



A REVISION PROGRAMME

BEFORE you start revising

1. Organise everything that you need – books, pens, paper, calculators etc.
2. Organise all your notes into order – by subject and by topic.
3. Find an area that you can use for revising and where you will not be disturbed. Preferably an area where you can leave your revision things and an area which doesn't need to be used for anything else.
4. Good lighting.
5. Area should not be too hot or stuffy, as this tends to induce tiredness.
6. Use wall space for revision timetables, calendars, targets etc.
7. Background music - not too loud. No TV or computer games.

What type of reviser are you?

There are basically two types of reviser and each type has a combination of strengths and weaknesses. If you know what type of reviser you are you can identify the weaknesses and plan to avoid them.

	Which of these apply to you?	Yes, this is me	No, this is not me
1	I am easily distracted		
2	I am usually thorough		
3	I can be disorganised		
4	I can be impatient		
5	I can concentrate well		
6	I can forget important details		
7	I can get 'bogged down' with too many important details		
8	I can often see new ways of doing things		
9	I can see the links between the subjects I am taking		
10	I can see the links between the topics in each subject		
11	I can skim through my textbook quickly		
12	I do not organise my notes		
13	I do not check my revision notes to see that they are accurate		
14	I prefer to work on my own		
15	I enjoy creative writing		
16	I keep my notes in good order		
17	I enjoy revising and sitting exams		
18	I have to understand every aspect of a topic before I move on to another		

	Which of these apply to you?	Yes, this is me	No, this is not me
19	I get very enthusiastic about some topics		
20	I like solving problems		
21	I make revision timetables but do not keep to them		
22	I know the exam syllabus quite well		
23	I like to use lots of books for revision		
24	I make a revision timetable and keep to it		
25	I never prioritise my revision		
26	I often leave things until the last minute		
27	I often rework my revision notes		
28	I often rush into answers without thinking		
29	I often spot the links between ideas		
30	I often try to do too much at once		
31	I organise my revision notes before I start revising		
32	I often forget my textbook		
33	I pay attention to the small details		
34	I often find interesting solutions		
35	I prefer to revise each topic piece by piece		
36	I prefer to work things out on paper		
37	I prefer to work in short bursts		
38	I prioritise my revision		
39	I rarely ask my teachers for advice		
40	I read the instructions on revision questions carefully		
41	I see problems as a challenge		
42	I am not usually critical of ideas		
43	I usually stick to the same methods		
44	I work well on my own		
45	I often guess what I do not know		
46	If I start a task I must finish it		
47	I often delay before starting my revision		
48	Once I have found a way to do something I keep to it		

Circle all the answers where you have ticked 'Yes, that is me' in the boxes below. Whichever box has the most 'circles' is the type of reviser that you are.

SPRINTER	LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER
1 3 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 15 17 19	2 4 5 7 14 16 18 20 22 24 27 29
21 23 25 26 28 30 32 34 37 42 45	31 33 35 36 38 39 40 41 43 44
47	46 48

Revision pitfalls for sprinters

If you are a 'sprinter', these are the problems that you are likely to have:

- you can be disorganised
- you try to do too much revision at once
- you are easily distracted
- you do not plan revision
- you do not prioritise revision topics
- your revision does not test how much you have learnt

If you are a 'sprinter', these are the things that you need to do:

- make a revision plan/timetable
- prioritise your revision
- test yourself
- avoid distractions before they distract you

Revision pitfalls for long-distance runners

If you are a 'long-distance runner', these are the problems that you are likely to have:

- you can become 'bogged down' in small details
- you can work on your own too much
- you try to collect too much information before you start
- you always use the same way of doing things
- you do not ask teachers for help if you are stuck
- you like to finish each section of your revision regardless of how thorough you have been

If you are a 'long-distance runner', these are the things that you need to do:

- try new revision techniques
- start a revision session by writing down three points about the topic just to get you started
- ask others for help

Varying revision techniques

It is important to vary revision techniques because research shows that:

WE REMEMBER

20% of what we READ

30% of what we HEAR

40% of what we SEE

50% of what we SAY

60% of what we DO

90% of what we READ, HEAR, SEE, SAY and DO

It can be seen that using a variety of approaches can **dramatically** increase your ability to memorise material. The chart also shows that reading (one of the most common exam preparation techniques) is also the **least efficient**.

Revision sessions should also include asking questions, drawing, talking out loud as well as listening, reading and writing.

