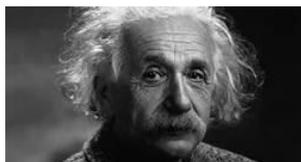


Why Revise?



Genius factor. Around 2% of the global population are believed to be geniuses, but only about 1 in every 10,000 actually develop 'genius' capabilities. Accepting that most of us are not geniuses, then this means that we all must work hard to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding in the subjects we study.

Growth of confidence. If we revise we experience a growth in confidence; in fact it's a real boost. We may still be nervous when we walk into an exam, but after quality revision time, we know a lot more than if we didn't revise. When we turn that exam paper over, we smile when those topics we revised so hard, appear.

Improves knowledge. There is no doubt that the more we study a topic, the more we learn and understand. Our knowledge expands the more we revise.

Improves skills. The more we practice past exam questions and papers, the more experience we gain in problem solving, using literacy or numeracy techniques or exam techniques generally. If we revise and practice these skills to the best of our ability, then we can only do well in our exams.

Improves understanding. Importantly, we understand through knowledge and skills how things connect, how to express ourselves, problem solve, apply formulae, etc. It's when we know a formula, but don't understand how to apply it, that we lack understanding. For example, we know the area of a triangle = $\frac{1}{2}$ base x height, but don't *understand* how to apply that to the problem. So make sure you understand what you are saying, writing or doing.

Intellectual growth spurt. Every year we all go through intellectual growth spurts. Think back to where you were last year, or the year before to realise how much you've intellectually grown. There is no doubt that after all your revision and exams that you will be far more intellectually developed and well-prepared for your courses next year. A Level students often look back on GCSEs and smile at how easy they were. Revision supports intellectual growth.

Feeling positive: For most of us, we simply feel much more positive when we have revised, knowing full well that we have worked as hard as we could and done our best. The opposite is also true; not feeling positive is when we've hardly revised at all!



How many days to the exam season?

How many days to the exam season? Always keep an eye on the calendar, tick off the days, don't let time creep past you.

Which exams and when? Make sure that you have a copy of the whole school exam timetable (there is another copy in this booklet for 2014) and that you have at least highlighted all of your exam sessions. Better still, extract them and put them on one page and put it on your wall, where you can check it every day.

How much time do I have? The exam season (or period) continues through several weeks, so you need to know the exact order of your exams, dates, days and times. You will need to prioritise which to revise first, or in which sequence, according to when they are scheduled on the timetable. Think about how many days you have for specific subject exams.

How can I chunk that time? By developing an exam revision timetable, which will change daily after you sit different subject exams.

Which subjects am I excelling in? Be familiar with those subjects that you are excelling in. You may need to revise less, but don't take them off your revision radar; you still need to do well in your best subjects.

What subjects do I need to develop? Clearly where you are not so strong with a subject, you may have to spend more time revising the knowledge, skills and understanding to improve to ensure you achieve the best grades. Top tip: if it's a C/D borderline grade – nail it! Seek the help of your teacher and revision materials to help you get there – don't be afraid to ask.

Priorities? Write down a list of your subjects. Which are you excelling in and which do you need to develop more? Rank them – best at the top. Write the dates of the exam beside them and calculate how much time you have to 'chunk'. Then prioritise your time to target and balance your potential.

Day	Revision time	Subject	Subject	Subject	Subject
Monday	2-3 hours	Maths	Science	French	History
Tuesday	2-3 hours	PE	English	Maths	RE
Wednesday	2-3 hours	Maths	English	Science	
Thursday	2-3 hours	Science	French	History	PE
Friday	2 hours	Maths	RE	Free	Free
Saturday	None	Day Off	Day Off	Day Off	Day Off
Sunday	2-3 hours	Maths	English	History	RE

A typical exam timetable. As you can see above, 2-3 hours across an evening is a good guide, but it may not be enough for some students, reasonable to others, but also challenging to some after a full day at school. However, the intensity of this type of revision is short-lived from Christmas to the end of the exam season. Also, as you complete some exams, you focus even more time on the remaining ones. What's important here is that you have a short Friday evening revision session and it may be sensible to have a day off on Saturday to relax and recharge your energy. Much of Sunday daytime may also be used for relaxation until you pick up the pace of revision on Sunday evening; the choice is yours, but this model may help you think about how to plan your time.

What is also significant about any timetable is how you allocate revision time. You could actually do:

- 5 minutes
- 10 minutes
- 15 minutes
- 20 minutes
- 30 minutes
- 45 minutes
- 1 hour
- 1 hour +

There is no reason why you shouldn't allocate your time and rotate your subjects to how you feel most comfortable.

