



The Swinton High School
a specialist college for the performing arts

A Guide to Revision



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A Guide to Revision - Introduction

You are now approaching the end of your compulsory school life (11 years - you have been going to school since you were 5!) and are now preparing to take your GCSE examinations.

It is therefore important that you apply yourself fully to the task that lies ahead of you. Using the information on this site will help you to review your progress, set meaningful targets, organise your revision time and build in some free time. Used properly, it will help you feel in control and prevent you from panicking and feeling overwhelmed.

You need to remember that it can be done! All that is needed for you to get the best grades possible is yourself!



Remember
***You are not giving up your free time -
you are investing it in your future.***

***Anyone who tries to persuade you otherwise
is NOT interested in your future.***

So, once you are sure you want to give it your best shot, where do you start?

Firstly, you need to set achievable targets and review your progress towards meeting them - this will be an ongoing process throughout the time you have left.

Next, you need to make a sensible revision plan. This will allow for revision time, some free time, and time to relax. It will be one of the most important factors in managing your revision.

It is important to find out before you start revising what type of learner/reviser you are. If you know your preferred learning style you can make use of your strengths and avoid your weaknesses.

By following the different sections in this pack, you should be able to find everything that you need for you to be able to devise a revision plan that suits you. By taking some time now, you will be giving yourself the best possible chance of fulfilling your potential, and preparing yourself for the future, whatever you decide to do.

Learning Styles

Understanding of the brain and how people learn has been growing over the last 20 years. The role of the senses - 'see it, hear it, do it' is now formalised as Visual, Auditory and Kinaesthetic learning styles. Also included is 'interpersonal' and 'intrapersonal' because reflection and collaboration have always been an important part of learning.

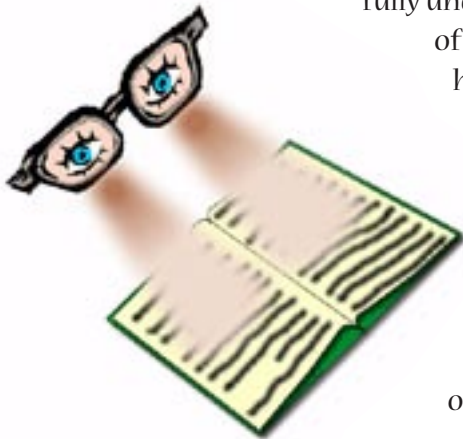
When finding out about your preferred style of learning, it is probably more helpful to think of learning as a range of styles we all have to some degree - 'having a strength in auditory learning', for example, rather than 'being an auditory learner'.

The idea of a person having only one learning style is incorrect, especially as our learning styles can be adapted to suit the task we are given.

Following is a summary of the three different forms of learning. Which one are you?

Visual Learners ... Learn through seeing ...

You need to see the teacher's body language and facial expression to fully understand the content of a lesson. Try sitting at the front of the classroom to avoid visual obstructions (e.g. people's heads).



You think in pictures and learn best from visual displays including: diagrams, illustrated text books, overhead transparencies, videos, flipcharts and hand-outs. During a lesson or revision session taking detailed notes will help you to absorb the information. Try using topic webs or memory maps to organise your ideas.

Auditory Learners ... Learn through listening ...

You learn best through verbal explanations, discussions, talking things through and listening to what others have to say. You learn by interpreting the underlying meanings of speech through listening to tone of voice, pitch and speed.

Written information may have little meaning until it is heard. Try hearing the sentence in your head before writing, and try learning spellings through saying words in rhyme or in an exaggerated way (e.g. en-vi-RON-ment).

When revising, you will often benefit from reading text aloud and using a tape recorder to record important points for revision.



Kinaesthetic Learners ... Learning through moving, doing and touching ...



You learn best through a hands-on approach, actively exploring the physical world around you
- you might think better with something in your hands to fiddle with!

You may find it hard to sit still for long periods and may become distracted by your need for activity and exploration. You will benefit from regular breaks where you get up, stretch and breathe deeply.

Sorting and ranking cards with key words or images, or manipulating symbols or props will help to focus your revision. Try learning spellings by writing them out several times.

Revision Planning

Revision is another word for reviewing. To understand and remember what you have learned over the year, you need to re-read your course essays, notes and textbooks. Revision requires accurate notes and careful planning to be most effective.

It is best to begin your programme of revision two or three months before the exams. However late you leave it, make sure you follow this advice:

Decide what type of revision suits you best

It is important that you get the most from your allocated time slot. In order to do this, complete the following questionnaire and work out what type of reviser you are - a sprinter or a long-distance runner.

What type of reviser are you?

There are basically two types of reviser and each type has a different combination of strengths and weaknesses. If you find out what type of reviser you are, you can note your weaknesses and avoid them. Fill in the following questionnaire and then follow the instructions to find out if you are a 'sprinter' or a 'long-distance runner'.

Which of these apply to you....	Yes, this is me	No, this is not me
1. I am easily distracted		
2. I am usually thorough		
3. I can be disorganised		
4. I can be impatient		
5. I can concentrate well		
6. I can forget important details		
7. I can get 'bogged down' with too many unimportant details		
8. I can often see new ways of doing things		
9. I can see the link between the subjects I am taking		
10. I can see links between topics in each subject		
11. I can skim through my text books quickly		

12.	I do not organise my notes		
13.	I usually do not check my revision notes to see if they are accurate		
14.	I prefer to work on my own		
15.	I enjoy creative writing		
16.	I keep my notes in good order		
17.	I enjoy revising and sitting exams		
18.	I have to understand every aspect of a topic before I move on to another		
19.	I get very enthusiastic about some topics		
20.	I like solving problems		
21.	I make revision timetables but do not keep to them		
22.	I know the exam syllabus quite well		
23.	I like to use lots of books for revision		
24.	I make a revision timetable and keep to it		
25.	I never prioritise my revision		
26.	I often leave things until the last minute		
27.	I often rework my revision notes		
28.	I often rush into answers without thinking		
29.	I often spot the links between ideas		
30.	I often try to do too much at once		
31.	I organise my revision notes before I start revising		
32.	I often forget my textbook		
33.	I pay attention to the small details		
34.	I often find interesting solutions		

35.	I prefer to revise each topic piece by piece		
36.	I prefer to work things out on paper		
37.	I prefer to work in short bursts		
38.	I prioritise my revision		
39.	I rarely ask teachers for advice		
40.	I read the instructions on revision questions carefully		
41.	I see problems as a challenge		
42.	I am not usually critical of ideas		
43.	I usually stick to the same methods		
44.	I work well on my own		
45.	I often guess what I do not know		
46.	If I start a task I must finish it		
47.	I often delay before starting my revision		
48.	Once I have found a way to do something I keep to it		

Circle all the answers where you have ticked 'yes, this is me' in the boxes below. Whichever box has the most 'circles' in is the type of reviser you are.

SPRINTER	LONG-DISTANCE RUNNER
1 3 6 8 9 10 11 12 13 15 17	2 4 5 7 14 16 18 20 22 24
19 21 23 25 26 28 30 32 34	27 29 31 33 35 36 38 39
37 42 45 47	40 41 43 44 46 48

Revision pitfalls for sprinters

If you are a 'sprinter', these are the problems you are likely to have:

- You can be disorganised
- You try to do too much revision at once
- You are easily distracted
- You do not plan revision
- You do not prioritise revision topics
- Your revision does not test how much you have learnt

If you are a 'sprinter', these are the things you need to do:

- Make a revision plan/timetable
- Prioritise your revision
- Test yourself
- Avoid distractions before they distract you



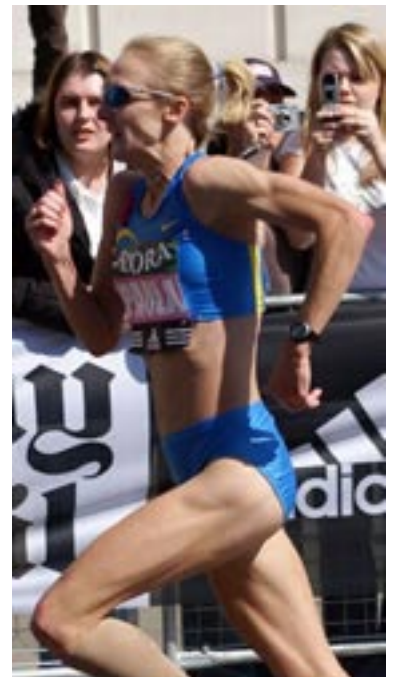
Revision pitfalls for long-distance runners

If you are a 'long-distance runner', these are the problems that you are likely to have:

- You can become 'bogged down' in small details
- You can work on your own too much
- You try to collect too much information before you start
- You always use the same way of doing things
- You do not ask teachers for help if you are stuck
- You like to finish each section of your revision regardless of how thorough you have been

If you are a 'long-distance runner', these are the things you need to do:

- Try new revision techniques
- Start a revision session by writing down three points about the topic just to get you started
- Ask others for help



Devise a revision timetable

You can use it to remind you about your exams and other important events.

	Time of Day											
	9-10	10-11	11-12	12-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5	5-6	6-7	7-8	8-9
Monday	Science – Human Body							Maths - Equations				
Tuesday		Maths - Area										
Wednesday	Geog - Cities						RE - Christianity					
Thursday				RE - Islam			Science - Space					
Friday		Science - Reactions				Geog – Tectonics						
Saturday												
Sunday												
Monday		Maths - Triangles			Exam - Maths							
Tuesday		Geog – Coastal Processes										
Wednesday	Science – Plant Animal Cells											
Thursday								RE - Weddings				
Friday		Geog - Cities			Exam - Geog							
Saturday												
Sunday												



Revise in short manageable chunks and take regular breaks

Each revision session should last about 30 minutes, with 10-minute breaks between each session.

Try not to revise more than two subjects a day and don't attempt to do all of a subject in one go.

Make sure you have time to relax before going to bed and try to get plenty of sleep

But don't go to bed so early that you can't sleep - read a book or watch TV first.



