

Howden School & Technology College



Revision Tips



Specialist Schools
and Academies Trust
THE SCHOOLS NETWORK™



Examinations

GCSE Exams for 2012/13 start on Wednesday 6 November 2012 and finish on Wednesday 27 June 2013.

Every student will have an individual timetable with their candidate number and seating number for all their exams.

What will I **need** to bring with me?

- A **black** ball pen – do not use gel pens (blue is not allowed)
- HB pencils, an eraser, a ruler
- A protractor
- A calculator – unless told otherwise you are allowed to use a calculator. Your subject teachers will tell you in advance.
- Calculators with any of the following facilities are prohibited:
 - data banks
 - dictionaries
 - language translators
 - retrieval of text or formulae
 - QWERTY keyboards
 - Built in symbolic algebra manipulations
 - Symbolic differentiation or integration
 - Capability of remote communication with other machines or the Internet

What must I **NOT** bring into an exam room?

- ✗ calculator **case/cover** (as instructed above)
- ✗ **correction fluid**
- ✗ a bag or pencil case (unless the pencil case is transparent)
- ✗ text books – no Anthology text book, new copies will be issued
- ✗ any notes
- ✗ dictionary or computer spell-checker unless you are told that you may do so
- ✗ any unauthorised material
- ✗ any sweets or drinks
- ✗ **NO MOBILE PHONES, MP3 PLAYERS OR ANY OTHER DIGITAL DEVICE**
– if you are found to have a mobile phone, MP3 player or any other digital device whether or not switched on, you will receive no marks for that exam. If it rings you will be disqualified from that exam.

You are responsible for bringing with you any materials stipulated as required for the examination. Possession of unauthorised material in an examination, whether for intended use or not, constitutes an infringement which will be subject to penalty and possible disqualification.

What should I do when I arrive at school?

If you have a mobile phone make sure that you leave it, either in your bag or give it to an invigilator. Best of all leave it at home.

All coats and bags are to be left in the room at the back of the Library. Students should arrive at the hall through the back entrance **15 minutes before** the exam is timed to start. Wait until you are asked to enter.

REMEMBER TO COME TO THE EXAM DRESSED IN FULL SCHOOL UNIFORM
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Revision Tips

Everyone dreads revision but there comes a time (or several times) in everyone's life when you **have** to do it to get where you want to in life.

Motivating yourself to revise is one of the toughest things you have to do at school. To make it worse, there is no immediate benefit: You have to sit there for hours on end, going through endless notes for an exam that is still some time away, and to get results that you won't know until months after you have sat the exam.

The fact is however that both the exams and the results **do** matter. Revision **does** matter. You need to know that whatever happens, you tried your best.

Remember also that everyone is on **your** side. If you need help, ask a teacher, ask your friends or your parents. It is also good to go to any **revision classes** at school, even if you think you know it already!

Getting Organised for Revision

1. Plan ahead

Before you do any work, sit down and **plan** what you are going to do between now and the exams. It is often a good idea to revise the areas you find most difficult first - get them out of the way and build your confidence in the subject. Creating a timetable is always useful.

2. Make summary notes

Gather all your material for the topic area and reduce it into **brief, clear notes**. Then summarise those, and then again and again until you only need a few **keywords** to remind you of the whole topic! (The S-cool! summary revision notes are a good place to start). You can then carry around a postcard with all the keywords wherever you go.

An effective way to make sure you remember certain things is to invent mnemonics. For example, **Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain** for the colours of the rainbow.

3. Understand how your memory works

Some of us are better at remembering things than others. However, here is a trick that should help...

If you learn something new, in general it will already start fading in your mind after a few hours (unless it is particularly exciting). However, if you revise it again in the next four hours, it will take about 24 hours before it starts to fade. Revise it in the 24 hour period and it will last for four days, then one and a half weeks, then one month, and so on.

By setting out your revision schedule to make the most of this (learn something, revise it again after a few hours, revise it again in the next couple of days, and so on) you will be using the way **your memory works to your advantage!**

4. Put aside specific hours in the day for revision

If you set aside the hours in the day you are going to revise, and let everyone else know what these are, you can make sure you are not disturbed. You can then get into a '**revision pattern**' - where your mind expects to be revising and is therefore more receptive to the material.

5. Try not to revise more than two subjects a day

Don't feel that you need to revise a whole topic in one go. As well as keeping a fresh head, going back the next day to finish revising the topic will renew your knowledge and hopefully help you **retain the information** for longer.

