



CARLETON
HIGH SCHOOL

How To Revise:

A Guide to Successful Preparation

Our Revision Strategy

This guide is aimed at helping you to prepare for your mock and summer exams, giving you tips on how to revise. It includes what you need to do when preparing to revise, what to do during revision, along with revision techniques and tips for how to stay calm.



1. Get Ready

Know the exams

- Know the exam structure for each subject.
- How many papers are there?
- How many marks is each paper?
- How long is each paper?
- What topics appear on each paper?
- What type of questions will you be asked? (AO1, AO2, AO3).

Find a quiet space to revise

- Find a place where you will not be interrupted whilst you are revising such as your bedroom.
- Avoid anywhere noisy, also, **don't listen to music**.
- Switch off your mobile phone.

Evidence suggests students who study in a quiet environment can recall more than those who revise while listening to music.

Preparation

Make sure you have all of the notes, information and equipment you need to start your revision.

Make a plan

- Create a timetable.
- Using a blank timetable fill in the times you will revise and what subject.

Chunk your revision

- 20-25 minutes on a topic.
- 5 minutes break.
- 20-25 minutes on a topic.
- 5 minutes break.
- 20-25 minutes on a topic.
- 5 minutes break.
- 20-25 minutes on a topic.

How to create a revision timetable



Factor in some breaks and some time for social activities, but not too much!

In your breaks, move around and have a drink.



2. Revise and Apply

Revision techniques to help you revise effectively.

Look, Cover, Write, Check

Look, cover, write, check is a quick and easy method for testing yourself.

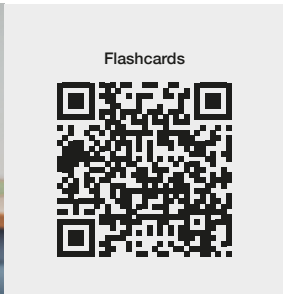
- Look at the information – read it a few times. You could highlight/underline the essential points as you read.
- Cover the section with a blank piece of paper.
- On the piece of paper, write down as much of the information you can recall from memory.
- Check by revealing the answers – update any missing information you forgot with a different colour. This primes your memory for better remembering next time.
- Repeat after a day, a week etc until fully remembered.



Flashcards

Flashcards are one of the simplest, but most effective, revision tools.

- Put a keyword or the name of a concept/topic on one side and a definition or a series of notes on the other.
- To make flashcards use your class notes or revision guides to produce flashcards for each topic.
- The next crucial step is to test how well you can recall the information on the flashcard (**retrieval**).





Test your knowledge and understanding.

Test yourself using your flashcards using the Leitner System

Step 1: Set up five different boxes or spaces on a shelf to store your flashcards.

Step 2: Name each box or section as follows:

Box / Space 1: Everyday.

Box / Space 2: Every other day.

Box / Space 3: Once per week.

Box / Space 4: One per fortnight.

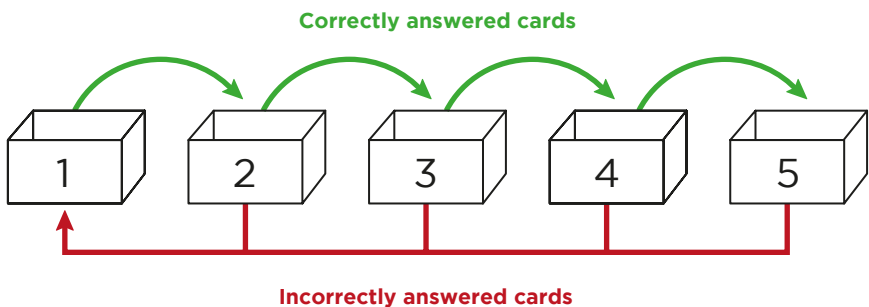
Box / Space 5: Once a month and before your exam.

Step 3: Start practicing your flashcards!

Take note of whether you answer correctly or incorrectly.

Step 4: Every time you get a question right, place the flashcard in the next box/space. Correct answers mean these cards only need reviewing in increasingly spaced intervals, so over time they'll gradually travel down the line and hopefully end up in box 4 or 5.

Step 5: However if you get a question wrong then the flashcards needs to return to the box / space 1.





Mind maps

Put simply, a topic is summarised on one large sheet. Each sheet will have more information than a flashcard.

How to create a mind map

- **Identify knowledge:** Select a topic you wish to revise. Have your class notes ready.
- **Identify sub topics:** Place the main topic in the centre of the page and identify sub topics that will branch off.
- **Branch off:** Branch off your sub topics with further detail. Try not to fill the page with too much writing.
- **Use images & colour:** Use images and colour to help the topics stick in your memory.
- **Put it somewhere visible:** Place completed mind maps in places where you can see them frequently.



