

Revision Help

There is no 'right way' to revise. Individual students need to identify a method/s which suit them and enable them both to consolidate knowledge and gain a solid grasp of key facts.

Having the opportunity to try out different revision techniques and test out their effectiveness is one of the key aspects of sitting examinations in the early years of secondary school.

While some students are happy to read their classroom notes from start to finish, most will find it much more helpful to simplify the information as much as possible. In practice, most students find that mixing techniques suits the varied nature of the subjects being revised, and provides essential variety when studying.

The following techniques are among the most popular and effective, but there are others:

1. Produce a set of skeletal revision notes (just the essential information / facts!) organised under key headings - colour coding and highlighting are useful here. Ideally you should aim to reduce your class notes down by one half to two thirds so that they are much more manageable.
2. Index Cards: many students find these highly effective revision aids allowing them to break down information into smaller units under key headings. Some students write a key word or point on one side of the card and an explanation on the other side. This allows them to read through the key points using them to trigger memory before checking accuracy of recall on the other side. Index cards are useful as they allow sorting and grouping of ideas in different ways and make it easy for other people to test out your knowledge. They are also a handy size suitable for a blazer pocket!
3. Read, cover, write, check – read the work through, cover it up, write as much of it as you can remember, check to see how you did.
4. Create memory aids such as mnemonics e.g. Colours of the Rainbow (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet) = Richard Of York Gave Battle In Vain.
5. Create Mind Maps with a central topic / theme and branches radiating outwards. This can be a very effective way of grouping and linking different point / themes in a clear and memorable way. See page 2 for an example.
6. Getting someone to test you will help you know your progress.
7. Check out BBC bite size revision online and other revision websites that your teachers might suggest, specific to their subject.
8. There are also many revision guides available to buy – but be sure they cover the topics that are relevant to the courses you are doing. (It is important not to just rely just on revision guides. They should be used to supplement your class notes).

