

Guide for Parents to surviving the exams!

What to do now to support your child.



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The exams!

Most students will have to **sit 20+ exam papers** this summer, spending up to **40 hours in exams!** This is a daunting prospect and the only way to tackle this is **by taking action as soon as possible.**

We hope the information in this booklet will provide you with some support and actions you can take with your child!

Revision and how to support - Your role in this success

There is no right or wrong way to support your child through this process! It will be trial and error – the key element is to **keep trying**. Your role is to support, nag, feed, empathise and do revision with them if need be. The more involved you can be the easier it will be for all!

Don't count the days, make the days count!

Included in this pack is a planning sheet for you to pin up and add to. We will provide updates to this throughout the year.

We ask you to look at this and complete it **with your son/daughter** and then pin it up somewhere prominent.

Please **then tick off together** as the weeks go down – it will help with the realisation of how quick the year will go.

Supportive “Nagging”!

Nobody enjoys revision and no one looks forward to it! However, it is a necessary evil and the **sooner habits can be formed the better and easier it is**. In this process students are likely to have wobbles and moments of doubt. Your role is to be that ear they need, to listen and nod in support, and then to encourage them in to doing that little bit of revision that they will need to do.

It is important to know when to push and when to support, what we are providing you with in this pack are the tools to do something proactive to help them be the best prepared they can be.

Rules about revision

1) It must be manageable and realistic

If there is too much on the timetable **they will fail**, and then feel bad and then be put off doing it again!. Think about building it up over time towards the exams increasing the amount every so often.

We encourage you to first block out the time that **revision WILL NOT happen**. Put in any sports, regular visits, catching up with friends, shopping trips or maybe any household chore times! It is important you identify time where nothing else will get in the way of revision and time to relax and give the brain peace and quiet.

There will be some homework set as we finish of the course. As we get closer to the exams and especially after the February half term homework is going to be more and more focussed on revision.

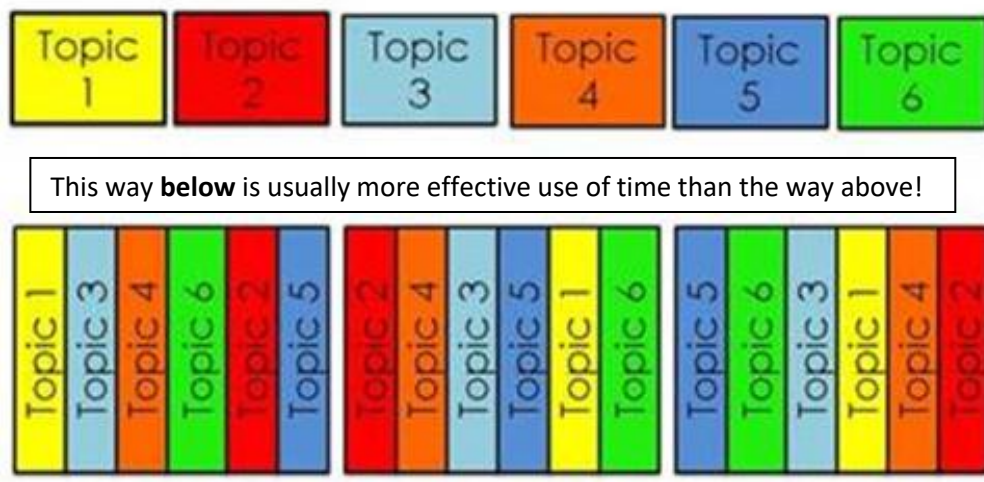
2) It must be the “right” amount

Revision is boring and trying to do too much will not work! The brain works best in 20-30 minute bursts! After that the topic needs changing and this should be done 2-3 times before a break. Too much revision can be as bad as too little!

3) And interleaving instead of blocking!

Interleaving is a process where students mix, or **interleave**, multiple subjects or topics while they study in order to improve their learning. Blocked practice, on the other hand, involves studying one topic very thoroughly before moving to another topic. Most studies suggest that interleaving is a more effective form of revision.