Test your knowledge and understanding

Ask another person to test you

- Give a copy of a mind map to a family member or friend which they can use to test you on.
- Get them to ask you questions based on the topic and information on your mind map.
- Alternatively you could write down everything you know about the topic.
- Once you have written down everything that you know, you can ask them to review what you have written, discussing with you anything you have missed or that is inaccurate.
- You can also use this strategy to support your recall of knowledge and understanding when revising alone.

Exam questions and papers

- Answer exam questions that test your knowledge and understanding of that topic.
- Answer the questions in a set amount of time. Normally one mark per minute in the exams.
- As you progress with your learning, move from a small, narrow selection of topic specific questions up to whole papers.
- Practicing under timed conditions also becomes increasingly important.
- Use the mark scheme to mark your answers.
- Correct anything you've got wrong.





3. Review

Use of mark schemes

Often, students only have a vague idea of what is expected of them in exams and as a result, they often may not perform as well as they could.

- Using the mark schemes to assess your answers will help you to develop a critical eye when reviewing your own responses.
- You will be able to see how many marks your answer/response would be worth as well as being able to spot mistakes or weaknesses in your writing.
- This will give you a valuable insight in to what you need to do to improve your work.

Self assessing your own response to exam questions, using the mark scheme, will lead to you having a greater understanding of what is being assessed and what you need to include within your responses to obtain full marks on the different types of questions that can appear on your exam.



Past Papers and
mark schemes





What to Avoid

What does research say?

Re-reading and highlighting are amongst the commonest and apparently most obvious ways to memorise or revise material. They also give a satisfying – **but deceptive** – feeling of fluency and familiarity with the material (Brown et al, 2014).

Research says, two of the most common (and easy) methods of revision are actually two of the **least effective** techniques.

Re-reading and **highlighting notes** can lead to very little of the read or highlighted information going into long-term memory. On their own they are **very, very ineffective**.

Avoid starting on the topics you find easy. Most people do this! However you need to spend more time on things you don't know.

Well-Being

- Preparing for exam can feel stressful at times and it is normal to feel like this. Starting your revision sooner rather than later will help you to remain calm.
- Making revision plans and sticking to them will support you in feeling confident and well-prepared.
- Eat breakfast, this helps concentration and boost memory.
- Have plenty of sleep during your revision times and also the night before an exam.
- Exercise: Aim to do 30 minutes after or before revision. Exercise will increase blood circulation and oxygen to your brain which increases productivity and reduces tiredness and stress.
- Phones can be distracting - put it away, out of sight. Evidence shows that students who spend more time on phones get lower grades.

Well-Being

Here are a couple of other techniques that can support you to stay calm:



Breathing techniques

- Sit down somewhere comfortable with both feet firmly on the ground if possible.
- Place one hand on your stomach and check how quickly you are breathing.
- Take a deep breath and start counting steadily.
- Breathe out slowly and try to get the last of the breath out on about five seconds.
- Carry on doing this until you are doing it naturally.



Relaxation techniques

- Close your eyes and breathe out slowly and deeply.
- Locate any area of tension and try to relax those muscles; imagine the tension disappearing.
- Relax each part of your body, from your feet to the top of your head.
- As you focus on each part of your body, think of warmth, heaviness and relaxation.
- After 20 minutes, take some deep breaths and stretch.

Recommended Revision Resources (GCSE)

English Language

Revision guides:

- CGP GCSE AQA English Language Complete Revision and Practice.
- AQA GCSE English Language and Literature Practice Test Papers.
- Collins GCSE Grade 9-1 SNAP Revision - AQA GCSE 9-1 English Language Reading (Papers 1 & 2) Workbook.
- Revision guide: Collins GCSE Practice 9-1 SNAP Revision - AQA GCSE 9-1 English Language Writing (Papers 1 & 2) Workbook.

Websites:

- www.mrbruff.com
- senecalearning.com: Online Learning & Tutoring for A Level, GCSE & KS3.
- www.educake.com

English Literature

Revision guides:

- Collins GCSE Grade 9-1 SNAP Revision (SNAP workbooks also available).
- An Inspector Calls: AQA GCSE 9-1 English Literature Text Guide.
- Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde: AQA GCSE 9-1 English Literature Text Guide.
- Macbeth: AQA GCSE 9-1 English Literature Text Guide.
- Power & Conflict Poetry Anthology: AQA GCSE 9-1 English Literature Text Guide.
- Unseen Poetry: AQA GCSE 9-1 English Literature Text Guide.

Websites:

- www.mrbruff.com
- www.senecalearning.com
- www.educake.com

Art

Revision guides:

- AQA GCSE Art & Design Student Handbook.
- GCSE Art Ideas & Portfolio Planning Book: For All Exam Boards.

