year Head, in consultation with the relevant subject teachers, will develop an assignment schedule and time guide for the Year group where appropriate.
- Learning support teachers will advise on designing assignments for students with special educational needs.

## **MONITORING PROCEDURES**

- Academic Year Heads will conduct ongoing monitoring through informal discussion with students and subject teachers, and through spot checks of the students work, and will note feedback from students, teachers and parents.
- Subject Departments will review implementation

## **REVIEW PROCEDURES**

The policy will be reviewed once in the life-time of each Board. The review team will comprise the Headmaster, Deputy Headmaster, Director of Studies and Academic Year Heads.

- Views and experiences of teachers, students and parents will be surveyed in relation to the success criteria
- School records will be analysed to assess impact on students' academic progress

The progress of students with special educational needs will be given particular Consideration.



Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 20<sup>th</sup> November 2017

**Mr. Peter Gray, Chair Board of Management**