

CVC revision and support guide for students and families

Welcome to your preparation and revision guide for creating good habits and preparation that will significantly help you for your real exams in May/June 2026. All of the advice in here is **long-term revision advice**. Effective and regular revision, little and often, from now until the real GCSE exams at the end of Year 11 is the **best** preparation.

You have some mock exams next half-term. These are a chance to experience what exam papers look like and the types of questions you will answer in your real exams. Although you are not ready to sit a GCSE exam (otherwise students would take these in Year 10!), you should try your best in these assessments: they are designed to help your teachers identify the topics and knowledge they need to focus on in Year 11.

Some of you might feel more confident about the revision strategies which work best - others may realise that they need to spend more time on revision in order to succeed. These are not the final exams. The most important thing is to use these assessments to learn from your experience. These opportunities offer an excellent and early opportunity to find out what you know and what you don't know so that you can improve your study habits and your subject knowledge.

Y10 ASSESSMENTS 24 JUNE – 4 JULY 2025

It is important to make very clear that the projected grades that are submitted for post-16 applications are **not** solely generated by mock exam results. We know that students have not completed any of their courses and are not ready to sit their final exams, our teachers are very experienced and accurate with projected grades – they will use this expert judgement in projecting grades for post-16 applications using a range of evidence.

ADVICE: LOOKING AFTER YOURSELF DURING EXAM SEASON

Looking after your wellbeing is a key part of preparing well for exams. In school, staff are here to help. There is a lot of helpful advice out there to help you to eat well, sleep well, work hard and stay relaxed. Visit the links on this page (see right) for more information.

Dealing with exam stress and anxiety

Everyone feels stressed during exams and often this stress encourages us to do that extra bit of revision, listen a little more to the information in a lesson and work a bit harder. However, too much pressure and anxiety can affect your ability to concentrate on your work and you may find that you are overly worrying about how you will do in your exam.

Try to reduce anxiety because it uses up working memory. This is where mock exams can help, as they give you the opportunity to try test papers under exam conditions and experience what being in an exam venue is like. You can also lean on your family/friends, talk to your teachers about what might help, organise a revision timetable and establish good habits in terms of sleeping, eating and keeping active.



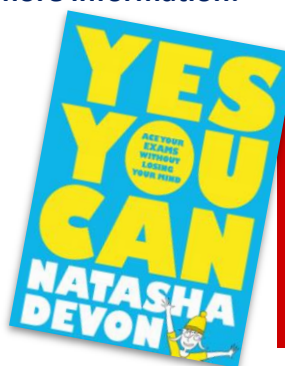
Get plenty of sleep during exam season!

- Did you know there's evidence that students who sleep for at least 7 hours a night do 10% better on average than those who get less sleep?
- Good sleep will improve thinking and concentration so try and get between 8 and 10 hours' sleep a night.
- Allow half an hour or so to wind down between studying, watching TV or using a computer and going to bed to help get a good night's sleep.
- Make sure that your bedroom is dark and cool as these are the best conditions for sleep and if possible ensure that where you sleep is separate from where you revise (if this isn't possible, make sure you cover up your revision at the end of the day).
- Finally, cramming all night before an exam is usually a bad idea - sleep is much better for you than a few hours of panicky last-minute study, so set yourself a time for bed.



Put away your mobile phone when studying

We know that smartphones are brilliant 'distraction devices'. We also know that there is research which shows that using mobile phones (as a break from studying) can be mentally draining, reducing your performance (they pull your attention in lots of different directions). So, when you're not using a revision app, keep your head 'recharged' and ready to learn by putting away your mobile phone when preparing for an exam.



**YES YOU CAN -
Ace your exams
without losing
your mind
by Natasha
Devon**



**Blitzing Exams Exam
Stress Revision Basics**
[HTTPS://BBC.IN/33VBV2X](https://bbc.in/33VBV2X)



**Student & Parent
Support – Managing
Exam Stress**
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/2ZNCPB0](https://bit.ly/2ZNCPB0)



**Conquering Exam Stress
– useful advice**
[HTTPS://BIT.LY/2QGBXYE](https://bit.ly/2QGBXYE)

Make sure you eat and drink!

