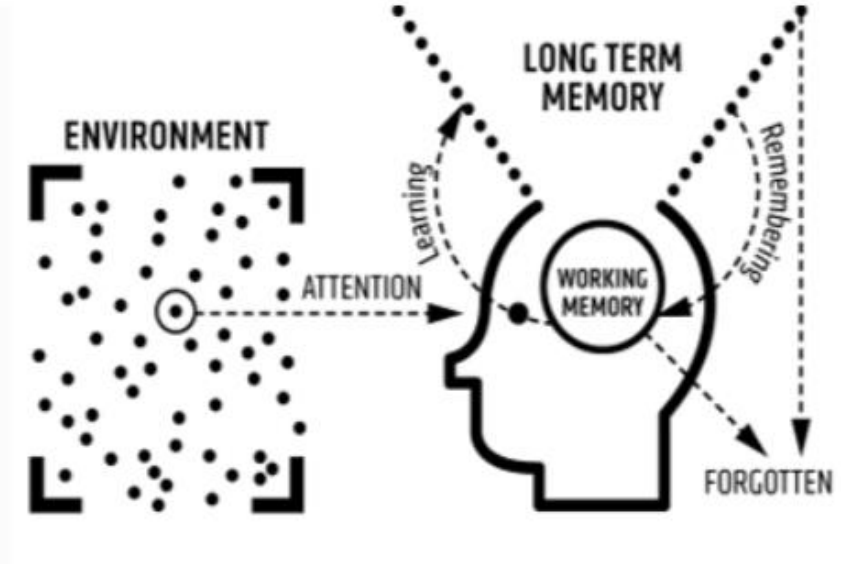
Year 11
Revision Guide 2025

Name _____

Tutor Group _____

How do we learn?

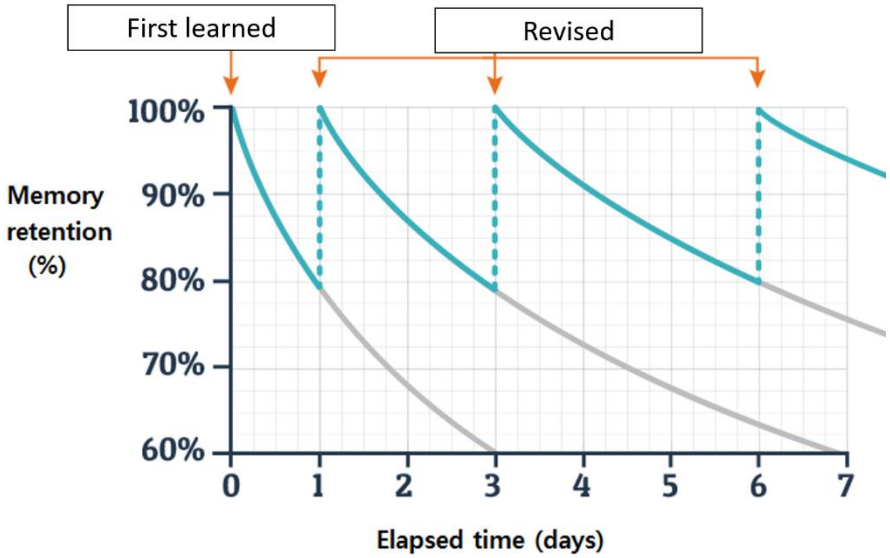


This image represents how we learn. The **environment** is made up of lots of stimuli that you could pay attention to. It is important that we limit distractions in our environment and work in a quiet space, so that we can pay full attention to what we are learning.

If we do pay proper attention to what we are learning, the knowledge can be processed through our **working memory**. Working memory is limited and easily overloaded. That's why trying to learn lots of things at once or leaving it to the last minute ('cramming') is a bad idea. If we overload our working memory, we won't retain the knowledge in our long-term memory and therefore won't be able to actually remember it in an exam or when we need it.