6. Eat properly

While you are using up energy revising it is important to eat properly so that your body and your mind are fit and ready for the exams. Fish, eggs and milk are high in **protein** which is used by your brain. But you will need **energy** as well. Nuts and bananas are good sources for this (chocolate is another good source of energy, but the effects of eating a bar of chocolate last far less than eating, for instance, a banana).

7. Take lots of breaks

Your mind will only be able to concentrate well for short periods of time - the first 15 minutes of revision are thought to be the best. Make sure you **stop for a few minutes every 30 minutes** or so. During your break, a good thing to do is to sit back for a few minutes, close your eyes, **relax**, and just think about the things you have just learnt.

8. Use diagrams

Visual stimulus is very important when trying to stay focussed on your study. **Colourful pictures and writing** will help you stay motivated to learn and also keep the material in your head for longer.

9. Test yourself

Or, get someone else to! Ask them if they can flick through your notes and ask you some **questions**. If you can't answer any of their selection, note the topic down so you can **re-learn** it after.

10. Revise for "you"

You may hear your friends boasting about "how little revision they did last night" - and if you admit you have been revising you have fears of being the Swot of the class. In fact your friends are probably working just as hard as you. You know how much you need to revise, so just do it, and don't worry about what the people around you are doing. **Everyone will get what they deserve in the end...**

11. Get hold of some past exam papers

Your teacher will be happy to supply recent past papers for you if they are available. Study the papers **and familiarise yourself** with the layout and the type of questions asked. Use the papers to test out your knowledge and understanding.

12. Get into the habit of planning your answers in rough

When you read the questions, underline and circle the key words to **help your understanding** of it. Then draw a quick (but detailed) spider diagram, listing all the important stuff to include in your answer. Finally, stop avoiding that awkward first paragraph! Focus and get on with it, writing as quickly as you can without it becoming illegible.

13. Try to sleep well

It can be very difficult to sleep in the periods leading up to the exams. The trick here is not to worry about it and get into a routine. Don't go to bed too early if you are worried about getting to sleep - it does not help. Instead **relax before going to bed** (the S-cool! trick is to have a cup of **camomile tea** which is a natural way of making you relax).

14. Don't overdo the revision the night before your exams

If it makes you feel better, then carry around some summary notes and glance at them now and then just to keep your confidence high. If you have given your all up to this point, then you will not learn anything you don't already know in the last evening. The extra marks you will get through having a **relaxed mind** will more than offset those few extra marks you may get from the small amount of extra material you can learn in one night.



10 Steps to Revision Success:

1. **Revision space:** Find a good place to work. It should be quiet and uncluttered.
2. **Revision timetable:** Draw up a revision timetable - it's crucial. It should be realistic, cover all subjects and allow you time off to relax.
3. **Make notes:** Don't just read through your class work, make notes - gradually condense your notes so they fit on the back of a postcard.
4. **Revision guides:** Get a recommendation from your teacher as to which are most useful and then make sure you use them!
5. **Questions and answers:** Write out answers to some questions to see how much you're actually remembering.
6. **Listen in:** Record your notes on your iPod or MP3 player and then play them walking down the street or whilst you're in bed.
7. **Prompts:** Put key words and phrases on sticky notes around the house, so you'll see them often.
8. **Seek help!** Don't go it alone. Get friends and family to help you revise.
9. **Past papers:** Make sure you get hold of some past papers, they're a really good way of knowing what to expect in the exam.
10. **Relax:** Panic does not help. The exams are going to happen, so you might as well give yourself the best chance of doing well, by starting to revise early and keeping calm.

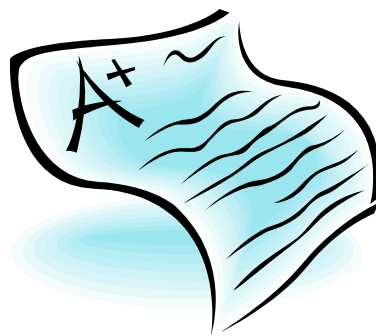
Very few people claim to enjoy exams, but that doesn't mean you should panic about them. Try to keep things in perspective and check out our top tips to help you get through the time in the run up to the exams and the exam period itself.