Website:

- www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zjymp9q

Drama

- GCSE Drama - AQA - BBC Bitesize: www.quizlet.com/en-gb/content/gcse-drama
- AQA GCSE Drama Revision | Quizlet
- Visit live theatre or watch recorded live theatre of Billy Elliot/Blood Brothers



Photography

Websites:

- Technical aspects www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zrnq6rd
- Project process Revision www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/z8nq6rd

French & Spanish

Revision guides:

- Collins AQA GCSE 9-1 Spanish - Complete revision & practice.
- CGP Spanish - Complete Revision and Practice.

Geography

Revision guides:

- Level 5-9: Hodder My Revision Notes: AQA GCSE (9-1) Geography Second Edition. *Simon Ross, Rebecca Blackshaw.*
- Levels 1-5: CGP revision guide GCSE Geography AQA Revision Guide.

Seneca Learning:

- Knowledge Recall and Exam Technique testing- sign up is free at: www.senecalearning.com

History

Revision guides:

- BBC Bitesize.
- YouTube "Medicine Through Time".
- Oxford Revise, Edexcel GCSE History. Series Editor: Aaron Wilkes. Complete Revision and Practice.
- PG Online, Clear Revise, Edexcel GCSE History.

Maths

Revision guides:

- Sparx Maths, also used for homework, has independent study sections you can search for topics - this is good because you can check your answers as well.
- Corbett Maths has tutorial videos and accompanying exam-style practice questions packs (free).
- www.mathsgenie.co.uk has examination style proactive questions by topic, as well as tutorial videos and past examination papers.
- CGP Revision Guides and Workbooks are recommended. Content is the same across all exam boards (although the style of question may differ) so if you have Edexcel or AQA revision guides those are fine.

Combined Science

Revision guides:

- AQA I GCSE I Combined Science: Trilogy I Assessment resources past papers and mark schemes.
- AQA GCSE Science Past Papers - Revision Science more past papers and mark schemes.
- GCSE Combined Science (AQA Trilogy) BBC Bitesize. This is a mixture of podcasts, past paper questions and revision materials broken down by topic.
- Freesciencelessons - YouTube. This is an incredible resource. Make sure you choose AQA GCSE as there are also A Level resources on there!
- GCSE Past Papers & Questions by topic I Save My Exams. Choose combined science and there are videos and quizzes. This one has limited access but you can sign up for £5 monthly subscription.

Religious Studies

Revision guides:

BBC Bitesize Revision Website:

- Christianity - GCSE Religious Studies: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zh7bxyc
- Islam - GCSE Religious Studies: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zf64pg8
- Islam GCSE RS Revision: www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zrnr2p/articles/zynvkhv
- Carleton High School Religious Studies website: sites.google.com/carletonhigh.co.uk/socialsciencesrevision/home
- The RE Podcast: sites.google.com/carletonhigh.co.uk/socialsciencesrevision/home
- Social Science Revision Resources (see QR code).



GCSE PE

Revision guides:

- GCSE Bitesize PE: bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/znyb4wx

Computer Science

- Smart Revise: Web based interactive resource containing hundreds of original multiple-choice and longer answer examination questions and resources – all students have a subscription.
- Oxford Revise: OCR GCSE Computer Science Complete Revision and Practice All students have a copy of this revision guide, which also includes online revision materials.
- Isaac Computer Science: Department for Education's National Centre for Computing Education.
- Computer Science Newbies: Excellent resources for both theory and practical programming practice tasks.

Recommended Revision Resources (Vocational)

Engineering

Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Engineering WJEC.

This book has been written specifically for the Level 1/2 Vocational Award in Engineering (Technical Award).



Health & Social Care

Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Health & Social Care (J835): Second Edition.



Hospitality & Catering

Revision Guide: WJEC Level 1/2 Vocational Award Hospitality & Catering (Author: Bev Saunder & Yvonne Mackey).



Websites:

- www.revisionland.com/subjects/hospitality
- www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects

Music

Use YouTube tutorials or the following websites to practice your instrument independently:

- www.ultimateguitar.com
- www.chordify.net
- www.noobnotes.net

Accessing Google Classroom independently to make key additions to coursework slides.

Sport Studies

- GCSE PE - Simplified: Cambridge Nationals Sport Studies.
- CGP Books: Cambridge National Sport Studies.
- The EverLearner: www.theeverlearner.com



Exam check list

- 1: Avoid the 'hype' before exams.
- 2: Stay calm and focused.
- 3: Make sure you have all of your equipment.
- 4: Take a bottle of water into your exam.


Reminders / To do list



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