CHASE HIGH SCHOOL<br>Aspiration, Character at Excellence



## Revision Guidance: Strategies and Top Tips

## Top ten revision tips

1. Short bursts of revision (30-40 minutes) are most effective. Your concentration lapses after about an hour and you need to take a short break (5-10 minutes).
2. Find a quiet place to revise - your bedroom, school, the library and refuse to be interrupted or distracted.
3. Make sure you don't just revise the subjects and topics you like. Work on your weaker ones as well.
4. Make your own revision notes because you will remember what
 you have written down more easily. Stick key notes to cupboards or doors so you see them everyday.
5. Rewrite the key points of your revision notes; read them out loud to yourself. We remember more than twice as much of what we say aloud than of what we merely read.
6. Use different techniques. Make your own learning maps, use post-it notes to write key words on, create flash cards. Record your notes on tape and listen to them back on your Walkman. Ask friends and family to test you. Use highlighter pens to mark important points. Chant or make up a rap song.
7. Practise on past exam papers or revision tests available on the web Initially do one section at a time and progress to doing an entire paper against the clock.

8. You will need help at some stage, ask parents, older brothers and sisters, teachers or friends. If there is a teacher with whom you get on well at school ask for their e-mail address so you can clarify points you are unsure of whilst on study leave. Use websites specifically designed for revision.
9. Don't get stressed out! Eat properly and get lots of sleep!
10. Believe in yourself and be positive. If you think you can succeed you will; if you convince yourself that you will fail, that's what will probably happen.

## Effective revision

To be effective, revision must be:

- Active - always work with a pen and paper, look for key points, test yourself. Never just sit down and read for a set period. Focus on tasks, not time. If you just read notes you'll only retain about $10 \%$ of the information.
- Organised - always ask yourself at the start of a study session "what do I want to have completed in this session?" Have a plan for what you want to cover this week and this month. Have an overview of the priority areas in each subject.


## Getting started on revision

## Where?

Find a fixed place to study (a particular desk/room at home, a spot in the library, etc.) that becomes firmly associated in your mind with productive work. All the equipment and materials you need should be within reach, and the room should be well lit and ventilated, but not too comfortable! Turn your room into a positive learning environment. books and notes on the desk to a minimum and decorate your walls colourful notes and key facts. Music is fine as long as it helps you to and blocks out distracting noises. The very best sound to study to is thought to be that of Baroque composers or Mozart. Experiments
 that brains are positively stimulated and IQs boosted by such music.

## What?

Remember that it's all about being active and focused on tasks, not time! Know at the start of a session what you want to have completed by the end of the period. Make the tasks specific and realistic, not vague and large.

## How?

Always work with a pen and paper at the ready. Getting started is often the most difficult bit, so start by 'doing'. It usually helps to begin with a subject you like, move on to other less favoured areas, and then finish up with a favoured topic to maintain the interest.
When?


Try to schedule your study for times when you are more mentally alert. Most people find their ability to focus deteriorates towards the end of the day. Getting revision done earlier in the day aids efficiency and also offers the reward of having time to relax after the work is done.

## Why?

Test your progress at the end of a study session. Ask yourself "what have I just learned?" Review the material covered in your revision session. Merely recognising material isn't enough - you must be able to reproduce it without the aid of the book or notes.

## Revision - Do's and Don'ts

## DO

## 1. Make a list of all the topics you need to revise:

Each subject that you are studying can be broken down into its constituent parts, with main sections, sub-topics and supporting details. A very useful start is to list out all the topics on the course according to this hierarchy and use this as a 'revision checklist' for the subject. Tick topics off as you've learnt them.

## Create a realistic schedule.

Block the waking part of each day into three portions. Allow yourself portion a day off and allocate subjects and topics to the remaining the schedule on display so that your family can see when you are available. It will also reassure your parents that you are in control.

2. one two. Put

## 3. Plan ahead by working backwards

By using revision checklists in your various subjects, you should know what quantity of material has to be covered over the coming months. Start from the final date (end of May) and divide your revision up week by week, allowing some flexibility for unforeseen delays. Surprise yourself by being ready in time! Use the timetables and other sheets you have been given.


## 4. Revise using your preferred learning style.

Have you tried.... mindmaps, diagrams, colour, mnemonics, recording yourself and listening back to it, rewriting your favourite song using your revision notes for a topic as the words, walking round (Great for kinaesthetic learners - try read out the positive effects of $X$ standing on the left-hand side of the room and negative effects on the right-hand side).

## DON'T

Just keep going! The body and the mind need regular 'time-outs'. When you're tired, concentration is more difficult, you get distracted much easier and learning and memorisation is less effective. There comes a point in an evening study session when it is counter-productive to stay at the desk - nothing is going in and you are only tiring yourself further. Use breaks effectively, particularly after completing a task.

## How should I revise?

Try one of these......

A: MIND MAPS: Make mind-maps or association maps rather than taking linear notes. Mapping your notes by radiating key words out in a pattern of links from a central point will make best use of your memory. If you use colour and images on the maps, you'll be harnessing the power of both sides of your brain - creative and logical.

## How to mind map:

1. Start with the theme in the middle of the page.
2. Then develop your main idea.
3. Each branch must relate to the branch before it.
4. Use only key words and images.

5. Key words must be written along the branches.
6. Printing your key words makes them more memorable.
7. Use highlighters and coloured markers to colour code branches.

8. Make things stand out on the page so they stand out in your mind. (This doesn't show up well on a black and whole photocopied booklet! You should use a different colour for each main branch and all its sub-branches)
9. Brainstorm ideas. Be creative.

10. Design images you can relate to which will help you remember key information. Mindmaps can be mostly text...


Or they can include more images (much easier to remember!) Look at this one summarising William Shakespeare's life....... (again - much better in colour!)


B: Read intelligently. Spend five minutes flipping through a book or your notes looking at headings and summaries. Then attempt to mind map what you have spotted and what you can remember.

