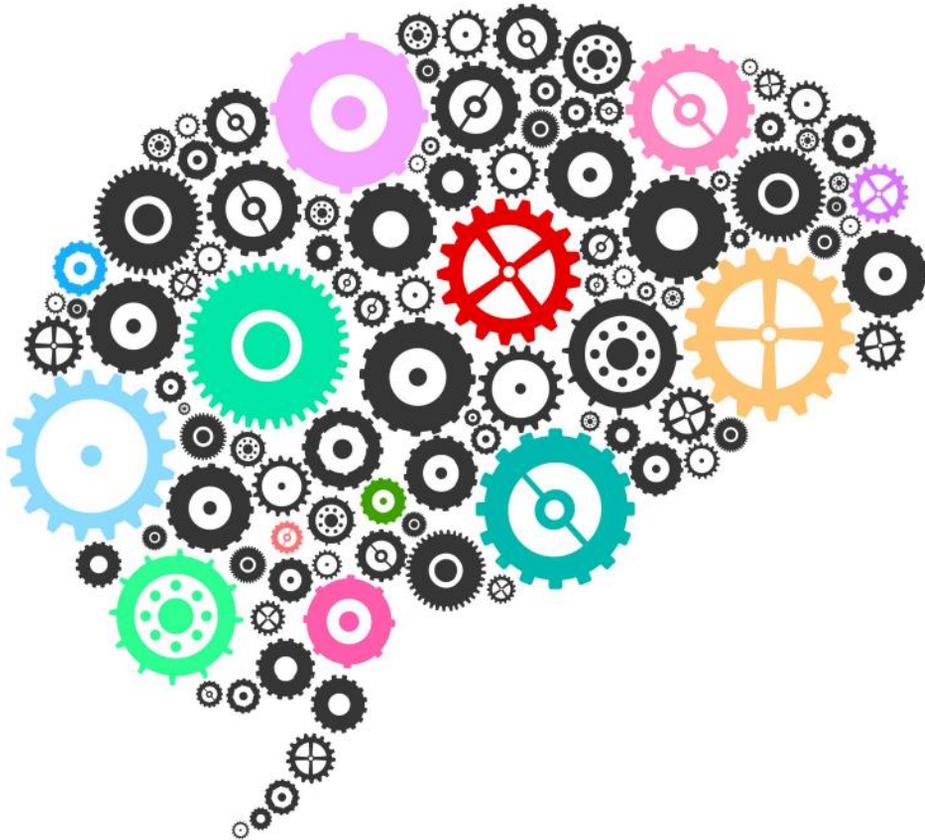




Sprowston Community  
Academy



**GCSE Exam Revision Guide**



Student revision guide for  
preparing and succeeding in the  
GCSE Examinations





In order to maximise your chances of success in the exams, revision needs to start **NOW** if it hasn't already. It is proven that '**distributed practice**': in other words chunking and spreading out revision: is the best approach. This leads to repetition which helps.

