

Tips for effective revision

Key points

- **Revise actively - engage with the material, don't just read.**
- **Review, recall and self-test from memory. Check what you really know.**
- **Apply what you learn - practise using it as you will need to in the exam.**
- **Stay motivated - build in time off and rewards for work done.**

Organise your material

For example summaries can include:

- **Mind or concept maps**
- **Bullet point lists**
- **Grids or tables**
- **Hierarchy charts**
- **Annotated diagrams**
- Use the course learning outcomes.
- Divide information into chunks.
- Highlight, subordinate and show the relationships between things.
- Use whatever helps you remember – colour, images, speaking, stories.
- Retrieve from memory and check.

Use your time effectively

- **Focus intently on working on a task for a set time (15 to 25 minutes) and then have a 5 minute break.**
- **Use small amounts of time to self-test** (e.g. using flash or cue cards).
- **Minimise distractions.**
- Short breaks are as important as the period of intense study.
- It can be better to do a variety of topics than to mass.
- After a long study period, have a longer break – take exercise.

Check your knowledge and understanding

Self-testing is one of the most effective learning strategies you can use.

- **Make mini-revision fact cards** (cue on front; answer on back).
- **Construct summaries and check to see what you missed.**
- **Bullet point quick essay outlines from memory.**
- **Use unlabelled outline charts or diagrams.** Don't just label these – annotate fully to explain processes, causes and effects using recall and check afterwards.

Practise using the material

- **Analyse previous questions.** What are they asking you to do?
- **Make outline answer plans.**
- **Do MCQs and short-answer questions to time.**
- **Write 10 to 15 minute essays to cover breadth.**
- **Make up mock questions** which mimic the style and type of exam. Rewrite past paper questions by substituting topics and altering the question stem.