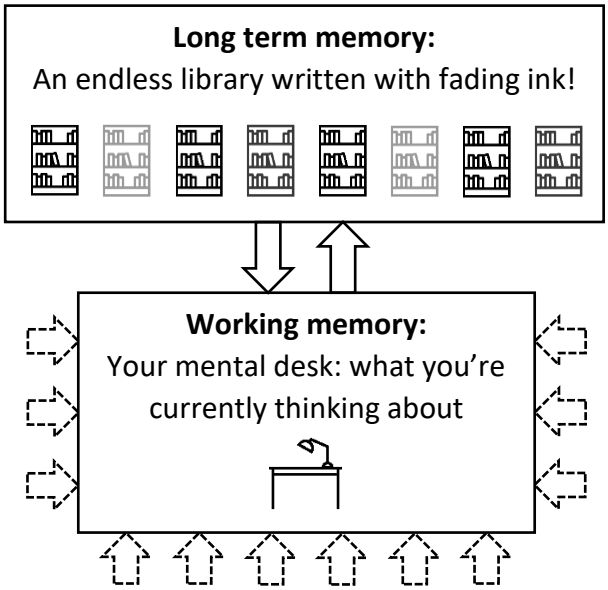
Now we need to practise *using* it. This is essentially the **learning** process. This might be through repetition, saying new words out loud, or applying the knowledge, for example in answering practice questions.

After we do this successfully, the knowledge can be stored in **long-term memory**, which is effectively limitless. But it doesn't end there: if we don't then revise the information at a later date, the memory stays 'trapped' and will essentially be forgotten: we will have learned it, but we can't retrieve or use it. The only way to interrupt the forgetting process is by practising **remembering** it. That means, quizzing yourself and practising using knowledge on many separate occasions over a long period of time.



Where should I revise?

When you revise effectively, you pull information from your long term memory and strengthen it in your working memory. You may also be finding gaps in your long term memory and closing them by thinking hard about new information in your working memory.



Your working memory can only hold a **small amount of information at once**. To revise and learn effectively, use techniques which stop your working memory from becoming overwhelmed.

Anything that you are currently paying attention to takes up space in your working memory. One way that you can 'free up' space in your working memory is by working in an environment which is free from distractions.

When creating a space to revise:

Do:

- ✓ …work in a tidy environment where you have the tools you need to revise effectively.
- ✓ …work in a quiet environment.
- ✓ …put your phone in another room or use an app which blocks social media.
- ✓ …work in a space which you only use for home study, schoolwork or revision (if possible).

Don't:

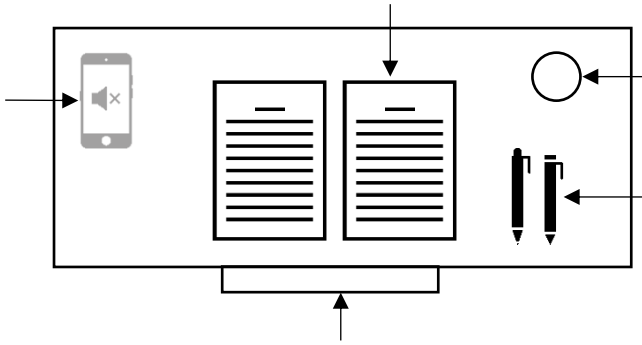
- X …work in a cluttered environment.
- X …distract yourself with (loud) music or noise.
- X …work near your phone or other devices which can access social media.
- X …work in the same space where you relax.

An example of an effective revision space:

A quiet environment, such as a classroom or library

The resources you will need to revise using your chosen method

Put your phone on silent or put it in another room.



A drink, such as a glass of water

The pens, pencils and equipment you will need

A chair which is similar to the chair you use at school (not a sofa or bed)

How do I improve my sleep?

To learn and revise effectively, you have to think hard. Being able to think hard partially depends on being well-rested and sleeping well. There are strategies you can use which can help you get to sleep more quickly and which can improve the quality of your sleep.

If you have serious and/or long-term issues with your sleep, discuss it with your parents or carers.

When revising:

Do:

- ✓ …establish times for when you go to bed and wake up every day (including weekends).
- ✓ …create a routine which you follow before you go to bed.
- ✓ …avoid screens for at least an hour before you go to bed.
- ✓ …avoid caffeine in the evening.
- ✓ …make your sleeping environment quiet, dark, and cool in temperature.
- ✓ …get up and reset if you're finding it difficult to sleep.

