



THE KING'S
SCHOOL

How To Revise:

A Guide to Successful Preparation

This guide is to help you prepare for your exams by giving advice and tips on how to revise, as well as how to keep calm and to perform at your best in exams.

TIPS

Before You Do any Revision



Create a timetable

- Using a blank timetable fill in the times you plan to revise and what subject you will cover.
- Make sure you factor in some breaks and some time for social activities, but not too much!



Find a quiet space to revise

- Find a place where you will not be interrupted.
- Avoid anywhere that is noisy, also, avoid listening to music.
- Evidence suggests students who study in a quiet environment recall more than those who revise while listening to music.



Eat breakfast

- It's not called the most important meal of the day for nothing!
- Eating breakfast will support your levels of concentration.



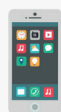
Sleep

- Have plenty of sleep during your revision times and the night before an exam.
- Even 30 minutes earlier will help you perform better.



Exercise

- Exercise will increase blood circulation and therefore more oxygen to your brain.
- This increases your level of productivity. It also helps you stay calm.



No phones

- Phones are a distraction, so put it away and out of sight.
- Evidence shows that students who spend more time texting and using social media get lower grades.

During Revision



Start early and spread it out

- Cramming at the last minute is stressful and has limited success.
- Start your revision as soon as possible.
- Have a list of topics to revise for each of your subjects.



Chunk your revision

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



Chunking your time will help you concentrate and make sure your revision is as productive as possible.

In your breaks, move around and have a drink.



Avoid distractions

- Be honest and strict with yourself.
- Keep your TV, computer, laptop, etc away.
- Music can interfere with your thinking. Switch it off until you have a break.
- Do not waste time or delay starting.

Revision Strategies

Flashcards

- Flashcards are one of the simplest, but most effective, revision tools.
- Flashcards have a keyword of a concept/topic on one side and a definition or notes on the other.
- Use your class notes to produce flashcards for each topic.

The creation of the flashcards is not the end point of revision for this topic. The next crucial step is to test how well you can recall the information.

Use them to test yourself:



Step 1
Create your flash cards.

Step 2
Use them to test yourself by recalling the information on the cards.

Step 3
Apply your knowledge to exam style questions.

Use the links for more support:

Creating flashcards (right)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=xVcdIANWsl0

Techniques for using flashcards (left)

www.youtube.com/watch?v=afThJNpscZA





Retrieval: What does research say?

“Students who can test themselves or try to retrieve material from their memory are going to learn that material better in the long run. Start by reading your book then make flashcards / Mind Maps of the critical points and test yourself. A century of research has shown that repeated testing works.”

Professor Dunlosky, Journal of the Association for Psychological Science.

Self-quizzing

- This can be as simple as having a blank sheet of paper in front of you and writing down (from memory) everything you know about a topic.
- Then try to expand on some of the key ideas.
- Once complete, you can then self-check your book / flashcard / mind map.

You can also use your friends / family to test you from your flashcards / mind maps / revision guides.

How can Mnemonic help?

When revising topics, try to create and use mnemonics to help with retrieval. For instance, here is a mnemonic that is quite easy to remember and will help you answer questions on right angled trigonometry.

Sohcahtoa

Sine, **O**pposite, **H**ypotenuse, **C**osine, **A**djacent, **H**ypotenuse, **T**an, **O**pposite, **A**djacent.

Another example is (for the 7 continents).

Always Eat An Apple Says Aunt Nora.

Asia, **E**urope, **A**ustralasia, **A**frica, **S**outh America, **A**ntarctica & **N**orth America.

Revision Strategies

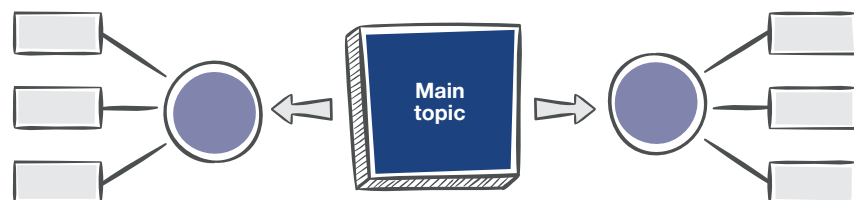
Mind maps

- Put simply, a topic is summarised on one large sheet.