Revision can often be a shared experience

Revision doesn't have to be a lonely, solitary experience, but can and should sometimes be fun, sociable time. Revision sleepovers can be very beneficial on that Saturday night off, when you share what you have learned and support your friends with their studies too.

Quiz nights are an alternative way to develop your knowledge with family and/or friends. Revision cards are a good idea and those students who make their own and use them always excel.

Chat with your friends about how it's all going, test each other, support each other – share and learn. Revision games really help learn in a fun way, especially if we pair up subjects with others.



Creating the right environment for learning



It's ideal if parents can create the right environment for learning. A specific place to revise is nice, but not always possible if a child shares a room. Maybe a place in the lounge or a quiet corner of a room could be adapted, somewhere with a little peace and quiet. Where younger siblings are part of the family, it may help if parents could keep them quiet during revision sessions.

Stationery can be very helpful in helping children revise, with paper, pens, post-its, high lighter pens, etc all being used to help organise notes. A clock is also very helpful, as often students can use them for timed answers or simply to ensure that they don't lose track of time.

Well-being – looking after ourselves and each other



In a survey conducted by Ofsted in April 2013, 82% of students stated that they were very anxious at the prospect of revising and sitting exams that year. Anxiety affects children in different ways, and as parents we are keen to support them in any way we can. The organisational skills we have previously discussed should help relieve a great deal of stress. However, some children will still feel worried at what lies ahead. Chances are that your child will be amongst the 80% or so that will sense some trepidation of the exam season.

Anxiety reveals itself in many ways. Some students develop nervous energy, others become quiet and isolated, others become agitated and irritable. Some become tearful and feel unwell or react with small scale illness such as flu-like symptoms.

We can't always stop anxiety, but as teachers and parents we can work with it. It's up to us to help support and manage anxiety by ensuring our children do not over-revise. Maintaining good health and well-being can be embedded in how much rest and sleep children have. Sleep patterns need to be managed. Time to relax must also become part of the routine for children during the exam season.

Equally, exercise is important and helps relieve stress. If children are part of a gym or swimming club, keep them going, but again time commitment and balance are key. Often children will lose their appetite if they feel nervous, distressed or upset. This is a classic symptom and one to watch for. Water is important, rather than caffeine or fizzy drinks.

Whilst we accept that children enjoy employment, like everything else balance is the ideal; extra hours may counter necessary revision time.

Also, we accept that some of our youngsters have relationships; this is an area which can cause conflict or anxiety. Demanding boyfriends or girlfriends may cause issues, so parents may need to explain that it's leisure time only.



One of the greatest impacts on quality revision time is the hours children spend on social networking sites. Whilst these sites may offer a means of communication, they also offer the opportunity for students to spend countless hours away from revising. Ask any parent or teacher, or indeed a student who sat their exams last year, and they will all warn against time wasted on social networking and how this impacts on GCSE results. Over-use of social networking sites accounts for the biggest single regret with under-achieving students.

Parent and Child – keeping everything positive

Our relationships with our children may be seriously challenged during the exam season. Worry, anxiety, irritation and panic can work both ways, push buttons and push boundaries. As parents we have to accept that these are somewhat unusual circumstances.

It's natural to worry, offload and even cry a little. This is all perfectly normal, but it's how we manage these emotions that is the key to how we all cope. Positivity, encouragement, warmth, compassion and that wonderful parental knack of just knowing how to handle your child – all come into play. As parents we may have to absorb a little more emotion, hold the line, or even step back when we want to really express ourselves. We are parents, we support our children, we offer reassurance and hope, like we always have done.

Ultimately, parents and teachers are a student's greatest resource during the exam season. Parents provide all the loving support and caring environment; teachers provide a great deal of knowledge, skills and understanding of the examination processes. Great teachers are caring people and there's nothing they wouldn't do for a student. Teachers happily give up

countless hours for extra revision classes, one-to-one support, providing and marking past papers, creating revision materials and offer guidance on exam techniques. Like great parents, great teachers help students get organised and offer any emotional support they can. The most important thing is for children to simply be up-front and ask for whatever they need.



Students must take real responsibility for their revision and those that do achieve remarkable results, often way above their expectations. Having said this, we know three things from experience. Firstly, it is a fact that students will all receive a brown envelope which contains their exam results in late August. This envelope will be the sum total to date of 11 years or more of school life and education. Friendships were wonderful, but they don't get you into college or university. Exam results do! That day in August is an interesting day which rewards hard work.

Secondly, it's almost certain that you will be starting in the 6th Form, at college or on an apprenticeship in September. Let's hope you get to where you want to be on that day.



