



HAILSHAM COMMUNITY COLLEGE  
ACADEMY TRUST

*'Be the very best you can be'*

# Hailsham Community College GCSE Revision Guide



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***“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world” Nelson Mandela.***

***“Education is the passport for the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today” Malcolm X***

***“Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire” W. B. Yeats***

# PREPARING FOR YOUR GCSE EXAMINATIONS



## Step 1: Preparing to Revise

Before you start revising you must know which exams you have:

- How many exams do you have?
- When do the exams take place? Date/time?
- Where will they take place?
- How long will each examination last?
- What equipment is needed for each exam e.g. a calculator, protractor etc
- What is the format of each paper? Do they consist of short answers / essays or a mixture of both?

The following may also be useful:

- Folders
- Plastic Wallets
- Highlighters
- Coloured Pens and Pencils
- A3/Coloured Paper
- Flash Cards
- Subject specific material

## Step 2: Construct a Revision Timetable



You will need a Revision Timetable which can be used to structure your revision. An example of one is at the end of this guide. There are other types you can use. You should be aiming to revise 3 hours a week night, and 5-6 hours at a weekend. Be realistic - don't plan a schedule you can't manage!

Some other useful things to bear in mind are:

- Be disciplined - stick to what you say you will do
- Choose the right time of day to revise - some people like to study early in the day, others prefer to study later on
- Revise efficiently – we advise the Pomodoro Technique, which is revising for 20 minutes, and then having a 1-5 minute break (revising for too long is inefficient in one sitting)
- Try to give each subject equal time
- Schedule breaks in your working day - for fun, food, relaxation and exercise, but not all at once (IMPORTANT)
- Don't try to do all of the hardest topics at once - spread them around evenly with the easier ones
- Reward yourself when you achieve targets or goals!

### Step 3: Select a Suitable Working Environment



Your study environment should be:

- Calm and quiet
- Well lit
- At a good temperature
- Full of nice, fresh air to keep you awake
- Free from distraction (i.e. mobile phone, gaming consoles, TV etc).
- If you are using PIXL app on phone then this obviously will be needed

Your study environment should contain:

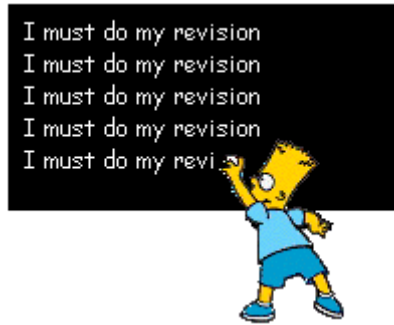
- A large table or desk
- A good chair
- A dictionary and thesaurus
- Stationery and other study aids (as above)
- A drink or something to nibble on while you study

You may find it hard to study in the same place every day. Try thinking of other places to study, such as:

- The college Library or after school homework club
- A public library
- At a friend's house

The most important point to remember about wherever you choose to work is that you are there to revise and not to socialise!

## Step 4: How to Revise



The most effective methods of revision are to start early (using your revision timetable) and to practise exam questions. You also need to use a variety of methods.

As a school we suggest you use the 'spaced revision' theory. This is an evidence-based strategy which involves 4 stages that repeat over a period of time. Each learning topic should span two days, with the first two stages on day 1, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stage on day 2.

- 1. Review a topic** - For the first 20 minutes, utilise any technique you are comfortable with to review the topic. This could be highlighting, making notes, creating flashcards or using post-its. Often, you might stop after this and think 'my revision is done!'. But no, this is just the start of an effective learning technique.
- 2. Transformation task** - This is building on Stage 1. Here you need to transform the notes or highlighting that you have from Stage 1 into something different. This could be a mindmap, a drawing, a song, a poem. (Look at the suggested activities that are in this guide to help you).
- 3. Practise Testing** - With a friend, family member or one of the many websites online that have relevant quizzes – test yourself on the area that you have reviewed.
- 4. Exam Questions** - Finally, complete an exam question or questions on the area you have reviewed and mark this yourself using a mark scheme, or ask your teacher to mark it

## Step 4: Transformation Tasks and Revision Activities



([http://jamiedavies.co/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/transformation\\_exercises.pdf](http://jamiedavies.co/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/transformation_exercises.pdf))

*The tasks are easy at the bottom, but increase in difficulty as you work your way up the ladder. The more challenging the task, the more advanced the skills that are required and the higher the GCSE grade you are working towards*

### Remember tasks

- Write down all the key terms for the topic and define them
- Write down a topic in 10 bullet points
- Play keyword hangman with someone
- Create an acronym using the first letter of all key terms
- Create flashcards
- Highlight key information

### Understanding tasks

- Pick out 5 key points about a topic and explain them
- Reduce the key points down to less than 200 words, or even 50 words
- Verbally explain key terms to someone
- Create true or false flashcards

### Application tasks

- Explain why a topic is significant or important
- Explain how topics relate or link together
- Try applying it to short exam answers
- Research/find real life news/evidence which supports your topic
- Explain a topic using a cartoon/TV character

### Analysis tasks

- Compare and contrast by writing down similarities and differences
- Create a mindmap showing links and connections
- Create a flow diagram showing links and connections
- Use a piece of evidence to write a PEEL for one key point – Point, Evidence, Explain, Link

### Evaluation tasks

- Create a table of strengths and weaknesses for a topic, approach, theory etc
- Write a paragraph on whether you agree with something associated with your topic
- Opinionated Octopus: Evaluate the topic using 4 strengths and 4 weaknesses
- Use a piece of evidence to write a PEEL evaluation point – Point, Evidence, Explain, Link

### Creation tasks

- Transform a topic into a cartoon strip or storyboard
- Write a mark scheme to think about how it will be assessed, and compare this to the actual one
- Create a song or poem etc
- Create or plan your own experiment
- Create a role play or puppet show on a topic
- Produce a revision guide including key points and activities





## Step 5 Revision Timetable template

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9.05-10.05							
10.15-11.15							
11.20-12.20							
12.35-1.35pm							
2.05-3.05							
3.05 – 4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							

Break everything down into bite size topics using spaced revision  
Factor in breaks