- Did you know research shows that students who eat breakfast perform better in exams?
- A balanced diet is vital for your health, and can help you to feel well during exam periods.
- Too many high-fat, high-sugar and high-caffeine foods and drinks (like cola, sweets, chocolate, crisps, burger & chips) can make you hyperactive, irritable and moody.
- At night, try to avoid eating three hours before sleep.
- The best way to help concentration is to keep hydrated, as even mild dehydration can lead to tiredness, headaches, reduced alertness and concentration.

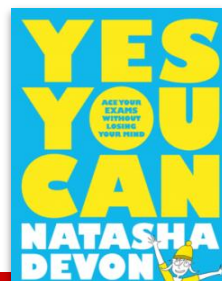
ADVICE: HOW FAMILIES CAN HELP WITH INDEPENDENT STUDY

- **Give plenty of praise and encouragement.** It has been suggested that writing your child a letter describing what their hard-work and effort means to you can be very powerful;
- **Create the right environment for study.** Ideally, this would be quiet, well-lit and free from interruptions. They also need plenty of paper, cue-cards, pens, highlighters etc.;
- **Make sure they have a balanced diet**, including plenty of water;
- Support your child with the **preparation of a revision timetable/schedule**. An example Revision Planner template has been provided in this guide;
- **Be a revision buddy!** Help your child to track their progress through their revision timetable/schedule. What tasks have been completed? What is there still to do?
- **Be prepared to listen.** Students can often become more emotional during this period and need someone to listen to their anxieties.
- **Encourage exercise.** Exercise can help boost energy levels, clear the mind and relieve stress. It does not matter what it is – walking, cycling, swimming, football and dancing are all effective.



TRY TO AVOID:

- Focusing on grades. Instead, praise for the effort put into preparation rather than results obtained. How hard they try is the part of this process over which students have most control;
- Constantly mentioning the exams and piling the pressure on (i.e. avoid nagging);
- Making comparisons with siblings, cousins, friends etc. This is never productive;
- Worrying if some of their revision approaches seem unfamiliar or different to when you were at school;
- Expecting them to study all of the time. Taking breaks and some time to relax will have an overall positive effect on their ability to revise effectively.



YES YOU CAN - Ace your exams without losing your mind

by Natasha Devon

This book can also be a valuable source of information and guidance for parents of students in examination years.

RESOURCES: SUBJECT SPECIFICATIONS & ASSESSMENT MATERIALS

For each of the qualifications you study, the exam board website contains links to your **course specification** (a list of what you will have studied). **The table below contains the information for all subjects.**

Course	Exam Board	Website Link
Art & Design – Fine Art (GCSE)	Eduqas	Art and Design GCSE
Biology (GCSE)	AQA	Science GCSE Biology
Chemistry (GCSE)	AQA	Science GCSE Chemistry
Computer Science (GCSE)	OCR	Computer Science GCSE
Creative iMedia (National)	OCR	Creative iMedia GCSE
Design & Technology (GCSE)	AQA	Design and Technology GCSE
English Language (GCSE)	AQA	English GCSE English Language
English Literature (GCSE)	AQA	English GCSE English Literature
Food Preparation & Nutrition (GCSE)	Eduqas	Food Preparation and Nutrition GCSE
French (GCSE)	AQA	Languages GCSE French
Geography (GCSE)	AQA	Geography GCSE
History B – SHP (GCSE)	OCR	History GCSE
Maths (GCSE)	AQA	Maths GCSE
PE (GCSE)	OCR	PE GCSE
Physics (GCSE)	AQA	Science GCSE Physics
Religious Studies A (GCSE)	AQA	Religious Studies GCSE
Science Combined Trilogy (GCSE)	AQA	Science GCSE Combined Trilogy
Spanish (GCSE)	AQA	Languages GCSE Spanish

RESOURCES: HAVE YOU GOT WHAT YOU NEED?