The revision needs to be active and can be in the form of –

- **Using Doodle** – here you can find resources to revise and re-teach topics specific to your subjects and exam boards as well as self marking quizzes.
- **Pair work** – asking each other questions following revision on a small topic or using past exam papers.
- **Testing yourself** – watch a video clip or re-read work or a page in the revision book, then test yourself. What can you remember? What links to what? What was the order? This re-testing and tasting failure or success engrains the information into your long term memory.
- **Internet and Apps** - BBC Bitesize, PiXL Maths, English Lit, History and Geography Apps, and the school's website Yr11 Revision area are good places to start. It can be easy to be distracted or go off on tangents from the core area you started to revise. However the variety and accessibility can not be questioned. Exam boards also offer past exam papers and mark schemes.
- **Highlighting revision booklets** – many subjects have provided revision books. These need to be working documents, with notes added, points highlighted etc. These have already chunked information into pages/chapters/sections so do a small amount reading, underlining and absorbing.
- **Using past exam papers** – this could be timed and in exam conditions, but could also involve answering questions using revision guides, or unpicking questions, highlighting the command words and topic and then briefly planning a possible answer.
- **Using Marking schemes** – if you do complete exam papers, use these to look at what the examiner would be awarding marks for and what you should have included.
- **Reading through your books** - simply re-reading your work from GCSE lessons does suit some people, especially if followed by recording what you can recall without the notes in front of you or making brief lists of key terms, revision cards, mind maps or posters.
- **Using Images** – Study a diagram of a process. Then re-draw the image from memory and compare to the original to see how similar they are. 'Dual coding' is a term to using images and writing to help memory.
- **Revise words not whole paragraphs** – a key word can trigger the rest of the information, so make sure you know these and in what order. You can then add the detail and reasons etc. Mnemonics may help here.
- **Making revision cards** – these can be in the form of notes/bullet points from your work, with one card per topic. An alternative is to have a key term on one side and the definition on the back to test your understanding of key vocabulary (pair activity also).
- **Bullet Points/Notes** – re-reading your work or revision books and jotting down the key concepts or specifics can help build a library of key points. Use post-its to stuck around your room or house or colour to organise and link.
- **YouTube** – although possibly tempting to stray away from revision, you have numerous resources here to watch videos concerning key processes or subject specific videos e.g. Geography, History, Science
- **Mind Maps** - a very common approach in turning large amounts of content into a logical, interconnected colourful, single diagram. Key concept/topic in the centre with arms per sub topic, with specific information coming off this e.g. Vietnam War in centre, 'Causes' arm coming from this with linked information off the end.
- **Images and Audio** – it doesn't have to be all words, using images /audio to test understanding or recall.
- **Imagining a route** – imagining a route you are familiar with or the rooms of your house and placing certain items or pieces of information from revision in these can help recall and keep ideas in an order e.g. hall way see a wave, into kitchen where there is a cliff face etc.



## Revision Tips

- Start your revision in good time; Little and often.
- Plan your revision using a Revision Timetable and stick to it.
- Spread your subjects out, covering all.
- Plan exactly what topic you are covering within that subject.
- Plan for 30-60 minute sessions, one subject at a time before a break.
- Evening revision should be for one or two subject maximum.
- Revision sessions should include breaks to have a snack, drink and rest.
- Allow for days off for relaxation, socialising, sport etc. these might not be possibly though during the examinations an few weeks leading up to them.

## Being Prepared

- Make sure you have the correct equipment and are ready for the day of the exam.
- You will need a couple of pens, sharp pencils, rubber, and ruler in a clear pencil case.
- For some subjects (eg Maths, Science) you will also need a protractor, calculator.
- You may need a watch, although this has to be removed and placed on the exam table.
- Make sure you know when each exam is taking place, your candidate number and your seat number from the CM Exams notice board.
- Take some water in a clear bottle.

## The Examination

- When waiting for the start, read the information on the front of the paper.
- Read each question carefully twice, highlighting key command words.
- How many marks is the question worth? How long should you spend on it?
- Answer the question. Do not repeat it or go off on a tangent.
- Check all answers, especially calculations. Does the answer make sense?
- Read all information in the paper not just the question eg titles and keys of graphs or diagrams.
- Check your spelling and grammar., especially of key terms.
- If complete, re-read the questions and answers. Leave no question blank.

## Common Mistakes

- Mis-reading questions or completing the incorrect sections of the paper.
- Offering two possible answers, when it asks for one.
- Using lists of ideas when asked to describe or explain.
- Not following the instructions in the question.
- Not linking your answer to the command word – eg ‘explaining’ why something happens when asked to only ‘describe’ what it is like.
- Running out of time
- Writing too much or too little
- Missing questions out completely.
- Making silly mistakes mis-reading graphs or tables

# GCSE Revision – Revision Techniques

