

Making the most of your subscription to

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There is no right or wrong way to use the handbook in your school. Every school will have different programs already in place, different amounts of time available, different levels of computer access and different types of students. Rather than a rigid program, the program is designed to be flexible so you can use it in the way that best suits the needs of your school and your students.

A good approach is to do a mix of both allowing students to browse the handbook on an as-needs basis either at home or at school and formally completing some units at school using the worksheets for the unit.

However it is wise to make a decision and to have a clear plan.

Possible approaches for your school to consider:

1. SELF-USE RESOURCE FOR THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY

The idea is that you make the resource available to the school community, but that is as far as the school's involvement goes – your school acts as a facilitator arranging for the families at your school to have access to this resource. Individual teachers may also choose to use as a support tool with students.

Ways you can communicate about the site to the school community are:

- Place the monthly study skills tip (emailed to the main contact) and reminder about the login details into the newsletter each month.
- Place a link to the site on your school website or intranet.
- Hand out flyers at year meetings, parent/student meetings, or information and orientation evenings, encouraging students and parents to use the site at home as needed.
- Remind students about the site at year level assemblies.
- Send the reminder for teachers email (sent at the start of this year) to teachers with the attached flyer and self-tour for teachers.
- Place information about the site in the school diary (we can give you the content for this).
- Teachers may specify units for individuals as needed, for example if parents ring up saying their student is disorganised, or doesn't know how to study, they can be directed to the appropriate units of the site.
- Teachers may set particular units as homework for classes to complete or suggest classes review particular units at certain times of the year (eg. the section on examinations at examination time) or to meet particular class needs (e.g. organisational skills).
- Teachers can use as a class activity for learning support classes or study skills sessions.

2. ALLOCATE UNITS TO PARTICULAR YEAR GROUPS TO DO AT HOME

Some schools specify that students are expected to complete all units by a certain year level.

For example, to show their commitment to senior studies or as part of the requirements to move from Year 10 to Year 11, your students could be expected to have completed ALL units in the handbook by the end of Year 10.

They can start working on these as soon as they enter high school, but by the end of Year 10 teachers will check in the tracking system to make sure students have completed all quizzes and modules. Then in the senior years if they need help or to review a section they will also know where to go back in the handbook to find it. Teacher mentors can recommend that individual Year 11 and 12 students review particular units.

3. USE WITH A YEAR GROUP(S) AT SCHOOL, REST OF THE SCHOOL HAS ACCESS AT HOME AS NEEDED

You may have a particular year level where you would like to target study skills. For example, some schools focus on Year 7 or 8 to develop study skills, while others have an intensive push in Year 10 or 11. You would then either

let students select which units to work through or give them a list of which units to do, in what order, based on what you perceive as the most relevant units for that group. You then place the monthly study skills tip and reminder about the login details into the newsletter each month so that the rest of the school can use the site as needed.

□ 4. ALLOCATE UNITS TO PARTICULAR YEAR GROUPS TO DO AT SCHOOL

You may choose to schedule the content to be distributed formally over all of Years 7-12 and have each year group complete the worksheets for the allocated units throughout the year. For example: Year 7 'at school' units 1-5, Year 8 'at home' units 1-5, Year 9 'specific skills' units 1-5, Year 10 'at home' units 6-10, Year 11 'tests and exams' units 1-5. However most schools will have particular units they want particular years to focus on. The Topics Completed Tracker handout is useful for planning.

You can then have students work through the topics systematically at school in a computer lab during pastoral lessons or other appropriate times to improve overall study skills. The units may be integrated into the school's pastoral program (eg as part of a 'learning to learn' program). Some schools print off the worksheets for the unit as needed while others print off all the worksheets and bind them into a workbook for the students. Throughout the year they then have the students work systematically through the topics (or allocate different topics to different year groups). There is also a record of completion sheet (just click on any of the print worksheet links) for students to keep track of the units they have completed.

Qu: Can ELES provide a specific program to follow?

Unfortunately it is an impossible task to provide a suggested program or allocation of topics as:

- Every school has different year groups with which they use the handbook.
- Even if schools choose the same year group to focus on, they will have different amounts of time to allocate to the program which will influence the choice of topics.
- Some schools have exams and some don't.
- Every unit can be experienced by all year levels at different stages of understanding (although they may get more out of it when they revisit it again at a later year level). But every school has a differing range of student abilities. There are some schools I work with where it would be ridiculous to get Year 10 to look at classroom skills and other schools where classroom skills unit would actually be really useful for them – it really depends on the types of students you have.
- Many schools have an existing pastoral program and they want to choose units to complement what they are already doing. For example I would do research skills probably around Year 9 in most schools but a school I was working with recently had a big push on this in Year 7 so they wanted to do that unit then.
- With all these variables, a suggested program that will work for all schools with such different situations just doesn't work.

But what we can do is have a chat to you if you like about your students, how much time you are allocating and then give you an opinion as to what topics we think might suit each year group. It can help to talk it out with someone who knows each topic intimately or use us just to bounce off some ideas. Or you can email information about the time you will have available, the type of students you have and focus of your program and we can suggest the best units to focus on. Email info@enhanced-learning.net or call Prue on 0416 293 087.

Remember: There is no right or wrong way to use the handbook in your school. Every school will have different programs already in place, different amounts of time available, different levels of computer access and different types of students!

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