



GUIDE TO REVISION

◆ HOW TO SUCCEED IN YOUR GCSES ◆

NAME : _____

Revision Timetables.

Planning out revision is the first step to making sure it is as effective as possible. A revision timetable will help your child stay on track and keep them accountable for their own learning outside of the classroom. Helping your child stick to this timetable can give them a sense of accomplishment for meeting targets and also give them confidence as we move into the exam period. Some things to keep in mind are:

1. Make sure to create a **realistic timetable** which allows time for rest. This will make it reasonable to complete and motivate students to stick to it if they can actually achieve it.
2. Focus not just on their favourite subjects. Find **areas which need improvement** and give time to them accordingly.
3. Schedule in **breaks**. This will make sure your child is working at their best and not feeling demotivated. It also means they can fit revision around their life and are more likely to stick to the timetable if they have breaks to work towards.
4. **Chunk subjects**. It is more effective to complete a little revision often in the months before exams than huge sessions too close to exam periods. You could block time into 20 minute sections and revise multiple subjects in a day to keep things fresh.

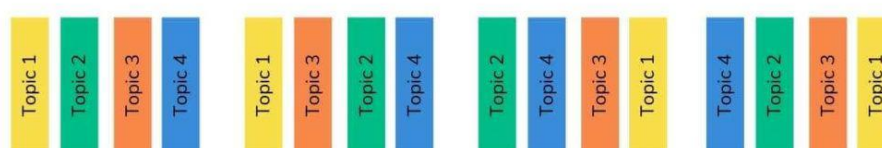
Memory, Timing and Planning.

At any one time, we can deal with 7 pieces of information. To stop this information from fading once we're done with it, we need to move it from the short-term memory. The purpose of revision is to move information **from the short-term memory into long-term memory**. This process of moving from short-term to long-term memory is called **consolidation**. The more information is used and recalled, the more likely it is to stick in the memory effectively.

When planning revision, you should consider that this is the aim to help you be effective. One way to do this is to plan for multiple shorter sessions. It is more effective to have several short sessions over one long session. You should cover multiple topics in one session instead of focussing just on one topic for the full time.



Space out and interleave topics



Mind Maps.

Mind maps are an excellent tool for GCSE revision because they help **organise information visually**, making it easier to understand and remember. Instead of passively reading notes, creating a mind map encourages active learning by summarising key points in your own words. This **improves retention and helps break down complex topics into manageable sections**, which is especially useful in subjects like science, history, and English.

The visual format of mind maps makes revision more effective by showing links between ideas, such as cause-and-effect relationships in science or thematic connections in English Literature. Mind maps are also great for **quick reviews**—rather than going through pages of notes, you can glance at a mind map to refresh your knowledge efficiently, making them perfect for last-minute revision.

1. Start with a Central Idea

- Write the **main topic** in the centre (e.g., "The Carbon Cycle" for science or "Macbeth" for English).
- Use a **bold colour** or even a small doodle to make it stand out.

2. Use Branches for Key Points

- Draw **thick branches** from the centre for **main ideas** (e.g., Causes, Effects, Solutions).
- Then, create **thinner branches** for **sub-points**.

3. Use Colours and Images

- Colours help your brain **group information** and make it more **memorable**.
- Simple sketches (like a clock for "Time Management" or a skull for "Death in Macbeth") can **boost recall**.

4. Keep It Concise

- Use **keywords and short phrases** instead of long sentences.
- Example: Instead of "Deforestation causes carbon levels to rise," just write "Deforestation → CO₂ ↑".

