

Assessment and Exam Preparation

Assessment Weeks/Mocks

- Assessment Week 1: 2nd -13th November
- Yr 13 mocks; Yr 12 Assessment Week 2: 1st -12th February 2027
- Yr 12 end-of-year exams: 21st -30th June

List any additional exam dates specific to you:



Contents

3 - How to study effectively

4-6 - Assessment/exam information sheets to be completed before your revision for each round of assessments/exams;

7-15 - Revision-planning templates to use in the lead-up to assessments weeks and exams

Eighteen effective ways to revise(plenty to keep you busy!):

16 - Mix and Match & Quiz, Quiz, Teach

17 - Dual coding / Conversion & Match it Up

18 – Mark schemes & Vocabulary

19 – Brain dump and Analysing Examiners' Reports

20 – Mind maps and WAGALLS

21 – Spacing and Interleaving

22 – Test yourself and 'Buddy Up'

23 - Just do it and Mnemonics

24 – Flashcards

25 – Deliberate Practice - past papers



"SUCCESS
DOESN'T COME
TO YOU,
YOU
GO TO IT."



How to Study Effectively

- Get organised right from the beginning. Keep your folders, notes and flashcards etc organised and ensure they are easily accessible.
- Plan your time carefully and realistically by creating a timetable – work out when you can fit in short periods of study throughout your day. **STICK TO THE PLAN**
- Set clear goals – Break subjects into manageable topics.
- Create a distraction-free environment – a quiet space with enough room to work in; no tv and **PUT YOUR PHONE AWAY!**
- Stay consistent – short, regular sessions beat cramming.
- Take breaks – Stay healthy – Sleep, nutrition, and exercise matter.
- Reward yourself after you have completed each study session.

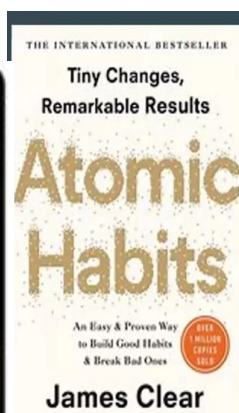


DON'T WASTE TIME ON INEFFECTIVE METHODS: just reading your notes and highlighting things won't get you very far!

- Use active recall – Test yourself regularly.
- Use spaced retrieval; recall information at progressively longer intervals.
- Teach what you learn – explaining reinforces understanding.
- Practise planning and writing full exam responses regularly



"If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning. And if it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first."



Implementation intentions.

I will (BEHAVIOUR) at (TIME) in (LOCATION).

"Hundred of studies have shown that implementation intentions are effective for sticking to our goals, such as writing down the time and place you will get a flu jab, do recycling, etc.

The punch line is clear: people who make a specific plan for when and where they will perform a new habit are more likely to follow it through." (James

1. Mix and Match

1. MIX AND MATCH!

This is not a revision technique per se, but a wise way to approach revision at A level. Essentially there are three types of revision; content based, skills based, and reflective. To achieve a strong grade at A level you need to be combining all three.

Content based revision tasks focus purely on recall and consolidation of knowledge

Skills based tasks apply this knowledge to exam scenarios or skills

required within the exam, such as evaluation.

Reflective tasks focus on addressing an individual's weaknesses and acting to improve these. This is the most powerful form of revision as it prevents repeat errors.

You should do a mixture of red, blue and green

Creating revision cards
Creating Knowledge mind maps
Watch video summaries
Reading over class notes
Reading course textbook
Making condensed notes
Completing exam papers and self-assessing with the mark scheme
Reading model answers
Comparing model answers to your own
Revising in groups and questioning each other
Creating your own exam questions
Handing in additional exam practise and seeking help from teacher
Analysing examiners reports
Completing challenging wider reading around the subject

KEY

Red: E- Grade AO1 Content based revision without skills

Blue: C/B Grade AO2/3 Applying content to exam skills (application and evaluation)

Green: A/A* Grade AO1/2/3/4 Reflection focussed purely on skills and 'BECOMING THE EXAMINER'

RED – This is what GCSE students do, at A level you should complete ALL content revision materials as you go, students who wait till the end to do this and ONLY do RED tasks do not have exam skills and fail!!!