Don't:

- X …go to bed and get up at different times each day or over the weekend.
- X …prepare for bed differently every night.
- X …browse your phone or computer directly before you go to bed.
- X …drink caffeine before you go to bed.
- X …try to sleep in a bright or stimulating environment.
- X …try to force yourself to sleep.

An example of a routine which encourages good quality sleep:

<u>Several hours before you go to bed:</u>

1. Get some light exercise, ideally outside.
2. Stop drinking drinks containing caffeine, such as coffee, tea, cola, or energy drinks.

<u>An hour before you go to bed:</u>

1. Put your phone on charge in a different room to where you are going to go to bed.
2. If you *have* to have your phone in room you are going to sleep in because it is your alarm clock, set your alarm now and place your phone face down.
3. Stop using and turn off any devices with screens, such as computers, TVs, laptops, and tablets.
4. Go through your bedtime routine. This could include tasks to prepare for bed, such as cleaning your teeth or having a shower, but could also include calming activities, such as reading a chapter of a book or meditating.

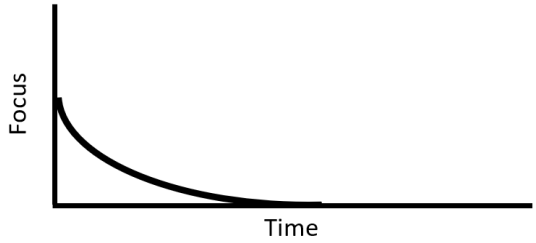
<u>Once you've gone to bed:</u>

1. Close the blinds or curtains and turn off the lights.
2. Make sure your room is a cool but comfortable temperature by turning on a fan or opening a window (if safe to do so).
3. Go to bed, ideally at the same time every night.
4. If you can't sleep, get up, leave the room, and spend 15 minutes resetting. Reset by having a short walk or doing something which *doesn't* force you to think hard.
5. Try again after you have reset.

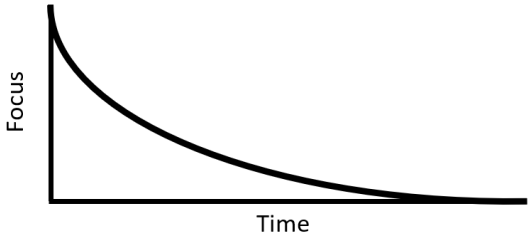
When should I revise?

To revise effectively, you have to think hard. Thinking hard is tiring. Therefore, when you revise, you should choose a time when you find it easiest to focus. This should be a time when you are well-rested and when you are used to working.

Revising when you are tired:

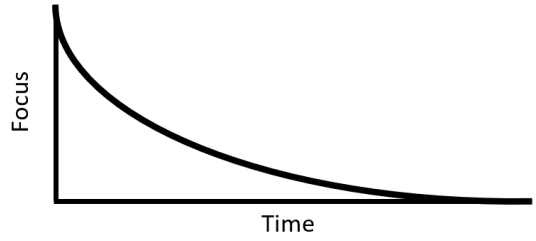


Revising when you are well-rested:

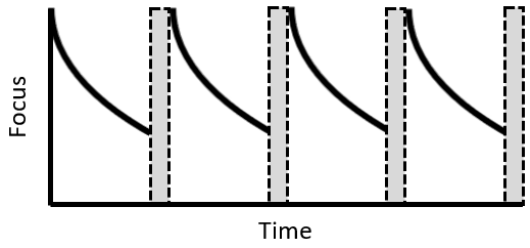


You should also take regular breaks when you revise. These breaks can be structured using a method called the Pomodoro technique.

Revising without a break:



Revising with small regular breaks:



When revising:

Do:

- ✓ …get into a routine of revising at a particular point every day.
- ✓ …revise when you are well-rested or at a time when you are used to working.
- ✓ …take regular small breaks.

Don't:

- X …depend on when you '*want*' to revise.
- X …revise late at night or when you are tired.
- X …try to force yourself to work for long periods of time without a break.