Revision Techniques

VISUAL	AUDITORY	ORGANISATIONAL	PERSONAL
Mind map	Record key ideas on tape	Plan revision time	Build in rewards eg watching TV
Make a poster	Say key ideas out loud	Break revision into manageable chunks	Approach revision positively
Make a chart	Tell key ideas to the dog	Make a revision timetable	Take regular breaks
Make a diagram	Get someone to test you	Highlight the main points	Seek advice on difficult concepts
Make a cartoon	Exchange key ideas with a friend	Reduce notes to key words	Review the progress of your revision to make sure appropriate techniques are being used
Make notes on key ideas	Give a presentation to a group of pupils	Tick each topic as it is revised	
Surf a revision site on the Internet	Play soothing background music	Organise your notes	
Create revision cards	Watch revision DVDs		
Create a picture in your imagination			

But:

- Always ask yourself questions e.g. 'Is what I'm revising relevant?' 'What do I need to remember about the topic?'
- Occasionally move – stretch or massage to increase your oxygen supply
- Alter methods to avoid boredom and heighten concentration
- Say 'no' to distractions. Turn off your mobile phone!!!
- Take a break every 30-40 minutes – recharge your brain.
- Stop each session whilst you are making progress.
- Short and frequent is better than long and irregular

An example – Revision Cards

For a specific topic or case study prepare a small card which summarises all you know about that subject.

It should include the following:

Key ideas

The main factual information on the topic

Diagram/map etc.

Specialist vocabulary

The ideal revision session

You will be a faster reviser...	You will be a slower reviser...
When you are motivated	When you are bored
When you are relaxed	When you are worried
When you are eating and sleeping well	When you are tired, hungry and thirsty
When you use both sides of your brain	When you revise in an uncomfortable place
When you believe you are going to do well in your exams	When you cannot see the point of what you are revising
When you like the subject	When you do not like the subject

REMEMBER – IT DOES NOT MATTER HOW MUCH YOU **READ** IN EACH REVISION SESSION, ONLY HOW MUCH YOU **REMEMBER**.

YOU WILL NOT BE TAKING YOUR BOOKS INTO THE EXAMS WITH YOU. ALL THAT YOU WILL BE TAKING IS WHAT IS INSIDE YOUR HEAD!

Command words

Typical command words in examinations and their meanings. The most common used are in bold.

Account for	State why something happens (normally more than one reason)
Analyse	Break into separate parts and discuss, or interpret each part
Compare	Examine two or more things, and pick out similarities or differences
Consider	Give opinions in relation to given information
Contrast	Examine two or more things, and pick out the differences
Criticise	Make judgements; usually also give detail to support your views
Debate	Consider both sides of the question and come to a conclusion
Define	Give the meaning, or precise limits of the topic
Describe	Give a detailed account of qualities, parts etc.
Discuss	Consider both sides of an issue; maybe compare and contrast, or focus on differences
Enumerate	List several ideas, aspects, reasons, qualities
Explain	Make an idea clear; show logical development with reasons (more than one)
Evaluate	Give your opinion or refer to those of critics. Include evidence, quotation, details in support
Illustrate	Explain through examples
Interpret	Explain the meaning of the text
Outline	Give all the main ideas relating to the subject
Prove	Support fully with facts
Relate	Show the connection between ideas and/or place them against broader relevant issues
Review	Go back over earlier points briefly
Sketch	Give main ideas briefly
State	Explain precisely
Study	Look closely at something
Suggest	Try to explain why something happens
Summarise	Give a brief version, avoiding unnecessary details
Trace	Show how events/arguments progress and develop

Saving time in exams

The most common source of wasting time in GCSE exams occurs when candidates rewrite the question that they are responding to. You do not need to and you don't get any marks for it so **DON'T DO IT!!**

The second biggest time waster is writing more than you need to. Look at the number of marks available. Don't write more for a question with 2 marks available than you would for one with twice as many marks. Often one-mark questions sometimes only require one-word answers.