5 steps to follow:

- **Step 1:** Write the MAIN TOPIC in the middle of the paper and draw a ring around it.
- **Step 2:** For each KEY POINT, draw a branch out from the main topics.
- **Step 3:** Write a KEYWORD or PHRASE on each branch.
- **Step 4:** Build out further branches and add DETAIL.
- **Step 5:** Use pictures and words rather than loads of writing copied from notes.

The next crucial step is to test how well you can recall the information on the Mind Map (retrieval).



Below is a web address for a YouTube clip to support with the creation and use of a Mind Map.

Creating Mind Maps:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f5fOeu0F2Sl&list=PLaEbL4v2zBEEgh4Z_2mjZWJYwyViObdrv&index=22



Revision Strategies

Speed dating

- Revising in groups or pairs, pick a topic.
- Sit opposite each other with a blank piece of paper each.
- 5 minutes to write as much as you can about the topic.
- After 5 minutes compare what each of you have written, the best response wins.
- Then swap partners (if you are in a group), pick a different topic and repeat again.

Past papers

- Past paper questions are crucial.
- It makes you apply your knowledge to actual exam questions.
- Make sure the past papers are from the same exam board that you are studying.
- Read the questions carefully.
- Look at command words (name, describe, explain, evaluate, justify, etc).
- Review and mark you answers using official mark schemes. You can ask you teacher for help with this, particularly if the mark scheme is difficult to interpret.
- 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.



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 satisfied – **but deceptive** – feeling of fluency and familiarity with the material (Brown et al, 2014).

- Re-reading & highlighting.
- This doesn't help the information go into your long term memory.
- There is nothing wrong with reading and highlighting, but on their own, they are **very, very ineffective**.
- Avoid revising things that you find easy, you can already do them!
- Spend revision time focusing on the things that you find harder to understand.

How to Keep Calm

- Preparing for an exam can feel stressful sometimes and it is normal to feel like this at times.
- Start your revision early, this helps you to remain calm.
- Make revision plans and stick to them.
- Prepare well so you go into your exams feeling confident.

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



Breathing techniques

- 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.

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.
- Personalised revision support | Educake.

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:

- <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zjymp9q>

Photography

Websites:

- Technical aspects <https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zrnq6rd>
- Project process Revision <https://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: <https://senecalearning.com>

History:

Revision guides:

- BBC Bitesize.
- YouTube "Medicine Through Time" - great animations.
- Oxford Revise, Edexcel GCSE History. Series Editor: Aaron Wilkes.

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).
- There are wide range of good maths tuition videos on YouTube. Include "GCSE Maths (topic)" in your search.
- 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 | GCSE | Combined Science: Trilogy | 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 | 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:

- Revise Edexcel (9-1) Religious Studies B, Christianity and Islam Revision Guide & Workbook.

GCSE PE

Revision guides:

- Everlearner (students all have a log in) and Planet PE videos on YouTube.
- New GCSE Physical Education AQA Revision Guide (with Online Edition and Quizzes) (CGP AQA GCSE PE).

Seneca Learning:

- Seneca - AQA GCSE PE 9-1.

Computer Science

Isaac Computer Science

Department for Education's National Centre for Computing Education.

Computer Science Newbies

Excellent resources for both theory and practical programming.

Design & Technology

Revision guides:

- CGP GCSE AQA Design & Technology: The Revision Guide.
- GCSE Bitesize: Design and Technology (choose the AQA specification).

Websites:

- <https://technologystudent.com>

Recommended Revision Resources (Vocational)

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 Sports Studies.

CGP Books: Cambridge National Sports Studies.

- Everlearner (students all have a log in).
- New OCR Cambridge National in Sport Studies: Revision Guide (with Online Edition).

Performing Arts

- www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/zbckjxs
- www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zrnjwty
- www.quizlet.com/en-gb/content/gcse-drama
- www.thestudentroom.co.uk/revision/aqa/gcse-drama-exams-and-revision-aqa-explains-what-you-need-to-do

Child Development

- Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Child Development (J809) Exam Practice Workbook.
- My Revision Notes: Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in Child Development: Second Edition.
- www.Quizlet.com
- Google Classroom code: q2gasvk for past exam papers and mark schemes.

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.


Revision notes



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