C: Use cards. Write questions on one side and answers on the other. Then get your family to test you. Merely creating the cards will help your recall. You can also use them to test yourself when faced with 'dead' time at bus stops or waiting for someone.


D: Physical learning: Use the environment Use a different room for each subject.

* Notice aspects of the environment such as the light or feel of the room - how do you feel in that place?
* Attach your notes to the furniture. Notice their location.
* Associate a different location with each subject. Associate furniture, windows, plants and ornaments with particular topics.


## Using your clothes

* Associate items of clothing with topics in your learning - a shoe could represent one aspect of foreign policy; each button on a shirt could represent a quotation. Clothes with patterns, pockets and buttons are especially useful.


## Using the parts of your body

* Parts of your body are especially helpful as triggers to memory, as your body will be there in the exam room! For example, each hand could represent an essay plan - each finger one major topic; each segment of each finger a principal reference you would use. The fingernails could represent counterarguments; the knuckles could be associated with relevant quotations.


## Use motor memory

* Study on the move. If you exercise, associate each movement with something you wish to remember. To refresh the memory, go through the exercise in your mind.
* Writing, drawing and speaking also use motor memory: the fine-muscle sequence is recorded by the brain.

E: Condense. Fitting notes onto one side of paper makes them easier to stomach, so rewrite and cut down as you go.

F: Highlight. Target key areas using colours and symbols. Visuals help you remember the facts.
G: Record. Try putting important points, quotes and formulae on tape. If you hear them and read them, they're more likely to sink in.


H: Talk. Read your notes out loud, it's one way of getting them to register.
I: Test. See what you can remember without notes, but avoid testing yourself on subjects you know already. Why not ask someone else to test you?

J: Time. Do past exam papers against the clock, it's an excellent way of getting up to speed and of checking where there are gaps in your knowledge.

## Reading better and faster

Most students, when faced with a textbook or chapter to study, will 'start at the beginning, read through at the same pace until the end, then stop and put the book away'. This passive approach is a most inefficient way to learn, as it can take longer and leave you bogged down in detail, with no overall grasp of the subject matter. By adopting a more active approach to reading, you can begin to read better and faster within a very short space of time. The PQ2R method has proved to be most successful in this regard. Try it for the remaining weeks of term and see the benefits.

## P = Preview

Begin your reading task with a quick skim (2-3 minutes) of the text, trying to get an overview of the chapter or text. Look for section headings, illustrative charts and diagrams, signposts or key words. Don't start highlighting text at this point.

## Q = Question

This is the key to active learning. Look for answers to the basic questions of "Who?", "What?", "Where?", "Why?" and "When?" Identify the main theme or learning point of the particular text.

## R = Read

Now read the chapter carefully, with these questions in mind. Your mind will be actively looking for answers as you read. Work with a pen and paper, make brief summary notes, look for 'topic sentences' that summarise the most important point in a paragraph or section and highlight them, if necessary. Vary your reading speed - move quickly over lighter, less important material and slow down when you come to a difficult section.

## $\mathbf{R}=$ Review

Always check your understanding of the material by reviewing and testing your recall before putting the text away. Look at the notes you have taken and check that they answer your initial questions. Summarise your findings from this study session.

## Making your notes useful

The purpose of making summary notes on a topic or section is to aid your overall understanding of material, to help you distinguish between what is really important information (depth) and what is merely supporting detail. Reference to the main syllabus topics will help the process of discernment within each subject.

In addition, good summary notes make retrieval of information quicker and easier.

- Sort out your filing system

If you haven't already done so, get your subject folders and notes organised immediately. Invest in some ring binders, dividers, plastic pockets, etc. Have a separate folder for each subject (a permanent reference point) and then keep a
 'current folder' for managing notes in progress.

- Less is always more

When writing notes, remember they should contain a summary, not an extensive repetition of what is in the textbook. Don't crowd the page. Stick to main headings and sub-headings. Use abbreviations where appropriate. Try to reduce what you need to know on the topic down to one A4 sheet. Once you have an overview, it is easier to fill out the detail.

- Make your notes visual


Ensure your notes have a memorable appearance so that you can recall them easily. Use illustrations, diagrams, graphs, colours, and boxes ('a picture is worth a thousand words'). Arrange the material in a logical hierarchy (title, sub-point, explanation, example). Ideally, you should be able to close your eyes in an exam and visualise a particular page of notes.

## - Beware of transcribing and highlighting!

Merely re-writing the text from the book into your notes does not ensure retention. Try to put things in your own words and devise your own examples - this will make the material more meaningful. Only use the highlighter pen AFTER you have previewed and questioned a text, thus ensuring you identify the most important material and you avoid the creation of a fluorescent textbook!

- 'Save' your notes carefully

Practice following the logic of your computer files, when storing information. Think - "Where does this material best fit (subject, section, topic, sub-topic, etc.)?" In this way, you will ensure that it is efficiently processed and easily retrieved both physically (during revision) and mentally (when you need it in an exam).

## Improving memory

We often blame our memory for poor academic performance ("I'm no good at remembering names / dates / rules / verbs / characteristics") when really, we
 should be addressing our faulty input and storage system. There is a big difference between short-term and long-term memory. If you study a topic one night and can recall most of it the next morning, don't be fooled into thinking that you will be able to remember it accurately in two month's time.

If the goal is to improve your long-term memory, then the key to success is based on the efficiency of input (the 'mental filing system' we employ). Reducing the burden on the limited short-term memory, and channelling information into long-term storage, is based on the creation of patterns and the avoidance of randomness.

