

Sitting the Exam

Exam tips – sitting the exam

Be prepared; find out what is involved in each of the examinations that you are going to sit. Organise yourself the night before and get plenty of sleep.

- Check you have the correct equipment with you before you leave the house (pens pencils, ruler, scientific calculator, etc)
- Do take a watch or clock so that you can time your answers
- Leave for the exam in plenty of time
- Look through the paper first and mark difficult questions/initial thoughts
- Select the questions that will best enable you to demonstrate your knowledge to the examiner
- Look at the marks available and read the questions carefully, following instructions given in the paper (e.g. to show all workings, word limits etc)
- Use the information provided on the paper (the answer's often nearly all there)
- Pace yourself and allow enough time to answer all the required questions
- Write as neatly as possible to help the examiner to mark your work. Marking untidy writing is difficult
- For longer answers, take a few minutes before you begin to produce a structured plan of what you are going to include in each section
- Allow yourself ten minutes at the end to read through your answers and correct any mistakes
- Cross out anything you do not want the examiner to read (e.g. an earlier answer to a question)

Dealing with exam nerves

It is natural to feel nervous before an examination. The more prepared you feel, the easier it will be to conquer your fears.

- Create a revision plan to help you feel in control of the process
- Plan your work carefully around the topics you need to focus on. Being aware of gaps in your knowledge can create nerves, but having a plan of how you will fill these will make you feel better.
- Find out what is involved in the exam:
 - where and when it will take place
 - how much time is allowed
 - how many questions you need to answer
- Think positive
- Keep the exam in context – even if you do badly, there will be other options open to you
- Allow yourself some fun-time each day to relax
- Eat sensibly – your brain cells need energy to function well. Make sure you drink plenty of water to avoid becoming dehydrated. Dehydration makes you tired and reduces concentration