Blocking vs interleaving



4) It must be spread out.

Trying to cram it all in will not work – instead look at the spread of “school” weeks and “holiday weeks” and try and balance it – thinking about which topics are most difficult and need starting on sooner.

5) It must be revisited.

Revising something once will not work – instead students need to go back to topics every so often that have already been looked at. They should revise the more difficult ones more often than those they are confident with!

6) And it must be specific

Just saying I will revise “History” or “Maths” will not work

Instead it needs to be topic or paper related. Students have been given a book of topics for the exams and should refer to this, but they should also look at any feedback from questions or sections from the mock exams and use them to help them plan!

7) It should be active!

Just reading revision notes will not work. We have spoken to students about how to revise and how to make it active – again if you need any ideas please look at the video link <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BIToCDvbe9c&feature=youtu.be> (*This is an old presentation form lock down but has useful information within it – try 30 minutes inwards*)

In essence you need to ensure what they are doing sticks in their brain! This means not only making “flash cards” but also using them by putting questions on the front of them and you asking them those questions. Them teaching you is the best way of revising, so put on your interested face and let them teach you about the topics on their exams.

8) Find the template that works

Students have been and will be show a range of templates to use to set out revision notes. They need to find the one which works for them They can be found here:

https://www.latimer.org.uk/_site/data/files/examinfo/DC93E2C1EA2996FD09A1D434B5691341.pdf

Dealing with stress

Examination are a stressful time for all! However, the stress does not have to be negative if it gives students the motivation students to revise! The best way of dealing with stress is to have a plan for revision!

However, we do realise that this is a stressful period. We have a parent support page on our website with an array of documents and links to support and tips on how to support students through their exams:

<https://www.latimer.org.uk/site/data/files/pathways/822F11B9A6F1E79C5748547F17C3870B.pdf>

Also to support you in dealing with this we would suggest the following resources:

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/coping-with-exam-stress/>

<https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/for-parents/parents-guide-to-support-a-z/parents-guide-to-support-exam-time/>

Environmental factors

Training your body

Imagine sitting still in the same seat for 2 hours. Imagine writing for 90 minutes in complete silence. The thought of these might make you break out in a cold sweat! However, this is what your son/daughter will be doing. And if they turn up having not done this their body will not be trained

We therefore recommend that for a large part of their revision that they revise

- Sat in a chair, not laying on a bed
- Without music or phones near them
- For a reasonable period of time with no distractions!

Now this might be a struggle but they will not have a phone in their hand, or music or be able to get up and go for a walk in the exam so the more the practice this the less stressful and more normal it will be. It also will get the brain and body in sync for when the real exams happen.

Food for thought - Recipes for revision

3 things to know:

- Research shows that pupils who eat breakfast perform better in exams. Even mild dehydration can lead to tiredness, headaches, reduced alertness and diminished concentration. One of the best ways for pupils to maximise focus is to stay hydrated and to eat healthy foods.
- Your brain needs energy from food to work efficiently. Eating and drinking the wrong foods like fizzy drinks, fatty and sugary foods will cause peaks in blood sugar which can lead to anxiety, fatigue and poor memory recall. Eating a balanced and nutritious diet can help pupils maintain energy levels, sleep better and avoid illness.
- Research shows that eating the right foods at the right times can benefit mood, motivation, lower anxiety and even strengthen memory formation. The wrong food choices could cause pupils to feel sluggish, making learning more difficult.