Getting the best out of the exam

(Don't give the examiner an excuse for not awarding the marks)

1. **Timing:** Make sure you know how much time you will have in the exam, what kind of questions you will be asked, and how many there will be. That way you can split your time between the questions to make sure they all get answered.
2. **Read everything:** It's worth reading the whole exam paper very quickly from start to finish. That way you can get a feel for the questions and know exactly how much you've got to get done in an allocated time.
3. **Choose carefully:** Once you've read through the exam paper you'll know how many questions you need to answer. It's worth taking a few more minutes to decide which questions you think you can answer the best. A wrong hasty decision could cost you marks.
4. **Plan your answer:** Examiners say that time given to planning is an important factor in successful writing. Your plan is your route to organised writing and higher marks. It might be worth highlighting the key words in the question you have chosen and noting how many marks you get for each question. That should give you a rough guide to how long to spend on it.
5. **Full answers:** Examiners are not telepathic – you need to write the full answer. Sometimes questions have several parts – check that you have tackled each part. However, full answers do not mean repeating the question.
6. **Show workings out:** you need to show your workings out in maths exams; by doing this, even if the final answer is incorrect, you will get credit for the method used.
7. **End of exam:** When you're doing an exam that involves long answers - for example English, it's a good idea to leave some space at the end of the answer so you can add any additional comments or arguments that might come to mind when you re-read your paper at the end of the exam.
8. **Facts and figures:** If you're writing an answer that requires you to quote facts, figures and quotations then make sure you include them! It sounds obvious but often people get so caught up in getting their answer down they forget to include all the important stuff!
9. **Clock watch:** Make sure you keep an eye on the time as you're going through the exam paper. You should have a rough idea how long to spend on each section and try not to go over that or you may not finish it in time.
10. **Answer all questions:** You'd be surprised how many students don't read the instructions or don't check the last page of the exam paper and end up missing valuable marks.

- 11. Timing:** Don't spend all your time on questions you know the answer to. Remember that you have to answer all the questions, and you may end up with a poorer mark for answering some questions supremely well and some not at all.
- 12. Remember what you've learned:** You will do many practise questions and paper in the lead up to the exams. And, whilst you won't get the exact same questions in your real exams you will be able to apply some of the things you've learnt and try not to make the same mistakes again.
- 13. Handwriting:** Make sure you're writing is legible, it's worth taking a little extra time making sure your work is neat enough for the examiner to be able to read it. Try to avoid spelling mistakes too! Remember to use **black** ink only.
- 14. Be prepared:** The more prepared you are the more likely you are to succeed.
- 15. Keep calm:** If you feel yourself getting stressed take a deep breath.
- 16. Move on:** Once an exam is over, try to forget about it. There is nothing more you can do about it. The best thing you can do is go home and revise for the next one.



Looking after yourself: before an exam

It's normal to feel nervous about taking exams. However, too much anxiety may mean you panic and under-perform, so here's how to get those nerves under control.

Revise: Stick to your revision timetable. This will make you feel in control of your work.

Study everything: Don't not revise a subject because you don't like it or find it hard. You'll still have an exam on it so it's important to cover everything.

Check dates and times: It's your responsibility to get to your exams on the right day and at the right time.

Get organised: Make sure you pack your bag and check you have everything you need for the exam the night before. Remember that **black pen**, and some spares!

Early to bed: Don't stay up late cramming for your exams - you need to be fresh for the next day. Get to bed at a reasonable time and don't forget to set your alarm for the morning!

Think positively: Make yourself feel more positive by visualising the exams going well. Imagine you are confident and relaxed during the exam. Try to imagine the scene in as much detail as possible. If you do have negative thoughts, replace them with a positive image.

Relax: Make sure you have time out in the lead up to the exams. Worrying constantly won't help you do any better in the exams, so take time to chill out.

Eat breakfast: Even if you don't feel like eating before the exam, try and eat something for breakfast, your brain needs energy to work.

Avoid caffeine: Drinking lots of coffee or other drinks containing lots of caffeine is not a good idea, as this can make you feel more nervous.

Keep calm: If you start to feel nervous, breathe deeply. Keep saying 'I CAN do this exam'

Good luck!

Useful web sites

www.bbc.co.uk/gcsebitesize/ and <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/ks3bitesize/>

A secondary school revision resource for students studying their GCSEs featuring written content, interactive content, audio, video and games

<https://www.o2learn.co.uk/>

O2 are building a video library of revision lessons, for students aged 13 - 18, from teachers across the country

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/learning/>

Online learning and advice from the BBC including links to educational sites

<http://www.edexcel.com/i-am-a/student/examzone/Pages/home.aspx>

A great new site where you can find all the information you need to help you prepare for Edexcel exams

<http://www.s-cool.co.uk/>

The education site for students at school. *Revision* and teaching materials for *GCSE*

<http://www.revisionworld.co.uk/gcse> *GCSE* exam *revision* section where we provide free *revision* resources for a range of subjects

Weekly Revision Planner / 2011 - / 2011



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Weekly Revision Planner / 2011 - / 2011

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GCSE monthly revision planner - April 2011

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