Planning revision sessions using the Pomodoro Technique:

1. Choose a time when you are well-rested and used to working.
2. Decide the **specific** task you are going to complete (e.g. I will complete a Seneca module about electrolysis of aqueous substances).
3. Set up your study area (See the "Where should I revise?" page).
4. Decide on how many 25-minute slots you will need to complete the task you have decided to complete.
5. Remove your phone and any other distractions from your working space.
6. Set a timer for 25 minutes.
7. Spend the *entire* 25 minutes working. If you have spare time at the end, start another task.
8. When the timer goes off, leave your working area and take a 5-minute break.
9. Repeat. Take a longer break after every three 25-minute sessions.

How do I decide what to revise?

Whenever you revise, you are doing one of three things:

1. Finding and closing gaps in your knowledge.
2. Strengthening fading knowledge in your long-term memory.
3. Practising recalling knowledge quickly.

Whichever purpose your revision has, it is important that you focus on the weaknesses within your knowledge. It is tempting to revise topics you're already good at. However, if you do this, you waste valuable revision time and you could get a shock when you don't do well in exams or assessments.

Before you start revising for a subject, you should decide what you need to focus on.

When deciding what to revise:

Do:

- ✓ …gather information about the topics which you need to revise.
- ✓ …break subjects and topics down into manageable chunks.
- ✓ …revise topics which you don't enjoy or which you find difficult.
- ✓ …keep a record of the topics you have chosen to revise and the revision you have completed for those topics.

Don't:

- X …spend more time making lists of what to revise than actually revising.
- X …write down entire subjects or topics as areas to revise.
- X …revise topics you enjoy or topics in which you are already successful.
- X …expect yourself to remember the areas which you need to revise.

How to decide what to revise:

1. Use information from a range of sources to find out where your weaknesses are.

What topics **don't** I enjoy or feel success in?	What does my teacher think I need to revise?	What are my weakest areas from Knowledge Assessments or home learning quizzes?	In which topics or questions did I struggle in my last assessment?

2. Create a table of topics and subjects on which you need to focus.
   Example: Spanish

Topic:	**Scores:**					
Discussing protecting the environment	20%	15%	37%	45%	50%	
Directions	40%					
Describing a bad day on holiday	30%	33%				

3. As you complete revision on these topics, create quizzes for yourself, or self-mark exam practice questions. Fill in your scores. This will allow you to see your success over time.

4. As you become more successful in the areas you have identified, go back to step one. This will allow you identify any gaps in new knowledge or any information which has faded since you made your first list.

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

Subject:

Topic:	Scores:					

How do I plan my revision?

During year 11, you should revise independently so that you can close the specific gaps which you have in your knowledge. However, because you have to plan your own independent revision, its easy to forget revision or to only do it in large bursts (known as 'cramming') right before an assessment. Research indicates that cramming does not help you retain the information in the long run and it is better to revise with a 'little and often' approach.

Planning **when** and **what** you are going to revise reduces the number of decisions you need to make every day. It will also will reduce the risk of you not revising or your revision being ineffective because you have left it until the last minute.

How to make a revision timetable:

1. Fill out the days with the subjects you will revise and complete home learning for. Leave yourself some free days for relaxing or hobbies. Example:

Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
1. Spanish 2. English	X	1. Maths 2.	1. English 2. Science	1. 2.	X	1. Geography 2. History

2. Using the questions from the "How do I decide what to revise?" page of this booklet, decide on the subjects and sub-topics you should focus on when revising.

What topics **don't** I enjoy or feel success in?	What does my teacher think I need to revise?	What are my weakest areas in Knowledge Assessments and home learning	In which topics or questions did I struggle in my last assessment?

3. Add at least one revision session to each of your 'home learning' days. Tagging revision onto the existing habit of doing your home learning on particular days will make you more likely to do it.

4. For each session write down:
- The subject you're going to revise
- The topic you're going to revise
- How you're going to do revise it (self-quizzing, flash cards, mind-maps, practice exam questions etc)

5. Every morning during tutor time, tick or cross the revision sessions which you completed the previous day. This will give you a sense of achievement and remind you of the small steps you are taking towards success.

