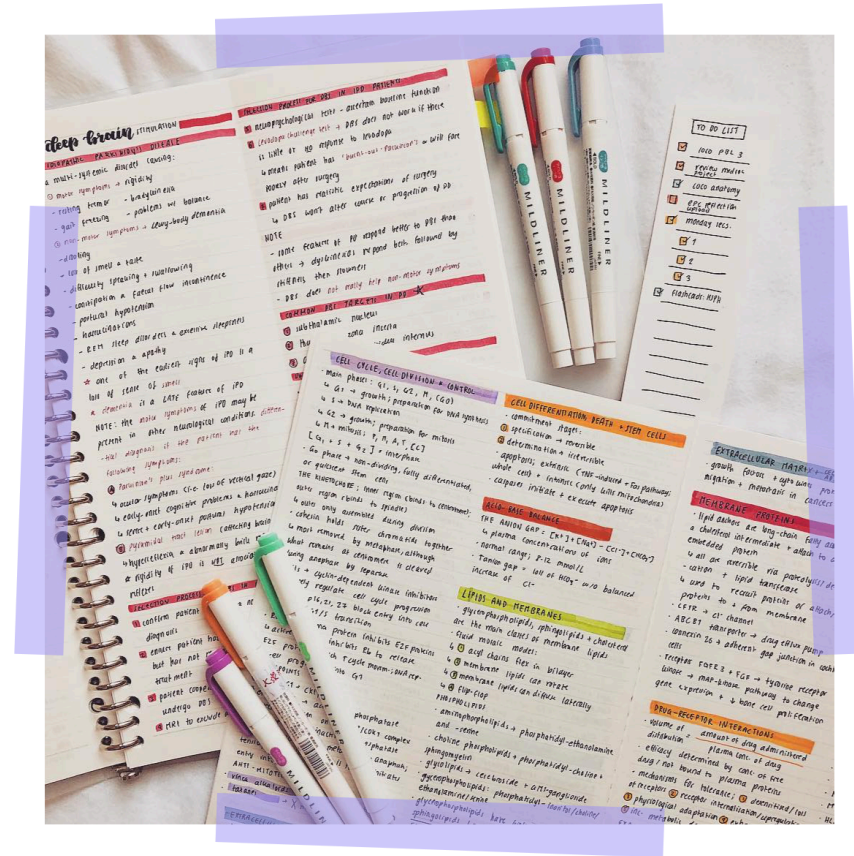


S6C Student Revision Guide

Making the Grade

1. Preparation guide for exams
2. Who can support you?
3. Creating a revision timetable
4. How to structure revision
5. What others can do to help
6. Your mental health & wellbeing
7. The day before the exam
8. On the day
9. Thoughts from the staff
10. Following the mocks - what can I do if I messed up?



PREPARATION GUIDE - STUDENTS

The aim of this revision guide is to provide you with some tools to help you prepare for the exams you are going to be taking this summer.

Everybody learns and revises differently, so this guide contains a range of strategies that can be used as well as specific information and hints around good behaviours for study or wellbeing. You will have learnt specific subject techniques in class in how to recall information (retrieval practice), or approach questions, and you need to continue to ask for that guidance from your teachers.

Revising isn't always about working harder but more about working smarter. This involves organising your time and using better techniques to help you learn the information and the skills needed to show your full potential in the exam room.

Included in this guide are also tips for parents on how to support you through both the exams and the preparation for them. It is hoped that the advice and techniques help you to reinforce your learning and help you to reach your full potential.

We are so proud of your journey at S6C and we know that you are all capable of achieving great things - work hard and do as much preparation as you can and you'll do brilliantly!

PREPARATION GUIDE - PARENTS/ CARERS

As a parent it can feel really difficult to know how to support - how do I ensure I am taking enough interest without it feeling overwhelming? It's really hard to get the balance right and know you're helping in the right ways.

You may question whether you need to think about your family routines, and when you should question or challenge behaviours to make sure your young person is coping well but also committing to do well.

The best advice we can give is that you know your young person best and are well placed to trust your instincts to support them. You know their routines, what makes them laugh, and what makes them feel anxious.

