Exam Revision Tips

Exam revision shouldn’t be an ordeal. By planning your time carefully, and being aware of how and when you learn best, your revision should progress fairly smoothly leaving you able to go into your exams feeling prepared and confident that you will pass.

1. Create a revision timetable. On your calendar mark when each exam will take place. Then identify time-slots you can dedicate to revision. Make sure you split you time between all of the exams and dedicate at least one revision slot per exam per week.

2. Decide on your timetable approach. Depending on the type of learner you are, you could take a fixed or a flexible approach to revision. A fixed timetable involves writing down a schedule for each day; identifying what you will do at specific times. A flexible timetable involves writing down tasks to be done and length of time, but the timing is left flexible (to decide on the day).

3. Know when and where you work best. Consider if you prefer studying in the morning, afternoon or evening. Also consider if you prefer working in a quiet study space. Working to your preference may make you more productive.

4. Know how you work best. Knowing your learning style will help you learn and memorise better. If you are not sure what your learning style is, you can complete the VARK learning style quiz.

5. Know the difference between active and passive learning strategies. Active strategies are where you actively do something with the material – they involve thinking and processing information. Try to make your revision more active!
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Passive</th>
<th>Active</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Re-reading your notes</td>
<td>Summarising your notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copying from a textbook</td>
<td>Creating diagrams and graphs</td>
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<tr>
<td>Copying out quotes</td>
<td>Making mind maps</td>
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<tr>
<td>Highlighting notes</td>
<td>Peer-to-peer testing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Typing-up notes</td>
<td>Answering past exam papers</td>
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6. **Identify revision material.** Use good quality material, e.g. your own essays (55% and above); answers to seminar/tutorial questions and clear and comprehensive notes from lectures, seminars, and your own readings.

7. **Try Module Mapping.** On a sheet of blank paper, map out the module as a whole; creating links between the main ideas. This will help you to get an overall picture of the module and how the individual units fit together as well as how much you can already remember.

8. **Divide the module into manageable chunks of information.** Identify the main ideas/theories along with key author names and publication dates.

9. **Decide which topics to cover and in what depth.** Map the key topics and theories covered by your module. Look for connections and areas which overlap. Think strategically (e.g. a three question exam requires at least five areas of revision).

10. **Identify how to tackle each exam.** First of all, make sure you know the nature of the exam e.g. multiple choice/essay, number of questions you must answer, weighting of marks for questions, if study materials can be taken in etc.
11. **Construct your revision ‘toolkit’**: gather together all of the ‘tools’ you will need to study for each module; lecture notes, module handbook, past papers, coloured pens/paper.

12. **Make sure you know what the question words in essay titles mean**. You will need to be able to understand the exam questions. (see Essay writing section on Skill Resources Blackboard).

13. **Use past papers as only one revision strategy**. Do not make the mistake of only rehearsing past papers and trying to predict what questions will come up – it’s impossible! The same questions will never be repeated so you must revise and learn the topics, then be able to apply your knowledge of the topic to any question asked about it on the exam paper.

14. **Take regular breaks**. Don’t plan to study for more 2 hours at a time as you will become tired. Use short breaks to keep focus. You could try the ‘Pomodoro technique’: Use a timer for 25 minutes for focused study, then take 5 minute break. Repeat this up to 4 times and then have a longer break.

15. **Regularly reflect on your learning**. Test yourself to check your learning – are your current revision strategies working? Also, assess how you are using your time. Make sure your revision timetable is realistic, you may need to revisit the timetable and make it more achievable.