BLUE – Grade C+ students do this throughout their studies, this is what enables you to make progress and is the difference between GCSE and A level study. At GCSE this was important, at A level it is impossible to succeed without it!!!

GREEN – This is what makes an A/A* student, students who complete green activities are reflective and recognise what they need to do to improve before a teacher nags them about it!

2. Quiz, Quiz, Teach

For this one you need a friend to compete with!
Either at home or virtually.

Spend 10-15 minutes writing some questions down on revision cards. You can make as many as needed but 10 - 15 is probably enough.

Use your textbook or exercise to make them challenging! You want to win surely?



Then quiz each other taking turns and keep a note of the score. Whoever gets the most right answers wins the battle!

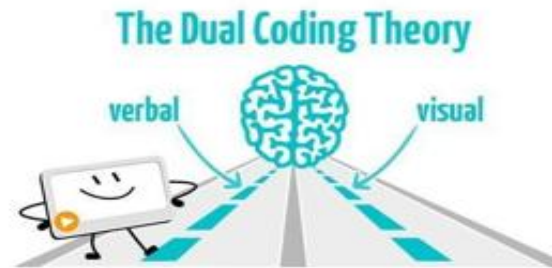
3. Dual Coding/Conversion

3. DUAL CODING / CONVERSION

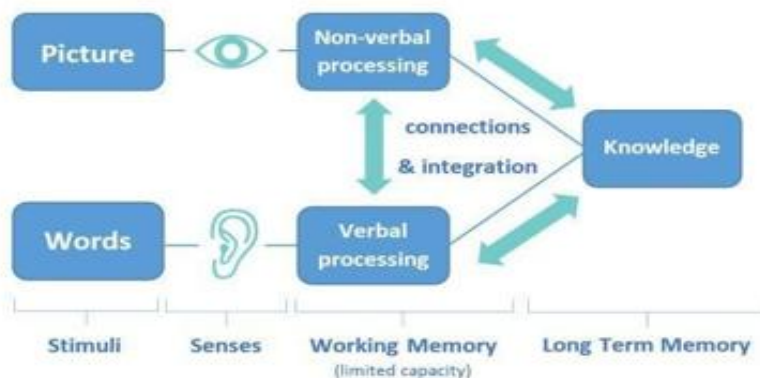
Dual coding is the process of blending both words and pictures.

Take your revision notes and add drawings / pictures to help you remember or take chunks of text and turn them into mind maps or brainstorms.

Your brain is more likely to remember as you have made visual connections with the words or text.



Allan Paivio's Dual-Coding Theory



You can also try Conversion:

Take information in one format and "convert" it into a different format:

- A flow chart into text
- Text into a mind map
- Text into a graph
- A graph into a news report
- Text into a picture
- Diagrams into a poem/ story

4. Match it Up!

4. MATCH IT UP!

- 1 Pick a topic in a subject that has a lot to remember e.g Science
- 2 Take 40 blank A5 revision cards. 20 of one colour, 20 of another.
- 3 Find a specific topic and then write out 20 questions that you are not yet confident you can answer. Then write out the answers from your exercise book or textbook on separate cards, keep the two piles separate and shuffle them.
- 4 The task is to then spread them all out on the floor or a large table and give yourself 5 minutes on a timer to match them all accurately.



If you do it in less than 5 minutes, try it again the next day and see if you can beat your time. Or give your cards to a friend and challenge them to beat your time!

5. Mark Schemes

5. MAKE THE MOST OF MARK SCHEMES!

Students often use past papers to plan and answer questions, BUT, do they always follow up with self-assessment and analysis of the mark scheme? The answer is no!

Mark schemes can be used in several ways, it could be simply to assess a practice question the student complete in exam conditions. Or student may look to mark schemes to help plan a question they are struggling with. Or you can use a mark scheme as a model, then try and create a different question and mark scheme which follows the same patterns.