Find ways daily to show them how you feel and care about them, that you are proud of the emerging young adult they are. Be open that the months ahead will feel challenging, but that you stand by them cheering from the sidelines and are proud of their commitment in trying their best. Through that love and care, monitor and check their wellbeing and resilience to help guide them. Encourage your young person to reach out for support when needed, and staff will be on hand to help.

Who can support you?

The issue	Who can help
Subject specific e.g. knowledge, exam skill	Your subject teachers
Study skills e.g. creating a revision timetable, time management, effective revision strategies	Diane and Eva
Mental health, including exam anxiety	Your tutor Rebecca (Pastoral Lead) Liz (Mental Health Lead) Any mental health champion
SEND or access arrangement support	Nicky Miller (SENDCo) Frankie (Exams Officer)

Create a Revision Timetable

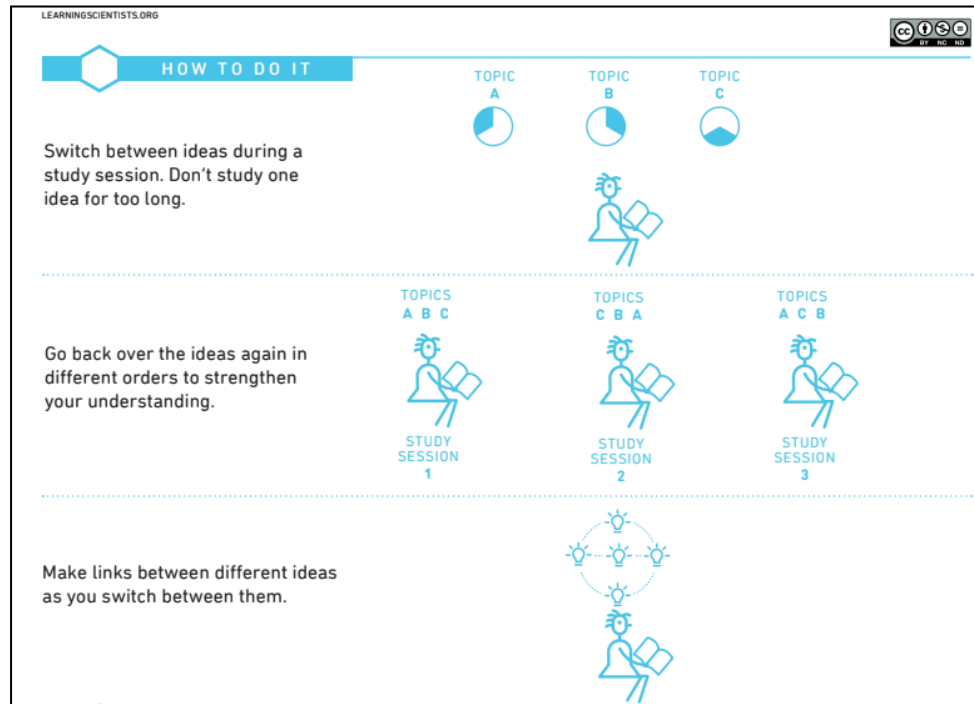
If you feel like you don't get a lot done in a study session, using a revision timetable will help you prioritise your tasks and accomplish one thing at a time. Using this tool can add structure to your revision and identify weaknesses or areas which you need to focus but try to avoid.

Developing your personal study plan can help you organise what you need to study and boost your motivation to revise for exams.

To reduce exam stress it's important to plan a revision timetable - sticking to a number of rules:

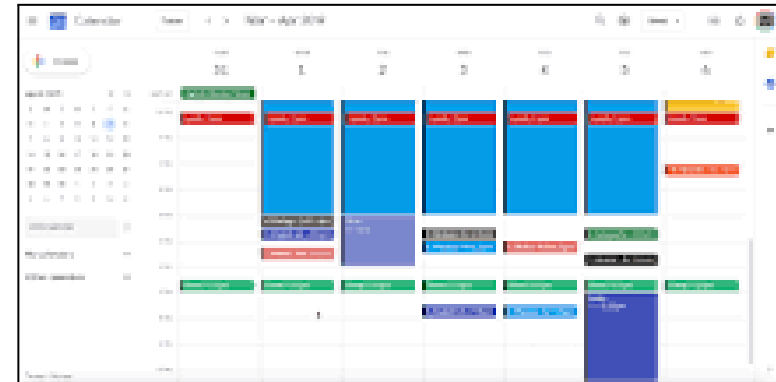
1. No more than 30-45 minutes per subject session – it is proven that “cramming” long periods of time on one topic area is not as effective as numerous shorter periods over time
2. Fill in “non-negotiable” commitments that you do not control e.g. football training – socialising with friend is not “non-negotiable”
3. Design a plan which allows similar exposure to subjects as your college timetable - it may be useful to use your timetable to plan e.g. if you have three subjects on Monday in the day, plan to revise/consolidate this learning on Monday evening too
4. 3-4 Subjects / topics per day is likely to be sufficient
5. Build in review times – it is important to test what you have revised. This will highlight what has successfully been memorised and what needs further revision

The practice of Interleaving (technique highlighted in the Study Centre)



While it's good to switch between ideas, don't switch too often, or spend too little time on any one idea; you need to make sure you understand them. Get advice from your teacher on topics or ideas that you are finding hard to retain / understand. Interleaving will feel harder than studying the same thing for a long time. Mixing up topics is supporting your exam preparation - many of the exam papers will jump between topics so you need to be prepared to switch or connect your learning.

How to structure revision



1. **Step 1** - Figure out how much time you have to revise.
2. **Step 2** - Prioritise your subjects/topics. Consider which topics on Paper 1 / 2 / 3.
3. **Step 3** - Break subjects into topics. Ensure you do not overly focus on strengths - you must tackle 'your gaps'.
4. **Step 4** - Allocate 30 - 45 minute time slots to revise.
5. **Step 5** - What to do within each revision session.
6. **Step 6** - Stay flexible.
7. **Step 7** - Make your timetable achievable.

*“A top tip by the Faculty leaders is to **Use the app 'adapt'** <https://getadapt.co.uk/> - it can be set up for specific exam boards so will input the topics for them! This is far quicker than generating it for yourselves”.*

Things to consider

1. Compiling your study timetable?

A basic revision timetable is essentially a calendar. But instead of holidays and birthdays, it contains topics and subjects you need to revise on specific days. Yours doesn't really have to stray far from this very simple model:

- i. Divide however long you have until your exams by how many subjects you study.
- ii. Divide all the topics and areas you need to cover accordingly.

If you can access your timetable on the go (using something such as Google Docs or an app) you'll have more flexibility over where you can study. The length of your study periods can also be flexible according to what works for you. For example, you might find that two 45-minute sessions of maths, with a break in between, are most productive. But you can focus on your chemistry revision for longer periods of time.

One way to structure a revision timetable is to allocate revision sessions and breaks within certain times, such as 45 minutes of revision followed by a 15 minute break, which is repeated.

2. Regular refreshers

Don't just cover an area once and move on. If you do this, the material you study first will be a distant memory by the time you come to exams. Fit in time to interweave your practice- revisit material among your study timetable.

3. How do I prioritise what I need to revise?

Ask yourself what subjects or particular topics within those subjects do you need to spend more time on? Perhaps some disappointing mock results have flagged areas you need to pay attention to? Or are there certain subjects where you need to achieve a certain grade, to progress into what you plan to do next? Make sure you prioritise these in your revision schedule. Remember not to be overconfident and neglect those subjects that you're already strong at. 'Efficient revision' is key. Don't just spend time reading over notes or the things you like because you know them - this is a huge waste of time. Here is a step by step [guide](#) on HOW to revise for essay subjects like History.

4. Past papers

Past papers are always a great idea. Your teachers have lists of past questions that they can share with you. You may already have these in Google classroom or in your folders - so make sure you use these to plan. This can allow you to focus more on specific areas or topics that need that extra practice. Teachers will also have mark schemes that will support your self reflection in identifying the

preciseness the exam board is looking for. Here are links to the exam board pages where you can find past papers:

- [AQA past papers on the AQA website](#)
- [Edexcel past papers on the Edexcel website](#)
- [OCR past papers on the OCR website](#)

Wider revision techniques shared in the Lifeskills lessons

Flashcard Programmes

Anki - a flashcard programme recommended by Kirsty. It is free on a laptop but there is a charge for using it on a phone.

