

# Sixth Form Information: Revision Strategies and Exam Routines

Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2026



# Aims

- Have a good understanding of how to plan revision effectively.
- Know some strategies to counter the key challenges with revision.
- Outline the most effective revision strategies.
- Detail the logistics of the examinations in the summer.

# Revision

## Student Message

Preparing for A-Level and BTEC examinations requires a lot of time, effort, and commitment.

Remember that revising for A-Level / BTEC examinations is a process, and it takes time and effort. Be patient with yourself and stay motivated. Good luck!

# Key Information

**Examinations start in May** – check subject-specific dates.

**Coursework / NEA** - Ensure your child is aware of deadlines for coursework (if applicable).

**Mock examinations taking place in March**– vital for final preparation.

**Organisation** - Encourage early organisation to reduce stress.

# 'I don't know where to start!'

**Aim 1: Have a good understanding of how to plan revision effectively**

Many students will have at least **six** exams over a period of a few weeks. Each of these exams will be assessing a large part of the A-Level course. An important part of the build-up to the exam period is therefore time management.

The key elements of this are:

- Routine
- Timetabling
- Work-life balance

# Routine

**Aim 1: Have a good understanding of how to plan revision effectively**

Many students will benefit from a routine from week to week.

We would suggest that in addition to using their study periods to revise, students will want to spend **around two additional hours each day** to revise.

Below are two examples of what a student's evening routine may look like, depending on the individual student.

<b>16:00</b>	Revise subject 1
<b>17:00</b>	Revise subject 2
<b>18:00</b>	Break for dinner
<b>19:00</b>	Revise subject 3
<b>20:00</b>	Watch TV, relax
<b>21:00</b>	Watch TV, relax
<b>22:00</b>	Bed

<b>16:00</b>	Gym/sport
<b>17:00</b>	Gym/sport
<b>18:00</b>	Dinner
<b>19:00</b>	Revise subject 1
<b>20:00</b>	Revise subject 2
<b>21:00</b>	Watch TV, relax
<b>22:00</b>	Bed



# Routine

## Aim 1: Have a good understanding of how to plan revision effectively

Students may want a long-term plan for their revision which covers what topics they will review each week in each subject.

It's also beneficial to then have a weekly plan so they know what they are doing in each revision session.

Below is an example of this for History.

<u>Week</u>	<u>Topic</u>
<b>6th March</b>	Britain: 1906-1914
<b>13th March</b>	Britain: 1914-1922
<b>20th March</b>	Britain 1922-1929 and recap 06-14
<b>27th March</b>	Britain 1929-1939 and recap 14-22
<b>3rd April</b>	Britain 1939-1945 and recap 22-29
<b>10th April</b>	Britain 1945-1951 and recap 29-39
<b>17th April</b>	Britain 1951-1957 and recap 39-45
<b>24th April</b>	Review areas of weakness and recap 45-51
<b>1st May</b>	Review areas of weakness and recap 51-57

<u>Week 6th March</u>	<u>Revision</u>
<b>History hour 1:</b>	Mind map on 06-14
<b>History hour 2:</b>	Make revision cards on 06-14
<b>History hour: 3</b>	Plan 4 essays on 06-14

# Work-Life Balance

**Aim 1: Have a good understanding of how to plan revision effectively**

It is important to maintain a good work-life balance to avoid burn out.

This may include putting aside one night a week for something other than work – such as a Friday.

Of course, sacrifices during revision will need to be made but students should still prioritise what helps them relax.

I asked some students what they couldn't go without, and this is what they mentioned:

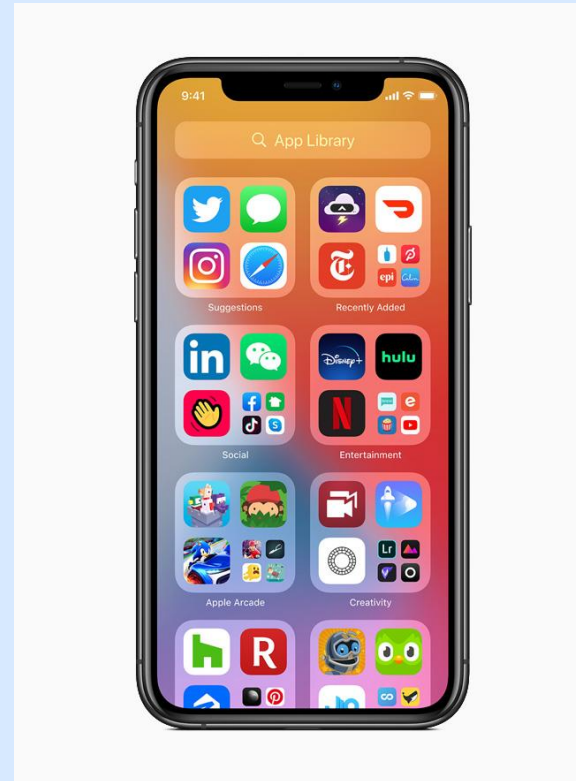


# Challenges

**Aim 2: Know some strategies to counter the key challenges with revision**

I asked students what are the key challenges they face when revising and these were the common answers.