3 things to do:

- Work with your child to create a healthy meal plan each week. Include wholegrain carbohydrates, such as porridge oats, pasta, rice, wholemeal wraps or bread, which are important for the brain and slow release energy. Include protein rich foods such as eggs, meat, fish, nuts and yoghurt for greater alertness and foods high in good fats such as avocado, nuts, oily fish for brain development. Fruit and vegetables have many benefits and will provide key nutrients to support the immune system.
- Watch the videos from chef Mark Lloyd and use the recipe cards to try cooking some of the meals as a family. These recipes are designed to help your child perform in exams and have lasting energy. Each recipe outlines the benefits and when the best time to eat each one is - e.g. before the exam, the night before the exam, prior to revision etc.
- Help your child to snack on the right foods such as fruit, vegetables, nuts, healthy protein bars or homemade snacks. Buy a range of healthy snacks and drinks each week to support your child rather than chocolate, sweets and energy drinks. Make sure your child doesn't try new foods out before an exam as you don't know how their body will respond to them, so it isn't worth the risk near exams.

Revision Resources – useful for content



Students can sign up for FREE at www.gcsepod.com using their College email account. Podcasts can be streamed or downloaded on PC, Android or IOS. Email ithelpdesk@latimer.org.uk if you require any assistance when using GCSEPod.

The “pods” provide essential information on a wide range of topics and subjects – the best way to use them is to watch them a couple of times, and then make notes on what can be remembered. then watch them again to double check the notes. Other ways of using them can be found using this guide for parents on how to use GCSEpod which can be found here:

<http://resources.gcsepod.com.s3.amazonaws.com/Resources%20for%20GCSEPod%20-%20The%20Next%20Generation%20Website/03.%20Parent%20&%20Carers%20Resources/GCSEPod%20Specific/Parent%20Video%20-%20How%20to%20Use%20GCSEPod.mp4>



Seneca is an app which is used by staff to support learning. Students are set assignments to work through, but the site can also be used for independent revision by students logging in themselves and selecting topics they wish to go over. Parents can also sign up and link their account to their child to see how much they are doing!



Tassomai makes learning and revising for GCSE Science, effective and straightforward. Simply log in regularly and complete the assignments at the top of the list. The mission is simple - keep the pace of progress up to the speed prescribed - a task that requires a few minutes of attention each day.

Website: <https://www.tassomai.com>



Vocab Express is an online vocab learning application that has been set up to support students with learning their French vocabulary, which is vital to examination success. Students should access this daily.



Language gym makes learning tenses and verbs easier and more engaging. It also provides a totally different way to practise vocabulary, listening, reading and translation. It is great preparation for the written papers. KS4 students are set an assignment to complete each week, and can access lots of additional revision material.

GCSE Maths Revision Websites: The maths department recommends the use of Sparx Maths and CorbettMaths for GCSE revision. Both of these websites have helpful videos to remind students of the key concepts and important facts that they need to remember for their exams. Crucially they also give the students the opportunity to practice their skills and assess their own work.

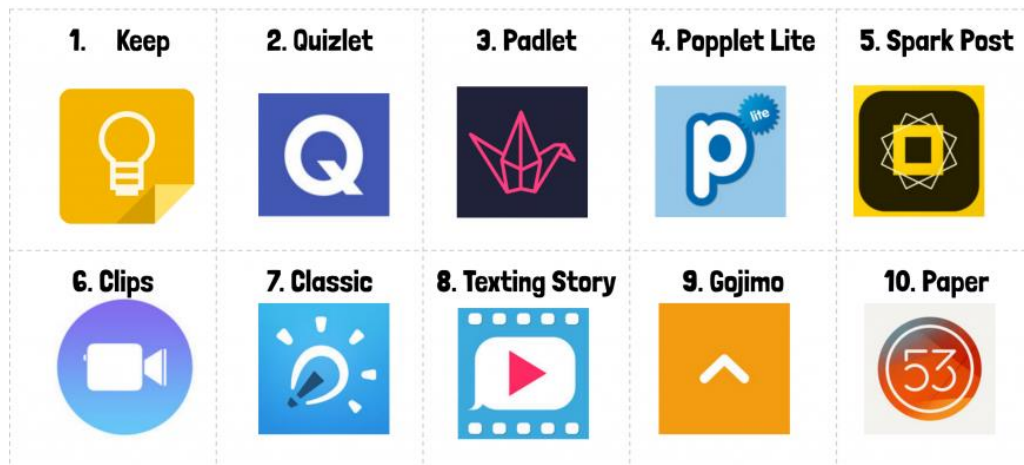
Sparx Maths

All students have been given their own login details for [sparx maths](#) , but can click on the forgotten password button to send a reset password request to their class teacher. They should simply search for the topic that needs to be revised, select it and then watch the video (noting down the key learning points) before trying the quiz. All scores are saved so that students can see the progress they are making.