[AnkiWeb](#)

You can also create and access flashcards and interactive tests/games using Quizlet. If you are using pre-made material to test yourself - how are you going to know it is high quality? <https://quizlet.com/latest>

Flashcards made of ... card ...are also a very effective option!

Retrieval practice of knowledge - Seneca

See if your subjects are available on Seneca - a learning programme linked to the UK exam syllabuses.

[Seneca Learning](#)

5 Ways to Use Dual Coding

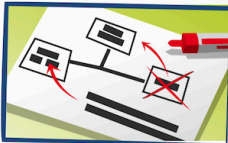
by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

Dual coding is the process of blending both words and pictures while learning, but what are some specific different ways you can do this?



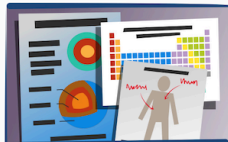
1. Drawings

These boost learning by getting students to think deeply about information



2. Diagrams

These are helpful for breaking down complex concepts or processes to make them easier to understand



3. Posters

These are great for combining writing, pictures, and diagrams all within one page of information



4. Timelines

These can be used for information that happens in a particular order or sequence



5. Graphic Organisers

These organise verbal and visual information by the relationships between different concepts. Examples include tree diagrams, mind maps, and Venn diagrams

USING FLASHCARDS TO REVISE

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

1 Split a box into 5 different compartments and label them 1 to 5.



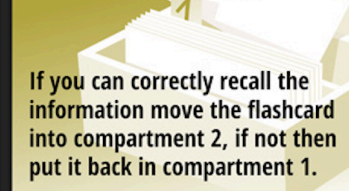
2 Place all your flashcards in compartment 1.



3 Test yourself on a flashcard



4 If you can correctly recall the information move the flashcard into compartment 2, if not then put it back in compartment 1.



5 Continue to test yourself and each time you correctly recall the information, move the flashcard into the next compartment. Flashcards from compartment 1 should be reviewed daily, with flashcards from compartment 2 being reviewed every other day, compartment 3 every third day and so on.



Eventually, all your flashcards will have been transferred to compartment 5 and the information they contain stored in your long-term memory.

9 Ways to use retrieval practice

by @inner_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

<p>1</p>  <p>Past papers</p>	<p>2</p>  <p>Practice tests</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>Quizzes</p>
<p>4</p>  <p>Multiple choice tests</p>	<p>5</p>  <p>Essay answers</p>	<p>6</p>  <p>Answering a spoken question</p>
<p>7</p>  <p>Testing yourself on what was on your flashcards</p>	<p>8</p>  <p>Making your own questions and answering them</p>	<p>9</p>  <p>Having someone ask you 3 questions about a topic</p>

What Others Can Do To Help

Connections with other people are key to our sense of wellbeing and achievement. You may feel like withdrawing as you revise, but reaching out will really help.

5 Ways of Wellbeing is an internationally recognised set of strategies that help keep us well, calm and content.



It only takes a few minutes to connect with someone supportive, do a blast of exercise, take a few breaths of fresh air, or be kind. Just because you are revising, don't stop engaging with the world around you - keep up with other things you enjoy doing, especially with other people, so you don't lose your sense of identity.

Your mental health and wellbeing.

Time will be pressed as you revise, so think of quick ways to connect with others. You might want to try things you wouldn't normally do:

- Go on a dog walk with whoever usually walks the dog
- Play a quick game with a younger sibling
- Call a relative,
- Do some exercise with a friend

All these things can help you and those around you feel better, and will break up your revision schedule, without taking too much time.

You can also get family and friends to help you revise by testing you using flashcards. Think of things that they can test you on easily, without needing to be subject experts.

A popular and well supported idea by local businesses is to meet as a study group in a coffee shop, revise together and discuss ideas. This can help you to connect.

