

KS4 Revision Guide



What is Revision?

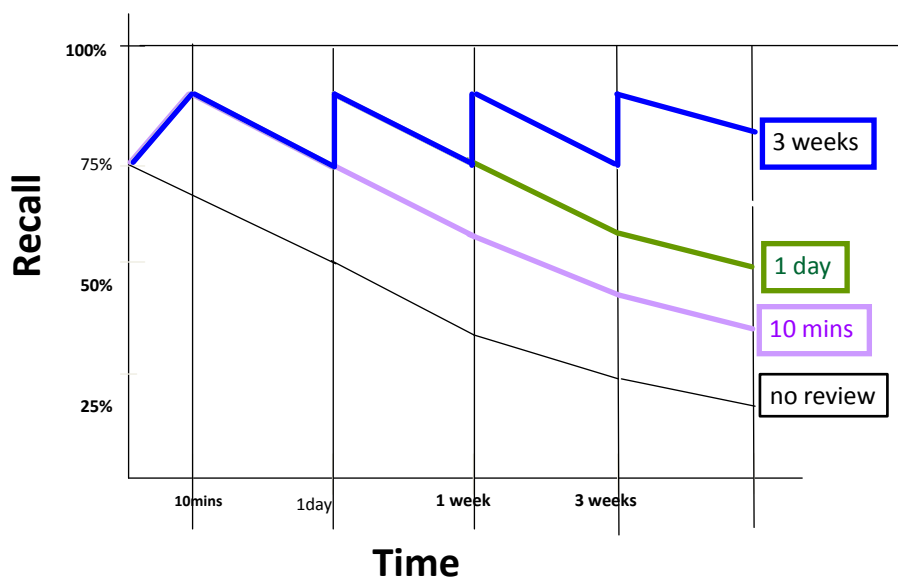
The dictionary definition of revision is:

“To read (something) several times in order to learn it in preparation for an examination.”

Revision cannot be left to the last minute. Remember you should approach the exam season like a military campaign! – Plan it in detail well before the exam so that you are confident when you walk into the exam room.

Your brain cannot take everything in all at once, it needs time to process the information. If you only learn / revise something once, you will retain some of that information. In order to retain as much information as possible you need to continually revisit the topics to make sure that as much of the information as possible has been stored in your memory. Th chart below will help you to see why it is important to keep going over things!

Review times



Preparing for Revision

Revision shouldn't just happen the night before the exam; it needs to take place long before this. Ideally during your exam course you will have reviewed your work and notes on a regular basis. Below are some hints for the period before the final exam.

- Plan to start revising 2 - 3 months before your exams.
- Get yourself a book/folder to keep your revision notes in.
- Find yourself somewhere suitable to revise:

**somewhere quiet, with no distractions, music, etc.*

**sit at a table, rather than lying on your bed*

- Organise your folders & books for each subject
- For each subject, make a list of topics that you need to revise:

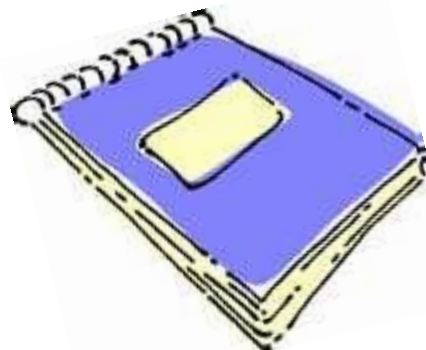
**break the syllabus down into small topics which you can revise in one session. Your teacher will help you with this.*

** start off with the topics you know least well*

**you can then use this list to tick off those topics you have made revision notes for, those that you have read your revision notes on etc.*

**Use your PPM to help you to organise your time*

- Obtain copies of past exam papers and questions from your teacher
- Remember once you have revised all of the topics on your revision list – START AGAIN

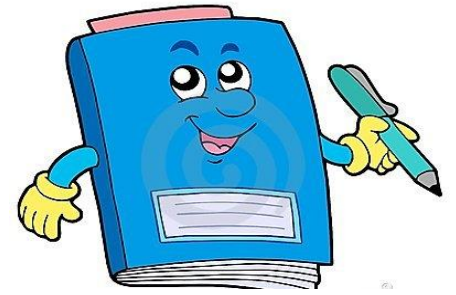


Revision Timetable

Revision needs to be structured and carefully thought out. If it isn't you could confuse yourself, miss important parts of the course without realising, or not complete all revision you need to. The best way of planning your revision is using a timetable.