Preparing for your mock fortnight, it's crucial that you have the materials you need. Here is a handy checklist!

- ☐ **Revision guides/study aids for the subjects that you are studying.** The notes in your exercise books will be useful, but for a complete set of notes (alongside questions, model answers etc.) any revision resources that have been given to you or suggested by each subject.
- ☐ **Online resources/apps.** Do you have your login details handy? Check the information on the back page of this guide and get yourself up and running online.
- ☐ **Materials for note-making/flashcards.** Pens (black ink), pencils, highlighters, post-it notes, flashcards.
- ☐ **Materials for maths/science.** A scientific calculator, preferably the **Casio FX-83GTX** (which you have practised using before the exam!), a compass and a protractor.
- ☐ **A plan.** Do you have a plan for tackling your gaps in different subjects? Use the **Revision Planner in this guide** to help you get started.

GUIDANCE: REVISION - WHAT WORKS?

To be effective, **revision must be active, it must cause you to 'think hard'**. Passively reading through notes or flicking through a revision guide is a very poor form of revision. Active revision leads to more chance of committing information and learning to your long-term memory.

Students are most successful when they use a revision timetable (**see the revision planner at the end of this booklet**) because it allows you to plan your time more effectively and ensure that you are splitting your time across your subjects, as well as making sure that the right subject is tackled at the right time (particularly in relation to the mock exam timetable). In addition:

- **You should aim for 25-35 minute bursts of revision activity, with 10 minute breaks** in between (going for a walk can be the most effective type of break);
- **Identify and tackle your knowledge gaps** - don't just revise the topic you like or are better at – it is tempting to do so, but you need to prioritise the topics and areas you know you would struggle with in an exam.

The following pages describe some of the ways in which you might improve the effectiveness of your revision. They summarise some of the methods that the Learning Scientists recommend. The Learning Scientists are a group of scientific researchers in cognitive science who have focused on how students best learn and revise. Their website explains why these approaches are so successful and has downloadable resources for more information and guidance.

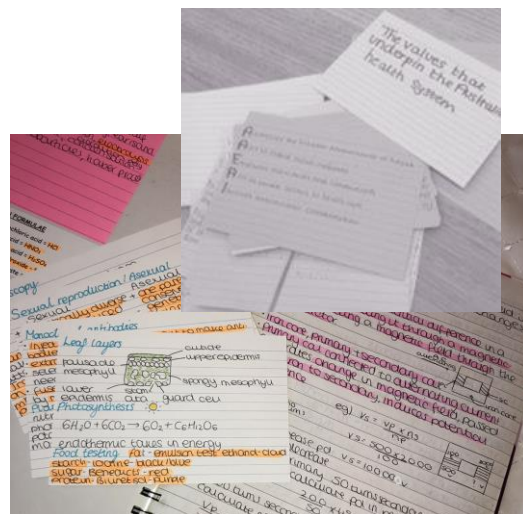
www.learningscientists.org/downloadable-materials



HOW TO MAKE YOUR REVISION ACTIVE AND SUCCESSFUL!

1. Using flashcards The ultimate portable revision strategy! There are different ways to create and use flashcards to target your knowledge gaps. You could simply record a keyword, definition or idea on each card. You could use both sides of the card: question on one side, answer on the other.

Lots of students find that they are able to recall information more effectively when they use colour and pictures on their flashcards. **Self-testing with flashcards has been shown to be a very effective way to prepare for exams.** Using the **Leitner system** (below) has been shown to be a brilliant way to super-charge your revision/learning.