There is plenty of support available in college whether you need help with study, wellbeing, mental health, or pastoral issues like friendships or family issues. Getting help early is always best, but you can come and see us anytime. Talk to your tutor, to the pastoral lead, mental health lead, or learning mentor. Or look at the Safe@S6C posters in the toilets, and at the Who Can Help Me posters around college.

Relaxation

Many people feel stressed about exams, so if you're feeling a bit anxious that's absolutely normal. In fact pressure can help you to perform better.



Centering

If even the thought of sitting an exam makes you anxious, try this while sitting in your chair before starting. Centering is a way of giving yourself some of the benefits of relaxation when you don't have the time or opportunity to lie down for a full relaxation session.

- Sit with your feet flat on the floor, legs uncrossed, your arms comfortably supported on your lap.
- Let your shoulders drop and move apart and check that your lumbar spine is long. Allow yourself to receive the support of the chair and the floor.
- Let your eyes close.

- Listen to the sounds you can hear outside the room, and to sounds inside the room.
- Then take your attention inside yourself.
- Notice the thoughts passing through your mind.
- Notice how you are feeling.
- Go through your body from your feet right up to your head observing the sensations in the different parts – feet, legs, pelvis, chest, back, hands, arms, shoulders, neck, head, face.
- Notice sensations of warmth, coldness, lightness, heaviness, stillness, restlessness, any places where you feel pain or discomfort. Observe your breath moving in and out. Without any forcing, take a deeper breath so that your stomach fills like a balloon. Exhale slowly and completely. Repeat a couple of times, and then return to normal breathing.

Calm try the CALM app to help you relax.

Other APPS to help you stay calm and well

[How To Deal with Exam Stress | YoungMinds](#)

The NHS point out that the best way to avoid exam stress is to be well preparedas well as looking after yourself...and give top tips for both. [Tips on preparing for exams - NHS](#)

What to do on the exam day

The night before

The first priority is a good night's sleep. You should have finished revising by now – last minute cramming is not productive or efficient.

What matters at this point is getting a good eight hours' sleep, to feel alert in the morning. Make sure you have set an alarm (or two!) as well – this is not the day to oversleep.

Your bag should also be packed with all their exam materials and their clothes laid out, so there is no panic in the morning.

Breakfast

Despite any last minute nerves, it is important to try and eat breakfast to fuel yourself for the endurance you will need. People who eat breakfast do perform better in exams. If you are feeling too nervous, try a glass of milk or a smoothie.



Eating a banana for example, will provide potassium which is good for the brain and can stop you from feeling unwell with nerves.

Give yourself enough time. Make your pre-exam breakfast a slow and relaxing one. At college we will have tea and toast on hand for anyone who needs a final fuel.

Arriving at the exam

It is absolutely essential that you arrive on time. Leave extra time to get to college in case of traffic or other transport delays. You should aim to be there at least 30 minutes before the start of your exam for the Energiser session. If you arrive late, your work might not be accepted. Additionally, arriving at an exam late and flustered is not a good way to get your head in the game. The extra minutes at the start will give you the chance to relax and get mentally prepared for the exam.

Energiser Sessions

Be present for the 30 minute session before the exam. Your teacher will be with you and will calm your nerves and provide one or two key elements of exam technique that we want you to use as you walk through the hall door. This is not last minute revision - it is all about being present, calm, and ready to give each exam your best shot.

Bring the right equipment

You should already be well prepared with the equipment you will need for your examination. It is worth stocking up on a few extra pens or pencils so you use equipment you are familiar with - writing for hours in an exam gets tiring and you need to be used to the grip of that equipment to manage finger fatigue.

We recommend that you should have :

- A clear water bottle (with no labels)
- Black pens (bring several spares!)
- Additional equipment such as rubbers, pencils, and calculators (no case allowed for the calculator)
- A clear pencil case (a clear plastic bag will be fine)

Unexpected problems and emergencies

If any of the below occurs, the main thing to remember is not to panic. Systems are in place to help students cope.

Sickness

If you are sick on the day of the exam, please ring college and let us know as soon as possible. Be sure to get a medical certificate from a doctor to prove that it is a severe illness – a light cold or a runny nose doesn't count. The exam officer will let the exam board know.