Mark Scheme

Paper	Section	Mark Allocation				Total Marks	%
		Section 1	Section 2	Section 3	Section 4		
Paper 1	Section 1	10	10	10	10	40	40%
	Section 2	10	10	10	10	40	40%
Paper 2	Section 1	10	10	10	10	40	40%
	Section 2	10	10	10	10	40	40%
Total		40	40	40	40	160	160%

***This mark scheme was taken from the most recent syllabus. Please note in this mark scheme Paper 1 refers to the Listening Examination and Paper 3 refers to the Oral Examination.

6. Vocabulary

6. SUPERCHARGE YOUR VOCABULARY

Keywords and embedded subject vocabulary is the key to higher grades!

List all of the subject-specific vocabulary for a subject or an individual topic and create a glossary where you define each term in your own words

When completing practice exam responses, highlight your use of specific vocabulary

Test yourself or get someone else to test you on the meaning of each term and use each one in a sentence to show you know how to use it correctly



7. Brain Dump

7. BRAIN DUMP

The act of constantly retrieving the same information will strengthen the memory.

Get a blank sheet of paper and set yourself a 5-minute timer. Then pick a topic you are fairly comfortable with but that you know you need to revise.

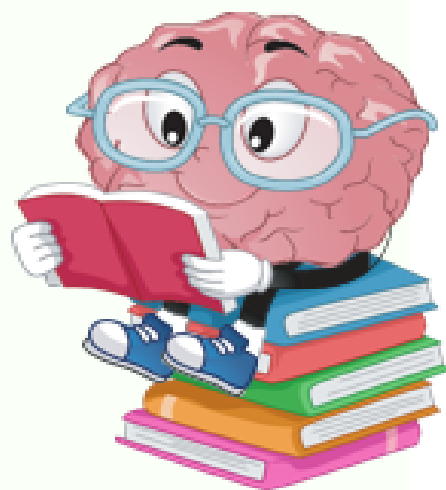
On the paper, write down as much as you can remember from memory without cheating, then when your time is up, go back and check what you missed.

e.g. History - you may remember many parts of the Cuban missile crisis but miss dates or key people from this event.



Then, using a different coloured pen, add the bits you missed. These are the parts you then to revise for a few days or transfer to a flash card.

The trick with this retrieval activity is to then repeat the task a few days or a week later and see if you can remember more.



8. Examiners' Reports

8. ANALYSING EXAMINERS' REPORTS

This one is a very powerful revision strategy, yet many students have never even looked at an examiner report before, or don't even know what one is.

An examiners report is written by an exam board after each exam. It highlights the strengths and weaknesses of the cohort who sat it and instructs future students what pitfalls to avoid and what skills/content got the top grades. They are available on all exam board websites and are best used after a students has attempted a practice question and wishes to self-assess it.



9. Mind Maps

9. MIND MAPS

Often underrated, if done well mind maps can be very powerful to build and strengthen neural connections to jog your memory.

The two most important parts students often miss are the use of different colours and labelling the branches so they are not just blobs of information scattered around randomly.



Check out expert Tony Buzan on YouTube for top tips:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MlabrWv25qQ>

10. WAGOLLS

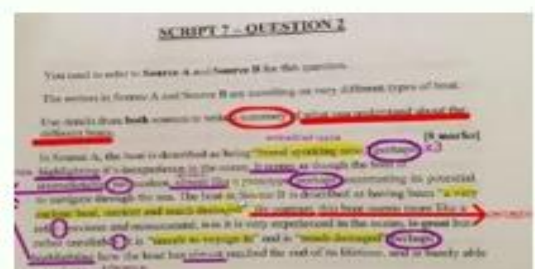
10. WAGOLLS

Model answers are either provided by your teachers, or they can be found on the exam board's website. Wherever you find them, use them by comparing them to your answers.

Apply the generic mark scheme to both answers and consider how the skills in the model answer differ to the skills in your own. How can you replicate these skills?



Another useful exercise is to find a 'mid-range' answer and improve it so that it reaches the top band of the mark scheme.