Thirdly, if you didn't make the grades, there will be another year when you can re-sit and get what you need. In the 6th Form or at college, you will have the opportunity to gain a GCSE Grade C in maths and English. There is another year – but save yourself the time and expense – do your best from the start!



Useful revision websites

Create online flashcards and your own quizzes

<http://www.proprofs.com/>

BBC revision podcasts/videos/quizzes

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

Free – mindmapping software

http://freemind.sourceforge.net/wiki/index.php/Main_Page

The loci method of memory (visual images connected to ideas)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9NROegsMqNc>

Art and Design

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/gcse/art

www.lightboxresource.co.uk

www.studentartguide.com

Computer Studies and IT

www.bbcbasic.co.uk/bbcwin/tutorial

www.teach-ict.com/gcse_computing/ocr/GCSE_A451topics.html

www.learnict.it/ocr/cambridge-nationals/unit-1cambridge-nationals-revision-help/

www.yacapaca.com/teacher/assignment/new/step3/subject/1/0/1326/

English

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/

www.englishbiz.co.uk/

French and Spanish

www.languagesonline.org

www.linguascope.com

www.vocabexpress.com

www.activiscope.com

www.zut.org.uk

Geography

www.aqa.org.uk/subject/geography/gcse/geography-a-9030

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize

www.revisionworld.co.uk/gcse-revision/geography

www.s-cool.co.uk/gcse/geography

History

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/history/

www.historylearningsite.co.uk

www.historyonthenet.com

www.spartacus.schoolnet.co.uk

Maths

www.edexcel.com/quals/gcse/gcse10/maths/maths-a/Pages/default.aspx
www.redruth.cornwall.sch.uk/students/the-departments-and-faculties/1934-2/maths-gcse-revision/ - Password - parallel

PE

www.aqa.org.uk
www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/PE
www.teachpe.com

Photography

www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/gcse/art
www.lightboxresource.co.uk

Product Design

www.technologystudent.com

Science

www.bbc.co.uk/schools/gcsebitesize/science
www.s-cool.co.uk
www.kerboodle.com

Exam Boards

AQA

www.aqa.org.uk

EDEXCEL

www.edexcel.com

OCR

www.ocr.org.uk

WJEC

www.wjec.co.uk

To obtain copies of past papers/specimen papers, access the relevant exam board website and click on the link to past papers - all the websites have a link on the home page. Alternatively, using the search box, type in past papers and add the appropriate exam code (exam codes on following page).