College telephone - 01722 597970

College email - office@s6c.mlp.college

Frankie Church, Exams officer

Oversleeping

If you do not turn up to an exam, we will phone your home or parents to see if you are asleep. If you can get to the exam hall in time, you will be allowed to start the exam late (with no recourse to make up for the missed time). If you arrive late, we will review your entry into the



exam hall, and it is possible that you will not be allowed the whole period of time. It will be very dependent on how late, and the college following the regulations set by the examining bodies. If you oversleep and completely miss the exam however, there is little you can do. With this in mind, it is imperative to make sure you are up and at college on your exam days.

Severe weather

Less likely in the summer, but in the case of severe weather that affects transport, allow extra time to travel and check for updates from the college. If weather conditions mean you will arrive late, ring college to let us know. Depending on how late you are, you might still be able to sit the exam. Our exams officer will tell you what your options are.

Special consideration

Special consideration can be applied when a student, despite being fully prepared for an exam, is disadvantaged due to unavoidable circumstances or illness at the time of the exam or coursework submission. In these situations, a small boost is given to the raw mark.

Final thoughts from S6C staff

"If you know you are prone to procrastination, consider doing the least appealing and most challenging topics first. You will find it more motivating as you know the next topics will be easier than what came before".

"Being well hydrated is essential for your brain to work at its best. Make sure you keep drinking plenty of water throughout your revision, and also on the exam day."

"Revision quite literally changes the structure of your brain - in just 20 minutes, you will make new connections. The more you go back over this content, the stronger those connections become - you are less likely to forget the content and it will also be quicker & easier for you to access (remember) it in the exam!!"

"Practice, practice, practice."

"Make a list of key vocabulary and hang it where you will see it for a few minutes every day."

"Make a list of things you intend to revise and then you can tick them off as you go and see the progress you have made."

I messed up my mocks... what do I do?

Were your mock results not quite what you hoped for? Or, worse, you've been completely knocked for six and don't know what to do next?

Bad mock results can be disheartening, and it's important to know why you didn't get the marks you wanted so you can improve next time. If you didn't revise much, now's the time to be honest with yourself and prepare better in future.

You're not alone. Lots of students have mock results they're less than pleased with, and pull it back for the main results – don't forget they're the exams that count.

So what should you do now?

1. Don't dwell

There isn't time to. You can't afford to spend a couple of weeks with a black cloud above you, lamenting that your future is down the toilet (it's really not). Shake it off, focus on what's ahead of you, and start making changes today.

2. Don't ignore the problem

The other extreme to avoid is pretending that your mocks didn't happen. If your results aren't what you were expecting, take it as a sign that you need to change something. If you remain in denial and do nothing different, the same thing is likely to happen when you come to the real thing.

3. Speak to your teachers

Your teachers will be on the case already. Book in some time to speak to them about where you went wrong. Ask questions where you don't understand – don't just say you 'get it'. Do take up offers of revision classes or regular catch-ups for extra guidance.



4. Where did you go wrong exactly?

While a bad mock exam boils down to not getting enough marks, it's important to understand why this was the case. Was it:

- **time management:** did you set aside enough time for different sections of the exam (particularly those worth the most marks)? If not, learn to keep an eye on the clock and identify the sections where you can get the most marks.
- **misreading the question:** the pressure of an exam situation can do funny things to you, and misreading a question is a common one, even if it seems really silly. In the real thing, don't pick up your pen until you've read the question two or three times. Underline key words and prompts so they stand out.
- **not showing calculations:** a common one in maths exams especially, where your final result isn't always what the examiner is looking at. If your method is sound, you can still pick up marks.
- **not providing evidence:** correct sourcing is important in subjects such as history or psychology, where there are lots of dates, names and case studies to remember. Making wild claims or arguments isn't enough; you have to show evidence to back up everything you say.

5. Your revision timetable

- Plan what you need to study to ensure you cover this sufficiently in time for the exam – picking random chapters in a textbook to read probably isn't the most productive use of your revision time.
- Breaking down everything you need to study into chunks will make everything much less overwhelming. Draw up a [revision](#)

[timetable](#) you can realistically stick to, factoring in extra time for those areas that need more attention, and to go through past papers.