- 'Chunking': as the average person can only hold seven 'items' in short-term memory, grouping items together into 'chunks' can increase capacity. This is generally used for remembering numbers (think of how you remember phone numbers by grouping the seven digits into 2 or 3 chunks) but can be applied to other listings in various subjects.
- Repetition: Studies indicate that $66 \%$ of material is forgotten within seven days if it is not reviewed or recited again by the student, and $88 \%$ is gone after six weeks. Don't make life harder for yourself - build in a brief daily and weekly review of material covered. It will save you having to re-learn material from scratch!
- Application and association: The best way to channel material to long-term memory is to organise it into meaningful associations. Link it to existing information and topics and create vivid personal examples which act as 'mental hooks' or 'cues' for recalling material in the future. Thus, new items are put in context. If you learn a new formula / verb / rule, try to put it into practice immediately with a relevant example.
- Use of mnemonics: these are various word games which can act as memory aids and which allow personalisation and creativity. Think of stalactites (come down from the ceiling) and stalagmites (go up from the ground); the colours of the rainbow - Roy G. Biv ('Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain' to remember red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, violet); the seven characteristics of living organisms - Mr. Grief (Movement, Reproduction, Growth, Respiration, Irritability, Excretion, Feeding). You can devise many more of these to aid your personalised recall of items in your subjects.

CHASE HIGH SCHOOL
CHASE HIGHECHEL

## Review

Looking over a topic every now and then will help to keep it in the memory, taking away the need to cram before exams.

Make a summary of the work and look over it ten minutes later, the next day, the next week and then the next month for a few minutes each time. This reinforces the knowledge learned.

Understanding increases as time spent studying passes. However, the ability to recall things being memorised becomes progressively less efficient as time passes in a study session.

20 minutes is needed for the mind to get into the rhythm of and flow of the material. Any more than 40 minutes spent memorising means that memory declines to a point where it is no longer valuable.

The answer in revision lessons therefore is to do 30 minutes with a 5-minute stretch break and then review the topic.

## After a one-hour memorising session:

10 minutes later revise the topic for 10 minutes
1 day later revise the topic for 5 minutes
1 week later revise the topic for 2-5 minutes
1 month later revise the topic for 2-5 minutes
Before exams revise the topic as required.
Each time knowledge is reinforced; it enters deeper into the long-term memory and becomes more stable.

## Practising output

To prepare for an exam, you must practice doing what the exam requires you to do; giving out information, not taking it in! This to regular class tests as well as the final exams. Prior to June, you will probably have had the benefit of many class and some modular exams where the GCSE conditions are simulated benefit - you can learn a lot by reflecting honestly on your performance in these tests. You also have the benefit of a wealth of
 available information about the exams. Past exam papers, marking schemes, study guides and examiners reports are all there to be used.

- Make use of past papers

These should be your constant companion in all revision tasks. For each topic you revise, consult the past questions on this subject and then attempt answers to them. Check your answers, fill in the 'knowledge gaps' where necessary, and file away the correct 'model answer' in your notes for future reference. You will also start to notice any trends in the questions asked.

## - Follow the marks

Marking schemes are an invaluable aid to exam preparation (available online from DfES, AQA, etc). You can see how the marks are allocated for each question on the paper and what quantity or style of answer is required in each case. This knowledge will greatly inform your revision work and helps to remove the mystique of the exam.

## Try a dress rehearsal

Each exam paper contains its own particular structure and challenge, with varying emphasis on answering style and depth. While much of your ongoing revision will be based on individual topics and questions, it is a very useful exercise to tackle an exam paper in its totality (at least once before June). It forces you to consider your strategy - the questions you will want to attempt or avoid, the issues of timing, the number of points you will need to make in each part of a question. Having performed this exercise a couple of times, your confidence levels rise as you fix on your strategy for the exam and realise that there can't be any major surprises for you in June.


## The Examiner's view



You can largely determine the end result by simply heeding the voice of experience. The job of examiners is to give you marks, not to take them away, but they are powerless to help you if you fall into the most common traps. These are the biggest pitfalls they have identified:

- Not reading the paper correctly

Examiners say that this is one of the most regular and fatal errors. They call it the 'triggered answer'. You have your pre-prepared answer ready but you don't look at the exact terms of the question and therefore supply the wrong information in your answer.

- Not finishing the paper

Mismanaging your time within the exam can easily cost you a full grade. The biggest exam 'crime' is to leave suitable questions unattempted. Remember: it is much easier to get the first 20\% of the marks for any question than the last 5\%. Therefore, if you find yourself stuck for time as you struggle through your third answer out of five, do not spend your remaining time extending and perfecting that answer. Instead, move on to questions four and five, even if your attempt is sketched or in point form. If you have answered only three questions instead of five, the highest mark you can get is $60 \%$.

- Ignoring the marking scheme

You must take the marking scheme into account when you allocate time to each question or part of a question. If the marks allotted to a question clearly indicate that a few paragraphs are sufficient, do not write an essay on the subject. Avoid the temptation of writing everything you know about a topic - just give the appropriate amount of information.

- Repetition

Make the point once. There are no extra marks for restating facts, even if you phrase them differently. Examiners say repetition is a very common mistake. It is also a time-waster and an irritant.

- Missing part of a question

Sometimes, part of a question can be carried onto the next page and, in the pressure of the moment, you don't see it. As a consequence, you might fail to do a compulsory part of a question or miss out on the chance to take an option that would have suited you better. Always take time to familiarise yourself with the whole paper before you start answering it.

- Irrelevant quotations

In literary subjects, don't use irrelevant quotations you may have learned off, as it only irritates the examiner.

- Rough work

Include your rough work with your exam script - you might get some credit for formulae or calculations contained therein.

## Performing on the day

- Get a good night's sleep

While the temptation is to stay up half the night 'cramming' in more facts and figures, the evidence suggests this approach is counter-productive. In the context of a two-year course, an extra night's studying can make very little difference to your
 knowledge. However, having a mind that is refreshed, alert, and ready to respond to circumstances will obviously be of far greater benefit.

