



**Enhanced Learning
Educational Services**
"the study skills specialist"

'THE YEAR 12 COUNTDOWN'



YEAR 12

Moving towards achieving your personal best in
a stress-free way for your last months of school

*Note: We will not complete this entire booklet during the session.
Some of it is set up for you to work through at home*

You are on the home stretch now. You are probably feeling a bit overwhelmed by everything, like you can't believe after all this time the end is finally in sight.

With the Trial HSC / Mock IB examinations completed, you now have a number of options as to how you can approach the weeks between now & the final exams.

Option 1: You could sit down and moan and complain about how badly you did and how you are giving up and you don't care;

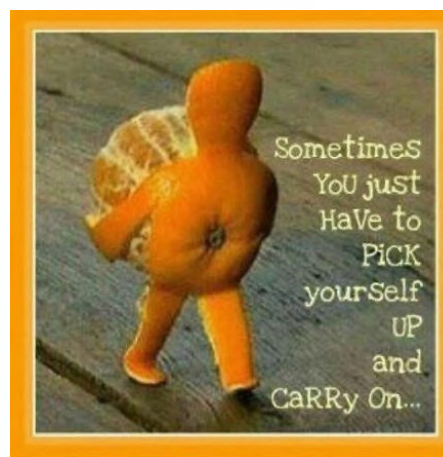
Option 2: You could decide you now need a holiday after all that stress and make the holiday last until your final examinations then panic all over again; **OR**

Option 3: You could do the smart thing and learn from the experience, make a new plan, and get started....

Not sure where to start?

Follow this step-by-step guide of

**THINGS TO DO BEFORE
THE END OF TERM:**



1. MAKE THE MOST OF YOUR TRIALS / MOCK EXAMS

Go through each of your returned papers carefully using the checklist provided on the next page. Tick when you have done this for each subject in the grid on the organiser. An important aspect of this step is seeing your teachers for help on things you are struggling with or didn't understand in the exams.

2. WORK ON, IMPROVE, ORGANISE & FINALISE YOUR PAPERS & STUDY NOTES

Try and have study notes finalised by the end of the term. Do a plan of what you want to achieve each week. This gives you an exact plan of what to do each week and makes sure you don't waste the time. Each week look at the time available, what work you'd like to do and come up with specific action lists for each time period. Write a plan for that week.

3. DECIDE HOW AND WHAT YOU WILL STUDY FOR EACH SUBJECT

Make up a list of all the things you could do to prepare for this subject. How many past papers do you have? Should you buy other books or study guides? What sorts of questions can you do as practise? Do you have overdue work to complete? What parts of your textbook should you re-do? What would you like to achieve between now and the final exams? There is some more information about the types of study you will need to do in the following pages. Make a weekly plan of what specific study you want to do or past papers or essays before the end of term for each subject.

4. ALLOCATE TIMESLOTS TO STUDY FOR SUBJECTS BETWEEN NOW AND THE FINAL EXAMINATIONS

End of the term! We are at crunch time - time to make some hard decisions in advance about the next months. Although you might be resistant to the idea, having some sort of plan is much better than no plan at all. Obviously your plan will change and develop as you go, but it is good to have a clear starting point.



TRIAL/MOCK PAPER/APPROACH CHECKLIST:

Take the time to go through your papers carefully.

For each subject, work through the questions and ideas in the list below:

- What do you need to change in your approach for the final exams?
- What areas do you need to review and revise, what you should do to address these?
- Which areas do you need to ask for help on as there are things you still don't understand?
- Was there any revision work you did not complete before the exam?
- Which questions of your paper should you re-do? Re-do them!
- Should you rewrite any poor questions or essays and resubmit?
- What worked well in the way you prepared for this subject?
- What changes do you need to make in the way you continue your preparation?
- Are there students who did well you can talk with to find what they did differently?
- How much sleep did you get in your preparation time?
- How effective or ineffective were late nights for you?
- How much time did you spend trying to find stuff? Do you need to get organised?
- Are there topics you still need to finalise study notes on?
- Is the course finished or is there still more to learn for this subject?

LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES AND FIX THEM

GET YOUR NOTES AND STUDY MATERIAL ORGANISED

START STUDYING AGAIN NOW, DON'T PUT IT OFF

YOU CAN SEE HOW QUICKLY TIME GETS AWAY

MAKE YOUR STUDY ACTIVE! DON'T JUST SIT THERE READING

CONCENTRATE ON PAST PAPERS UNDER EXAMINATION CONDITIONS

SUBJECTS	WHAT DID YOU LEARN ABOUT WHAT YOU KNOW AND DON'T KNOW FOR THIS SUBJECT FROM DOING THE TRIAL (HSC)/MOCKS (IB)? WHAT DO YOU NEED TO DO IN THIS SUBJECT MOVING FORWARD? WHAT ARE YOUR AREAS OF WEAKNESS TO FOCUS ON?

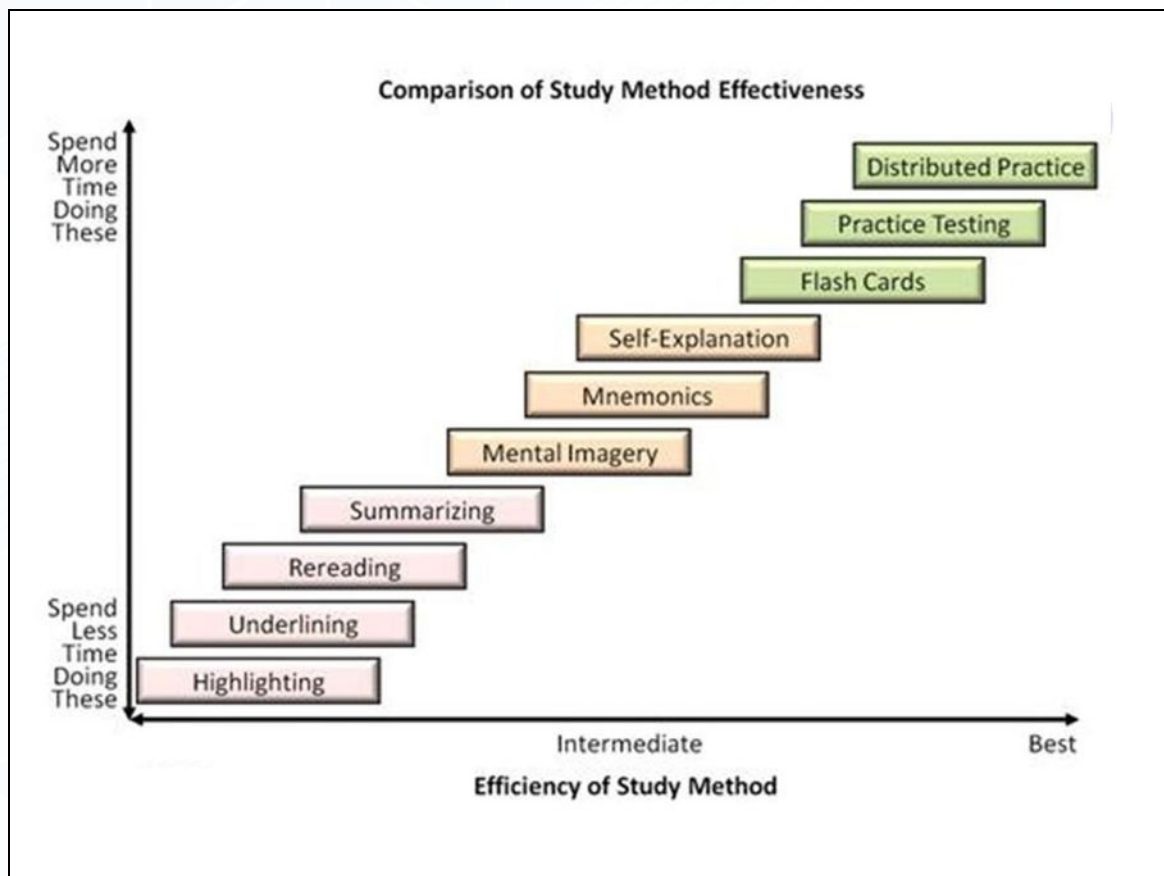
7 TERRIBLY COMMON MISTAKES STUDENTS MAKE WHEN IT COMES TO STUDYING

1. Not making study notes on a regular basis, instead, waiting till just before the exam.
2. Not finishing the study notes early enough so there is not enough time to learn them properly or do practise.
3. Not making the study notes 'brain-friendly'.
4. Not testing yourself to see if you know the content or not, just reading your notes over and over.
5. Not using a wide range of study techniques, being lazy and just using the same old techniques, regardless of whether they are working for you or not.
6. Not doing practise for exams under exam conditions (ie time limits and not looking at notes or answers).
7. Not doing questions from a wide enough range of sources.

Keep repeating this process:

1. Do Past Papers under exam conditions.
2. Do targeted spot revision. Revise specific topics if necessary – study notes & practise questions on the topic.
3. Review study notes actively.





What could you do to improve your OVERALL approach to your study for the final exams?



WHAT SORT OF STUDY SHOULD YOU BE DOING NOW?

1. Complete study notes/summaries ASAP. You don't want to be doing these in the weeks before the exams. They need to be done and dusted so that you can focus on doing as much practise as possible.
2. See teachers about the work you have difficulty with or do extra work on these areas.

Assuming your study notes are completed, and you have addressed most of the things you have had difficulty with, your study now needs to follow a particular pattern over and over again:

- Review your study notes. Read them, then see what you can write down without looking at them or what you can say out loud. Test yourself on sections. You want to move the information into long term memory and the way to do that is through regularly reviewing the material and testing yourself. Repetition and regular testing is the key.

MAKE YOUR MEMORISING ACTIVE! DON'T JUST SIT THERE READING

- Do past papers/questions for the subject. Try and simulate the examination conditions as much as possible. Set your room up so you won't be interrupted, take all your notes away, set up a clock, sit and start the exam fully under examination conditions. Do not even peek at your notes and do not let yourself have any extra time. It is only by adhering strictly to examination conditions that you can really find out if you understand the subject and get an accurate picture of how much you know and what it is you do not know.

CONCENTRATE ON PAST PAPERS UNDER EXAMINATION CONDITIONS

- Once you have corrected the paper, mark it carefully, try and work out any mistakes you made. Make a list of what you need to go back and review. Go back and re-do these sections by re-doing questions or sheets on each of these topics. Add to your study notes anything that you may have left out or need to clarify. Use your study notes to possibly re-do the question again building up your answers. The study guides you can buy on subjects are also useful for this type of topic-by-topic revision. For essay subjects, go back through your notes and see if you have covered everything or if there was a better way to structure the essay. Your teacher may also be prepared to give you feedback on your revision work. Focus on filling in the holes in your knowledge.

WORK ON FILLING IN THE HOLES IN YOUR KNOWLEDGE

- SEE YOUR TEACHERS if you need clarification, guidance or help. Make a time to see your teacher during the study period, bring in work that you need to discuss with them or pick up work from them. A phone call in advance to make an appointment is a good idea and former lesson times are your best bet. Some teachers may be happy to share their email address with you as well so you can email to arrange a time, ask questions, or send work as an attachment.

**REVIEW STUDY
NOTES - STUDY
THEM IN AN
ACTIVE WAY**

**DO PAST PAPERS
UNDER EXAM
CONDITIONS**

**PINPOINT
SPECIFIC AREAS
TO WORK ON, ADD
TO SUMMARIES**

- If you are doing a past paper, you do need to sit there for the full length of the paper and work without a break. But if you are studying for a period of time, it is a good idea to take a short break every half hour or so.

➤ Tick which of the following study techniques or approaches you have been doing:

<input type="checkbox"/> Write strongly visual summaries and study notes
<input type="checkbox"/> 3Rs: Read, Recite, Recheck
<input type="checkbox"/> Write out what you remember in your own words
<input type="checkbox"/> Look, cover, write, check
<input type="checkbox"/> Make up rhymes, songs or mnemonics to help you remember
<input type="checkbox"/> Have a parent or friend test you
<input type="checkbox"/> Write out lists of questions and answer them
<input type="checkbox"/> Make and use flashcards or index cards or flashcard Apps
<input type="checkbox"/> Type what you remember without looking at notes
<input type="checkbox"/> Put up formulas and notes around the house
<input type="checkbox"/> Teach or explain what you have learnt to someone else
<input type="checkbox"/> Work with friends or make discussion / study groups
<input type="checkbox"/> Write out info over and over (preferably without looking)
<input type="checkbox"/> Make recordings of the info you need to learn
<input type="checkbox"/> Speak out loud the info you've read to check recall
<input type="checkbox"/> Make lists of key points of part of a topic or an executive summary
<input type="checkbox"/> Visualise and form pictures in your mind of the information
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep adding to your study notes to make things clearer
<input type="checkbox"/> Check if you know everything listed in syllabus/outcomes

Do you spend enough time learning the material and checking that the information is in long-term memory by seeing if you can recall it without referring to your notes? What changes do you need to make to the way you have been making notes (or not making notes!) and studying?

<input type="checkbox"/> Re-do class exercises from the textbook
<input type="checkbox"/> Do past test papers under exam conditions
<input type="checkbox"/> Re-do past topic tests or previous assessments
<input type="checkbox"/> Do questions and submit to teachers for marking
<input type="checkbox"/> Do as many different types of questions as possible
<input type="checkbox"/> Get study guides or extra textbooks to try other questions
<input type="checkbox"/> Ask your teacher for extra worksheets for revision
<input type="checkbox"/> Do any chapter reviews or topic summary questions
<input type="checkbox"/> Target the areas you are weak on with extra practice
<input type="checkbox"/> Do as many questions as possible under STRICT exam conditions
<input type="checkbox"/> Correct all of your work, re-do the ones you got wrong
<input type="checkbox"/> Add points into your study notes based on your practice
<input type="checkbox"/> Do sample essay plans on possible essay topics
<input type="checkbox"/> Practise writing essays completely under the time limits
<input type="checkbox"/> Spend time working out what it is you do NOT know yet
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep a list of areas you need to revise further
<input type="checkbox"/> Keep a list of things you need to ask your teacher about
<input type="checkbox"/> Be conscientious in chasing up EVERYTHING you can't do

Do you spend enough time practising the skills of the subject, trying lots of different types of questions, making sure you can apply the information in different situations and looking for what you don't yet understand? What changes do you need to make to the way you have been practising the skills of the subject?

There is no one 'right' way to study. We all learn in different ways and with different styles. It is a good idea to try techniques from all the different groups below and work out what combinations work best for you (and this may vary depending on the subject or content you are learning).

Visual learning means it can help if you *SEE* the information:

- ☐ organise notes using COLOUR, highlighting and structure
- ☐ use MIND MAPS, sketches, flowcharts and diagrams
- ☐ VISUALISE words or facts to be memorised
- ☐ make MENTAL PICTURES and associations
- ☐ PRE-READ textbook sections before class
- ☐ make FLASHCARDS: limit amount of info so your mind can make mental pictures
- ☐ put up NOTES around the house as visual reminders
- ☐ translate words and ideas into SYMBOLS, pictures and diagrams
- ☐ read a section of notes then see what you can WRITE DOWN without looking

Auditory learning means it can help if you *HEAR* the information:

- ☐ make RECORDINGS e.g. a question and answer mp3 file
- ☐ RECITE, repeat and say it out loud to aid recall, always read out loud
- ☐ EXPLAIN it to out loud to yourself or someone else
- ☐ make DISCUSSION groups with friends
- ☐ when trying to understand something, TALK your way through the info.

Kinaesthetic learning means it can help if you incorporate *MOVEMENT*:

- ☐ do some EXERCISE before trying to sit down and study
- ☐ do something like ride an EXERCISE bike while revising content
- ☐ remove all DISTRACTIONS
- ☐ PACE OR WALK while studying or reading notes
- ☐ REWRITE notes or TYPE into the computer to reinforce by sense of touch
- ☐ write notes or facts out OVER AND OVER to reinforce them
- ☐ sit near the FRONT of the classroom to help you stay focused
- ☐ take NOTES or draw diagrams of the info so you stay on track
- ☐ find ways to make learning TANGIBLE & have lots of EXAMPLES in your study notes



STUDY NOTES: These need to be finalised ASAP and then kept up-to-date as you finish the last topics for your courses. You don't want to be doing these in the weeks before the exams!

Write the subjects you are studying this year across here:							
a. My <u>class notes</u> for this subject (i.e. all the day to day work) are reasonably well organised, nothing missing and mostly sorted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. I am over half way in my <u>study notes</u> for this subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. My <u>study notes</u> are pretty much up-to-date for this subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Ask your teacher to have a look at your notes as you make them and you can also feel free to email me your notes if you want some additional feedback: info@enhanced-learning.net

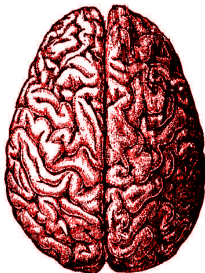
What are the main changes you need to make to your study notes?





HELP YOUR BRAIN

Study is all about getting information you read or see or hear to move out of the short-term memory, which will not retain the information for long periods of time, into the long term memory which has an amazing capacity to recall info stored, then being able to apply your learning.

<p>* We learn best when we understand the material we are studying and even better when we can find ways to enjoy it.</p> <p>* You learn best when you create the right environment, remove distractions and create study triggers such as clearing the desk, or placing a stuffed toy in front of you so your body recognises it is time to go into study mode.</p> <p>* Belief in your ability to learn creates positive learning states.</p>	<p>ENERGY</p> <p><i>Remembering is an activity- must use energy.</i></p> <p><i>Active learning strategies essential.</i></p> <p><i>If your study requires no effort, then it probably isn't working.</i></p>	<p>* Water helps neural activity in the brain and gives energy; memory is affected by dehydration so keep fluids up.</p> <p>* Memory is aided by working in small specific sections of content and completing tasks in their entirety.</p> <p>* Brain requires 25% of our oxygen intake. Exercise ensures a good consistent supply to the brain. It also relieves stress and improves circulation leading to better mental performance.</p>
<p>BREAKS</p> <p><i>A few minutes break every 20-50 minutes.</i></p> <p><i>Then do a quick review before you start again.</i></p>		<p>REPETITION</p> <p><i>Spread your study for each subject out over different days.</i></p> <p><i>The next day, review for 5-10 minutes (per hour of study) what you studied yesterday before starting again.</i></p>
<p>* We remember best in units of 7 or whatever words can be said in 7 seconds.</p> <p>* If listening to music while concentrating choose music which has a recognisable melody played on string instruments and a steady bass rhythm of about 60 beats per minute – classical Baroque music such as Bach or Vivaldi, classical Indian or New Age healing tapes.</p>	<p>SLEEP</p> <p>ALPHA STATE</p> <p><i>A powerful memory time is last thing before you sleep and as soon as you wake up. Use that time to spend 10 minutes reviewing the key things you studied that day. You could read through notes, look at flashcards, or listen to a recording.</i></p>	<p>* If you study on automatic pilot without really thinking about what you are doing you won't retain the information. You need to direct your attention consciously and purposely.</p> <p>* Optimal state for learning is when you are not tired, not stressed, not hungry, and not on a sugar high. Eat complex carbohydrates for slow release.</p>

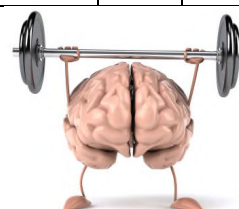
*To move information into long-term memory we need to **ORGANISE** the material we want to learn (ie study notes) and we need to find **ACTIVE** ways to study it.*



APPLY MEMORY MAXIMISERS

Do you apply the following memory maximisers?

	Yes	Sometimes	No
* You create more permanent memories by ensuring you understand the material you are studying.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You do your studying in an optimal state for learning: when you are not tired, not stressed, not hungry, and not on a sugar high.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You look for ways to find some enjoyment or satisfaction out of what you are studying (emotion anchors memories deeper).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You make sure the next day you review (for about 10 or 15 minutes) whatever you studied yesterday.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You create the right environment for maximum learning: remove distractions and create study triggers (such as clearing the desk, or placing a stuffed toy in front of you so your body recognises it is time to go into study mode).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You have firm belief in your ability to learn (this creates positive learning states).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You ensure you get enough sleep each night in order to consolidate what you have learnt.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You spread out your study for your subjects over different days – rather than doing one big block of work on a subject.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You drink lots of water. This helps neural activity in the brain and gives energy; memory is affected by dehydration (causes short term memory loss) so you keep fluids up.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You aid your memory by working through small specific sections of content and completing tasks in their entirety.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You exercise regularly. Your brain requires 25% of your oxygen intake. Exercise ensures a good consistent supply to the brain. It also relieves stress and improves circulation leading to better mental performance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You memorise information in chunks. (Memory is most effective when you study in units of 7 or whatever can be said in 7 seconds).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* If you listen to music while concentrating, you choose music which has a recognisable melody played on string instruments and a steady bass rhythm of about 60 beats per minute – classical Baroque music such as Bach, Vivaldi, classical Indian or New Age healing tapes, not the radio or modern music.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You take a short break approximately every half hour and let your brain absorb what you have studied (for a few minutes) before starting any new work or watching TV.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You direct your attention consciously and purposely when studying (if you study on automatic pilot without really thinking about what you are doing, you won't retain the information).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
* You do more than just 'read' in order to learn something – you use active learning strategies and a variety of techniques.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





WORK EFFECTIVELY AT HOME

For the next few weeks, at the start of each week, write a specific plan in your diary for the coming week so you know in advance what study you'd like to get done that week.

M30	T31	W1	T2	F3	S4	S5
English Re-do qu 2 from Trial practice Maths Review trig chapter	D&T Write up notes and test myself on them French Write vocab list to focus on, do practice paper	Business Studies Review chapter 3, do revision sheets History Redo Cold War summary, do practice essays	English Re-do qu 3 from Trial practice Maths Review algebra chapter, start past paper		D&T Write up notes, do past paper	French Do listening task Business Studies Review chapter 3 History continue Cold War summary, plan essays

Your main distractions:

METHOD 1: Have set times allocated each day to your work (like a study timetable).

METHOD 2: Plan to complete a certain number of 30 or 40 minute blocks each night and cross off when you have done them.

METHOD 3: Make a plan each afternoon before you start.

Have you tried any of these ideas to deal with distractions and procrastination?

- ☐ **TECHNOLOGY:** Put the technology out of sight or try blocking software:
Self-Control, Cold Turkey, Stay Focused
- ☐ **REWARDS:** Use small rewards to motivate you to complete sections of work.
- ☐ **TIME LIMITS:** Set an alarm in your mobile phone of when you will start work and end breaks.
- ☐ **FRIENDS:** Work with a friend and keep each other on track.
- ☐ **SNACKS:** Take snacks with you so you are not getting up all the time.
- ☐ **TWO-FER CONCEPT:** Have two pieces of work and alternate between them when you get bored.
- ☐ **GLUED TO THE SEAT:** Remove all distractions and don't let yourself get up for a set period of time.
- ☐ **TOP 3:** Make a list of work and circle the top 3. Don't move onto other tasks till those are complete.
- ☐ **WORK TARGET:** Decide how much work you want to get done before you allow yourself to stop.
- ☐ **FRIEND CHECK UP:** Have a friend call you at the end of the night to see how much work you did.
- ☐ **AVOID THE MEASLES:** Every time you think of a task but do no work on it put a red dot on the page.
- ☐ **PAVLOV'S TRICK:** Create rituals and routines you only do when you are studying.

❑ HOLIDAY STUDY:

9-10am Review work done yesterday

(you could lie in bed and do this bit!)

11-2pm 3 hours on one subject

3-6pm 3 hours on another subject

Then: Watch TV, see friends,
exercise etc etc

For some people:

Possibly also an hour or two after dinner.

Write a plan that looks like this for each day:

<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>
9-12 Maths	9-12 History	9-12 Business
2-5 English	2-5 CAFS	2-5 Weakest subject

BREAKING UP A STUDY DAY IN THE HOLIDAYS:

In a 3 hour study block:

As you get closer to exams, spend more and more time doing past papers under exam conditions.

- ½ hr: learning/memorising testing yourself on study notes and content
- 1½ hrs: Do ½ a past paper under exam conditions or other questions under exam conditions.
- 1 hr: Spend time going through what you just did, working on stuff you got wrong, doing extra questions on those topics and adding to your study notes, work through marker's reports.

Wildcard Days

Day 1

subject 1

subject 2

Day 2

subject 3

subject 4

Day 3

subject 5

Subject 6

Day 4

WILDCARD DAY

Day 5

subject 1

subject 2

Day 6

subject 3

subject 4

Day 7

subject 5

Subject 6

Day 8 etc.

WILDCARD DAY

A Wildcard Day could be:

- A day off study to recharge
- Time to sleep, exercise
- A day to focus on a subject you are worried about
- A day to do things you'd wanted to finish earlier
- A bit of all of the above!

If you are doing a past paper, you do need to sit there for the full length of the paper and work without a break. But if you are studying for a period of time, it is a good idea to take a short break every half hour or so.

Have you thought about your planned study approach for the holidays?





AT THE END OF THE TERM, MAKE A SPECIFIC PLAN FOR THE WEEKS BETWEEN WHEN SCHOOL ENDS & THE EXAMS START

- Have a plan of how long you will study each day and what you will try to achieve. Concentrate on past papers under examination conditions and learning from your attempts at these papers.
- Don't forget any Advice or Study Helplines – like your teachers they are a great resource at your fingertips.

Take the weekend off when school is finished to relax and re-energise, after which it's time to get straight into study. With only 3 weeks left there isn't time left to waste. As soon as possible, create a plan of what you will do to prepare.

Planning a Study Timetable

Step 1

Be clear on what you need to know and what you need to do. For each of your subjects, list the topics or areas that will be covered in the examination. Do you know what chapters or sections of your text or reference will be covered? Are you clear on the format of the exams? Have you made summaries or study notes? Ideally, what sorts of things should you do to study and practise for these examinations? What would you like to do or get done before the final exams?

STEP 1 TO DO: For each subject write a list of what you would like to complete before the final exam.

Step 2

Allocate the blocks of time you will set aside for study each day.

Some things to think about:

- How much study are you going to try and get done over the holidays? The range could be anywhere from 0 hours a day (obviously not a good plan) to 12 hours a day (out of control).
- Are you going to work mainly weekdays and do less on weekends? Are you going to work mainly during the day? Will you sleep in or will you get up early and get into it? How long will you do work for at a time? How many blocks of work will you do each day?

Some suggestions are as follows and they build in intensity:

PLAN A

Give yourself a few days off at the start totally. Relax, unwind, get rested from a hectic term. Plan to work on the weekdays and have weekends off. Do around 5 hours a day. Sleep in then study 11-2 then 3-5. (This really isn't enough work. This MIGHT be OK to just scrape by depending how organised your study notes are so far but you would not be expecting very good marks from this.)

PLAN B

Take the first weekend off work totally. Plan to do around 6 hours a day on weekdays and finish what you did not complete on the weekend. Do work from 10-1 then have a break for a few hours, then work 3-6. Or alternatively you may work in two hour blocks 9-11, 12-2, 3-5. Take the rest of the night off. (This would be an OK plan of study. Many people will be looking at something similar to this.)

PLAN C

Take the first weekend off and then start Monday. Aim to do around 7 hours a day of work for 6 days taking Saturday night and Sunday off unless you are falling behind in your schedule. Do one block of study from 9-11.30, 12-2.30, 3-5.30. Or alternatively you may prefer to structure your work 8.30-12.30 (one big block with short breaks) then 2-5pm or even 8.30-12.30pm then 5-8pm. (This is a pretty intense plan, an extra day on Saturday and just those extra hours really add up. If you are pretty motivated and disciplined, you could do this plan but it requires commitment and a desire to do really well. High achievers are looking at something similar to this.)

PLAN D

I know a student who, before their final exams, was doing around 10-12 hours of study a day. That basically means you get up and you don't really stop until you go to bed. Not only does this require huge amounts of discipline but it is also really difficult to sustain. Your parents and teachers warn about burning out and most people would under this regime. Most people also require relaxation and down time or their brain just gets exhausted. Most students are also not able to sustain effective concentration for such a long period of time. This is not a recommended approach.

STEP 2 TO DO: *Decide how much work you'd like to complete each day. Draw up a grid of the time between now and all your examinations, filling in the exams and all of the blocks of study.*

Step 3

Now it is time to plan out your work over the period. Some things to think about. Do you prefer:

- just focusing on one subject for a whole day
- doing blocks of work in a day for different subjects
- doing certain combinations of subjects together
- do you need to spend equal time on your subjects or do some require more work than others
- which do you find hardest and are you better to do that in the first block of each day

STEP 3 TO DO: *Once you have decided, write in what subject you will study in each time slot.*

Step 4

Finally, what are you going to do in each block of time for that subject.

STEP 4 TO DO: *In pencil, because it will probably change as you go, look at what you wrote down in the first step about the things you'd like to get done. Time to start studying!*

STEP 2	STEP 3	STEP 4
Monday 9-11	Monday 9-11 MATHS	Monday 9-12 MATHS - Do past paper
1-3	1-3 ENGLISH	1-3 ENGLISH - organise notes on
4-6	4-6 HISTORY	Emma and write a one
Basketball training 7pm	Basketball training 7pm	page overview on each character

Note: It always seems like there isn't enough time. The trick is to accept that this is how much time you have, so what is the most effective and productive way you can use this time. However, without a plan, it is unlikely you will be as productive or efficient as you could be. Instead, you could spend time each day deciding what to work on, shuffling papers around and getting more and more stressed. Talk to your teachers and ask for their advice on exactly what you should be doing to prepare for their subject.





WHY AM I NOT GETTING THE MARKS I WANT? **HOW DO I IMPROVE MY RESULTS?**

Most people, if they were really honest with themselves, probably know why they are not getting the results they'd like. But if you are not sure, try this checklist:

The Basics:

- ☐ You are using your classtime effectively.
- ☐ You are asking for help on things you can't do.
- ☐ Your papers and files are organised and filed.
- ☐ You get all your homework done and stay up-to-date in your work.
- ☐ You put effort into planning and preparing well for your assessments.
- ☐ You use spare time to work on study notes and stay up-to-date.
- ☐ You are doing at least 3 hours work per night (21 hours per week).
- ☐ You make sure you 'test yourself' when memorising (not just read).
- ☐ You do questions under exam conditions when studying.
- ☐ You do questions from lots of different sources when studying.
- ☐ You have balance in your life and a healthy lifestyle.

Many students are not doing all of the above and each of these makes a huge difference to the results you achieve. If you haven't got all of the above under control, focus on fixing these first.

What do you need to work on from the above list?



Now if you ARE doing all of these things, what else do you need to consider????

Next stage is:

1. Get extra resources to practise from eg: extra textbooks, study guides, worksheets, papers from other schools. The more different questions you can find the more chance you have of eliminating any holes in your knowledge.
2. Review and work through marker's reports for your subject. Make notes on things you need to remember, analyse what a top answer looks like, decide what changes you need to make to the way you answer questions and write essays.
3. Get teacher feedback on your work. Write sample essays (under exam and time conditions) and ask for feedback, work out what your areas of weakness are and then fix these.
4. Read widely in subjects that will benefit from this. Add to and develop your study notes and your ideas about the topics.
5. Check your notes against the syllabus outcomes and dot points for each subject.
6. Do as many papers as you can (under exam conditions) and make notes on things you need to learn/remember. Always study in the way you will be tested.
7. START EARLY!!! You will find time goes really quickly and it is a challenge to learn everything and have enough time to do as many review questions and past papers as you'd like. Increase the amount of work you are doing and start early.
8. START EARLY!!! (Just in case you didn't get the importance of the last point).

What could you use in the above list to move your results to the next level?



IMPROVE TEST-TAKING TECHNIQUES

As the exam block approaches do you:

- ☐ *Ensure your study notes are completed.*
- ☐ *Spend time testing yourself on your study notes to make sure you remember the info.*
- ☐ *Do lots of general revision practise.*
- ☐ *Do past exam papers so you are used to the style and length of papers.*
- ☐ *Make sure you are eating healthily and drinking lots of water.*
- ☐ *Do some exercise to burn off energy and stress.*
- ☐ *Make sure you know what equipment is allowed and that you actually have it.*
- ☐ *Check your timetable so you are clear about when exams are on and starting times.*
- ☐ *Plan out how you will allocate your time in the exam.*

To calculate time for one section:
= Marks for that section DIVIDED BY total marks for exam
MULTIPLIED BY total time for exam.
(ie Marks Section / Marks Total * Time)

The night before you should:	The morning before you should:

Before you start writing in an exam do you (especially during reading time):

☐ **PUT YOUR WATCH ON YOUR DESK:** Take your watch off and prop it up on your desk in front of you. This is much more effective than having it on your wrist or having to look up at a clock on the wall.

☐ **READ INSTRUCTIONS:** Read the instructions really carefully making sure you are clear about what you are expected to do. Look for any special instructions about the test or suggested timings.

☐ **PREVIEW THE EXAM PAPER:** Have a quick look through the whole paper to get a feel for the paper and an overview of the information. This will also help you familiarise yourself with the sorts of questions on the paper so that there are no surprises. Your subconscious will start working on the questions!

☐ **DECIDE YOUR PLAN OF ATTACK:** If there are options for questions, select your option. If you feel that one section will be easier than another, do that section first. The advantage of doing this is that you will start to feel more confident about the paper if you know that you have already definitely got some marks and you may save some of the time you allocated for that section so you can use it later in a more difficult section.

As soon as you are allowed to write do you:

☐ **MEMORY DUMP:** Do a quick memory dump of anything you are worried you might forget. This means as soon as you are allowed to write you quickly jot down any formulas etc. you are worried you are going to forget so they are there and ready for when you need them. But don't spend too long doing this.

☐ **WRITE DOWN YOUR TIME PLAN:** As soon as you get into the examination, write the key times at the top of the page (eg Part B 9.20, Part C 9.55am) so that you have a mental reminder of your time plan for the exam.

During the exam do you:

☐ **MOVE ON IF YOU GET STUCK:** If you feel yourself getting bogged down, leave that question, put a mark next to it and move onto the next question. Spending too long on a question when you are not getting anywhere with it becomes unproductive. You are better to move onto other parts of the paper as:

1. Firstly, you may pick up hints to that question or trigger a memory through reading other questions in the paper.
2. Secondly, your subconscious will be processing that question and when you come back to it for a fresh look you often find you have new ideas on how to approach it.
3. Thirdly, continuing for too long on a question you are struggling with lessens your confidence and can raise your stress levels.

Become more aware of how you are spending your time in an examination and if you have been working on a question for too long – move on and come back later!

☐ **NOTE THE MARKS A QU. IS WORTH TO DETERMINE DEPTH OF RESPONSE**

☐ **READ QUESTIONS CAREFULLY HIGHLIGHTING KEY WORDS**

☐ **BRAINSTORM IDEAS TO LET RIGHT HEMISPHERE CLICK IN**

☐ **ORGANISE IDEAS AND PLAN FOR ESSAYS**

☐ **KEEP ASKING YOURSELF: AM I ANSWERING THE QUESTION?**

☐ **USE CLEAR SETTING OUT (AND SHOW ALL WORKING)**

☐ **CROSS OUT MISTAKES AND MOVE ON (NO LIQUID PAPER)**

☐ **ENSURE WRITING IS CLEAR AND LEGIBLE**

At the end of the exam:

☐ Check you have completed all questions and not left anything out by mistake

☐ Go back and check you have actually answered the questions

☐ Check small details (eg decimal places, no. of responses).



REVIEW YOUR LIFESTYLE

*Many students don't realise how small things can make a big difference to results!
Let's see what changes you need to make at home to help improve your marks.*

SLEEP	<i>Read through the extra notes below carefully when you have time at home:</i>
What time do you usually go to bed each night?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- It is important that you do not wake up feeling tired or you will not be able to work well that day or concentrate properly.- Sleep is when your brain recharges and replenishes the proteins (chemicals) you need to think effectively.- The last stage of memory takes place while you are sleeping. This is where the brain takes the information from the day and files it into long-term memory (REM cycles).- Reviewing your notes just before you go to sleep and as soon as you wake up helps you remember the information more effectively (alpha state).- What time do you go to sleep? If you are going to sleep after 11.30pm, it is too late! Earlier, like around 10 or 10.30pm would be even better! You may need to change your sleep patterns gradually. Start going to bed a bit earlier each day until you can get to sleep well before 11.30pm.- You should be getting around 8-9 hours of sleep per night.
What time do you usually get up each morning?	
How many hours sleep do you usually get each night?	
Are you getting enough sleep to ensure you remember the information you are studying?	
Would you benefit from gradually going to bed earlier each night?	

EXERCISE	<i>Read through the extra notes below carefully when you have time at home:</i>
Do you play any sports on a regular basis?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Exercise, fresh air and sunlight also help improve brain function. You need to try and get some exercise each day – even if it is a 15 minute walk around the block.- Your brain requires 25% of your oxygen intake. Exercise ensures a good consistent supply to the brain. It also relieves stress and improves circulation leading to better mental performance.- Research has shown that exercise juices the brain with more glucose, which may promote and increase the neural connections or pathways along which information flows in your brain.
Do you do any exercise regularly?	
Do you walk for at least 10-30 minutes every day?	
Do you spend some of your time each day outside?	

WATER	<i>Read through the extra notes below carefully when you have time at home:</i>
<p>What types of drinks do you have each day?</p> <p>How much water would you drink each day??</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - You may know your body is 70% water but did you know your brain is 78% water? It is vital that you keep the brain hydrated as dehydration lowers your brain's ability to retain information and causes short-term memory loss. - Have a water bottle on your desk and keep sipping as you study. Try and drink 3 of the 600mL bottles every day. Maybe add some fruit juice to your water for the natural sugars if you don't like plain water. - More than 2 coffees per day will only increase dehydration and make it more difficult to focus and concentrate. Avoid 'energy' drinks and sugar filled soft drinks that give you a short-lasting energy boost. - Herbal teas and fruit juice in moderation are OK.

HEALTHY FOOD	<i>Read through the extra notes below carefully when you have time at home:</i>
<p>Do you eat a decent breakfast each morning?</p> <p>Do you eat between 3-5 regular meals?</p> <p>Do you eat much takeaway food like McDonalds for your meals?</p> <p>Do you eat much 'junk' food: ie sweets, sugary foods or foods that are deep fried or oily?</p> <p>Do you eat lots of fresh fruit and vegetables each day?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Your brain needs the right fuel to keep it healthy and ensure it works properly. - Regular meals are important to ensure a good flow of fuel to the brain. If you have fallen into the bad habit of skipping breakfast, start eating a little bit in the morning then gradually increasing the fuel you give your body first thing in the morning. - Eat a balanced diet and combine proteins and carbohydrates in a meal for best results in energy levels. - Look for low GI foods. Increase the amount of fresh fruit and vegetables you eat and reduce sugar and fat: cakes, lollies, chocolates, donuts, sugary drinks, take-away food, McDonalds, KFC, deep-fried food. - Eat omega 3 rich fish like salmon twice a week to help your brain. - Think twice about the damage from cigarettes and over-indulging in alcohol!

In Summary:

- START GOING TO BED A BIT EARLIER AND GET 8 HRS SLEEP
- DO A BIT MORE EXERCISE EACH DAY, MAYBE GO FOR A WALK
- DRINK MORE WATER AND LESS SUGARY OR CAFFEINE DRINKS
- TRY AND EAT MORE HEALTHY FOOD AND LESS JUNK EACH DAY

What could you do to improve your lifestyle?



DEALING WITH STRESS

The most effective strategies for dealing with stress are:

1. **QUALITY SLEEP:** de-stress, remove negative thoughts.
2. **EXERCISE:** burn off stress hormones.
3. **HEALTHY FOOD:** avoid caffeine and sugar.
4. **MANAGE YOUR EXAMS :** be thoroughly prepared, plan study time.

When dealing with stress:

- Recognise the causes and symptoms.
- Decide to do something positive about your stress – you are in control. Moderate stress before an examination is normal and can improve your performance. It can make you feel vital and alive and energised.
- Give yourself permission to relax.
- If you feel tension building up, do something active to relieve the stress.

Active Strategies:

- Peace and quiet or a warm bath (girls tend to like this one).
- Go for a run or a jog (boys tend to like this one).
- 10 minute afternoon siesta (a short nap to get your energy levels up).
- Laugh, smile.
- Talk to someone, write to yourself, write in a journal.
- Breathe deeply, close your eyes and relax muscles one by one.

Mental Strategies:

Mental strategies are harder to do although when you master them they are highly effective:

- Get things in perspective, don't make mountains out of molehills.
- Chill out, sit out, meditate, withdraw from problems and have a quiet time to calm your mind.
- Change your self-talk. How stressed you become is directly related to what you are telling yourself in your head. You can reprogram that. Are you negative in your self-talk?
- The Catastrophe scale. Imagine a ruler marked 1 to 100 and think of all the things that are not good in the world. Where at the moment is the thing that is making you feel bad on this scale. This reminds us that reality is not as bad as it seems.
- Focusing: change the focus from the negative thing to positive things.
- Guided Imagery: see yourself in a beautiful place in control of life, use positive affirmations.

Visualise the day of the examination and imagine it all going well. In your mind, go through each of the steps. Lining up for the exam, walking in, arranging your papers, opening the exam and writing your answers. See yourself doing a good job and finishing the paper and feeling satisfied. Every day keep imagining this before you go to sleep until your mind starts to believe it's true.





THE IMPORTANCE OF PERSPECTIVE

Keep things in perspective. As important as the final exams seem right now, it is not the end of the world. Doing well in these exams can allow you to fast-track to the path you want to take in life. But just remember, there are always alternate paths you can take and other ways, that admittedly could take longer, but that will take you to where you want to go. One exam will not determine the outcome of your life. Do your best, and work to your potential and that is in the end the most important thing.

Making the most of the last months of school:

- ☐ **LEARN FROM YOUR MISTAKES AND FIX THEM**
- ☐ **GET ON TOP OF ASSIGNMENTS AND BIG PIECES OF WORK**
- ☐ **GET YOUR NOTES AND STUDY MATERIAL ORGANISED AND COMPLETE**
- ☐ **START STUDYING AGAIN NOW, TIME GETS AWAY QUICKLY**
- ☐ **MAKE YOUR STUDY ACTIVE! DON'T JUST SIT THERE READING**
- ☐ **GET UP-TO-DATE AND STAY THERE**
- ☐ **USE EVERY AVAILABLE BIT OF TIME – LIKE STUDY PERIODS!**
- ☐ **CONCENTRATE ON PAST PAPERS UNDER EXAMINATION CONDITIONS**
- ☐ **MAKE A FIRM DECISION AS TO HOW MUCH TIME YOU WILL ALLOCATE TO SCHOOLWORK AND STICK TO IT**



KEEPING THINGS IN PERSPECTIVE

These last few months can be overwhelming as the focus just seems to be on marks, marks, marks.

So here are some important things to remember:

*Yes this year is important.
And yes you want to get the best marks you can.
BUT*



A very big but.

You as a person are not defined by a number alone.

There are always alternate paths to get to where you want to go in life. The marks might make it quicker or easier but if you really want to get somewhere you will find a way to make it happen. Many people don't get their first preference at uni, so start off in one course then transfer after a year to the one they really wanted.

Many people leave school and find out that they actually have some incredible skills, they just weren't academic! They discover that they are really good at lots and lots of stuff and that in the end, the marks did not make that much difference to their final career.

Really what you want after the next few months is to walk away with no regret, to be able to walk away saying no matter what, I really did the best I could - rather than I blew off 12 years of school cause I just couldn't be bothered. Doing your best is all anyone should expect of you, teachers, parents and even yourself.

These can be hard months and you will be sooo over study by the end of it. Remember everyone has to go through it and the good news is it is never like this again! Just keep saying to yourself each day, this is one day less and I will never ever have to study like this again. The hardest part of Year 12 is finding the self-discipline to make yourself do the study when you don't feel like doing it! So hang in there, and just take it day by day.

MY GOALS

My main goal for the end of Year 12 is that I am going to.....

The reasons why I want to do this are.....

And the result of making this happen will be

To achieve this goal I need to do/remember the following:

TO ACCESS THE SLIDES

www.enhanced-learning.net

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'7. Download SLIDES'
Scroll down to the bottom of the page

Password: **success**

Dr Salter's email:
info@enhanced-learning.net

www.studyskillshandbook.com.au

(Access to this site only available if school is a subscribing school and login details listed below.)

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