

Performing on the Day

Get a good night's sleep



While the temptation is to stay up half the night 'cramming' in more facts and figures, the evidence suggests this approach is counter-productive. In the context of a two-year course, an extra night's studying can make very little difference to your knowledge. However, having a mind that is refreshed, alert, and ready to respond to circumstances will obviously be of far greater benefit.

Arrive in plenty of time: To perform well on the day, you need to be relaxed and to feel in control of the situation. This is difficult to achieve if you have missed breakfast and are stuck on a bus in traffic or standing on a train for 45 minutes as the exam time approaches. You will need about 15 minutes 'quiet time' to mentally rehearse your exam and run through your 'game plan' for the final time.

Have your equipment ready

Each exam has its own requirements. Apart from properly functioning pens, pencils, rulers, etc, you may need a calculator for the Maths or Science exam. Drawing pencils may be required for diagrams in some subjects. A lot of nervous energy can be expended on last-minute hassle if these items aren't checked in advance.

Think positive

On the day of the exam, remind yourself of the good things (the material you know well, the revision you have completed, all the past exam questions done, the good grades achieved) rather than dwelling on areas of weakness. Having that self-belief will give you the confidence to trust your judgement within the exam hall and 'hit the target'.



Maintain your focus

There can be a lot of tension, drama, and hysteria in the air on the days of an exam. You want to keep the balance between maintaining your focus and interacting normally with your friends and classmates. Try finding a quiet spot *far from the madding crowd* to 'warm-up' before each exam and 'warm-down' afterwards. Surround yourself with people who are likely to add to the calm rather than add to the clamour.

Beware of post-exam analysis

The more you participate in the exam post-mortem, the more confused and disheartened you are likely to become. You can't change what has happened, you can only focus on the present and this will need your full attention.