- Arrive in plenty of time: To perform well on the day, you need to be relaxed and to feel in control of the situation. This is difficult to achieve if you have missed breakfast and are stuck on a bus in traffic or standing on a train for 45 minutes as the exam time approaches. You will need about 15 minutes 'quiet time' to mentally rehearse your exam and run through your 'game plan' for the final time.
- Have your equipment ready

Each exam has its own requirements. Apart from properly functioning pens, pencils, rulers, etc, you may need a calculator for the Maths or Science exam. Drawing pencils may be required for diagrams in some subjects. A lot of nervous energy can be expended on lastminute hassle if these items aren't checked in advance.

hall and 'hit the target'.

## - Think positive

On the day of the exam, remind yourself of the good things (the material you know well, the revision you have completed, all the past exam questions done, the good grades achieved) rather than dwelling on areas of weakness. Having that self-belief will give you the confidence to trust your judgement within the exam

## - Maintain your focus

There can be a lot of tension, drama, and hysteria in the air on the days of an exam. You want to keep the balance between maintaining your focus and interacting normally with your friends and classmates. Try finding a quiet spot far from the madding crowd to 'warmup' before each exam and 'warm-down' afterwards. Surround yourself with people who are likely to add to the calm rather than add to the clamour.

- Beware of post-exam analysis

The more you participate in the exam post-mortem, the more confused and disheartened you are likely to become. You can't change what has happened, you can only focus on the present and this will need your full attention.

## Top Tips on Exam Strategy

Success in exams involves two ingredients - having a thorough knowledge of the subject matter AND making the most of your knowledge in the exam through effective answering technique. Two students with identical knowledge and attainment levels can sit the same exam and their final grades can differ by as much as $25 \%$. The difference is down to having an effective strategy and exam technique.

Here are four golden rules to apply to all your GCSE papers:

## 1. Allow time to read the paper carefully

The importance of reading the paper carefully and choosing your questions wisely cannot be emphasised enough at this stage. The natural inclination is always to start writing immediately and launch into a favoured topic. Resist the urge. Take your time. Be smart and size-up the paper before answering.
2. Stick to your game plan

An overall strategy should have emerged from your revision and exam preparation in each subject. This covers the areas you will tackle, the topics you will avoid if they appear on the paper, the sequence in which you will tackle the various sections, the style of answering you will employ in each subject, the amount of time you will allocate to answering each section. In some cases, this plan will work like a dream but there will always be surprises to deal with in some papers. Don't get flustered. Stick to your game plan, trust your judgement, and move on.

## 3. Sweep up any mistakes

In the pressure of the exam hall, it is easy to make elementary errors. These will sometimes have the potential to lose you a lot of valuable marks. Misreading the instruction on a question can render an entire answer invalid. You might have known the correct answer, but you didn't put it down. A simple miscalculation can lose you valuable time as you try to figure out the balancing item. Be disciplined with your time. Always leave a few minutes at the end to tidy-up errors. Simply changing a definition / formula / calculation at this stage could be the difference between a good and an average grade.

## 4. Attempt all questions

It is amazing how many exam scripts are handed up unfinished. Every year, capable students who just didn't get time to finish the paper lose easy marks. Don't fall into this trap. Work on the basis that you will get an answer written for the required number of questions. Remember that it is much easier to get the first $20 \%$ of the marks for any question than the final $5 \%$. You can always polish an answer further but, if there is no attempt made at part of a question, the examiner can't give you any marks. BUT if the instructions on the front of the paper tell you to answer a certain number of questions - stick to this - don't answer too many!

## Key terms used in examination questions

| Account for <br> Explain the process or reason for something being the way it is. | Analyse <br> Explore the main ideas of the subject, show they are important and how they are related |
| :---: | :---: |
| Calculate <br> Find out using mathematics. | Complete Finish off. |
| Compare <br> Show the similarities (but you can also point out the differences). | Comment on Discuss the subject, explain it and give an opinion on it. |
| Conclude <br> Decide after reasoning something out. | Concise Short and brief. |
| Contrast <br> Show the differences ~ compare and contrast questions are very common in exams - they want you to say how something is similar and how it may be different too. | Criticise <br> Analyse and them make a judgement or give an opinion. You could show both the good and bad points. You could refer to an expert's opinion within this question. |
| Define <br> Give the meaning. This should be short. | Describe <br> Give a detailed account. |
| Differentiate <br> Explore and explain the difference. | Distinguish <br> Explain the difference. |
| Enumerate <br> Make a list of the points under discussion. | Estimate Guess the amount or value. |
| Discuss <br> Explore the subject by looking at its advantages and disadvantages (i.e. for and against). Attempt to come to some sort of judgement. | Evaluate <br> Give an opinion by exploring the good and bad points. It's a bit like asking you to assess something. Attempt to support your argument with expert opinion. |
| Explain <br> Describe, giving reasons and causes. | Express <br> Put the ideas into words. |
| Factors <br> The fact or circumstances that contribute to a result. | Give an account of Describe. |
| Give reasons for Use words like because in your answer as you will be explaining how or why something is that way. | Identify <br> Recognise, prove something as being certain. |
| Illustrate Show by explaining and giving examples. | Indicate <br> Point out, make something known. |
| Interpret <br> Explain the meaning by using examples and opinions. | Justify <br> Give a good reason for offering an opinion. |
| List <br> An item-by-item record of relevant images. This would normally be in note form without any need to be descriptive. | Outline <br> Concentrate on the main bits of the topic or item. Ignore the minor detail. |
| Prove <br> Give real evidence, not opinion, which proves an argument and shows it to be true. | Relate Show the connection between things. |
| State <br> Write briefly the main points. | Summarise <br> Give the main points of an idea or argument. Leave out |
| Trace <br> Show how something has developed from beginning to end. | unnecessary details that could cloud the issue. |

## Answering Exam Questions

1. Scan all the questions.
2.) Mark all the questions you could answer.
2. Read these questions carefully.
3. Choose the correct number of questions in each section.
4. Decide on an order: best answers first.
5. Divide up your time, allowing more time for the questions with the most marks.
6. Underline the key words in the question.
7. Plan your answer.
8. Stick to the point of the question.

9. Write your answer.
10. Use the plan at every stage - e.g. every paragraph.
11. Check your answer against the plan. Look out for mistakes.
12. If you have time, re-read the questions and your answers and make any necessary corrections.

## Dealing with distractions

- "I just start daydreaming"

Become an active learner. Always work with a pen and paper. Focus on a specific task, not a specified time for your study.

- "I can't focus because I'm anxious about the exams"

Try to limit yourself to your immediate concerns, the things you have some control over (preparation for the upcoming revision test) rather than the things you cannot determine (like what questions the examiners will choose for this year's English Lit paper.)

- "I often fall asleep when I'm supposed to be studying"

Try to get to bed on time over the coming weeks. A tired brain is very unproductive. Get some genuine rest at the weekend. Be sure to get regular exercise, even just a walk around the block at night to clear your head.

- "I'm constantly interrupted by other people"

Study in the location most likely to offer peace and quiet. Ask for consideration from family members over the final run up to exams. Never have a TV, phone, computer game, or music system within arm's reach while you are trying to work. Make a rule of not taking phone calls within certain defined periods.

- "I keep thinking of other things while I'm studying"

Divide the study session into smaller, short-range goals which demand your full attention e.g. vocabulary or poetry test. Keep a 'reminder pad' beside you, a little notebook to jot down something that strikes you (someone to call, a job to do, etc.) and deal with it after the study period. Having made a note of it, you can more easily re-focus on your work.

## Websites to help your revision:

REMEMBER: Making your own revision notes from your classwork and homework and are the most effective forms of revision notes. However, if you feel it would help you to spend your revision time using the internet here are some suggestions you: (Revision websites will cover every syllabus so make sure know which parts are relevant for your syllabus).

http://www.bbc.co.uk/radio1/onelife/education/revision/planners.shtml (on line revision planners)
http://www.nwlg.org/pages/resources/knowitall/index.htm guidance website (e.g. how to plan your revision etc)

## OTHER BITS!

## Healthy Body = Healthy Mind

## Food for thought

variety of healthy foods doesn't just give your body a boost, it also benefits cells. Skipping meals may well give you extra cramming time, but it can


Eating a your brain also leave you hungry and unable to concentrate, So, eat regularly and sensibly. Think wholemeal sandwiches and fruit, rather than cakes and biscuits!

## Brain fuel

- Bread, pasta, cereals and potatoes are filling and packed with starchy carbohydrates, which release energy slowly, meaning you can keep going for longer.
- Fruit and vegetables give you essential vitamins and minerals. Aim for at least five portions a day.
- Food like pasties, chips and crisps are high in fat. Unless you want to emerge from your room looking like Jabba the Hut, keep them for treats.
- Drink plenty of fluids. Dehydrated brains don't think clearly and water is healthier than sweet, fizzy drinks.
- Meat, fish, pulses, milk and dairy foods are good sources of protein. Moderate amounts are essential for a healthy diet.
- Make sure you eat breakfast on the day of an exam.
- If you're not getting enough iron then you'll damage your ability to concentrate for long periods of time and your energy levels will begin to drop. If hour long sessions of revision are proving too much, try eating more red meat, eggs and leafy green vegetables like spinach.

Exercise: Staying in your room can seem like the best option when time is short. But a bit of the great outdoors can blow the cobwebs away you relax. If you can't get out, at least get up and out of your chair for a and a wander. Better still, go for a swim or put those footie boots on and your mind and body a workout.


## Learn to relax

Take mini breaks throughout the day. Work on relaxation techniques, such as taking slow deep breaths.

## Exercise

Physical activity provides relief from stress. The brain uses $20 \%$ of oxygen in the blood so you need to think about your posture and exercise to make sure your body gets enough. 30 minutes of sport or a short walk will do the trick.

## Time

Recognise that you can only do so much in a given time.
Try to pace, not race.

## Make a list

Make a list of the things that are worrying you and the possible things that could happen - then your brain will stop bringing them forward all the time.

## Sleep

Don't become overtired by forcing yourself to work late. Your brain needs time to sort out the information it has come across during the day. Your ideal sleep time is about 8 hours a night.

## Get organised

Have a realistic daily schedule including revision, sleep, eating, relationships and recreation.

## Be positive

Talk positively to yourself! Don't pay attention to that internal voice saying you can't do it; tell yourself you can do it and volu will do it

## Talk

Talking and meeting with friends and occasionally sharing deep feelings and thoughts can be helpful in reducing stress.

Stay calm
Make sure you are in a calm, positive mood before you start studying.

## Be healthy

Watch your eating habits. Make sure you eat sensibly and have a balanced diet. Avoid too much chocolate, cola, caffeine and foods with lots of additives.
Drink lots of water.

## Business Studies

## OVERVIEW:

 Exam Board: Edexcel
## CCEE ASSESSMA A

Two exams: Equal weighting and both 1 hour 45 minutes long

- Paper 1: Investigating a Small Business
- Paper 2: Building a Small Business


## Key Equipment

Sscientific calculator needed for lessons and exams


## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision guide:

- Collins Edexcel GCSE Business Complete Revision \& Practice


## Flashcards:

Pearson REVISE Edexcel GCSE Business Revision Cards: For 2024
and 2025 assessments and exams

## Websites:

- eRevision: www.erevision.uk
- Two Teachers: www.twoteachers.co.uk
- Tutor2U: Www.tutor2u.co.uk



## Collins

Edexcel GCSE 9-1
Business
Complete Revision \& Practice


3 books in 1
auson guace, wownome emacticempen


- Focus on knowledge retrieval: Create flashcards with key terms and their definitions, create knowledge organisers for topics.
- Practice questions by doing as many GCSE past papers as you can to help you with: Exam format, questions style, time pressure and retrieving information quicker.
- Practice key mathematical methods!