11. Spacing

11. SPACING

You will be able to recall more knowledge to help you, if it is in your long-term memory.

In order to help the learning to stick, you need to revise small chunks, repeatedly with a gap, and then return to the same content.

This is called '**spaced practice**' because there are gaps. It is the opposite of cramming which is last minute panicking where you do an hour for a subject the night before. Not good!

Firstly, divide up the revision into small chunks of realistic and manageable time, let's say 20-30 mins a day. Then spread your subjects over the week and return to the same content at regular intervals until you can remember it!

Monday	Maths and History
Tuesday	French and Maths
Wednesday	History and French
Thursday	Maths and History
Friday	French and Maths
Saturday	DAY OFF
Sunday	History and French



12. Interleaving

12. INTERLEAVING



Interleaving is a process where students mix & combine multiple subjects & topics while they study, in order to improve their learning. Blocked practice on the other hand, involves studying one topic very thoroughly before moving to another.

"Interleaving has been shown to be more effective than block practice leading to better long-term retention."

Kate Jones

Similar to Spacing, the idea here is that you don't spend too long on one topic or one subject however tempting that might be.

Make a timetable which forces you to mix up topics and not necessarily go over them in order they were first learned. Although it can seem confusing at first, this 'cognitive conflict' is good for the brain and keeps you on your toes.

13. Test Yourself

13. TEST YOURSELF

It is clear that to check you know something, you must test yourself - but how many of us think that making notes or just rereading and highlighting is effective revision?

Research shows that you need to engage your brain in the act of trying to remember, even if it is hard, it will stick for longer eventually.

So, make sure any revision you do has an element of self testing. This is called Retrieval Practice. e.g. using flashcards is great, but only if you regularly try and remember what is on them without looking.

Use past papers or online quizzes to ensure you are regularly checking knowledge and self testing.

Remember, making mistakes is good, because if you get 10/10 every time - it's too easy. You need to know what you are forgetting, in order to work harder when revising to remember it next time.



14. 'Buddy Up'

14. BUDDY UP

Research has shown that if the person with you is working hard, you are likely to follow and copy their work ethic.

Find a friend who you know you can work with, and then arrange to spend some of your social time testing each other or helping each other make resources.

As long as you can stay away from too many distractions (phones away) this is a perfectly acceptable way to revise and you can tell your parents that the research supports this. Link this strategy to 'quiz quiz teach' (page 3) and test each other or make a board game to play against each other.

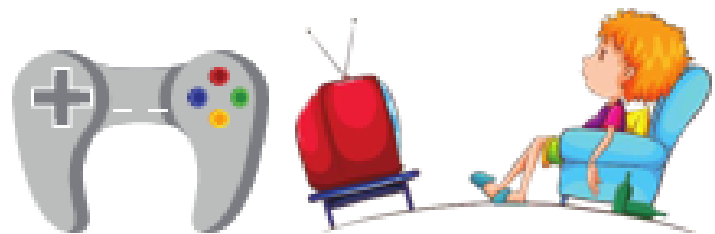


* Disclaimer some friends are not helpful with this one...but you can still stay friends!

15. Just Do it!

15. JUST DO IT!

No, this is not an advert for trainers, instead, it's a reminder that sometimes we all love to procrastinate.



On average, 75% of students consider themselves to be procrastinators. Finding imaginative ways to avoid doing what we should be doing, or spending ages on something else to put off the inevitable are all perfectly normal things to do! Ask anyone who is trying lose weight or do more exercise!

If you put off starting your revision, you will never get engaged with it, whereas sitting down and just starting anything at all is half the battle won. So don't look for other things to do that are not urgent.

Pick one of the ideas from this booklet right now, not in 10 minutes, and get revising. You will feel better afterwards, so get started now.

16. Mnemonics

16. MNEMONICS

This technique will test your imagination and can be very powerful if used well. There are lots that already exist but now it's time to make up your own!