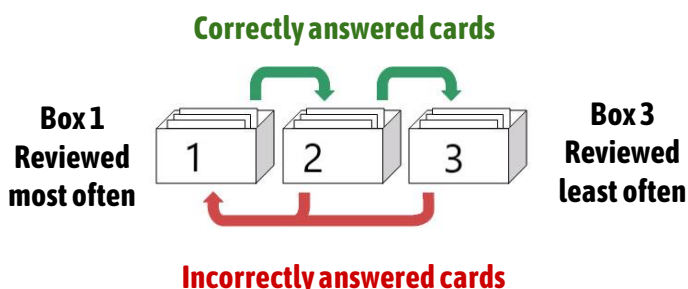


Leitner System: Get hold of three small boxes, envelopes or three different coloured elastic bands

Quiz yourself on your flashcards. If you recall the information on the flashcard, put it in box 2. If you don't recall, put the card in box 1.

Now, come up with a revision schedule e.g. review box 1 twice a week, review box 2 once a week and review box 3 once a fortnight.

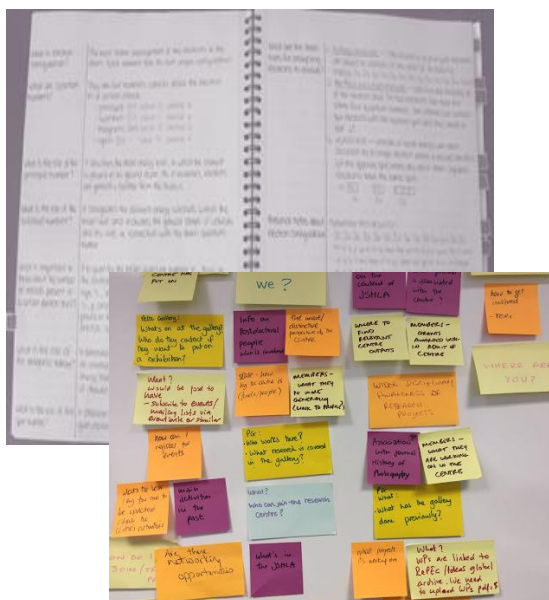
The next time you review a box (quizzing yourself on the cards), move any card you can recall into the next box (e.g. box 2 to box 3) and any card that you can't recall back to the earlier box (e.g. box 2 to box 1).



Video explanation/demonstration at:

[How to study flashcards using the Leitner system](#)

The cards that you recall (know), move towards box 3, the ones you don't know, move towards box 1. This way you will always be focussing your energies where they are needed most.



2. Making summary notes Once you have identified your gaps, try **transforming** the notes you already have from your revision guide, exercise book, websites/online and other resources. Don't fall into the trap of copying out lots of text – **turn the information into short paragraphs, bullet points, lists or pictures.**

Transforming notes in this way will help you to memorise the information by getting you to think harder about it! Often students find it useful to summarise their notes onto post-it notes and make a display of them in a place they visit regularly. The post-it notes can also be used to test your memory at a later date.

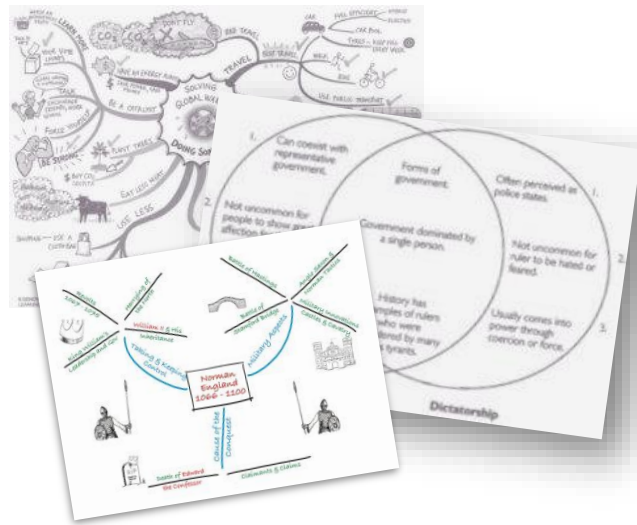
3. Graphic Organisers (Mind maps, Spider diagrams, Venn diagrams etc.)