## Design \& Technology <br> OVERVIEW: <br> Exam Board: AQA

## GCSE Assessment

## Written Exam 50\% of qualification

Duration is 2 hours and it has a total of 100 marks.
Section A:
Core technical principles (20 marks) A mixture of multiple choice and short answer questions assessing a breadth of technical knowledge and understanding.
Section B:
Specialist technical principles (30 marks)
Several short answer questions (2-5 marks) and one extended response to assess a more in depth knowledge of technical principles.
Section C:
Designing and making principles (50 marks) A mixture of short answer and extended response questions.

Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) $50 \%$ of qualification

30-35 hours and a total of 100 marks
The students are given a substantial design and make task, which will cover the following:

- Identifying and investigating design possibilities
- Producing a design brief and specification
- Generating design ideas
- Developing design ideas
- Realising design ideas
- Analysing \& evaluating

Students will produce a prototype and a portfolio of evidence.

## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Recommended Books:

Grade 9-1 GCSE Design \& Technology AQA Revision Guide
Grade 9-1 GCSE Design \& Technology AQA Exam Practice Workbook
Recommended Websites:
BBC Bitesize https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zby2bdm
Technology student https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zby2bdm

Remember- the 3 main principles:

- Core technical principles
- Specialist technical principles
- Designing and making principles

Create flashcards/ mind maps/ knowledge organises for each section as part of your revision

## English: Language and Literature

## OVERVIEW:

## Exam Board: AQA

## GCSE Assessment

English Language
2 exams
Both 1 hour 45 minutes

## English Literature

2 exams
Paper 1:
1 hour 45 minutes
Paper 2 :
2 hours 15 minutes

Key Texts
Literature Paper 1: A Christmas Carol \& Macbeth

Literature Paper 2: An Inspector Calls, Power and Conflic $\dagger$ Poetry \&
Unseen Poetry


## Recommended revision guides and websites

1. CGP guides for texts/ topics are available on ParentPay. A Christmas Carol, Macbeth, An Inspector Calls, Power \& Conflict and Unseen Poetry
2. Watch Mr. Bruff videos on www.youtube.com .
These videos include analysis of specific poems, analysis of themes in texts, as well as videos on how to approach different questions.

## 3. GCSE answers NoveIGuide www.novelguide.com has chapter summaries, character profiles, metaphor and theme analyses, and author biographies.

4. GCSE Answer www.gcse.com - has tutorials, exam techniques and handy tips.

## 5. Spark Notes

 www.sparknotes.com/lit/.dir A compilation of study guidesCreate flashcards of key quotations. On one side draw images that will help you remember the quotation. On other side write down the quote and three layers of analysis.

```
Revision . Use highlighters to annotate WAGOLLs you have been given.
Tips When you complete an exam question at home highlight where you have improved your work and included words of the day.
```


## Food Preparation \& Nutrition <br> OVERVIEW: <br> Exam Board: AQA

## GCSE Assessment

## Written Exam 50\% of qualification

1 hour 45 mins in duration.
It is marked out of 100 marks and is worth $50 \%$ of the qualification.
The questions are broken down as follows: Multiple choice questions (20 marks),
Five questions each with a number of sub questions ( 80 marks)

## Non-Examination Assessment (NEA)

## $50 \%$ of qualification

Task 1: Food investigation ( 30 marks)
Students' understanding of the working characteristics, functional and chemical properties of ingredients. Practical investigations are a compulsory element of this NEA task. Written or electronic report (1,500-2,000 words) including photographic evidence of the practical investigation.
Task 2: Food preparation assessment (70 marks)
Students' knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to the planning, preparation, cooking, presentation of food and application of nutrition related to the chosen task. Students will prepare, cook and present a final menu of three dishes within a single period of no more than three hours, planning in advance how this will be achieved. Written or electronic portfolio including photographic evidence. Photographic evidence of the three final dishes must be included.

## Recommended revision guides and websites

## BBC Bitesize:

https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/class-clips-video/design-and-technology-gcse-food-preparation-and-nutrition/zvjh8xs

## Recommended revision guides on the school system:

www.Illuminat.digital/aqafood

Username: SCHS3
Password: STUDENTS3

Remember- the course is broken down
into 5 sections:

- Food, nutrition and health
- Food science
- Food safety
- Food choice
- Food provenance

Create flashcards/ mind maps/ knowledge organises for each section as part of your revision

## French

## OVERVIEW:

## GCSE Assessment

## Overview of assessment

Four exams, one per skill, each worth $25 \%$ of overall GCSE grade.

- Paper 1 is Listening
- Paper 2 is Speaking
- Paper 3 is Reading
- Paper 4 is Writing

The exam is tiered i.e. student sits either all Foundation or all Higher papers.

## Listening exam:

Listening and understanding - pupils listen to audio and answer exam questions.

## Speaking exam:

Pupils are assessed on their ability to speak in French.

## Reading exam:

Pupils answer comprehension and translation questions.

## Writing exam:

Pupils are assessed on their ability to write in French.

## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision Guide:

CGP: GCSE Edexcel French for the Grade 1-9 Course revision guide and workbook.


## Websites:

- SENECA: https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/ Students have been given log in details
- Padlet: https://padlet.com/zpinkney1/gcse-french-revision-ioillfykonmi
- BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/z9daxnb
- A little and often is key to learning a language. This applies particularly to the vocabulary. I would recommend at least three times a week for 15 minutes.
- Learn key verbs in past, present and future tense.
- Generally, anything that is French can be seen as revision! This could be reading an online article, listening to a podcast or French music or watching a movie on Netflix in French.


