

Top Tips for THRIVING at DJSF (GENERAL)

- ✓ Make the most of it and enjoy what Johnston has to offer.
- ✓ Be yourself and don't make a new personality to fit it.
- ✓ Hit a good balance of work and play. If you don't work enough, you'll fall behind and will only get more and more stressed but equally importantly, make the most of your time to enjoy yourself. The lessons and relationships with the teachers are more relaxed and so that element of fun is crucial.
- ✓ Don't abuse the free time you're given between lessons as it comes in very valuable for homework if you're struggling to do it at home. Also get in a good relationship with your teachers and constantly ask them questions about things you don't understand.
- ✓ Getting involved in societies. Looking back at year 11 me, I never thought I would have joined any and am so happy that I was encouraged in assemblies at the start of year 12. I enjoyed them way more than I thought I would and it had become valuable to my studies as well as just a lunchtime activity! Loved MedSoc and Language Soc. Also taking other opportunities such as becoming a house leader, which I also never would have done in the past but it has been nothing but fun and rewarding.
- ✓ Don't miss days of school, keep your attendance high, lessons have so much more content compared to GCSEs lessons (which are easier to catch up on the work).
- ✓ Don't hold back, meet new people, try new societies, learn new things.
- ✓ If you're new to the school (coming to the sixth form from doing GCSEs at another school) then don't stay in your previous school bubble, make friends. If you came from Durham Johnston previously then make new friends with the people from other schools, I made friends with somebody from another school who I would now consider to be one of my closest friends - so do it.
- ✓ Never be afraid to ask for help - whether this is for subject help with your teachers or personal issues with the sixth form leadership/head students, there are always people around who are more than willing to share their knowledge and advice.
- ✓ Collaborate. Be resilient. Get involved.
- ✓ Only surround yourself with people who make you happy. Remove yourself from negative situations. Don't necessarily cut off friendships completely, but if it is bad then it will translate into the rest of your life and cloud your enjoyment of school. Also, if you get a job, always prioritise school; say no to shifts if you have tests and deadlines because at the end of the day that is going to be more important than the £4.35 an hour you would have gotten. Don't work too much; the money is nice but you need time for yourself to keep sane, and no one is forcing you to have a job.
- ✓ Don't compare yourself to others. Just because someone else is working / revising in a certain way doesn't mean it will work for you! Be confident in what you are doing and know that if you are always focusing on learning and meeting deadlines, you are doing well.
- ✓ Be kind to everyone, it really does make the year feel more like a community.

Top Tips for THRIVING at A Level Study (ACADEMIC)

- ✓ My top tip would be pick subjects you enjoy the most because there is a lot of work that has to be put in and if you don't enjoy something you won't have the motivation to do this.
- ✓ Choose subjects that you want to study, not the ones that your friends take or that you think look good, but also ones that suit the way you work. Don't take a subject if it is incredibly hard for you to do.
- ✓ Make a definition list and put it at the front of your folder adding in every new definition you receive as soon as you get it
- ✓ Keep on top of work and make sure to ask questions about what you don't understand. Always try to get the best result possible in mocks because you don't know what could happen down the line. (lockdown)
- ✓ Get homework done. Do not let it gather up because you will regret it.
- ✓ Utilise your study periods
- ✓ Love the subjects you're doing.
- ✓ Consolidate what you've learnt in lessons and ASK QUESTIONS.
- ✓ READ AHEAD!!! I find it so much easier in lessons and further down the line for revision by reading ahead to start with. At the start of year 12, I was told to do this but was a bit too lazy to do it but then everything gets a bit much and you end up stressed to bits. It's far better to do it now than later.
- ✓ Get on top of your work and don't get stressed. A LEVELS ARE SO MUCH MORE DIFFICULT! I went comfortably from 8s to Ds and I understand now that I needed a different approach. In fairness, I was told this was the case in assemblies. Making mistakes is fine so long as you change and learn from them (after that I'm not getting Ds anymore)
- ✓ Use your private study periods!! Even if you set aside your one-hour period for a more relaxed work approach, using your frees for work is the best habit to get into. Make a study playlist - this will help you 'get in the zone'
- ✓ Work with the teachers help because that's what they're there to do and they will happily help you.
- ✓ Use sessions provided for extra support. Some subjects do lunchtime or afterschool drop-ins and if it's about anything else then Mrs Lennon can see you early or at lunchtime. Don't be afraid to ask.