How to Revise

Before you start to revise

Try to organise a special revision work area. If everything is set up in one place, you will be able to make a fast start to your revision instead of being put off from starting because you cannot find any books, pens, calculators etc.

1. You will need a room or area where you will not be disturbed
2. You will need to leave your work in this area without anyone else disturbing it
3. You will need good lighting
4. Do not let your revision area get too hot or stuffy as this will make you feel tired
5. If you can, use the wall space for notices, timetables, calendars, goals etc.
6. Have background music on but do not have it too loud
7. Try and keep each subject's notes together so that you can find them easily
8. Always stop after 30 minutes and do a 'mini-exercise' (e.g. walk about)

How to revise

You don't need to revise alone - working in groups can be a great advantage, and more fun!

Revision doesn't have to be painful or boring. Believe it or not, it can even be enjoyable. By using these six key revision skills, you will gain confidence in your revision.

1 - Make Notes

Notes help you concentrate and understand a topic. They also save you from having to read your whole course file, because you can memorise your own notes more easily.

Read through your essays, notes and textbook chapters and list key points and words under each separate heading as you do so.

Write in different colours or use highlighters to make important points or to make headings stand out. List any of your own ideas under each of these headings in another colour.

Make sure your notes are concise (short and clear) and relevant (keeping to the subject). Try to show what is important information and what is not.

Make sure your notes are legible.

Once you have completed your notes, you may find it useful to rewrite them and keep a final copy stored on index cards or in a small notebook for easy reference, especially for when you have a spare moment.

2 - Use mnemonics to help you remember

A mnemonic is a way of helping you remember information using abbreviations, words or phrases. The funnier these are, the better. To remember the colours of the visible spectrum in order, you might use the mnemonic: Richard of York Gave Battle In Vain, using the initial letters of each word to remember (in the right order) the colours red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo and violet.

3 - Use diagrams

Diagrams can also help you remember and understand things.

Each leg of a spider diagram, for example, has a heading that is linked to the main body or topic. You can display these diagrams where you are studying.

4 - Revise with your friends

Forming self-help pairs or groups to assist your revision and to test each other can be a great advantage. Working with others can help you to fill in gaps in your understanding or knowledge and is bound to be more fun than working alone. But be careful not to make your sessions all fun and no work!

5 - Test yourself

If you log every time you use a test, you can keep track of which tests you have done and your scores in your own report card. Ask someone to test you, you do actually learn more by "teaching" someone else.

6 - Study past papers

If possible, try to get hold of a selection of recent past papers from your teacher. Study the past papers and familiarise yourself with the layout of the paper, the types of questions asked and how marks are allocated.

A good revision programme should leave you time to unwind. Don't try to sleep straight after revising - your brain will be too active and stop you from getting to sleep.

Don't panic! The worst thing you can do is stay up all night. If you've done your revision, you'll know a lot more than you think. So have a last read through your notes then hit the sack. A good night's sleep will do a lot more for your state of mind than cramming.

Revision Techniques

There are many different ways to revise. How successful different techniques are will depend upon a unique combination - the technique itself, combined with your learning style, so some techniques will be more suited to you than others.

You should try out as many different revision techniques as possible, and see which ones you prefer.

Research shows that we remember:

20% of what we read



30% of what we hear



40% of what we see



50% of what we say



60% of what we do



But, we remember:

90% of what we READ, HEAR, SEE, SAY and DO

- Always ask yourself questions e.g. 'Is what I am revising relevant?' 'What do I need to remember about the topic?'
- Look for obvious links and comparisons
- Occasionally move - stretch or massage to increase your oxygen supply
- To avoid boredom and heighten concentration, alter your revision style.
- Say 'no' to distractions and interruptions - switch off the TV and your mobile phone
- Take a break after about 30 minutes; your brain needs to be recharged. Stop each session while you are making progress.

Multi-sensory revision techniques

Type of Revision - VISUAL

- Mind Map
- Make a poster
- Make a chart
- Make a diagram
- Make a cartoon
- Make notes on key ideas
- Surf a revision site on the internet
- Create a picture in your imagination



Type of Revision - AUDITORY

- Record key ideas on tape
- Say key ideas out loud
- Tell key ideas to another pupil
- Tell key ideas to the dog
- Get someone to test you
- Exchange key ideas with a friend
- Give a presentation to a group
- Play soothing background music



Type of Revision - ORGANISATIONAL

- Plan revision time
- Break revision into manageable chunks
- Make a revision timetable
- Highlight the main points
- Reduce notes to key words
- Tick each topic as it is revised

	8:00	9:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	1:00	2:00	3:00	4:00	5:00	6:00	7:00	8:00
Monday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Tuesday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Wednesday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Thursday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Friday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Saturday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths
Sunday	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths	Maths

Type of Revision - PERSONAL

- Build in rewards such as watching TV
- Approach revision positively
- Take regular breaks
- Seek advice on difficult concepts
- Review the progress of your revision to make sure appropriate techniques are used



*However you decide to revise, try your best
and GOOD LUCK!!!*