How do I revise? Self-Quizzing

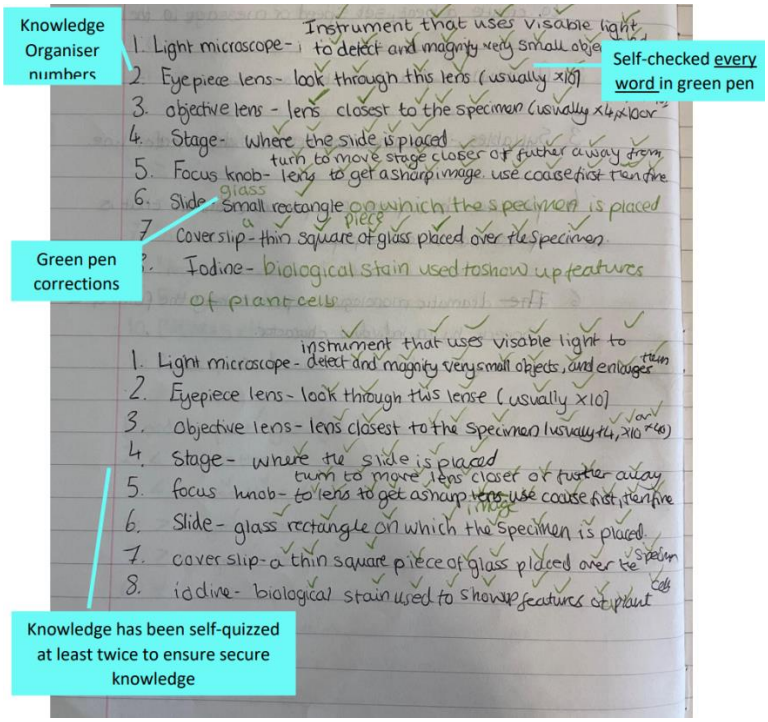
Self-quizzing is a technique that is proven to be highly effective when done properly. It is especially effective for learning terms and definitions, facts, quotes, dates and events, formulae and vocabulary.

To self-quiz:

1. Look at the knowledge you want to learn. Read it aloud several times.
2. Cover the information.
3. Write out the information from memory.
4. Check your answer by uncovering the information. Correct your work in green pen.

   Repeat this process until you know the term and definition off by heart.

   The biggest mistake students make with self-quizzing is that they just copy the information from the knowledge organiser or revision guide. This will have next to no learning impact whatsoever and is a waste of your time, as it does not practise retrieving the information.



Do:

- ✓ … properly cover the information when testing yourself
- ✓ … revise each chunk of knowledge more than once
- ✓ … use your knowledge organisers to find expert definitions
- ✓ … mark or check your work in a different colour pen
- ✓ …keep practising knowledge until you know it off by heart

Don't:

- X … simply copy the information. This is a complete waste of time
- X …try to learn too many different definitions at once
- X …only revise each chunk of knowledge once

How do I revise? Flashcards

Flashcards are another way of approaching the look, cover, write/say, check technique and are a great way of strengthening your memory of knowledge.

Here are some things to consider when creating and using flashcards:

Do:

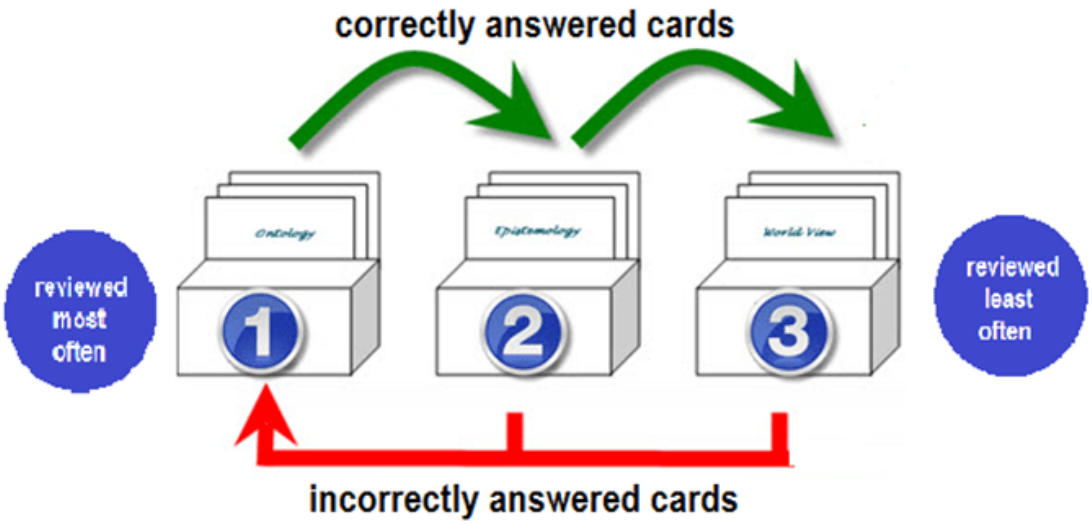
- ✓ …write the question or term on one side of the flashcard with the answer or definition on the opposite side
- ✓ … keep each flashcard short and specific
- ✓ … test yourself by reading the question on the flashcard, saying or writing the answer out from memory, then using the reverse side of the flashcard to check your answer
- ✓ … use the **Leitner system** to track your progress