## Geography <br> Exam Board: AQA

## GCSE Assessment

## Overview of assessment

The GCSE comprises three exams:

- Paper 1 (35\%) 1 hour 30 minutes
- Paper 2 (35\%) 1 hour 30 minutes
- Paper 3 (30\%)


## Breakdown of exams

Paper 1: Living with the physical environment
Answer ALL the questions in sections A and $B, C H O I C E$ in section $C$.
Section A: The challenge of Natural Hazards

- Natural Hazards
- Tectonic Hazards
- Weather Hazards
- Climate Change

Section B: The Living World

- Ecosystems
- Tropical Rainforests
- EITHER Hot Deserts OR Cold

Environments
Section C: Physical Landscapes in the UK

- UK Physical Landscapes
- TWO FROM Coastal Landscapes,

River Landscapes OR glacial landscapes in the UK.

Paper 2: Challenges in the human environment
Answer ALL the questions in Sections A and B, CHOICE in Section C.
Section A: Urban Issues and Challenges
Section B: The Changing Economic
World
Section C: The Challenge of Resource Management

- Resource Management
- EITHER Food OR Water OR Energy


## Paper 3: Geographical applications

Answer ALL the questions in the exam:
Section A: Issue Evaluation:
Material provided 12 weeks before the exam. You have to analyse and interpret it, then answer the questions about a related issue in the exam.

## Section B: Fieldwork

In the exam, you'll have to write about
fieldwork techniques and analyse some data that you're given.

- Physical Geography fieldwork:

Coastal study

- Human Geography fieldwork: London study.


## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision Guide:

CGP: GCSE AQA Geography revision guide and workbook.

## Websites:

- BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zy3ptyc
- Daydream Education: https://apps.daydreameducation.com/pocket-poster-
revision-guides/gcse-geography/app/


## German

## OVERVIEW: Exam Board: Edexcel

## GCSE Assessment

Written Exam $50 \%$ of qualification

Four exams, one per skill, each worth $25 \%$ of overall GCSE grade.

- Paper 1 is Listening ( 35 or 45 min ),
- Paper 2 is Speaking
- Paper 3 is Reading ( 45 or 60 min )
- Paper 4 is Writing ( 60 or 75 min ).

The exam is tiered i.e. student sits either all Foundation or all Higher papers.

## Listening and Reading exams:

Section A of both papers are in English, to be answered in English.
Section B is German questions to be answered in German.

## Speaking exam:

Between 7 and 12 minutes (dependent on tier). The exam consists of a role play, photo task and general conversation.

## Written exam:

Foundation: Students are expected to write four sentences to describe a photo, write 40 -words answering 4 one-word bullet points, translate 5 sentences into German and write 90 -words in answer to 4 bullet points in three tenses.

Higher: Students will complete the 90word task, translate a short paragraph into German and produce an extended writing task (150 words) in response to two bullet points.

## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision Guide:

CGP: GCSE AQA German for the Grade 1-9 Course revision guide and workbook.

## Websites:

- SENECA: https://senecalearning.com/en-GB/ Students have been given log in details
- Memrise: https://www.memrise.com/
- BBC Bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/subjects/z8j2tfr
- Learn German: https://learngerman.dw.com/en/learn-german/s-9528
- Easy German: https://www.easygerman.org/

$$
\begin{array}{ll}
\text { Revision : Learn key verbs in past, present and future tense. } \\
\text { Generally, anything that is German can be seen as revision! This } \\
\text { could be reading an online article, listening to a podcast or } \\
\text { German music or watching a movie on Netflix in German. }
\end{array}
$$

## Health and Social Care

## OVERVIEW:

## Exam Board: Pearson

## BTEC Assessment

BTEC Tech Award consists of 2 Pearson Set Assignments - these are internally assessed tasks completed in timed exam conditions and 1 External examination lasting for 2 hours.

- Internally assessed assignment: Human Lifespan and Development
- Internally assessed assignment: Health \& Social Care Services and Values
- Externally assessed written exam: Health and Wellbeing

Good attendance is essential to complete the Pearson Set Assignment tasks as these must be completed within 6 hours of lesson time. If pupils miss a lesson they will miss time towards their assessment.

## Recommended revision guides and websites

- Pupils will have access to e-revision when they complete component 3
- Sample assessments are available from the exam board
https://qualifications.pearson.com/en/qualifications/btec-tech-awards/health-and-social-care-2022.html
- Tutor2U Component 3 Revision Flash cards are highly recommended https://www.tutor2u.net/hsc/store/component-3-health-wellbeing-revision-question-cards-for-btec-tech-award-in-health-social-care-2022
- Remember to explain how your ideas link to the case studies in the assessment.
- Practice answering questions is the best preparation. Past papers are available and make an excellent revision


## Revision

Tips

- Make sure you cover the whole question in your answer- use sample answers/ WAGGOLLs to guide you.


## History

## OVERVIEW: <br> Exam Board: Edexcel

## GCSE Assessment

## 3 Papers

Paper 1 - Warfare through Time 1 hr 15 mins
Paper 2 - Superpower Relations / Elizabethan England 1 hr 45 mins
Paper 3 - Germany 1918-1939 1hr 20 mins

## Key Texts



Textbooks are available for each of the Units. Books are available for students to use during lessons and revision.
These books are available online or in WH Smith.

- Early Elizabethan England ISBN 9781292127262
- Superpower Relations ISBN 9781292127279
- Warfare Through Time ISBN 9781292127385
- Germany 18-39 ISBN 9781292127347



## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision Guide:

- Revision Guides for each unit are available online (CGP) but are not necessary as students are supplied with a variety of revision materials.


## Websites:

- BBC bitesize: https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/zw4bv4j
- Revisely: https://www.revisely.com/gcse/history/edexcel
- YouTube


## Cambridge National in Information Technology

## OVERVIEW:

## Exam Board: OCR

## Assessment

## Written Exam

- R050: IT in the digital world. In this unit learners will develop their understanding of design and testing concepts for creating an IT solution or product, and the uses of IT in the digital world. Assessed by 1 hour 30 minute written examination (40\%).


