

## Exam Survival

# Exams and studying for exams can be a really stressful period in your life.

To help reduce stress and ensure that you're as organised as you can be, learn more about planning and looking after yourself and about staying focused in order to be as ready for the exam as you can be.

### Take the time to plan

- Prepare a study plan and goals for each day / week. Make sure it's balanced with other important things in your life - that way it will be easier to stick to.
- Talk to your employers early to let them know you need to limit your shifts / hours while studying.
- Create a study space that is comfortable, quiet, well lit, organised, and has no distractions nearby, such as a TV, phone, people talking, etc.
- Make sure you have everything you need for each study session as this helps to feel more confident and organised.

### Look after yourself

- Self care is especially important when you have a big demand in your life - that way you have the energy to commit to what you need to accomplish.
- Build activities you enjoy and that bring your stress levels down into your study plan, such as sport, spending time with friends, internet, etc.
- Don't get hungry before or while studying. Grab nutritional snacks that keep you going, such as fruit/nuts/dairy, etc.
- Remember to get some exercise every day as this helps you to keep focused and energetic.

### Rest when you need to

- Work out what times of day you have the most energy and plan to study then.
- Don't study more than 40-60 mins without a short break. Even a 5 minute break will help. A glass of water helps too!
- When you have a break do something physical or fun, such as go for a short run or play with a pet.
- Try to keep your focus on school and exams rather than other stuff happening in your life; you don't need this extra worry around relationships, friendships etc. right now.
- Relaxation is important, especially before bed, to slow the brain activity down. Try some slow, deep breathing, a shower or a bath, herbal tea etc.
- Learn more about [sleeping well](#)

### Stay focused

- Say "no" to parties during the weeks close to the exams. This will help to keep you refreshed and energised.
- When studying, switch your phone and email off to stop the distractions. Try to keep a focus on your health and wellbeing by not using things like drugs or alcohol; they can make it much harder to study.

## Ask for help:

- Stay at school until your last day so you don't miss any important info about exams, or fun events with your colleagues.
- Practice writing essays and show your teachers for feedback for improvement.
- Ask teachers the best way to study for each subject; they have many years' experience they can share with you.
- Some teachers are happy to be contacted during the time leading up to the exams. Find out which ones you can contact and make use of this if you need to.
- If you have trouble approaching your own teacher for advice, talk to one of the other ones who teach the same subject.
- Group study sessions with classmates can be a helpful and entertaining way of studying, but keep your focus on what you want to achieve with these sessions.
- Talk about what you are studying with family members and friends as this helps to retain the info more, especially names and dates, etc.

## Be prepared

- Read/ write everything three times as this also helps to commit the info to memory.
- Use your trial exam results to focus in on what you need study.
- Use previous exam papers to get a feel for what to expect.
- Ask friends what they are doing that is helping with their study or friends who did it last year.
- You need to study within 24 hours of the exam on that subject to retain more info.
- Write things in coloured markers that you have trouble remembering (such as names and dates) and blu-tak to your toilet wall/door. Sounds funny, but it really works!

## Day of the exam

- Do your usual routine, for example, have what you normally eat for breakfast.
- Take some water and a healthy snack (if allowed) to the exam.

## And finally...

If the stress is getting to you it will prevent you from studying effectively and confidently - so ask for help from **headspace**, a counsellor, professional, or help line.