- 'I don't have any motivation'
- 'I end up just going on my phone'
- 'I find it difficult to work at home'



# 'I don't have any motivation'

**Aim 2: Know some strategies to counter the key challenges with revision**

Motivation is not required to revise.

Revision needs to become part of the daily routine.

However, it is important to build breaks into revision.

Pomodoro method is a common tool to do this.

## THE **POMODORO** TECHNIQUE



1  
Decide on the  
Task That  
You Need to  
Do



2  
Set the  
Timer to 25  
Minutes



3  
Work on the  
Task Until the  
Timer Rings



4  
Take a Short  
5 Minute  
Break



5  
After 4  
Cycles Take a  
15-30 Minute  
Break

# 'I end up just going on my phone'

**Aim 2: Know some strategies to counter the key challenges with revision**

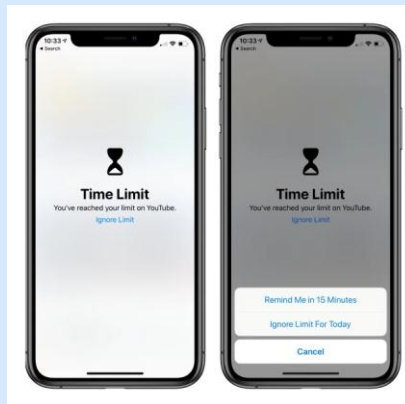
Forest app



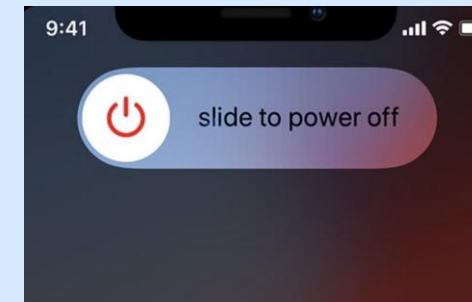
Remove the phone from study area



Screen time limits



Turn the phone off



# 'I find it difficult to work at home'

**Aim 2: Know some strategies to counter the key challenges with revision**

Our Sixth Form Area is open 8.00 am - 5.45 pm throughout the week.

Newcastle City Library is open 10 am to 4 pm on a Saturday and 10am to 5/7pm Monday-Friday.

Philip Robinson Library (Newcastle University) is open 24 hours a day. To access this library, you will need to complete a form from the Sixth Form Pastoral Team.

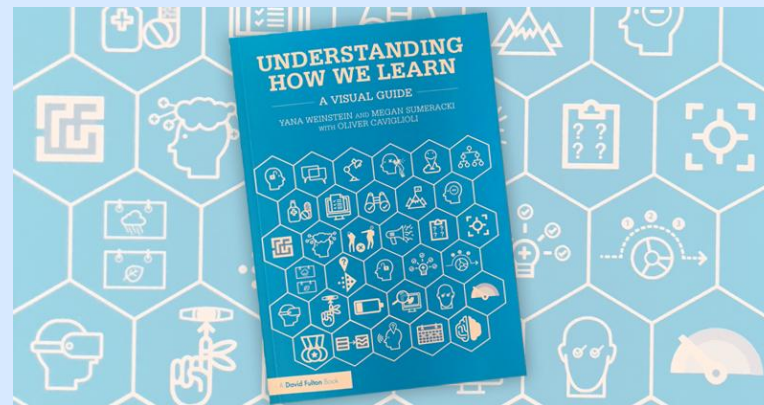


# The Most Effective Revision

**Aim 2: Know some strategies to counter the key challenges with revision**

'When students practice retrieving information, they predict poorer performance because it feels hard.'

'Alarminglly our feelings about how we learn can often be more compelling than reality. For example, if students read and re-read a textbook, they will become more and more confident that they will do well on a later test.'



