

Ask a teacher



Guide

Asking your teacher good questions helps you clarify your understanding and develop as an independent learner. Things to consider:

CONTENT

- **Subject-specific**
Ask your class teacher in the first instance, follow up with the Head of Department if required.
- **Personal wellbeing**
Ask your Tutor in the first instance, follow up with your Year Coordinator if required.
- **Academic program**
Ask your Tutor in the first instance, follow up with the Director of Curriculum if required.

TIMING

- **During your lesson** if it is relevant to discussion or other class members.
- **At the conclusion of your lesson** if it's a personal matter or related to the manner in which the teacher delivers the content.
- **During the week** if you encounter problems with homework or require individual direction with a specific topic.
- **Well in advance** if asking about assessments or draft submissions.

METHOD

- In person
- Via email

PREPARATION

- **Research**
Look at your class notes, CANVAS, feedback on homework/assessments; ascertaining the nature of the issue will help you form good questions, promoting good discussion and good learning.
- **Be specific**
Your teacher has a lot of students and limited time; make the most of your appointment by asking specific questions e.g. *I have looked at the class notes and the textbook and still can't understand how to use the trigonometry formula to answer example X.*

ETIQUETTE

- **Be polite**
This can be a challenge if you are frustrated or disappointed, but it is crucial in building a positive and productive relationship with your teacher.
- **Be timely**
Ask for direction with assessments well in advance of the due date.

Be mindful of your teacher's calendar e.g. best not to make demands in the last week of Term 4 when teachers are writing reports and marking examinations.

- **Be patient**
Allow adequate time for your teacher to consider then respond to your request.

If you have asked about a complex issue, perhaps indicate the issue in an email in advance of a meeting so the teacher has time to consider a response.

What's wrong with this email?

Yes, it is one we've actually received!

Subject: Need notes!
What up Maceman.
Was sick yesterday and need the notes.

Re-write the email the right way!

Feel free to write your own if you need to contact a teacher for another reason.

Subject Line: Your name, Your Year Group, Subject, Issue

Salutation: Dear Mr/Mrs/Ms/Dr/Prof X,

Body copy: During the lesson/homework assignment on A, I encountered an issue with B. I have read/researched/reviewed C and am still struggling with how A is related to D. Is it possible to cover this in the next lesson?

OR

May I please meet with you at recess following the next lesson or at another time?
I am available at the following times: E, F, G, H.

Sign off: Yours sincerely,