

Possible session on revision and preparing for examinations

- There is too much material here for one 50 minute class. You should adapt and edit to suit your context – select appropriate sections (from A to E) and add relevant examples. You may want to focus more on revision or on the examination itself.
- Timing will depend on amount of discussion allowed. Discussion activities will require five to ten minutes.

A. Initial discussion (taking control)

[Slide 2] **What bugs you about exams?** : Discussion in pairs or threes can be a good way to establish what aspects of revision and exams are of concern. You can ask for volunteers to contribute some of these concerns to the whole group or class.

[Slide 3] **Taking control:** Using the diagram makes it possible to begin to categorise the range of concerns and to start to deal with them. There is an optional 'take control' pdf handout students can write on. (Could but don't is a good area to focus on.)

[Slide 4] Lists some of the ways students can take control.

[Slide 5] Where to find the exam timetable (date, time and location): A web demonstration is possible using these links:

<http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/registry/exams>

<http://www.scripts.sasg.ed.ac.uk/registry/examinations/index.cfm>

B. Planning and prioritising

[Slide 7] **Prioritising:** A demonstration of one possible method – animated slide you can click through (four clicks). There is also a pdf handout.

- You can ask students for examples of other methods they use to identify and prioritise tasks.

[Slides 8 and 9] Hour by hour week planner – you can ask students to fill out one of these. There are also optional handouts for guidance (Word and pdf).

[Slide 10] Some students prefer a less rigid week planner where the time boundaries are not exact (e.g. half a morning, all afternoon).

[Slides 11 and 12] Slides where the students have drawn up a draft schedule in the session.

C. Revising actively

[Slide 13] Discussion questions: How do you revise now? How can you make your revision more active? Discussion in small groups can be a good way to establish what revision techniques students already use. You can ask for volunteers to contribute some of these to the whole group or class.

[Slide 14] Some examples of ways students can revise actively. Students may well contribute better suggestions!

[Slide 15] For some students using mnemonics is an effective aid where it is important to remember key information. Students can be encouraged to invent their own.

[Slide 16] A strategy for remembering key diagrams: Look at the original, cover it up, draw and annotate, then check for accuracy.

D. Preparation just before the exam

[Slide 17] Preparation and routine: Animated list – two clicks.

[Slide 18] Equipment examples – replace with appropriate examples.

E. During the exam

[Slide 20] Discussion topic: Your mind goes blank. Discussion in small groups can be a good way to establish what revision techniques students already use. You can ask for volunteers to contribute some of these to the whole group or class.

[Slide 21] Some suggestions of what students can do when 'your mind goes blank'.

[Slide 22] The 'Stop!' technique is taken from the Edinburgh University Counselling Service booklet ***Stress, a short guide for students*** which is available at:

<http://www.docs.sasg.ed.ac.uk/StudentCounselling/SCSbooklets/SCSstressbooklet.pdf>

[Slide 23] Have strategies worked out.

[Slide 24] Give an example of the instructions on an exam paper. (Replace with an appropriate one.) Discuss timing issues in relation to this.

[Slides 25 and 26] Answering the question: Go over examples of questions used (directive words).

[Slide 27] What examiners say: Additional slides may be inserted here which draw on your own experience.

[Slide 28] Discussion topic: Suppose you've got time left to do one question, but two questions left to do. Which one do you choose?

Dave Pearce, a lecturer in the Department of Electronics at the University of York, has some suggestions at this link: http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~dajp1/Exam_Hints/Exams.html

[Slide 29] A mnemonic such as ACUTE can be used to check over the exam script at the end.

[Slide 30] Summary: Amend to fit your edited presentation.

[Slide 32] LearnBetter: Any student (or member of staff) with access to MyEd and Learn can self-enrol on LearnBetter. Users will find pdf handouts and other materials available which can be downloaded and printed off or saved.

Optional handouts

- Take control sheet (pdf)
- Revision timetable and prioritising (Word)
- Creating a revision timetable (pdf)
- A way to prioritise: Revision (pdf)
- Week planner: hour by hour (pdf)
- Week planner: am, pm, eve (pdf)