# Learning Strategies

**Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies**

**Active Recall** – self-testing, flashcards, quizzes.

**Past Papers & Mark Schemes** – understand exam style & key wording.

**Mind Maps & Diagrams** – visual learning aids.

**Teaching Others** – explain concepts to reinforce understanding.

**Spaced Repetition** – revisit topics at intervals to retain information.

# Learning Strategies

**Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies**

**Blurting** – Write down everything you remember on a topic before checking notes.

**The Feynman Technique** – Explain topics in simple terms as if teaching a beginner.

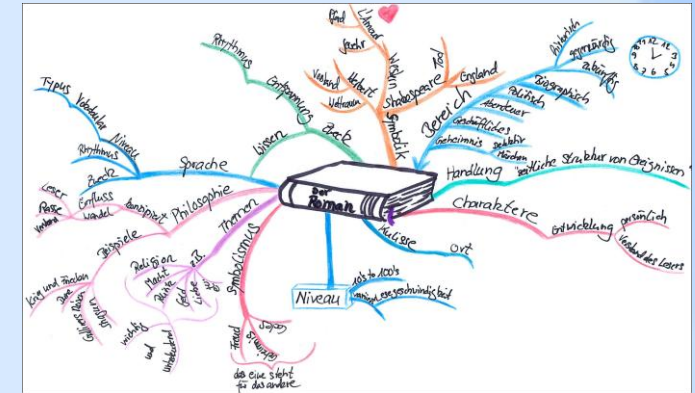
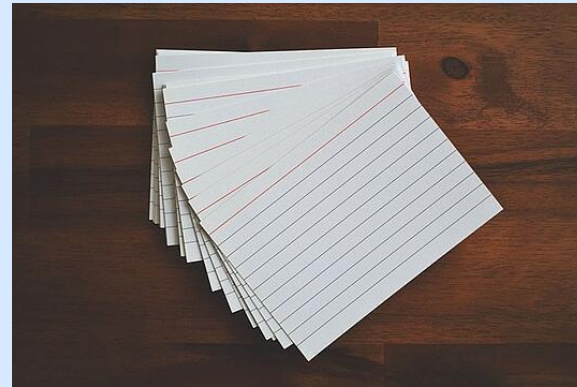
**Interleaving** – Mix different subjects and topics in one session to strengthen connections.

**Cornell Note-Taking** – Structure notes with key points, summaries, and questions.

**Dual Coding** – Combine words and visuals (e.g., diagrams, timelines) for better retention.

# General Advice

## Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies



AS and A-level Biology  
7401, 7402

Specification | Planning resources | Teaching resources | Assessment resources | Key dates

Introduction >

Specification at a glance >

Subject content >

3.1 Biological molecules >

3.2 Cells >

3.3 Organisms exchange substances with their environment >

3.4 Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms >

3.5 Energy transfers in and >

### Specification at a glance

These qualifications are linear. Linear means that students will sit all the AS exams at the end of their AS course and all the A-level exams at the end of their A-level course.

### Subject content

**Core content**

- 1 Biological molecules
- 2 Cells
- 3 Organisms exchange substances with their environment
- 4 Genetic information, variation and relationships between organisms
- 5 Energy transfers in and between organisms (A-level only)
- 6 Organisms respond to changes in their internal and external environments (A-level only)
- 7 Genetics, populations, evolution and ecosystems (A-level only)
- 8 The control of gene expression (A-level only)

### AS



# Most Effective Revision

## Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies

### Maths

- Review exercises in CGP textbook
- Integral Maths – videos on every topic and three levels of exercise
- TL Maths – videos on every topic
- **Website:** Physics and Maths Tutor – lots of practice questions and exam papers
- Maths clinic: every Monday lunchtime
- Topic 'catch up' sessions every week on either Wednesday or Thursday after school

### Sciences

- **Website:** Physics and Maths tutor
- Quizlet
- **Website:** Save my Exams
- **Website:** Snaprevise
- **Website:** Kerboodle (subscription via school)
- **YouTube:** Mr Turnbull's Physics
- **YouTube:** Miss Estruch Biology

### English

- Extensive reading lists
  - Knowledge organisers
  - Topic lists
- Revision workbooks
  - Model answers/essays

# Most Effective Revision

## Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies

### History

- Essay books
- Summary knowledge organisers
- Revision booklets
  - A3 revision summary sheets
- Extra reading booklets
- Essay question plans booklet

### Geography

- **Website:** Cool geography.co.uk
- CGP Complete revision and practice book
- **Website:** PMT physicsandmathstutor.com/geography-revision/a-level-aqa/

### Religious Studies

- Revision pack
- Useful Websites:
  - <https://philosophydungeon.weebly.com>
  - <http://www.philosophersannual.org>
    - <https://iep.utm.edu>
    - <https://plato.stanford.edu/>
    - <https://www.christianity.com>
  - Podcasts:
    - <https://thepanpsycast.com/panpsycast2>
    - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b006qykl> (In Our Time)
    - <https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b01nmlh2> (The Public Philosopher)
    - <https://philosophynow.org/podcasts>

# Most Effective Revision

## Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies

### **Sociology/Psychology**

- Simply psychology and Simply Sociology website
- PMT Tutor resources (psychology)
- Tutor 2 u website
- Psych boost (Youtube)
- Hectic teacher website – Sociology
- AQA website for past papers

### **Computer Science**

- Craig 'n' Dave (Youtube)
- Book: AQA A-Level Computer Science, Bob Reeves
- Revision book: ISAAC A-Level Computer Science Workbook
- Website: Physics and Maths Tutors – AQA Computer Science

### **Health and Social**

- Lesson PowerPoints
- Research Method booklet
- Pass assessments and mark schemes
- Question breakdown/layout
- Model answers

# Most Effective Revision

## Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies

### Business Studies

- Tutor2U
- Financial Newspapers: Financial Times/Economist
- Textbooks (available to borrow)
- Past papers and mark schemes
- Economist (Library)

### Spanish

- **Website:** Conjugemos.com
- **Website:** Kerboodle.com (Digital book/Repaso/Haz la prueba)
- A link to all past paper questions is posted on Teams

### Design and Technology

- Past papers and mark schemes are available from AQA
- **Quizlet:** Product design
- **YouTube:** Product Design Studio
- **YouTube:** Mr Ridley's Product Design
- **YouTube:** KAs CARTS
- **YouTube:** Miss Mott

### Drama

- Blue A-Level Drama textbook
- Essay structure guide sheets

# Most Effective Revision

## Aim 3: Outline the most effective revision strategies

For the Examinations, students will be issued with an Information, Advice and Guidance Booklet. In their lessons subject teachers will take students through the guidance. It is essential that students refer to this information in planning out revision, and regularly during the revision period, to enable them to prepare effectively.

St Mary's Catholic School Information and Guidance for Year 13 Students English Literature	
Teachers: Mrs Clough and Miss Hornsby	
<b>Title of the exams</b> Paper 1: Elements of Tragedy Paper 2: Elements of Crime	<b>Which content/ topics should I revise?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• King Lear</li><li>• Richard II (all scenes studied so far)</li><li>• How to approach unseen extracts for paper 2</li><li>• The Murder of Roger Ackroyd</li><li>• Crabbe, Browning and Wilde's poetry</li></ul>
<b>Date of exams</b> See timetable	
<b>Length of exams</b> Paper 1: 2 hours and 30 minutes Paper 2: 2 hours	<b>What should I use to revise? (Use this as a checklist to ensure you have all the revision materials)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Set texts</li><li>• Knowledge Organisers</li><li>• Notes in books and feedback on essays</li><li>• Re-read each of the set texts</li><li>• Watch a version of King Lear/Richard II to revise dramatic method</li><li>• Complete at least 2 extract style questions on King Lear as full answers or detailed mind-maps.</li><li>• Complete at least 1 traditional essay on King Lear/Richard II as full answers or detailed mind-maps</li><li>• Revise the roles of individual characters in King Lear/Richard II and learn key quotations from each text</li><li>• Identify key tragic elements and bullet point key ideas and text references that are relevant to the tragic element.</li><li>• Revise all notes and annotations from all crime texts</li><li>• Revise notes on Ackroyd/Poetry and related crime elements linking quotations to key elements of crime</li><li>• Re-visit unseen essays, and redo sections building on feedback from your teacher.</li></ul>
<b>Format of the exams</b> Paper 1: This is a closed book exam. Section a) extract from King Lear – explore tragic elements Section b) traditional essay on King Lear Section c) essay on Richard II  Paper 2: This is an open book exam. Section a) unseen extract from a crime text No section B Section c) element/s of crime applied to The Murder of Roger Ackroyd or poetry	

# Advice

**Create a study schedule:** Set a study timetable that covers all your subjects and topics, and make sure to allocate enough time for each one. Be realistic with your schedule and factor in breaks.

**Review your notes:** Review your class notes and ensure you understand the concepts and key points. Highlight the essential information and create summaries to help you remember the key points.

**Practice with past papers:** Practicing past papers is an excellent way to test your knowledge and get used to the exam format. Analyse the questions and the answers to identify the patterns and the areas that require more attention.

# Advice

**Get organised:** Organise your study materials, including textbooks, notes, and revision guides, so that you can quickly access the information you need when you need it.

**Use mnemonic devices:** Mnemonic devices are memory techniques that can help you remember important information. For example, creating an acronym or an image can help you recall a list of items.

**Study with a group:** Studying with a group can be beneficial as you can share ideas, discuss concepts, and test each other's knowledge.

# Advice

**Take breaks:** Taking regular breaks can help you stay focused and avoid burnout. Take a break every hour or so to rest your brain and recharge your energy.

**Stay healthy:** Eating well, getting enough sleep, and exercising regularly can help you stay healthy and focused during the revision period.

**Identify your strengths and weaknesses:** Identify the topics you're confident with and those you find challenging. Focus more on the difficult areas but don't neglect the topics you're comfortable with.

# Advice

**Start early:** Don't wait until the last minute to start revising. Give yourself plenty of time to cover all the topics and to practice past papers.

**Stay motivated:** Set achievable goals, reward yourself when you reach them, and stay positive and motivated throughout the revision period.

# Parent and Carer Advice

**Help them keep a simple routine**

**Ask the right questions** (not “Have you revised?”)

*“What topic are you on this week?”*

*“What will you produce in this session?”*

*“What’s your next past paper question?”*

**Create the right environment**

**Support an excellent balanced routine that drive performance**

**Manage stress early**

# Examination Logistics

## Mock Examinations

Final set of mock examinations take place in a 2 week period.

The mock examination period starts on Monday March 2<sup>nd</sup> .

Examinations take place in lesson time and each paper will be 1 hour long (maximum).

Students will not be given study leave for these examinations.

Final checkpoint ahead of final preparations.

Purpose – Not to simulate the examination experience.

To provide a final check to allow revision and support from staff to be purposeful.

Students already have received their timetables.

Students already have the examination preparation booklet.

# Examination Logistics

## Examination Timetables

Students have been issued with a paper copy of their summer examination timetable.

An electronic copy will be placed on Teams at the start of Study Leave.

**It is the student's responsibility to check this information and ensure they are at their examinations.**

If there is an examination clash, the students must make the Sixth Form Pastoral Team aware.

Students must decide which examination they wish to do first – this must be communicated ahead of time.

# Examination Logistics

## Study Leave

Students will be granted Study Leave for their summer examinations.

The last 'school' day for students will be **Friday May 8<sup>th</sup> 2026**.

Study Leave will begin at the end of this day.

The first A-Level examination for St Mary's student is Monday May 11<sup>th</sup> 2026.

When in Study Leave, students only must be in school for the examinations.

Students can still attend school to complete revision / examination preparation / attend revision sessions during the examination period.

**Whilst in school, students should be following the Sixth Form Dress Code.**

# Examination Logistics

## Before Examinations

Students should meet in the Sixth Form Cafe before each examination.

8:50 am for morning exams

1:15 pm for afternoon exams

Students do not need to register but should swipe in to school with their Sixth Form ID Card. **This is very important for our safeguarding procedures.**

# Examination Logistics

## **Before Examinations**

A member of staff will collect students before the examination.

Bags, mobile phones, wrist watches and smart watches placed in lockers or not brought to the school building.

**These items are not allowed into the examination room.**

No bits of paper in pockets or any writing on hands.

Students should go to the toilet before going to the examination room.

**Whilst in school, students should be following the Sixth Form Dress Code.**

# Examination Logistics

## Examinations

**Students must attend their examinations.**

If this is not possible, please do contact the school as soon as possible, to make the us aware of this.

# Support

**The A-Level / BTEC Examinations can be a stressful time for students.**

Students can see any member of the Sixth Form Pastoral Team or their Form Tutor if they are worried or concerned.

Students can see their subject teachers if they require further help and support with work in individual subjects.

Students access to support on mental health and positive strategies from the school nurse.

Students have access to our Sixth Form Library which includes a well-being section.

Students have access to the Sixth Form Area from 8.00 am until 5.45 pm each school day to revise and prepare for examinations.

**Whilst in school, students should be following the Sixth Form Dress Code.**

# Thank You

Thank you so much for attending this 'Sixth Form Parent and Carer Information Session' exploring how your child can prepare for their examinations. We really hope that the information shared has been helpful and informative.

If you do have any questions, please feel free to contact school anytime or pose a question in the chat facility. Please ensure questions do not mention any students or staff by name.

If you have a question regarding this important time for your child, please contact school. We are here to help. Thank you for your continued support.