Don't:

- X … write the question and answer on the same side of the flashcard
- X …cram too much information onto one flashcard
- X … write flashcards out but not actually test yourself on them

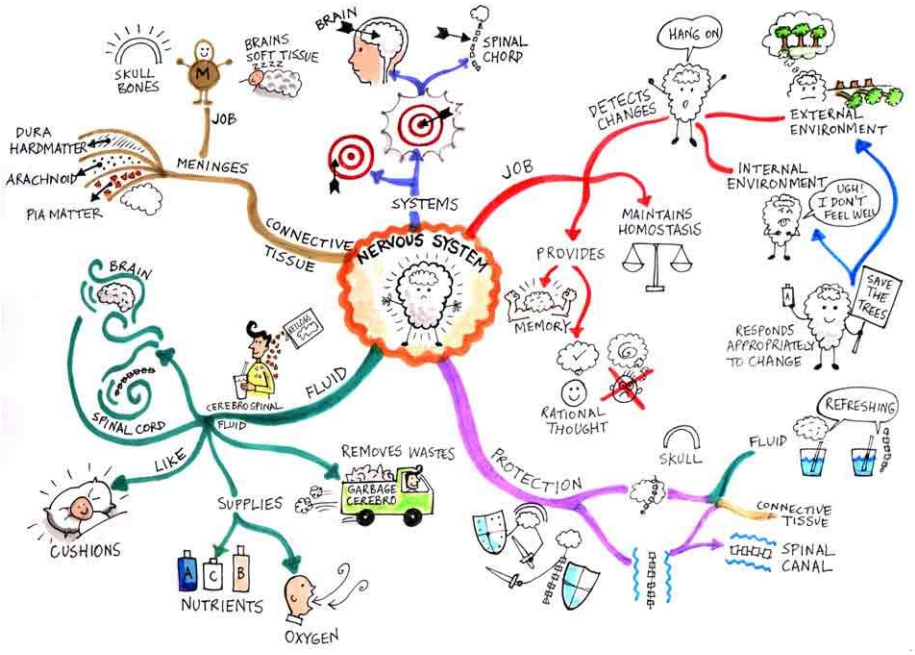
When you've written the flashcards, use the Leitner System to revise them. Here's how it works:

1. **Start with all your flashcards from a topic in Pile 1.**
   These are the flashcards you need to regularly repeat. You will quiz yourself on every day.
2. **If you can accurately recall the information on a card, put it into Pile 2.**
   These are cards you will look at every 3 days.
3. **In 3 days' time, test yourself on the cards in Pile 2. Any cards you still remember from this pile, place into Pile 3.**
   These are the cards where your knowledge is secure. You learn these cards every 5 days.
4. **If you can't recall all the information on a card from Pile 2 or 3, it goes back to Pile 1 to be studied every day until you know it.**



How do I revise? Mind maps

A mind map is a visual diagram that provides an overview or summary of a topic or idea. Mind maps are a great way to create links between topics and areas of a subject.