## Assignments

- R060: Data manipulation using spreadsheets. In this unit Learners will plan, design, create, test and evaluate a data manipulation spreadsheet solution to meet client's requirements. Assessed by 10 hour set assignment (30\%).
- R070: Using Augmented Reality to present information. In this unit Learners will design, create, test and review an Augmented Reality model prototype to meet a client's requirements. Assessed by 10 hour set assignment (30\%).


## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision guides:

- Level 1/Level 2 Cambridge National in IT (J836): Second Edition.

ISBN: 9781398352674

## Website:

- OCR: https://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/cambridge-nationals/it-level-1-2-i836/qualification-at-a-glance/


## Overview of written exam

| Section A | - This will have a range of closed response, multiple choice and short response |
| :--- | :--- |
| questions. |  |

## Mathematics

## OVERVIEW:

## GCSE Assessment

## Three exams: Equal weighting and all 90 minutes

Paper 1 non-calculator
Paper 2 calculator is allowed
Paper 3 calculator is allowed
Content is assessed across all three papers.
There are two tiers of entry; Higher and Foundation.
Foundation grades are from 1 to 5 and higher grades are from 4 to 9
Key Equipment
Scientific calculator


Geometry set (including as a minimum: protractor, compass and ruler

## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision guides:

- Collins Edexcel GCSE Revision Maths All-in-One Revision \& Practice: Foundation or Higher.


## Websites:

- MathsWatch.co.uk
- CorbettMaths.co.uk
- My Maths.co.uk
- Mathsgenie.co.uk
- Onmaths.com
- BBC Bitesize - www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/examspecs/z9p3mnb

- Create flashcards with key topics/ methods on one side and questions on the other.
- Complete past papers- Corbett Maths has a range of practice papers, as has Maths Genie
- Watch the videos on OnMaths/ Corbett Maths and complete the Tips exam style questions.
- Use model solutions to answers on Maths Genie .


## Science: Combined and Single

## OVERVIEW:

## Exam Board: AQA

## GCSE Assessment

## GCSE Single Sciences

- 3 separate GCSEs- each assessed individually


## Assessment

- 6 exam papers, each with equal weighting:
- 2 exams each in Biology, Chemistry and Physics worth 100 marks each.
- Practical work is part of the course, and knowledge of this is assessed in the exams.


## GCSE Combined Science

- One award, worth 2 GCSEs.
- 2 grades awarded on average performance across all 3 Sciences.


## Assessment

- 6 exam papers, each with equal weighting:
- 2 exams in each Biology,

Chemistry and Physics worth 70 marks each.

- Practical work is part of the course and knowledge of this is assessed in the exams


## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision guides:

- CGP Guides: Available at a discounted rate on

ParentPay

## Websites:

- BBC bitesize
- Free science lessons
- Cognito (YouTube)
- Primrose Kitten (YouTube)

- Practice questions by doing as many GCSE past papers as you can to help you with: Exam format, questions style, time pressure and retrieving information quicker.
- Past papers can be obtained from AQA online. Hard copies are


## Sociology <br> OVERVIEW: <br> Exam Board: AQA

## GCSE Assessment

## Overview of assessment

Two exam papers- both 1 hour 45 minutes

## Paper 1: The Sociology of families and education (50\%)

What's assessed:

- The sociology of families
- The sociology of education
- Relevant areas of social theory and methodology
Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

Questions:
Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.
Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.

Paper 2 The Sociology of Crime \& Deviance and Social Stratification What's assessed:

- The sociology of crime and deviance
- The sociology of social stratification
- Relevant areas of social theory and methodology Students will be expected to draw on knowledge and understanding of the entire course of study to show a deeper understanding of these topics.

Questions
Section A has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.
Section B has two multiple choice questions followed by a range of short and extended responses.

## Recommended revision guides and websites

## Revision Guide:

AQA GCSE 9-1 Sociology All-in-One Complete Revision and Practice: Ideal for the 2024 and 2025 exams (Collins GCSE Grade 9-1 Revision)

## Websites:

- Tutors2u: https://www.tutor2u.net/sociology
- Revise Sociology: https://revisesociology.com/
- The Sociology Guy: https://thesociologyguy.com/
- Sociology Central: http://www.sociology.org.uk/

|  | - Start creating flash cards and mind maps immediately |
| :--- | :--- |
| ReVISIOR - |  |
| Look at the subject specification and read ahead on topics to be |  |
| studied |  |

## BTEC Tech Award Level 1/2 in Sport

## OVERVIEW:

## Exam Board: Pearson

## BTEC Assessment

Component 1 - Preparing participants to take part in Sport and Physical Activity Learning content and coursework submission is May of year 10 (30\% of grade)

- Types of sporting and physical activities and the benefits of taking part
- Provision of sport in different sectors
- Types of participants
- Barriers to sport and physical activity participation and how to overcome these
- Sports clothing, equipment and technology
- Warm ups: planning and delivering, (filmed evidence), adapting and impact.

Component 2 - Taking part and improving participants sporting performance Begin learning content in summer of Year 10 and will submit coursework in December of Year 11 ( $30 \%$ of grade)

- Components of fitness
- Techniques, strategies and fitness needed for different sports (filmed evidence for showing your own skills and teaching others)
- Officials in sport
- Rules and regulations in sport

Component 3 - Developing fitness to improve other participants performance in sport and physical activity
Exam - sat in May of Year 11 ( $40 \%$ of grade)

- Components of fitness specific to certain sports
- Fitness training principles
- Exercise intensity
- Fitness testing and its importance
- Methods of training
- Effects of long term training on the body systems
- Fitness programme design


## Recommended revision guides and websites

- Revise BTEC Tech Award Sport (2022) Revision Guide
- CGP: New BTEC Tech Award in Sport: Exam Practice Workbook

| - | Remember- $60 \%$ of your grade is coursework completed in class- <br> attendance matters! <br> Create mind maps/knowledge organisers for each of the <br> component 3 topics |
| :--- | :--- |
| ReVision |  |