Some examination hints

1. Arrive in plenty of time – if you are in a hurry you will be stressed.
2. Wear comfortable clothing – check the weather – it may be boiling or freezing in the Hall.
3. Make sure you have all your equipment you need. Then take an extra pen and pencil.
4. Bring a watch and put it on the desk in front of you.
5. Ask your teachers beforehand exactly how many questions you have to do, how long you have, whether you have a choice of questions and if you are allowed any specialist equipment e.g. a calculator. You can then work out how long you need for each question.
6. Check that your desk doesn't wobble. If it does put some paper under the leg.
7. If you have a choice of questions, read them thoroughly before choosing which ones to do.
8. Do exactly what the question asks. Nothing more, nothing less.
9. You don't have to answer the questions in order from first to last. If there is a question you know you can do well, do it first, it will give you confidence. But, if you are given a separate answer book or paper, clearly mark the number of the question.
10. Look out for words highlighted in bold and titles for diagrams. These are the important words and the examiner is trying to draw your attention to it. Both these things are saying '**Make sure you notice this**'.
11. Don't waste time worrying about questions for which there is only one mark. It is not worth it.
12. If there is space for the answer underneath each question, there are normally extra pages at the end to go on to if you fill up the space. Don't hesitate to use it, but clearly mark the number of the question.
13. If there is some stimulus material given e.g. a picture, graph, paragraph etc. it is there to help you. Make sure you understand it.
14. If you find you are running out of time towards the end of the exam, try to answer as many questions as possible in shortened form. You will get more marks for some short sentence answers at the end than you will for one lengthy answer and a number of questions with no answer at all.
15. If you finish early, don't just put your pen down and stare into space for the remaining time. You don't look 'hard'; you look a 'fool'. Go through your paper, re-read the questions and answers, check your spellings, write something for the questions that you couldn't do, even if it is a wild guess (you won't lose marks for getting something wrong) and you might guess right.
16. After the exam, don't spend time discussing your answers with your friends – if they've put something different, it will only depress you and you may be right.

GOOD LUCK!

**The difference between a
grade D and a grade B may be as
little as 12 marks.**

Year 11 Revision Calendar

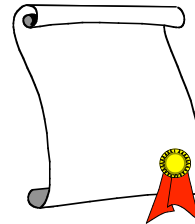
In planning revision you need to decide in advance what you are going to do and when. The most effective revision time is different for each person. **What time of day do you work the best?**

You also need to **take regular breaks** when revising and ensure that you **continue to take part in your leisure activities**.

Look at the revision schedule you have been given. This breaks up the majority of the day into two-hour blocks. The time spent in school is shaded as this is fixed in terms of specific lessons.

Try and complete the schedule by putting in first of all non-school things that you **have** to do. This might include:

- watching your favourite TV programmes
- visiting relatives/friends etc
- shopping
- sport
- other leisure e.g. cinema
- employment



To give yourselves the best possible chance, you need to **start revising over Easter**. You now need to put some revision slots in. But before you do, read this carefully.

SUGGESTIONS

1. When planning your revision time it is necessary to be more specific than just putting down a subject that you are going to revise in a particular slot. Instead you should be putting a topic, book or past examination paper heading. E.g. for English you may put down the name of your set text, for Maths you may put down a specific past paper to work through or for Geography you may want to concentrate your revision on 'Tourism'.
2. In order to help plan your revision, go through all your notes and create a list of the main books or topic headings for each of your subjects. Ask your teachers to help if necessary.
3. For each revision slot (2 hours) choose 2 subjects and have 15 minute break in between.
4. The best way to start is to read through all those notes which you made back at the beginning of Year 10. This refreshes your memory. You also need to increase the amount of revision you do the closer you get to the exams.
5. If you have a blank slot in your calendar, do some revision.
6. Keep a separate record of how much revision you do for each subject.



7. Stick this revision calendar on your wall, and stick to it. There is no point in creating a revision plan if you don't stick to it. Put a tick on your calendar if you've stuck with a session.
8. Reward yourself if you complete a session successfully eg bar of chocolate, phone a friend, ask the audience, go out.
9. Choose the same times for revising as your best friend(s). You are less likely to be disturbed. Turn off your mobile `phone!
- 10.If something happens to stop you revising in one of your planned slots, add another one in to replace it.
- 11.If you prefer listening to music when revising, then do it. It is impossible to watch TV and revise though.
- 12.If you've looked at the same page for more than 15 minutes, then you are not in the mood, give up this session.
- 13.Do the specific work set by your teachers first.
- 14.Ask your parent/carer to make sure you revise at the times stated. Have your own mobile answering machine, one that makes tea/coffee to order preferably.
- 15.Always be positive. Set yourself targets. What do you want to achieve? What do your teachers think you are capable of? What do you need for Post 16? Create a poster of them for your bedroom wall eg "I'll prove that horrible teacher wrong and get a B in".
- 16.**Your first target** - put in a minimum of 6 revision slots into your calendar over the half-term holiday. That's not much only 12 hours (less than a full day), not even one slot per day. **Your second target** - keep to it. **Your third target** - show your parents this document and ask for their help in whatever way they can. eg testing you, ensuring you keep to your revision schedule, keeping your little brother/sister out of the way, providing the rewards.



REMEMBER -

- If you don't revise, you won't succeed
- As little as 12 marks can make a difference of 2 grades at GCSE
- Be brave - it's not cool to fail.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help
- If your friends say they are not revising, they probably are, they're not telling you

*12 marks - the difference
between a D and a B*