Most students find that graphic organisers are

etc.) Most students find that graphic organisers are a memorable way to organise ideas on a page. Different organisers support different types of revision e.g. memorising a sequence (Chain), finding out how much you remember about a particular topic (Spider), thinking through how two ideas compare with one another (Venn) or organising pros & cons (T-chart).

There are lots of useful graphic organiser templates (which can be downloaded and printed) at:

<https://freeology.com/graphicorgs/page/4/>



4. Memorising! Read-recite-review

A significant part of exam success is memory work - what can you recall? There are lots of memory techniques you can try. One approach which works for lots of students is:

1. **Read** (your notes on a particular topic).
2. **Recite** as much as you can from memory (you could record this on your phone) then re-read your notes.
3. **Review**: get someone to test you on your notes or answer questions on the topic (use questions from your revision guide or past-paper).

Testing straight-away increases your ability to remember later.

5. Question practice (past papers & others)

Answering test questions (and marking/correcting your answers, if possible) is another effective way to prepare for exams. This is because it helps you to figure out where your gaps are, giving you the opportunity to do something about them. Most revision guides have tests, quizzes and exam-style questions (often with model answers alongside).

It can also be just as effective to carefully plan answers to longer/high mark questions in subjects where you write more extended answers (for example, English Literature, history, Drama etc.). Planning is as effective a revision task as actually completing practise questions in full.

It is very important to practise reading and interpreting exam-style questions to ensure that you understand what the different command words mean.

For past-papers, mark schemes and information about command words for a particular subject, please visit the relevant Exam Board website.

For example, here are the command words for AQA Combined Science

<https://bit.ly/33DbHBN>

<https://bit.ly/2lsJDAu>

Write your name here		Other names	
Surname			
Centre Number		Candidate Number	
Pearson Edexcel Level 1 / Level 2 GCSE (9–1)			
Mathematics Paper 1 (Non-Calculator)			
Higher Tier Paper Reference		1MA1/1H	
Thursday 25 May 2017 – Morning Time: 1 hour 30 minutes			
You must have: Ruler graduated in centimetres and millimetres, protractor, pair of compasses, pen, HB pencil, eraser.			
Total Marks			

ONLINE REVISION RESOURCES FOR A RANGE OF SUBJECTS

This page has a summary of key revision websites and online resources that students either can access for free or have access to because we have paid for subscriptions. If students need log-in information or access, they should speak to their subject teacher.

WWW.SENECALARNING.COM

Years	All
Subjects	All
Activities	Facts, pictures, quick-fire questions to test your knowledge & understanding.
Login	Free. Use your school email to create an account – you may have a class group if your teacher has set work/tasks on Seneca.

[HTTPS://THEPECLASSROOM.COM/](https://THEPECLASSROOM.COM/)

Years	10 & 11
Subjects	PE
Activities	Videos, quizzes, exam questions
Login	The best place to access the content for this is on Youtube which has free access. If you are unsure, speak to your PE teacher.

[HTTPS://THEEVERLEARNER.COM/](https://THEEVERLEARNER.COM/)

Years	10 & 11
Subjects	PE
Activities	Videos, revision materials, quick-fire questions to test your knowledge and understanding.
Login	The best place to access the content for this is on Youtube which has free access. If you are unsure, speak to your PE teacher.

Sparx Maths

[HTTPS://SPARXMATHS.COM/](https://SPARXMATHS.COM/)

Years	11
Subjects	Maths
Activities	Video & tasks for every maths topic.
Login	You have been given a password by your Maths teacher. If you forget it, click the link and your teacher will reset it ASAP.

WWW.TECHNOLOGYSTUDENT.COM

Years	All (but best for Years 10 & 11)
Subjects	Design Technology
Activities	Videos, revision notes, guides on a huge range of DT topics.
Login	Free to access.