There is no login or password needed for [corbettmaths.com](#) and it contains lots of good quality practice questions and videos. If students know the topic that they wish to revise they should head to the “Videos and Worksheets” section which contains an alphabetical list of all GCSE maths topics and click on the video or practice questions links as required. Students will notice that there are also several links on this page to find the answers to the questions for them to self-assess their work. The “5-a-day GCSE 9-1” section is also worth a visit and provides daily questions for general revision and practice.

Revision Resources - Apps which can help with revision



1) Keep

- All about organisation: from reminders to checklists – this app has it covered.
- Image to Text is a great feature that allows you to grab text from photos. Students can take photos of their notes and off they go!

2) Quizlet

- A study and flashcard app, Quizlet let's you create quizzes with your own information.
- There are also 400million quizzes already available across a wide range of areas.

3) Padlet

- The easiest and quickest way to collaborate. Students can create a shared space where everyone can share ideas, links, images and tips.
- The link can be shared with everyone in a class, allowing everyone to add in their information, save as a pdf and send to everyone!

4) Popplet lite

- A beautifully simple way to create mind-maps.
- In this free version you are only allowed to create one popplet, so when you're finished one, why not save a screenshot and start on a new topic! Alternatively you can purchase a version which allows you more!

5) Spark Post

- Make revision less boring by illustrating important quotes.
- The final image would fit nicely in the centre of a popplet (app 4).

6) Clips

- On Clips you can create short clips with live annotations!
- I recommend changing the language of your device; use the videos to test your pronunciation for MFL.

7) Classic Explain Everything

- The only paid app on this list. Explain everything may be worth purchasing.
- Import a photo, video or popplet, then add your voice explaining what you want to remember: blurt out all the vocabulary, processes and dates you need!

8) Textingstory

- A fun little app where you can create a video of a 'text conversation'.
- Create common answers to questions in a fun and visual way!
- Try importing your video to Explain Everything and practice your accent!

9) Gojimo

- Already the UK's most used revision app! It has over 40,000 practice questions ready to go and free!
- Focus on the specific areas you need to work, with instant feedback.

10) Paper by FiftyThree

- Visually representing your information can save thousands of words.
- This app along with the others here has made my scrawl look beautiful!
- Appsmash this with SparkPost and Explain Everything to produce a video explaining processes and forming answers that words cannot suffice.

Key Dates:

LAC 6th form open evening 9th November 2023

Please join us so you can find out more about the opportunities we can offer you.

Mock Exams – 20th November onwards

Precise dates and arrangement will be sent out prior to the October Half term.

Mock Results day Wednesday 10th January

We will share the results from the mocks in the style of a results day to experience what is to come!

NEA/Coursework February – April

Prior to the Easter holidays most subjects will expect final submission of any NEA/coursework elements

Easter Revision- Tuesday 2nd – Friday 12th April

We will put on a programme of Easter revision opportunities in the run up to the exam. This will be invite only and a programme of what subjects and when will be confirmed closer to the time

GCSE exams – Thursday 9th May – Wednesday 19th June 2024

This is the provisional dates – during this period we will still be running a revised timetable to support students through their exams

May half term Monday 27th – Friday 31st May

Another set of revision activities (tbc) – mainly focused on Maths

Contingency Day – Wednesday 26th June 2024

Students need to be available up to and including this day in-case of any national changes to the exam timetable at short notice

Results Day – Thursday 22nd August 2024

Time to celebrate the hard work!

Notes page: