

Quick Revision Tips!

- Exams are not mysterious, hit-or-miss affairs: with the right kind of preparation you can maximize your chances of doing well.
- Do your very best to get specimen papers and to make sure that you know the exact format of the exam.
- Decide how much of the syllabus you need to learn so that you can safely answer enough questions.
- Make a flexible revision plan which includes the following:

- Time off
- Variety so that you don't get bored
- "Recap" slots so that you can spend extra time on harder topics, review what you've already learnt, or catch up if you've fallen behind
- Time for all subjects so that you avoid revising hard for the first exams and neglecting the harder ones

- Reduce the bulk of your notes down to key ideas or information
- Formulate questions and answer them
- Make question banks
- Summarise
- Write skeleton answers
- Practise timed answers
- Do past papers
- Re-visit topics you don't understand
- Assess your own answers
- Work with others

- Work for short spells to suit your concentration span. Have plenty of breaks, but make sure that you return to work. Take exercise because it stimulates the brain. Relax.
- Generally, practice doing what you will have to do in the exam. If that's writing unseen essays, practice doing those. If it's recalling a lot of information, practice doing that. Avoid passively reading notes, and hoping it will all work out on the day!

A Guide to Exam Technique

- **The 'R' Word**
- There are many myths surrounding the issue of **Revision**. Many students believe that the amount of time spent revising is the key: the longer you spend revising, the better your results will be. Nothing could be further from the truth – its quality **NOT** quantity that counts!
- It is important to realise that we all learn best in different ways. Methods that seem to suit your friends may be totally inappropriate for you; we are all unique.

Your timetable should include:

- Time allocated to each subject - avoid devoting all your time to the first few subjects and neglecting the later exams
- Variety - make revision as stimulating as possible to avoid boredom
- Obtain copies of past papers for practice sessions
- Time off! Remember to take frequent short breaks either to relax or perhaps to get some exercise (which stimulates the brain). **BUT**
- make sure you return to your study
- Avoid the temptation to burn the midnight oil - get plenty of rest

- Having planned your timetable you now need to put it into practice. Some people like to work alone, others may benefit from working with friends. In either case here are some methods you might like to adopt:
- Reduce your notes to a manageable size - bullet point key issues
- Prepare a case/statute list for each subject area - this can serve as an effective memory jogger
- Read through notes two or three times and then try to recall them to memory - you may like to summarise on paper, run through them in your head, or say them out loud to yourself (best done in private!)
- Write skeleton answers to practice questions
- Try tackling past papers questions and time yourself - check answers against your revision notes
- Revisit topic areas that you don't understand

Question spotting - some words of caution!

- Most students will attempt to question spot at some point. Indeed, as you are unlikely to be able to revise the whole of a course, you will need to select which topic areas to revise. You should however avoid the temptation to question-spot too precisely simply because your favourite questions may not come up and you will be left without any alternatives to fall back on. By looking at past papers you can get a 'feel' for the sort of questions likely to crop up but you should make sure that you revise several topics in addition to the ones you hope to see on the paper to cover all eventualities.

The BIG day

- Some of the hints below may seem obvious but you'd be surprised at how easily and how often simple mistakes - such as revising for the wrong exam or turning up at the wrong place or time occur!
- Make sure you know the date, time and venue of the exam **AND** how to get there
- Arrive in plenty of time
- Make sure that you are comfortable and have all the right equipment with you

The BIG day (cont)

- Make sure you read the instructions carefully - take time to do this. You need to know how many questions to answer (e.g. 2 out of a choice of 5) and be aware of any special instructions (e.g. answer one question from part A and one from part B)
- Read the whole of the paper before deciding which questions you can answer best
- Assuming all questions carry an equal number of marks divide your time between them evenly. Make sure you stick to this. **Keep an eye on the clock!**

The BIG day (cont)

- Consider writing a plan - five minutes spent doing this at the start of each question will enable you to produce a much fuller answer than trying to think as you go along. You can also add to it as things spring to mind

The BIG day (cont)

- Make sure you answer the question. Many students fall into the trap of translating a specific question into 'write all you know about...' avoid this and make sure you keep returning to the question in your answer.
- Answer the correct number of questions. This is where timing comes into its own. An examiner can only mark what's on your answer paper if you run out of time and fail to answer the last question you could lose a substantial number of marks. In an **absolute emergency** (and this is not to be advised if at all avoidable) you could consider bullet pointing a final answer!

LET YOUR BRAIN TAKE THE STRAIN

- Lastly remember there is no gain without pain. Examiners are human (really!) they are not out there to trap you into failing. **BUT** the only person who can prepare effectively for an exam is **YOU**. If you follow some or all of the advice given here you will be well on the road to a successful and stress reduced university experience.

After the exam

- Remember that doing a post mortem by comparing your answers with others is quite likely to upset someone badly—perhaps you.
- Move your thoughts and energy to the next exam, or to the party—but it is far too late to start worrying about what you may or may not have done wrong, so forget it and **MOVE ON...**

Good luck!

- But good luck doesn't really have much to do with it. If you are well prepared, then you will do well!