[HTTPS://WWW.THENATIONAL.ACADEMY/](https://WWW.THENATIONAL.ACADEMY/)

Years	All
Subjects	All
Activities	Videos, revision materials, quick-fire questions to test your knowledge and understanding.
Login	Free to access

WWW.BBC.CO.UK/BITESIZE

Years	All
Subjects	All
Activities	Videos, revision materials, quick-fire questions to test your knowledge and understanding.
Login	Free to access

REVISION

REVISION

THE DOS AND DON'TS OF EFFECTIVE REVISION – A QUICK SUMMARY

DO:	DON'T:
• Revise for about 30 minutes at a time – take short breaks regularly • Get lots of sleep • Eat well and drink plenty of water • Take time for you and have some fun and relaxing planned activities amongst the revision • Get some exercise • Have a plan – work out what you will revise and for how long • Use effective strategies for revision – active ones (flashcards, practice questions, planning, creating useful and summary notes) • Use your teachers and their resources/support/suggestions to support your revision • Remove distractions (put your mobile phone away when revising) • If possible have a study area (if not, clear it away when you finish revising so that your room reverts to a place for relaxing) • Accept that mocks and exams and Year 11 is going to cause stress and feelings of anxiety and that this is normal BUT speak to people about how you are feeling so that you can get support if needed	• Try and revise for long periods of time without breaks • Try and revise late into the night • Try to exist on fast food and sweets • Resolve to revise all the time and never take time for yourself to have fun • Abandon hobbies and interests • Put your head in the sand and not plan out revision (makes things harder!) • Take part in passive revision (re-reading notes, reading text guides... you need to DO something) • Ignore a really important place of support and resources... your teachers! • Try to revise with your phone/access to social media/internet/gaming etc. • Try to revise in a noisy or chaotic location OR turn your bedroom into an office and never clear away the revision • Clam up and not share how you are feeling – stress and learning how to manage it is part of Year 11, but if you are feeling upset or anxious you must speak with someone trusted so that you can get support if needed
REMEMBER... ASSESSMENTS ARE THERE TO HELP GIVE YOU AN IDEA OF WHAT IS YOU KNOW HOW TO BEST PREPARE YOU FOR THE ONLY EXAMS THAT ACTUALLY MATTER... THE REAL ONES!	





Q. What do 'exam conditions' mean?

Exam conditions mean that:

- You must remain silent at all times - on entry to the exam room, during the exam, and while your paper is collected at the end of the exam;
- You must not talk, turn around in your seat or signal to any other student;
- You may raise your hand if you require assistance and a member of staff will come over and speak quietly with you;
- You are expected to behave in the same way for mock exams as is expected in your formal exams in the summer. This is your chance to rehearse.

Q. Why are exam conditions important for my mocks?

Exam conditions during your mocks will allow you to rehearse for the real thing. Take advantage of this by sticking strictly to the conditions described above. Another vital reason for sticking to these conditions is to ensure that everyone in Year 10 gets a fair chance to give each exam their very best shot without distraction or interruptions.

Q. What equipment do I need?

Black pen (biro not gel pens), pencil, ruler, eraser in a clear pencil case or clear plastic (sandwich) bag. You may bring in a calculator only for the exams where you need to use one.

If you take an exam in formal conditions (not a classroom assessment), then you cannot take the lid of your calculator into the exam venue. Water bottles must be see-through/clear without a label.

Q. What isn't allowed in formal exam venues?

Mobile phones and watches (of any kind) are not allowed. They must be switched off and placed in your bag, which must be stored in your locker and, if you do not have a locker, in the space outside the Sports Hall which will be secure during the exam. Bags will be left in a secure space for other exam venues if you are not in the Sports Hall. You may choose not to bring your watch on the day of an exam. It is malpractice to have a watch, air pods, mobile phone or any writing taken in with you to an exam hall.

Q. What if I need to go to the toilet during an exam?

Go to the toilet during break and lunchtime or before the line up to enter the exam hall. You will not be allowed out to the toilet, unless you have a known medical need/card. Leaving the room during an exam disturbs your own focus and concentration and will disturb the entire room and disrupt the focus of others. Make sure you go before you enter the classroom or exam hall and then you do not need to worry.

