

exam performance



Good preparation sets your brain up to achieve the results you want.

PREPARATION & REVISION PERIOD

◆ The basics

Remember that taking care of yourself **is** exam preparation. Exercise & eating well help you learn & be motivated.

◆ Revision

Make a study plan using effective learning strategies & remember you don't need to know everything to do well. Cramming causes more stress & doesn't improve results.

◆ Hobbies & Friends

Plan time for things you enjoy & connecting with others. Having fun & destressing help you stay motivated, keep you energised, give you things to look forward to, & tether you to the world beyond exams.

◆ Sleep

Avoid temptations to work late & sacrifice sleep. Setting healthy patterns in the revision period will help your memory, focus, & stamina. It's ok if nerves disrupt your sleep, resting counts too.

◆ Logistics

Prepare any practical arrangements several days or weeks before the exam to avoid feeling distracted & panicked on the day. Gather any needed supplies & a water bottle if allowed.

24 HOURS PRE-EXAM

Focus on getting your brain & body exam-ready.

Evidence strongly shows that *last minute cramming can worsen performance & doesn't have benefits.*

◆ Avoid anxious temptations by structuring your day. Work backwards from an early bedtime and think about time to wind down, exercise, eat well, & get fresh air.

◆ Make any revision you do short and concentrated. If you've revised well, this is just to remind yourself that you are prepared. If revision didn't go as well as you wanted, focus on a few areas to maximise exam performance. Make sure to finish early and get a good night's sleep.

EXAM DAY

Set in place conditions that will help you feel **relaxed, positive, confident, and in control.**

You might try:

◆ Setting an alarm to wake up early enough that you don't have to rush.

◆ Eating & hydrating beforehand so you have the energy needed to think & don't get thrown off by the stress hunger & thirst signal to our brains.

◆ Listening to music that makes you feel good. Music is a powerful mood modulator.

◆ Taking a moment to regulate your nervous system - spend time outside, notice your surroundings, breathe deeply.

◆ Thinking about whether you want time alone or with friends before going into the exam.

◆ Giving yourself plenty of travel time to the exam room.

IN THE EXAM

Reset your nervous system and refocus - Stress triggers during exams can cause normal nerves. They can also cause an anxious response which can hurt your performance. If you feel the nerves building, remember they're normal & use techniques to reset your nervous system so you can take the next step from a calm, focused brain.

◆ Enter the exam room slowly

◆ Breathe before looking at the exam

◆ A mind blank at first glance is ok. Take time to start with a question you can easily answer to build momentum.

◆ Looking at the clock & noticing how much time has passed probably means you've been working in flow. Don't panic and use the time left to finish as best you can.

AFTER

First celebrate! When leaving the exam **recognise what you achieved. Reward yourself** for your hard work. Later on you can think through what went well & what didn't - focus on what you've learned & how you want to grow. *Focusing on the negative will make you more anxious for future exams.*