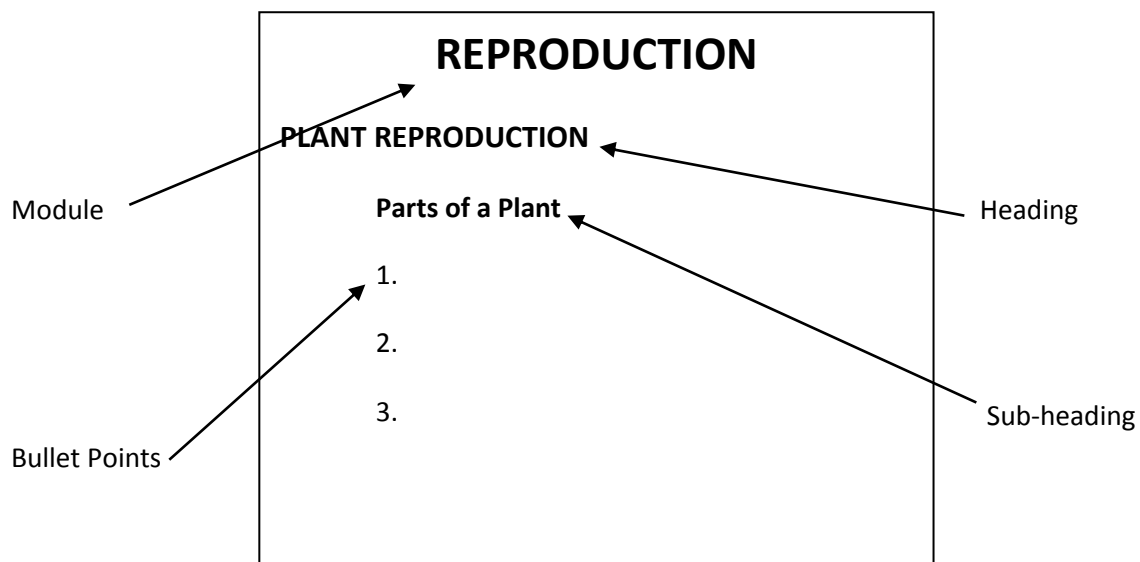
- Remember to get your revision lists for each subject first.
- Design a blank timetable that suits you. You should divide your day/time into revision blocks. Each block represents a slot in which you will revise a particular topic for a subject.
- During term time you need only worry about evenings and weekends for revision. Your blank timetable could look something like the one below. However you might want your timetable to have different time slots to the one below (p3).
- Your Learning Co-ordinator will provide you with an example of a blank revision timetable which you can use. You need to plan your revision week by week, starting the first week in March at the very latest. You should give your Learning Co-ordinator a copy of this weekly timetable.
- Plan out your revision for as far ahead as you can – at least 2 weeks and preferable longer – so that you get a greater sense of how it will all fit together. You should plan to cover at least 10 weeks.

Revision Notes



Most subject exams require you to show knowledge and to use this is to demonstrate understanding. It is therefore important that you revise this knowledge and practice the use of it to answer different types of questions. The first step in this process is to make revision notes.....

- Make sure you have a way of organising your notes. You could use A4 paper, an exercise book or index cards. You will also need your list of topics to revise for each subject.
- Make sure you have a Revision Timetable for writing out revision notes. This could take several weeks.
- Use different heading styles for each title or subtitle so that the topic heading stands out. See the example below.
- Use bullet points or numbers to note essential information. You need to make decisions about what is important. The key is to put down those facts which will trigger you into remembering other things.



- You could use spider diagrams and tables rather than simply list information.
- You can add colour, symbols and pictures to symbolise important ideas and information.
- You can make spider diagrams and stick them onto your bedroom wall.
- Alternatively you could use an index card system. Each section might be for a different subject or topic and each card could be for a different sub-heading.

	5 – 6pm	6 – 7pm	7 – 8pm	8 – 9pm	9 – 10pm
Monday		Tea/Relaxation			
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Etc.					

- In your revision timetable put in all the commitments that you have, other than revision.

For example, if you work on a Saturday, blank out those times when you are at work. If you have music lessons every Wednesday until 8.00pm blank those times out.

- You may need to leave time for normal homework in your plan.
- Now put in your revision topic:

**Be specific. Don't just write in the subject, but also the topic;*

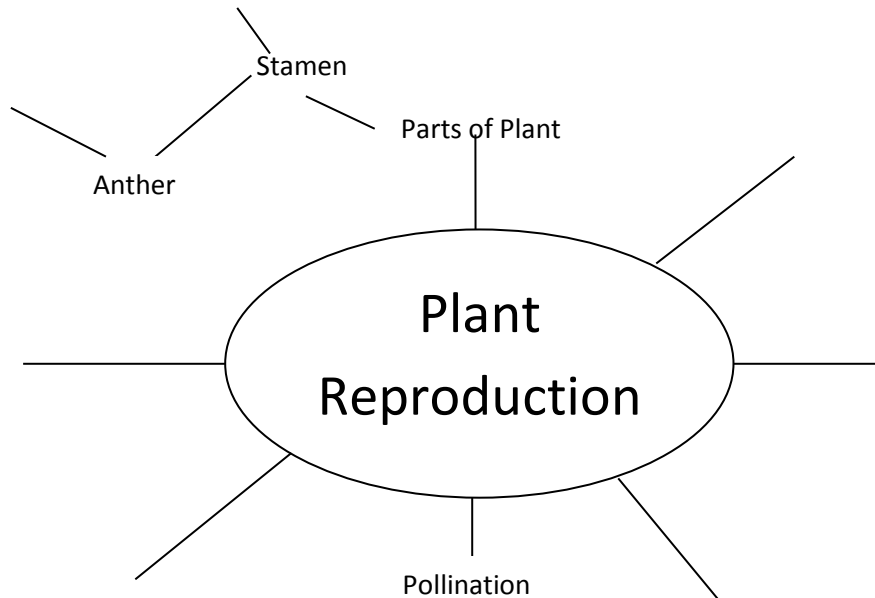
**Specify if it will be notes, reading, past papers etc.;*

**Leave gaps in your timetable to allow you to catch up if you need to.*

**Write in pencil so the timetable can be adjusted easily. However, try to stick to it as much as you can. After the first week or so you will get used to how much you can do in one revision session.*

- Some people suggest that during an evening you vary the subjects you are revising so that you don't get bored. However, don't overdo this as it might cause confusion!
- Remember to take short breaks between revision sessions.
- Try to arrange the timetable over several weeks so that you can revisit topics. You need to do this if information is to be remembered and understood effectively.

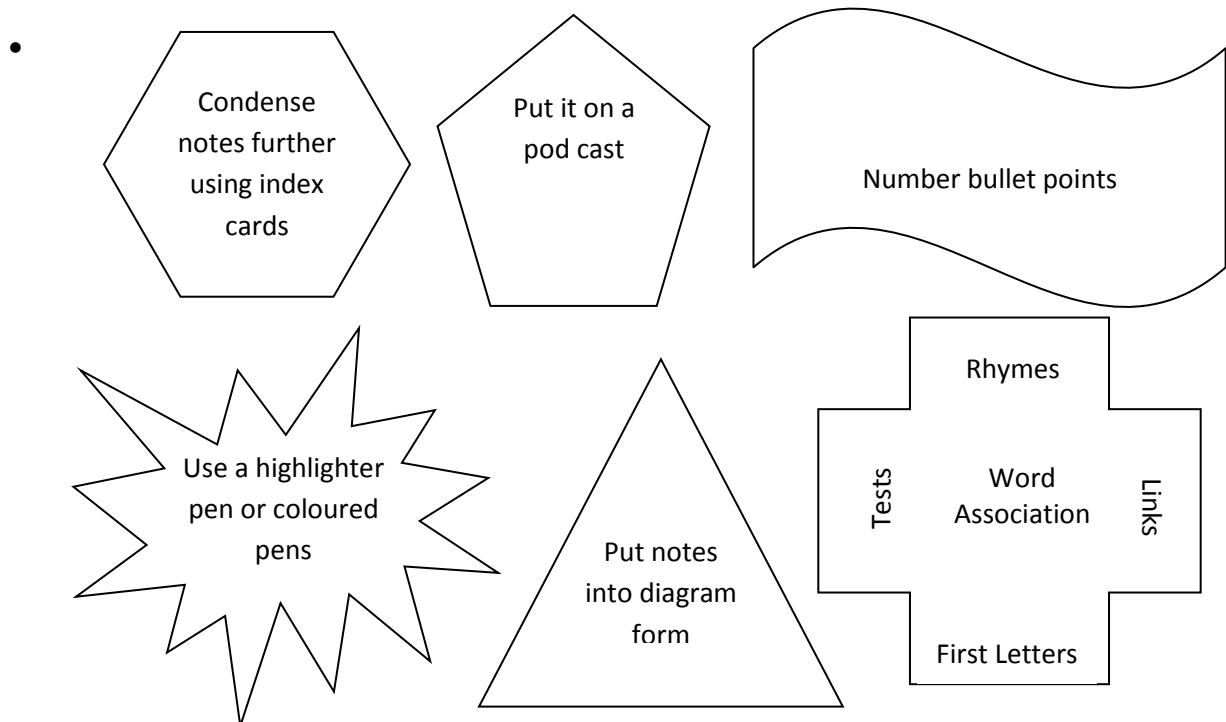
	5 – 6pm	6 – 7pm	7 – 8pm	8 – 9pm	9 – 10pm
Monday	(homework)		Geog – River features	Ma - Algebra	Ma - Algebra
Tuesday	(homework)		His – Treaty of Versailles	Sci – Plant reproduction	Sci – Plant reproduction
Wednesday	FOOTBALL		Geog – Humans & rivers	Geog – Humans & rivers	Ma – Algebra questions
Thursday Etc.	(homework)		Fr – Regular verbs	Fr – Regular verbs	His – Treaty of Versailles



Reviewing Revision Notes

Once you have organised set of revision notes for each subject you are ready to revise! There are several different ways you can go about this.....

