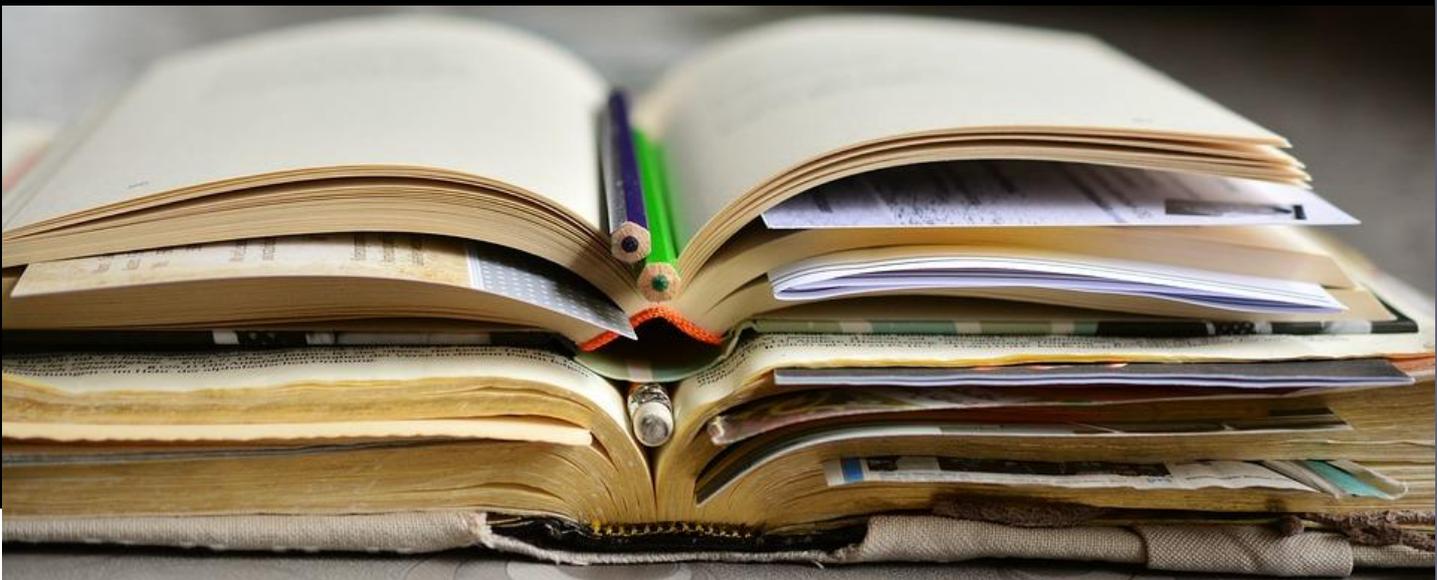




# EXAM REVISION GUIDE Y7-10

EXAM INFORMATION PACK



**CARITATE ET DISCIPLINA  
WITH LOVE AND LEARNING**

**ST MARTIN-IN-THE-FIELDS  
HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS**

## ARE YOU AN EFFECTIVE LEARNER?

This question and answer test may help you spot where you might start to improve your study skills.

1. Do you plan, make a rough copy of, and check your homework or assignment before copying it out neatly?
2. Do you voluntarily revise a subject even if exams or tests are not due for some time?
3. If you are having problems with a subject, do you talk it over with your teacher as soon as you can?
4. Do you complete your homework or assignment in advance of its deadline?
5. Do you have a place at home where you can study without being distracted?
6. Do you act upon the comments and suggestions your teacher makes about your work?
7. Do you keep a record of key words (terminology) used in each subject?
8. Do you use the library, internet or other learning aids regularly to help with your studies?
9. Have you always kept your exercise books or folders in good order and up to date?
10. Can you easily spot the main points of a topic when reading a text book and make extra notes from them?
11. Do you plan your use of time by writing down what you have to do and by when?
12. Do you know ways of improving your memory when revising?
13. Do you plan ahead for tests or examinations?

## GETTING IT RIGHT AT EACH STAGE

### STAGE 1

#### **Learning the content the first time around. NOW!**

Sounds obvious -otherwise the next stage is not revision it's learning. So make every lesson count and pay close attention.

### STAGE 2

#### **Revising**

Everyone has to revise to achieve their full potential. There are many methods, some better than others for different people. Choose the method that suits you.

### STAGE 3

#### **The exam itself**

Even with good revision this can still cause problems. Be prepared! Three things to aid your success:

- Know your stuff!
- Be organised. Have everything you need for the exam.
- Good exam technique, listen and act on advice.

## LEARNING AND REVISION

There is a difference between learning your work and revising for an examination.

**Learning** is an on-going process in which you build upon previous knowledge and understanding. There will be a lot of new work and if you really learn this new work as you do it, you will save yourself a lot of time later on when it comes to revision.

**Learning** is a long-term process and cannot be done by trying to cram information into a few weeks. It involves completely understanding topics and memorising information.

**Revision** is learning to unlock your memory. Use prompts to help you to 'call up' what you know.

**Revision** is learning to select and adapt what you know. By doing this, you can answer different types of exam questions.

### LEARNING TO LEARN – SOME PRACTICAL DO'S AND DON'TS

**DO** make sure that you get all you can from each lesson. It makes sense to ask if you don't understand.

**DO** make sure you understand new concepts – if in doubt ask. Never leave something you don't understand in the hope that it will sort itself out. That won't happen!

**DO** discuss new ideas and concepts with a friend. Try to test your own understanding by explaining the idea or concept to someone else.

**DO** go over your day's work at home. You know that homework helps you to learn your class-work – programme the brain – and helps you understand new concepts. Don't let yourself down – do it!

**DO** practise answering questions. This helps to ensure that you understand your work, gives you practice in doing research and helps your memory. Take time to practise different styles of questions under timed conditions, regardless of whether you have been given this as homework.

**DO** develop ways of memorising information. Write notes or read out loud – this helps concentration. Keep doing this until you can remember all the information easily.

**DON'T** let yourself get tired. Your brain will be 'fuzzy' after a really late night and even easy tasks may seem harder.

**DON'T** worry if you haven't solved every single problem before you finish your evening's work. The brain is a problem solver and can solve problems while you are asleep – use it!

### GOING THE EXTRA MILE

If you consider yourself to be a conscientious student then you will always be looking for ways to do that little bit extra in addition to your normal studies. You will discover that you will not only feel and be more prepared, but will also achieve better grades. As far as revision is concerned, the simplest approach is to regularly refresh your memory as you go along. You should make sure you learned adequately in the first place.

## REVISION TECHNIQUES



### Plan your time

How long can you learn effectively without taking a break?

How many subjects do you need to revise for?

What other commitments do you have which prevent you from revising?

Identify what topics you need to go over to ensure that you are really clear.

Check that you have covered each topic adequately.

Follow a time plan when you are revising for exams.



### Revision Cards

Revision cards are among the most popular revision resources. The idea is that you summarise some information on a single blank card. You can even create them online on [www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)

- 1) Write questions on one side and answers on the other, then test yourself or ask someone else to help you.
- 2) Write key terms on one side and a summary of what they mean on the other.
- 3) Write the advantages of something on one side and the disadvantages on the other.
- 4) Write about something in reasonable detail on one side and use the other side to summarise key points as a short list, no more than 5 points.



### Websites

[www.getrevising.co.uk](http://www.getrevising.co.uk)

This website allows you to create revision cards, quizzes, mind maps and gives access to thousands of resources that have worked for other students.

[www.bbc.co.uk/education](http://www.bbc.co.uk/education)

The BBC provides great materials and activities for revision at all levels.

[www.s-cool.co.uk](http://www.s-cool.co.uk)

Lots of 'chunked' information for all major subjects at GCSE and A level. You can test yourself too.

There are plenty of other websites that you can visit which are subject specific. Your teacher will direct you to the best websites for their subject.



### Mind Maps

Mind maps are a way of organising ideas about a topic. A mind map usually starts with a central idea with a series of branches, each relating one section of the main idea. These lead to other branches and so it goes on. A mind map allows you to see the whole topic on one sheet of paper. Making the mind map helps you learn both the detail and big picture of a topic.

- 1) Stick them up somewhere in your house where you can sit and look at them, perhaps your bedroom wall.
- 2) Illustrate your mind map, even if the drawings are silly, they will help you remember the point!
- 3) Spend time learning the map, turn the paper over and see if you can remember it well enough to copy.



### Past Papers

#### Top Tip

Exam board websites are the places to go for information about the types of exams, specifications, (syllabuses), past papers, mark schemes and examiners reports.

Here are some:

AQA [www.aqa.org.uk](http://www.aqa.org.uk)

Edexcel [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)

OCR [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

## EXAM COMMAND WORDS

<b>Contrast</b>	Stress dissimilarities, differences, or unlikeliness of things, qualities, events, or problems. Place opposition to bring out difference(s).
<b>Criticise</b>	Express your judgement or correctness or merit. Discuss the limitations and good points or contributions of the plan or work in question. Present the faults in a theory or policy or opinion.
<b>Define</b>	Provide concise, clear, authoritative meanings. Details are not required but limitations of the definition should be briefly cited. You must keep in mind the class to which a thing belongs and whatever differentiates the particular object from all others in the class.
<b>Describe</b>	Recount, characterise, sketch or relate in narrative form. Present the details and characteristics of something. This may be related to an event or process, or to data presented in a table, graph or other form. Must be concise and straightforward, using relevant terms rather than vague generalisations. The trend should be presented in words or translated into another form. If interpreting numerical data, it is often appropriate to refer to the figures, and these should be 'manipulated' in some way, for instance the trend could be quantified or the percentage difference over a period of time calculated.
<b>Discuss</b>	The term appears often in essay questions, directs you to examine, analyse carefully, and present considerations pro (for) and con (against) regarding the problems or items involved. This type of question calls for a complete and entailed answer. Essentially, you need to give a considered amount of a particular topic about which a degree of uncertainty exists.
<b>Evaluate</b>	You are expected to present a careful appraisal (review) of the problem, stressing both advantages and limitations. It implies authoritative and, to a lesser degree, person appraisal of both contributions and limitations. This requires you to judge from available evidence.
<b>Explain (give explanations/give reasons)</b>	In explanatory answers it is imperative that you clarify and interpret the material you present. In such an answer it is best to state the "how or why", reconcile any differences in opinion or experimental results, and, where possible, state causes. The aim is to make plain the conditions which give rise to whatever you are examining. Set out purposes or reasons. The answer would be expected to draw on knowledge to give reasons or explanations for the information or data given. Usually 2 or 3 mark answers are required and the answer should go beyond just repetition or reorganisation of the information or data presented.
<b>Illustrate</b>	Requires you to explain or clarify your answer to the problem by presenting a figure, picture, diagram, chart, graph or concrete example.
<b>Name, state, give, present</b>	Indicates that short, factual answers are needed, possibly with precise use of terminology. Express the high points in brief, clear narrative form. Details, and usually illustrations or examples, may be omitted. Try to express in unequivocal terms. Often one-word answers are sufficient.
<b>Prove</b>	A question which demands confirmation or verification. In such discussions you should establish something with certainty by evaluation and citing experimental evidence or by logical reasoning. Demonstrate validity on the basis of evidence.
<b>Summarise</b>	You should give in condensed form the main points or facts. All details, illustrations and elaboration are to be omitted. State briefly the essential points (dispensing with examples and details). Present principle points without detail. Basically, give a concise account of main points.
<b>Appraise/ assess/evaluate</b>	Make an informed judgement; explore the importance or value of something. Investigate without preconceptions considering both pros and cons.

## TIPS FOR PARENTS/CARERS

Improving study skills can have a positive impact on overall learning and examination success. Students with good study skills learn independently. They learn how to focus on important information, tie new information to previously learned information and learn how to review their own work.

There are no quick fixes, just hard work on your part to help your daughter establish good study habits. You can do this by following the Three Step Process below.

### STEP 1: MOTIVATING LEARNING

#### Help your daughter

- to understand that she has control over her academic success
- to understand that learning is important
- to develop goals and plans for studying
- to persevere, enjoy learning and ask for help if needed
- by ensuring she attends school regularly and is punctual

### STEP 2: PLANNING AND CHECKING

#### Help your daughter

- to meet deadlines for controlled assessments
- to plan and review her own learning
- by asking the right questions
- by establishing study routines
- by organising a quiet space to study
- by ensuring her attendance at extra sessions

### STEP 3: EFFECTIVE STUDY STRATEGIES

#### Help your daughter

- to improve her organisation
- to improve her listening skills
- to practise and improve reading skills
- to improve writing skills by practising exam papers
- by asking her to explain something she has learned or revised

## HOW YOU CAN HELP

Practise

Active

Revision

Encourage

Notes

Time Management

Your role as a parent/carer is stretched when your child is studying for their GCSE's. Over the next few months they will be looking at their future plans and preparing for examinations which can be very stressful. However, the right level of support from you can alleviate the anxiety and worry.

Be aware of their diet at this time. Prepare healthy meals that will sustain them through long periods of study, try not to let them binge on sugary snacks as this will result in short attention spans and energy drops. Try to encourage them to drink lots of water and do exercise regularly; a healthy body does denote a healthy mind. Good sleep is extremely important when studying and going to school. Allow your child to wind down for an hour or so before bedtime and make sure they are getting at least 8 hours sleep a night.

## STRESS MANAGEMENT