Building a mind map

1. Write your map topic in the middle of your page. Your content will link to your topic and spread out from the main heading.
2. Add key ideas to your map by writing their headings on the page and drawing a connecting line between them and your main heading. Continue breaking each section down and adding links between subjects to create smaller, specific mind maps on the page.
3. Use key words or images to represent each piece of information.
4. Change the style, size or colour of items to represent important content: make key terms stand out.
5. Use colours to identify themes and relationships. Some information in your map may fit more than one map 'branch'. Colour-coding and extra connecting lines will help you keep track of this.

Revising using a mind map

1. Revise one sub-topic/heading using your mind map. Create another blank version of the mind-map. See how much of the category you have just revised you can recreate from memory. Use the original mind-map to self-check.

2. Revise one area of the mind-map. Create questions based on the mind-map and answer them from memory. Use the mind-map to self-check your answers.

3. Revise one area of the mind-map. When ready, give the mind-map to someone at home or a friend and ask them to quiz you.

How do I revise? Timed Practice

It is important to practise past questions and where possible, to practise in exam conditions:

- In silence
- No resources or mobile phones
- In timed conditions

Practising in these conditions will mean you are used to working at the pace required for the exam and will help you to plan your timing. If you are unsure how long to allocate to each section of the exam, ask your teachers; for many subjects, there is a rough guide to how long we recommend you spend on different questions.

In addition to the practice questions your teachers will provide and set as part of home learning, you can find and download past papers and mark schemes from exam board websites.

AQA: www.aqa.org.uk

OCR: www.ocr.org.uk

WJEC: https://www.wjec.co.uk/

EDEXCEL: https://qualifications.pearson.com/

TOP TIP

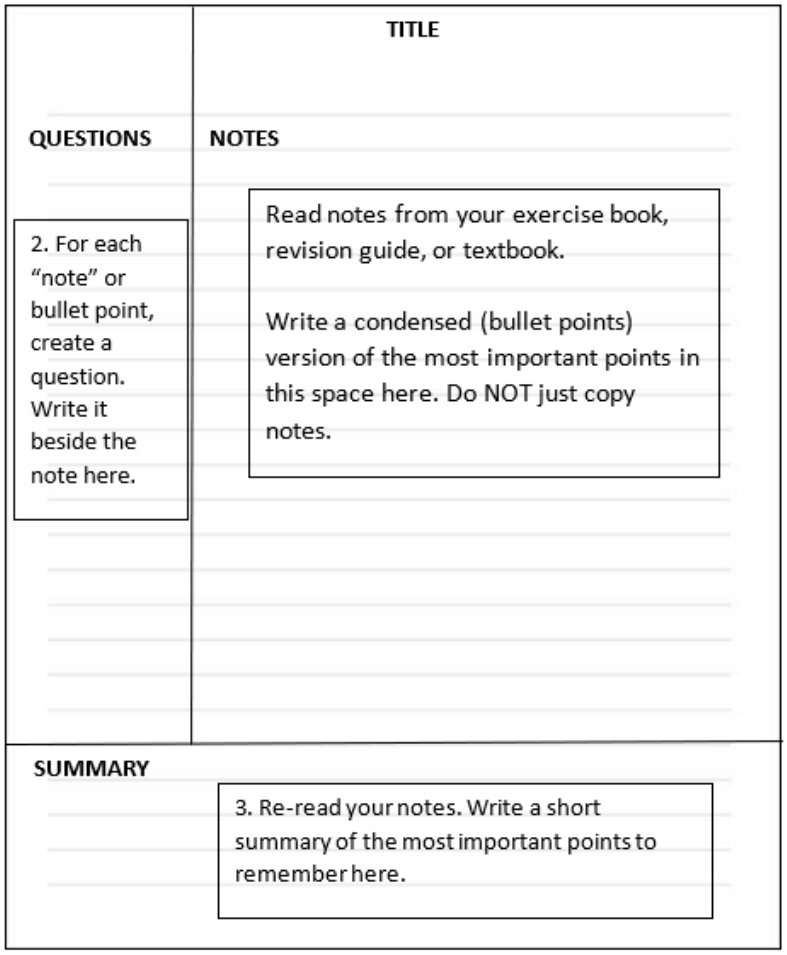
When you access past papers, it is a good idea to also download the 'examiner reports' that go with them. These contain feedback from examiners about how students could improve their performance based on national trends.

How do I revise? Cornell Notes

Cornell notes refers to a method of note taking developed at Cornell University. It helps you to:

- Think deeply about the content of your notes
- Summarise the key points
- Review and revise your notes

Cornell notes involves dividing your page into 4 sections as shown below.
Here is roughly how much space you need in each section and what goes in each section:



Revising using Cornell notes:

• **Reduce:** Chunk information down by 80%. Summarizing clarifies meanings and relationships, reinforces continuity, and strengthens memory.
• **Recite:** Cover the "Notes" area, using only your questions in the question column, say over the facts and ideas of the notes as fully as you can, not mechanically, but in your own words. Then, verify what you have said.
• **Reflect:** Draw out opinions from your notes and use them as a starting point for your own reflections on the course and how it relates to your other courses. Reflection will help prevent ideas from being inert and soon forgotten.

• **Review:** Spend 10 minutes every week in quick review of your notes, and you will retain most of what you have learned.

Revision Planner – EASTER HOLIDAY

Monday 7/4	Tuesday 8/4	Wednesday 9/4	Thursday 10/4	Friday 11/4	Saturday 12/4	Sunday 13/4
Morning	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**
Afternoon	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**
Evening	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**

Revision Planner – EASTER HOLIDAY

Monday 14/4	Tuesday 15/4	Wednesday 16/4	Thursday 17/4	Friday 18/4	Saturday 19/4	Sunday 20/4
Morning	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**	**Morning**
Afternoon	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**	**Afternoon**
Evening	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**	**Evening**

Revision Planner

Monday 21/4	Tuesday 22/4	Wednesday 23/4	Thursday 24/4	Friday 25/4	Saturday 26/4	Sunday 27/4
P1	P1	P1	P1	P1	Morning	Morning
P2	P2	P2	P2	P2		
P3	P3	P3	P3	P3		
P4	P4	P4	P4	P4	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	P5	P5	P5	Evening		
	Evening	Evening	Evening		Evening	Evening

Revision Planner

Monday 28/4	Tuesday 29/4	Wednesday 30/4	Thursday 1/5	Friday 2/5	Saturday 3/5	Sunday 4/5
P1	P1	P1	P1	P1	Morning	Morning
P2	P2	P2	P2	P2		
P3	P3	P3	P3	P3		
P4	P4	P4	P4	P4	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	P5	P5	P5	Evening		
	Evening	Evening	Evening		Evening	Evening

Revision Planner

Monday 5/5	Tuesday 6/5	Wednesday 7/5	Thursday 8/5	Friday 9/5	Saturday 10/5	Sunday 11/5
P1	P1	P1	P1	P1	Morning	Morning
P2	P2	P2	P2	P2		
P3	P3	P3	P3	P3		
P4	P4	P4	P4	P4	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	P5	P5	P5	Evening		
	Evening	Evening	Evening		Evening	Evening

Revision Planner

Monday 12/5	Tuesday 13/5	Wednesday 14/5	Thursday 15/5	Friday 16/5	Saturday 17/5	Sunday 18/5
P1	P1	P1	P1	P1	Morning	Morning
P2	P2	P2	P2	P2		
P3	P3	P3	P3	P3		
P4	P4	P4	P4	P4	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	P5	P5	P5	Evening		
	Evening	Evening	Evening		Evening	Evening

Revision Planner

Monday 19/5	Tuesday 20/5	Wednesday 21/5	Thursday 22/5	Friday 23/5	Saturday 24/5	Sunday 25/5
P1	P1	P1	P1	P1	Morning	Morning
P2	P2	P2	P2	P2		
P3	P3	P3	P3	P3		
P4	P4	P4	P4	P4	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	P5	P5	P5	Evening		
	Evening	Evening	Evening			

Revision Planner

Monday 26/5	Tuesday 27/5	Wednesday 28/5	Thursday 29/5	Friday 30/5	Saturday 31/5	Sunday 1/6
P1	P1	P1	P1	P1	Morning	Morning
P2	P2	P2	P2	P2		
P3	P3	P3	P3	P3		
P4	P4	P4	P4	P4	Afternoon	Afternoon
Evening	P5	P5	P5	Evening		
	Evening	Evening	Evening		Evening	Evening