5. Show Links Between Ideas

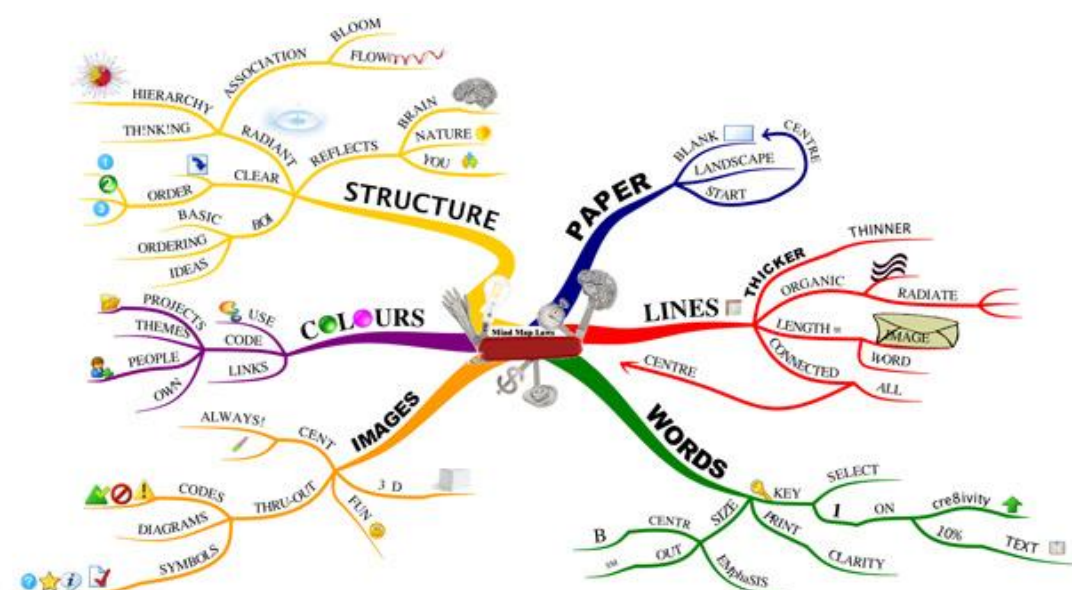
- Use **arrows** to show cause and effect or relationships.
- Example: For History, you could connect "Treaty of Versailles" to "WWII" to show how one led to the other.

6. Review and

Re-create

Redraw your mind maps **from memory** to check what you remember. Stick them up **on walls** or use them for **quick revision sessions**.

You can practise drawing a mind map on the next page.



Flashcards.

Flashcards are an incredibly effective revision tool for GCSE students because they actively engage the brain in recalling information rather than just recognizing it. This process, known as **active recall**, strengthens memory and improves long-term retention. Flashcards also make use of spaced repetition, a scientifically proven technique where you review information at increasing intervals to reinforce learning.

Another advantage of flashcards is their **flexibility**—you can use them for definitions, key facts, equations, or even essay plans. They are also quick and convenient for revision on the go, making them perfect for squeezing in extra revision during breaks or when travelling.

Tips for Making Effective Flashcards:



Keep Them Concise – Use short, clear answers instead of long explanations for quick recall.



Use Questions & Prompts – Turn information into questions rather than just writing facts (e.g., *What year was the Treaty of Versailles signed?*).



Add Visuals – Diagrams, symbols, or colour coding can make information more memorable.



Focus on Key Information – Prioritise essential facts, dates, and concepts rather than copying full notes.



Use Active Recall – Test yourself by covering the answer and trying to remember it before checking.



Shuffle & Mix Topics – This prevents memorization based on order and improves adaptability in exams.



Review Regularly – Use spaced repetition to reinforce learning over time, focusing more on difficult cards.

By making well-structured flashcards and reviewing them consistently, you can significantly improve your ability to retain and recall key information for your GCSE exams.

You can practice making some flashcards on the next page.

The repetition of the same consonant sound, especially at the beginning of words.	Alliteration
What is the correct order of stages that drying clay goes through?	Wet clay, leather-hard, greenware
What are indices (index)?	The power of a number

Memory Dump

A **memory dump** is a revision exercise where you try to write down or recall everything you know about a specific topic without referring to your notes or textbooks. This technique forces you to retrieve information from your memory, which strengthens your recall ability and helps identify any gaps in your understanding.

Tips for a Successful Memory Dump:

-  **Pick a Specific Topic:**
Choose one section or subject area to focus on. This keeps the exercise manageable and targeted.
-  **Use a Timer:**
Set a specific time limit (for example, 10–15 minutes) to simulate exam conditions and encourage quick recall.
-  **Write Freely:**
Don't worry about perfection. Write down all you remember, even if it's incomplete or slightly disorganized. The goal is to capture everything from memory.
-  **Compare Your Work:**
After your dump, review your notes or textbooks to see what you missed. This helps identify areas that need further review.
-  **Repeat Regularly:**
Incorporate memory dumps into your study routine to continually reinforce your learning and track your progress over time.

Summarising Information

Summarising is the process of condensing a large amount of information into a shorter, clear, and organized format that captures the essential points. This technique helps you understand the material better by forcing you to process and rephrase the information in your own words, and it creates handy revision notes for quick reviews.