- Again you need to plan out your revision using a timetable.
- The key point is that you need to 'internalise' the information. It is difficult to do this simply by reading. You are more likely to remember if you physically do something with the notes. For example.



Preparing for the Exam

Revision is not only about learning information and understanding it, but also about being able to apply it to exam questions. You need to learn techniques for different types of exam question. This question practice will also help you learn the information and develop skills such as essay writing and data analysis.

- Question practice should begin several weeks before your exam.
- Some exam practice should be under timed conditions.
- Give yourself factual tests. You could do this with friends or get parents involved.
- Analyse your answers afterwards. Compare them to your notes or specimen answers provided for you.
- Make sure you give your practice answers to your teachers to mark .
- Get others involved. Read your friends' answers or ask your parents for their advice.
- Finally, remember that you are **preparing** for the exam. Don't worry if you struggle with questions at first. The more you practice the easier it will get. The essential thing is that when it is time for the exam you are at your peak!

During the Exam



Eat something beforehand. Having done this and visited the toilet, make sure you have all the equipment you need for that exam. Once you get into the exam:

- Keep calm. Take deep breathe if you need to. A sensible way of calming down is to fill out the details on your answer papers.
- Read the instructions on the front of the question paper carefully. Re-read them if necessary. Make sure you understand how many questions you need to answer, whether there are any choices, whether there are any limitations on which questions you can answer, and how long you have.
- Read and re-read the questions carefully. If there is information to read – an English poem for example – then read this carefully. You might also jot down a few notes next to it.
- Look at the marks for each question. If the question is only worth a few marks then don't spend long on it
- A question with a lot of marks attached requires a longer answer and time spent on it. You should also think about planning the answer. Spend a few minutes writing down some notes and deciding which order to write them down in.
- When you answer a question it is sometimes sensible to leave a small gap before the next answer in case you think of something to add afterwards.
- The exam is designed so that you use all the time available to you. However, if you have a few minutes at the end go back over questions and check your answers. See if you can add to any of them. Check spellings as you do gain marks for this.
- Concentrate on yourself and your exam – do not worry about what other people around you are doing – it's not a race- you don't have to be the first to finish! Take your time and make sure that you have answered all the questions to the best of your ability.

What can Parents do?

Parental support can make a huge difference during the exam period. Often, parents find it difficult to advise and support their child. The subject and approach may seem too complicated and be very different to when you took exams. However, as a parent you can help your child prepare for the exams.....

- Keep calm, be supportive and provide cups of coffee!
- Ensure your child is keeping to their usual eating and sleeping patterns.
- If your child suffers from hay fever etc. make sure that their medication is organised well in advance of the exams.
- Check that your child takes regular breaks.
- Provide a quiet place for your child to study, away from brothers and sisters, TV etc.
- Check that your child has the resources needed for revision.

**Subject exercise books*

**A list of topics for each subject*

**School revision guides and materials*

**Past exam questions*

- Help your child to design a revision timetable or check that there is one. Display it on a notice board.
- You can encourage your child to seek the advice of teachers or attend revision clubs after school.
(Times of revision sessions/ after school sessions are posted on the school website)
- Encourage them to prepare a list of key questions and quiz them. Help them with vocabulary etc.
- Reward your child for effort (but do not bribe!). If they are revising hard, praise them and provide treats.
- Encourage him/her to team up with friends for revision. This will support and help them to check how they are doing. However, make sure that they are revising and not socialising!
- Keep a copy of their exam timetable and check that they know it.
- Provide some resources for revision:

**Folders, file paper, large poster paper, pens etc.*

**Highlight pens*

**Index cards*

**Revision guides*

and finally wish them.....

**GOOD
LUCK!**



REVISION TIMETABLE

Fill in commitments such as part-time jobs etc. Then plan out which subjects/topics you will study over each remaining session. Make sure you leave time for relaxation and 'catch up' time.

Week ↓		Session 1	Session 2	Session 3
	Monday			
	Tuesday			
	Wednesday			
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REVISION TIMETABLE

Weekly

	4 – 5pm	5 – 6pm	6 – 7pm	7 – 8pm	8 – 9pm	9 – 10pm
Monday						
Tuesday						
Wednesday						
Thursday						
Friday						
Weekend times →						
Saturday						
Sunday						