There are 3 types of mnemonics : **Acronyms , Orders and Rhymes Acronyms:**

Create a short word to remember a process. e.g. RICE for medical injuries, which stands for Rest , Ice , Compress , Elevate

Orders: Make up a sentence that uses the first letter of each word you need e.g. My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Noodles for the order of the planets (MVEMJSUN)

Rhymes: Match words that rhyme to remember them e.g. Divorced Beheaded Died, Divorced Beheaded Survived for Henry's wives

Now make some up for your subjects using things you are interested in.

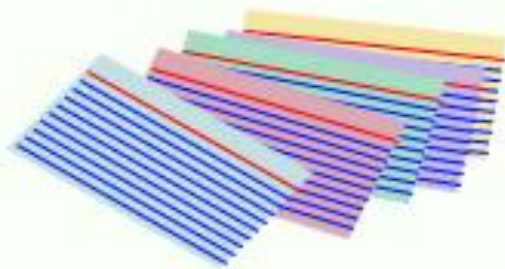


17. Flashcards

17. FLASH CARDS

Flashcards are very commonly used but how effectively do you use them? Do you spend longer making them and adding colours or highlighting than you do testing yourself? Whilst presentation and visuals are important, don't spend longer on them than necessary.

The trick is to use them whenever you can and as often as you can because they are small and portable. Also, they can be used to help friends and family test you on core knowledge or facts / formulas that you need to memorise.



HOW TO USE FLASH CARDS EFFECTIVELY

Make 3 boxes. Label them.:

Box 1: every day

Box 2: every other day

Box 3: once a week



Every flashcard will start in **Box 1**. As you answer a flashcard correctly, move the card into **Box 2**. If you incorrectly answer a flashcard, place the card back in **Box 1**. Follow this method for each flashcard in **Box 1**. At the end of this round, you will notice that some concepts remain in **Box 1** - that means that these concepts are more difficult for you and require frequent studying. The cards that have graduated to **Box 2**, on the other hand, are concepts with which you are more familiar, so you do not have to study them as frequently.

Each time you get a card correct, you move it to the next box. Each time you get a card wrong, you move it back to the previous box. Once you have finished studying for the day, you will see which concepts are ones that you need to study more frequently, and which concepts may only require you to study them once a week.

Follow the same method on each study day until all of your cards have been moved to the last box. If you have forgotten some concepts in **Box 3** by the time that study day rolls around, move the cards to the previous box.

18. Deliberate Practice

17. DELIBERATE PRACTICE / PAST PAPERS

Deliberate practice refers to a **special type of practice that is purposeful and systematic**. While regular practice might include mindless repetitions, deliberate practice requires focused attention and is conducted with the specific goal of improving performance.

To gain maximum marks on a question you need to fulfill all the exam criteria often using specific keywords and subject vocabulary. This is hard when you are studying 3 or 4 subjects and are working under extreme timed pressure in exam conditions.

One way to improve performance is to keep going over your technique so it becomes automatic, like a sports star who endlessly works on specific skills refining technique with a coach.



ASSESSMENT WEEK 1 OVERVIEW	Subject 1:	Subject 2:	Subject 3:	Subject 4:
When is my assessment in this subject?				
What topics/content will I be assessed on?				
What format will my assessment take? Timing; no. of questions etc				
How can I prepare for the assessment independently?				
What additional support is available (if applicable)?				

ASSESSMENT WEEK 2/MOCK EXAMS OVERVIEW	Subject 1:	Subject 2:	Subject 3:	Subject 4:
When is my assessment in this subject?				
What topics/content will I be assessed on?				
What format will my assessment take? Timing; no. of questions etc				
How can I prepare for the assessment independently?				
What additional support is available (if applicable)?				

YEAR 12 EXAMS OVERVIEW	Subject 1:	Subject 2:	Subject 3:	Subject 4:
When is my assessment in this subject?				
What topics/content will I be assessed on?				
What format will my assessment take? Timing; no. of questions etc				
How can I prepare for the assessment independently?				
What additional support is available (if applicable)?				

REVISION TIMETABLE

Dates:	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
Morning							
Afternoon							
Evening							

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