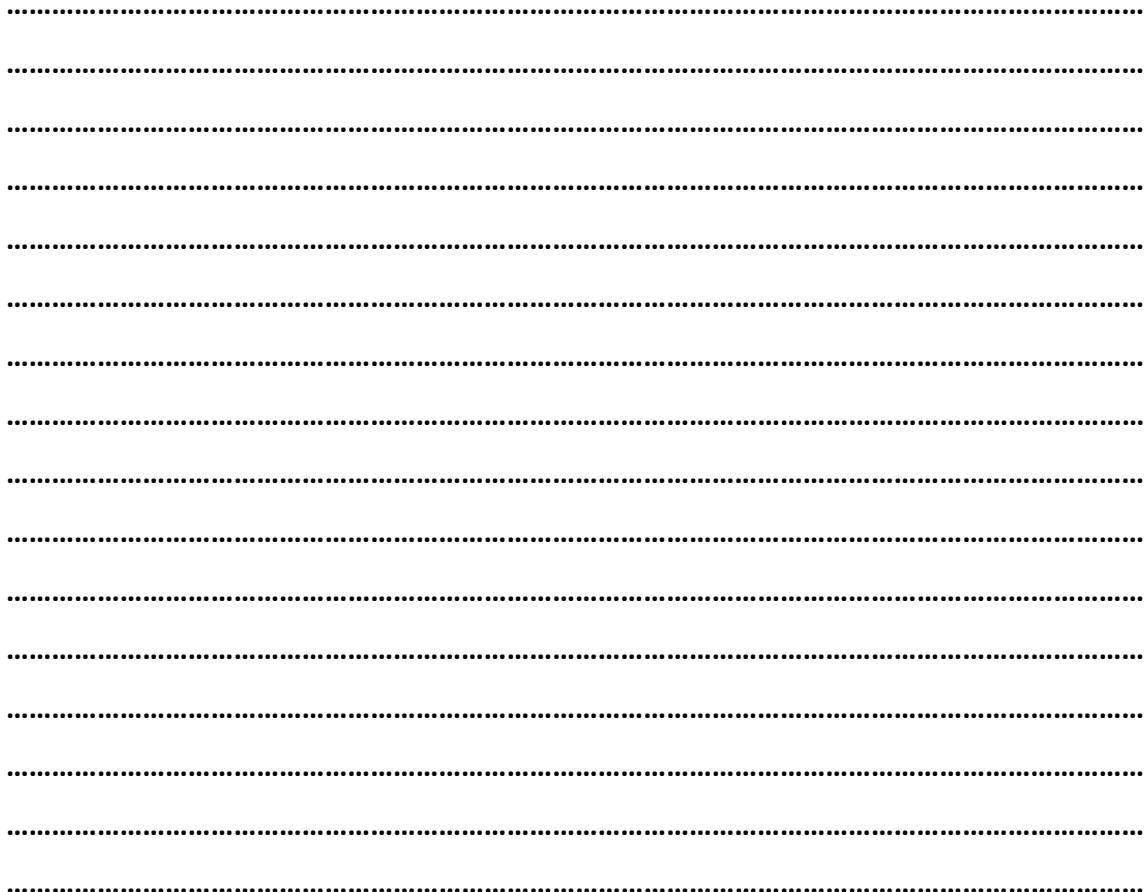
Tips for Creating Effective Summaries:

-  **Read and Highlight:**
Go through your study material and **highlight** or underline the most important points, concepts, and facts.
-  **Organize Your Ideas:**
Group related ideas together. Use headings, bullet points, or numbered lists to structure your summary logically.
-  **Rewrite in Your Own Words:**
Paraphrase the information instead of copying it verbatim. This reinforces your understanding and aids long-term retention.
-  **Include Visuals:**
Add diagrams, mind maps, or flowcharts where possible to visualize connections between ideas and to break up text.
-  **Regularly Review and Update:**
Revisit your summaries periodically. Update them as your understanding deepens or as new details become relevant.

Practice a Memory Dump of a topic here:



Practice summarising a topic here:



Completing past exam papers.

Completing past exam papers and marking them yourself is one of the most useful techniques you can use to revise. There are many reasons for this:

Exam Familiarity:

Past papers provide insight into the format, structure, and style of questions you'll face in the actual exam. This familiarity helps reduce anxiety and clarifies what examiners expect.

Practice Under Real Conditions:

Working through past papers under timed conditions simulates the pressure of the actual exam. This practice improves your time management and exam strategy.

Identify Knowledge Gaps:

By attempting past papers, you quickly discover which topics or question types are challenging. This allows you to target your revision on these weaker areas.

Improve Exam Technique:

Regular practice with past papers **helps refine your exam techniques**, such as planning your answers, structuring essays, and understanding the phrasing of questions.

Build Confidence:

The more you practice, the more **familiar and confident you become** with the exam **format** and content, which significantly reduces stress on the day of the exam.

Highlight Patterns and Trends:

Reviewing several past papers can reveal recurring themes or question types, guiding you to focus on areas that are more likely to appear in your exam.

Immediate Feedback:

When you mark your own work, you quickly see which questions you got wrong and why. This immediate feedback helps you **understand your mistakes** and prevents them from recurring.