EXTERNAL GCSE EXAMINATIONS SUMMER 2014					
Awarding Body	Title	Exam Code	Duration	Date	Start Time
Edexcel	Religious Studies Unit 1: Rel. And Life Based On A Study Of Christ. And At Least One Other Rel.	5RS01	1h 30m	12 May 2014	Monday am
AQA	French Unit 1 Listening	46551H	45m	12 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	French Unit 2 Reading - paper based	46552F	30m	12 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	French Unit 1 Listening	46551F	35m	12 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	French Unit 2 Reading - paper based	46552H	50m	12 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	Biology Unit 2	BL2FP	1h	13 May 2014	Tuesday am
AQA	Biology Unit 2	BL2HP	1h	13 May 2014	Tuesday am
AQA	Biology Unit 3	BL3HP	1h	13 May 2014	Tuesday am
AQA	Biology Unit 3	BL3FP	1h	13 May 2014	Tuesday am
AQA	Geography A Unit 1	90301F	1h 30m	13 May 2014	Tuesday pm
AQA	Geography A Unit 1	90301H	1h 30m	13 May 2014	Tuesday pm
OCR	ICT	R001	1h	14 May 2014	Wednesday am
AQA	Spanish Unit 1 Listening	46951H	45m	14 May 2014	Wednesday pm
AQA	Spanish Unit 2 Reading - paper based	46952F	30m	14 May 2014	Wednesday pm
AQA	Spanish Unit 1 Listening	46951F	35m	14 May 2014	Wednesday pm
AQA	Spanish Unit 2 Reading - paper based	46952H	50m	14 May 2014	Wednesday pm
AQA	Chemistry Unit 2	CH2HP	1h	15 May 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Additional Applied Science Unit 1	AAS1HP	1h	15 May 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Chemistry Unit 2	CH2FP	1h	15 May 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Chemistry Unit 3	CH3FP	1h	15 May 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Additional Applied Science Unit 1	AAS1FP	1h	15 May 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Chemistry Unit 3	CH3HP	1h	15 May 2014	Thursday am
Edexcel	Rel.Studies Unit 8: Rel. And Soc. Based On A St. Of Christ. And At Least One Other Rel.	5RS08	1h 30m	15 May 2014	Thursday pm
Edexcel	History B Unit 1A: Crime and Punishment	5HB01	1h 15m	16 May 2014	Friday am
AQA	Physical Education (Short Course) Unit 1	48901	45m	16 May 2014	Friday pm
AQA	Physics Unit 3	PH3HP	1h	19 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	Physics Unit 3	PH3FP	1h	19 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	Physics Unit 2	PH2FP	1h	19 May 2014	Monday pm
AQA	Physics Unit 2	PH2HP	1h	19 May 2014	Monday pm
WJEC	English Literature Unit 1 Higher	420102	2h	20 May 2014	Tuesday am
WJEC	English Literature Unit 1 Foundation	420101	2h	20 May 2014	Tuesday am
AQA	Geography A Unit 2	90302F	1h 30m	22 May 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Geography A Unit 2	90302H	1h 30m	22 May 2014	Thursday am
WJEC	English Literature Unit 2b Higher	420204	2h	22 May 2014	Thursday pm
WJEC	English Literature Unit 2a Higher	420202	2h	22 May 2014	Thursday pm
WJEC	English Literature Unit 2b Foundation	420203	2h	22 May 2014	Thursday pm
WJEC	English Literature Unit 2a Foundation	420201	2h	22 May 2014	Thursday pm
Edexcel	History B Unit 2C: Life In Germany C.1919 - C.1945	5HB02	1h 15m	23 May 2014	Friday am
WJEC	D&T:Food Technology Unit 1	409101	2h	23 May 2014	Friday pm
WJEC	D&T:Graphics Unit 1	410101	2h	23 May 2014	Friday pm
AQA	Engineering Unit 1	48501	1h	23 May 2014	Friday pm
Edexcel	Music Unit 3: Listening And Appraising	5MU03	1h 30m	2 June 2014	Monday am
Edexcel	History B Unit 3A: The transformation of surgery c1845-1918	5HB03	1h 15m	2 June 2014	Monday pm
WJEC	English Language Unit 1 Reading Higher (Centres in England only)	417102	1h	3 June 2014	Tuesday am
WJEC	English Language Unit 1 Reading Foundation (Centres in England only)	417101	1h	3 June 2014	Tuesday am
WJEC	English Language Unit 2 Writing Higher (Centres in England only)	417202	1h	3 June 2014	Tuesday am
WJEC	English Language Unit 2 Writing Foundation (Centres in England only)	417201	1h	3 June 2014	Tuesday am
WJEC	Hospitality & Catering Unit 2	473201	1h 15m	4 June 2014	Wednesday am
AQA	Dance Unit 1	42301	1h	4 June 2014	Wednesday pm
AQA	Biology Unit 1 - paper based	BL1HP	1h	6 June 2014	Friday pm
AQA	Biology Unit 1 - paper based	BL1FP	1h	6 June 2014	Friday pm
Edexcel	Mathematics 1 : Foundation Paper	1MA0 1F	1h 45m	9 June 2014	Monday am
Edexcel	Mathematics 1 : Higher Paper	1MA0 1H	1h 45m	9 June 2014	Monday am
AQA	Chemistry Unit 1 - paper based	CH1FP	1h	10 June 2014	Tuesday pm
AQA	Chemistry Unit 1 - paper based	CH1HP	1h	10 June 2014	Tuesday pm
AQA	Media Studies Unit 1	48101	1h 30m	11 June 2014	Wednesday am
WJEC	Hospitality & Catering Unit 4	474201	1h 15m	11 June 2014	Wednesday am
AQA	Physics Unit 1 - paper based	PH1FP	1h	12 June 2014	Thursday am
AQA	Physics Unit 1 - paper based	PH1HP	1h	12 June 2014	Thursday am
OCR	Computing:Computer systems and programming:Written Paper	A451/01	1h 30m	12 June 2014	Thursday pm
Edexcel	Mathematics 2 : Foundation Paper	1MA0 2F	1h 45m	13 June 2014	Friday am
Edexcel	Mathematics 2 : Higher Paper	1MA0 2H	1h 45m	13 June 2014	Friday am
AQA	Design and Technology : Product Design Unit 1	45551	2h	13 June 2014	Friday pm
Edexcel	Health And Social Care Unit 1: Understanding Personal Development and Relationships	5HS01	1h 15m	17 June 2014	Tuesday pm
AQA	Business and Communication Systems Unit 8	413008	1h	18 June 2014	Wednesday pm