Improved Understanding:

By critically reviewing your answers, you **reinforce your knowledge and identify areas where your understanding is lacking**. Redoing the questions after marking helps consolidate your learning and clarify concepts.

Better Time Management:

Self marking allows you to assess how well you're **pacing yourself** during an exam. Noticing where you spent too much or too little time can help you adjust your strategy for future attempts.

Iterative Learning:

Redoing past papers after self-marking is an iterative process that reinforces learning. Each attempt helps you gradually improve, turning your mistakes into learning opportunities.

Tips for making the most of past of past papers and self-marking:

Tips for Answering Past Papers:

Simulate Exam Conditions:

Practice under **timed conditions** to get used to the pace and pressure of the real exam.

Read Questions Carefully:

Take a moment to understand what each question is asking. Look out for keywords (e.g., *explain, compare, justify*) that guide your answer.

Plan Your Answers:

For longer or essay-type questions, jot down a quick outline before you start writing to organize your thoughts.

Show Your Working:

Especially for subjects like mathematics or sciences, write down your calculations or reasoning. This can earn you partial marks even if the final answer isn't completely correct.

Practice Different Formats:

Use **past papers from various years** to expose yourself to different question styles and formats, enhancing your overall exam readiness. (found online, links at the end of this booklet)

Tips for Self-Marking Past Papers:

Use Marking Schemes:

Compare your answers against **official marking schemes or model answers** to see where you can improve.

Reflect on Mistakes:

For every error or missed point, note down why it happened. **Understanding your mistakes** is key to avoiding them in the future.

Redo Incorrect Questions:

Rework questions you got wrong to reinforce the correct method or concept. This iterative process helps consolidate your learning.

 **Check Answer Structure:** For essay or long-answer questions, ensure your responses have a clear structure (introduction, body, conclusion) and that you've **addressed all parts** of the question.

Keep a Revision Log:

Write down recurring mistakes or weak areas that you notice during self-marking. This log can guide your subsequent revision session

Quizzing

You can use this template to plan out quizzes and get a family member or friend to test you. You can track questions you weren't sure of to improve in the future.

Quizzing Revision Sheet

Name of Topic(s): _____
Previous Score: _____
Strategies for Improvement: _____

	Question	Answer	Additional Information
1			
2			
3			
4			
5			
6			
7			
8			
9			
10			
11			
12			
13			
14			
15			
16			
17			
18			
19			
20			
Score: /20			

Self-Reflection.

This template is useful when you know you need to improve on a specific area. You can narrow down the elements you need to work on and make some very specific steps on how to improve (for example: use mark schemes to check work).

Self Diagnosing Revision

Name of the area that I am working on: _____
Name: _____
Class: _____
Task: _____

Diagnosis	Therapy	Test
Things I do not understand	Where am I going to learn about this?	5 questions someone can ask me about my new understanding.
	How am I going to learn about this?	
	How long am I going to give myself to learn this?	

Useful Websites for GCSE Revision

1. **Save My Exams:** Provides expert-written revision notes, past papers, and model answers across various subjects and exam boards, including AQA, Edexcel, OCR, and WJEC.
<https://www.savemyexams.com/gcse>
2. **Revision World:** Offers thousands of free GCSE and A-Level revision resources, including past papers, revision notes, and study planners.
<https://revisionworld.com/>
3. **Maths Genie:** Specializes in free GCSE and A-Level Maths revision, providing past papers, mark schemes, and video tutorials.
<https://www.mathsgenie.co.uk/>
4. **BBC Bitesize:** Offers interactive notes and tests across a wide range of subjects, tailored to different exam boards.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>
5. **Edexcel (Pearson):** Provides official resources, including past papers and revision guides, for their GCSE qualifications.
<https://www.pearson.com/en-gb/schools/secondary/parents-learners/revision/>
6. **S-cool Revision:** Provides comprehensive revision guides, question banks, and timetables across various subjects, tailored for GCSE and A-Level students.
<https://edumentors.co.uk/blog/top-10-websites-for-gcse-revision/>
7. **Collins GCSE Revision:** Offers free GCSE past papers and resources to aid in exam preparation, covering a wide range of subjects.
<https://collins.co.uk/pages/>
8. **CGP GCSE Revision Guides:** Provides a variety of revision guides and practice papers across multiple subjects, known for their clear explanations and engaging style.
<https://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/>
9. **AQA Official Website:** The official AQA website offers past papers, specimen papers, mark schemes, and support resources directly from the exam board.
<https://www.aqa.org.uk/find-a-qualification>
10. **Seneca:** Offers interactive notes and tests across a wide range of subjects.
<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize>