Rehoboth Christian College

HOW TO ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE

YEAR 11 AND 12 STUDY GUIDE

Third Edition
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What is Excellence?

*Excellence is an art won by training and habituation. We do not act rightly because we have virtue or excellence, but we rather have those because we have acted rightly. We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act but a habit.*
~ Aristotle ~

*Excellence is being the best that you can be*
Excellence is not about elitism or the achievement of an ‘A’ Grade.

Things that will keep you from Excellence

**Doing a bare minimum; doing only what you are required**

We need to be aiming for the **maximum**, not scraping by with the minimum. This means: **not** leaving things until the last minute; **not** concentrating on just what we have to do; **not** just making it on time; **not** doing the least that I have to do. We weren’t designed this way. God created only one man and one woman to **rule over the whole earth**. Our brain is far more complex and creative than the biggest computer. We are designed for big things.

**Misunderstanding Life’s Experiences**

Your **past is a very inaccurate predictor of your future**. Failure at something does not make you a loser. You learn by your mistakes. It enables you to **move forward in a different direction**.

**Excuses**

It’s not fair; it’s not my fault. Excuses are very disempowering and stop us moving forward, **and learning from our mistakes**.

**Distractions**

There will always be distractions, **good and bad ones** that capture your attention. A distraction is anything that takes your vision away from where it was going (vision is where you are going – your picture of your future). We have to plan for the long haul, rather than just for tomorrow. We have to be **immovable, steadfast, committed, faithful** – these are the things that keep us on track. **Expressions of opinion, peer pressure, magazine articles, being offended** – these are the things that get us off track.
### Characteristics of Excellence

Excellence is internal – an attitude.

**Having an excellent attitude changes my circumstances.**

It **doesn’t mean that there will be less difficulties.** Challenges come. You need to get used to being an overcomer; to become stronger; to lift greater weights.

A **moving forward** mentality (i.e. of making progress towards a goal) is a **normal characteristic of successful people.**

Excellence is **attractive.** Excellence can bring **applause**; it can equally bring **criticism.**

Excellence is a **lifestyle,** not an event ... going beyond what is required or expected. For an Olympic Swimmer, swimming 150km per week is normal. It is about **going the extra mile,** until the extra mile is no longer the extra mile.

**God directs** – the steps of a good man (moving ahead) are ordered by the Lord.

It is always the right time for excellence. It is normal for you to grow, **healthy things grow the best.**

This is not just about being a successful student – it is about achieving an excellent life, being an excellent leader ... **it is applicable to all areas.**

**Improvement** is the stepping stone towards the achievement of excellence.

Keep your **focus on the goal** ... this is the reward for your sacrifices.

Ask yourself the question, **is this the best that I can do?**
Keys to Achieving Excellence

1. Preparation

Preparation brings confidence. The most successful leaders have been the ones who were thoroughly prepared.

Winston Churchill would typically read nine newspapers every morning over breakfast. He would pour over reports, refusing to have his Staff digest information for him.

TIP Excellence takes sacrifice. Are you willing to pay the price?

Abraham Lincoln was so anxious to be informed of events during the Civil War that he would often go to the telegraph Office in order to obtain the latest information the instant it came in.

TIP Keep up to date.

Harry Truman was not perceived as a brilliant man, but was admired for always being thoroughly prepared. He inherited a tremendous load of decisions for which he bore sole responsibility. He would fastidiously examine every document and briefing until he understood the issues and was thoroughly equipped to make a decision. Truman became known for his decisiveness, which was enabled by his meticulous preparation.

TIP There are no short cuts.

At the close of his autobiography, Billy Graham listed several things he would do differently if he could live his life over again. He said, "I have failed many times, and I would do many things differently. For one thing, I would speak less and study more." Billy Graham has preached to more people and has seen more conversions than any preacher in history, yet he acknowledged that he needed to be better prepared.

TIP Regularly assess where you are at.
2. Time Management

Your ability to manage your time and stay organised is fundamental to success in all areas of life, as well as in studying. No system of time management, no matter how fancy it is, will ever work **if you don’t use it consistently. Time is an INVESTMENT; it needs be invested purposefully and wisely (i.e. you are investing in a future return).**

Most people waste an extraordinary amount of time. Even if you add up all the things in your life, and added other ‘essential’ activities that you could think of, you would find that you would be losing a few hours every day. Two questions should be considered:

1. **Do I always get as much study done each week as I set out to do?**
   - YES / NO

2. **Could I get more done in the hours that I have put aside to study?**
   - YES / NO

You might like to try the following simple four-step **time management system:**

1. Map out the year.
2. Map out each week
   a) Set out the ideal week
   b) Plan each week
3. Map out each day.
4. Evaluate and update.

**Requirements**
1. Your school diary.
2. Your assessment schedule.
3. A weekly planner (create your own).
4. A yearly wall planner.
   (Officeworks sells these)
5. A pen and a few highlighters.

**Step 1: Map out the year**
- Using your assessment schedules, mark all the assessment dates that you can, and your exam blocks, on your yearly wall planner. Include the subject and nature of the task as well as the weighting percentage.
- Mark each assessment in your diary on the corresponding page, including all relevant information about that task.
- Put a two week reminder on the appropriate page for all your major assessments. Include the subject the assessment is for and the weighting (the percentage it contributes to your total assessment mark).
- With a highlighter, clearly mark all your exam periods on your wall planner.
- With a different highlighter, mark all the holiday periods on your wall planner.
Step 2: Map out each week

■ Using the weekly schedule, plan out what you would consider to be the ideal week. Be sure to include: school; study; sport; relaxation; social activities; Church/Youth Group; daily routines.

You will need to do the ideal week routine exercise a few different times throughout the year, as demands change. Most likely, you will need to be allocating more study time in the last month leading up to any exam blocks.

If you don’t reach your weekly study target in any one given week, make up the time on Saturday. You should also use the planner for holiday periods. In Year 12 you should be allocating one week of these holiday break weeks to study/revision/revision courses.

Plan each Week

Every weekend, you should sit down and plan the following week. Using your yearly planner and your daily diary, identify the tasks that need to be done for that week. Make sure that you include study (revision) time each week (right from the start in Year 11 and 12). One hour per subject per week might be a good target in terms of the time that should be regularly put aside.

Take out your ‘ideal week’ and a blank weekly planner and begin to map out the coming week. Try to fit the week’s tasks into the same time slots that you have allowed for these types of activities in your ‘ideal week’. Keep this weekly planner in your diary and stick to it. A sample of an ‘ideal week’ plan might look like this:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Mon</th>
<th>Tues</th>
<th>Wed</th>
<th>Thurs</th>
<th>Fri</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6–7</td>
<td>Sleep In</td>
<td>Get ready</td>
<td>Get ready</td>
<td>Get ready</td>
<td>Get ready</td>
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<tr>
<td>7–8</td>
<td>Get ready</td>
<td>Study/ Rev</td>
<td>Study/ Rev</td>
<td>Study/ Rev</td>
<td>Study/ Rev</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8–9</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
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<tr>
<td>9–3</td>
<td>School Time</td>
<td>School time</td>
<td>School time</td>
<td>School time</td>
<td>School time</td>
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<tr>
<td>3–4</td>
<td>B/ball Train</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>B/ball Game</td>
<td>Maths tutor</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4–5</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Travel &amp; read</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5–6</td>
<td>Spare Time</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Spare time</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6–7</td>
<td>Dinner/ Spare</td>
<td>Dinner/ spare</td>
<td>Dinner/ spare</td>
<td>Dinner/ spare</td>
<td>Dinner/ spare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7–8</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>Youth Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8–9</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Shops</td>
<td>Youth Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9–10</td>
<td>Study/ Rev</td>
<td>TV</td>
<td>Study</td>
<td>Travel/ TV</td>
<td>Travel/ TV</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Each Saturday would have a **planned study slot between 9.00 and 1.00pm (or 2.00 til 6.00pm)**, depending on other activities, with more time devoted if needed (i.e. when deadlines occur or if the weekly timetable was interrupted). The rest of the day would be free. **Sunday is put down as a family day/Church/day of rest.**

**TIP**  If something is not working, change it.
3. Goal Setting

A goal is something you want to achieve. A short-term goal is something you want to achieve soon. Examples of short-term goals are finishing your homework and doing well on tomorrow’s test. A long-term goal is something you want to achieve at some later date. Examples of long-term goals are writing a paper and passing a class. To set appropriate goals, you must know what is important for you to accomplish. Then you must set specific and clearly stated goals. If you do not have clearly stated goals, your effort will lack direction and focus. Write your goals to have a record of them.

Characteristics of Appropriate Goals

Each goal you set should state WHAT you will do and WHEN you will accomplish it. Implied in each goal you set is your WILL (determination) to do it. For example, a goal for a research paper might be stated as follows: I will (your determination) finish gathering information for my research paper (what you will do) by November 20 (when you will accomplish it).

Your goals should be:

1. **Within your skills and abilities**
   Knowing your strengths and weaknesses will help you set goals you can accomplish.

2. **Realistic**
   Setting a goal to learn the spelling of three new words a day is realistic. Trying to learn the spelling of fifty new words a day is not realistic.

3. **Flexible**
   Sometimes things will not go the way you anticipate and you may need to change your goal. Stay flexible so when you realize a change is necessary you will be ready to make the change.

4. **Measurable**
   It is important to be able to measure your progress toward a goal. It is important to recognize when you have accomplished your goal and need to go no further. Failure to measure your progress toward a goal and recognize its accomplishment will result in effort that is misdirected and wasted.

5. **Within your control**
   Other than when working as part of a group, accomplishment of your goal should not depend on other students. You can control what you do, but you have little or no control over what others do. You may do what you have to do, but if others don’t, you will not accomplish your goal. Many times your parents, teachers, and counselors will set goals for you. Be accepting when they do. These are people who know what is important for you and are very concerned with your success. They can also help you accomplish the goals they set.

**TIP** Set goals in school that provide you with direction and lead to success.
Regularly Review your Goals and keep them Before you
You should have your goals written in big letters (or cut out some pictures if you are a more visual person) over your study desk, if not on the wall of your bedroom. This will constantly remind you of what you are trying to achieve, and why. If you have given yourself enough reasons why you should achieve your goal, it will show you why you need to sacrifice the time to go back to sitting at your desk, and get on with it.

Prioritise
What often holds people back is not knowing where to start. Sometimes it is so overwhelming that you just don’t bother doing anything at all. If you ever get to that point, ask yourself what is the most important thing you have to do, and do that one thing. When you have completed this, stop again and ask the same question and then do that one thing. Even the tallest mountain is climbed the same way as every other one: one step at a time. Break down your tasks or assignments or study sessions into individual steps and simply deal with them one at a time.

Start Small and Build your Way up
There is no need to start will three hours of studying at a time straight away. Why not increase by 20 minutes each day? Within two weeks, you will have eased your way up to your target. Just start your momentum moving in a positive direction.

It is Never too Late
Just get started right away. Even if you are only one month away from exams, putting in a solid effort for the next month is heaps better than not putting in any effort at all. You have nothing to lose.

Plan your Study Time (have a schedule)
Having a set time really helps you to stay on track.

Reward your Efforts
When you set a small goal, like ‘complete all the Human Biology summaries by Friday night’, give yourself a reward if you complete it on time. It is good fun coming up with the rewards, and gives you something to work towards.
What are my Career Options?
Read through the following points, but do the research yourself. If you want the real benefits, you need to take some steps to find out the things you will need to know. Find out what you need to know and that will lead you to other sources of information, and other questions to ask.

Myths about Career Choices

**Myth 1: You must know now what you are going to do with the rest of your life**
It is impossible to know now exactly what you are going to do for your future. Having said that, you must have some ideas about what you are interested in. You need to know what your options are and what you need to do to pursue those options. It is good to have Plan A, Plan B, Plan C ... and so on. If Plan A doesn't work out, then perhaps it is God closing that door. And when he closes a door he will open another one for you. Remember that his plan is always the best plan.

**Myth 2: Your decision is final**
Whatever the decision you make, you can always change it. Even after your finish school, it is amazing how quickly you can change your mind. Don't feel like you are locked in. If you know your options well enough, a change of mind can be quite easily accommodated because you’ll know what you need to do to pursue that new avenue.

**Myth 3: University is the only way**
In a number of industries, like hospitality and IT, University is becoming less the 'be all and end all'. There are some fantastic colleges out there that offer very good courses, and some will even help you to find that job once you graduate. However, that doesn’t mean that University is not the way to go, it is simply not the ONLY way to go. Do your research thoroughly. In many professions, University IS the only way, and if you are going up against university graduates for a job, you’ll want to have performed very well in your course and have some significant experience.

**Myth 4: The TEE is the only way**
There are other ways of getting to University, if that is what you want to do. An increasing number of students are using the Certificate III at TAFE as an entry to University; Portfolio Entry and the Uni Preparation Course (check out these at ECU and Murdoch) are other pathways, especially if you freak out at the prospect of exams.

The Importance of having Career Goals
You can change your mind, but it is still critical to know what you want and be committed to doing whatever it takes to get there. You need a definite purpose or target, or how do you know if you are on track? A career aim:
1. Gives you a sense of certainty about the future.
2. Relieves the pressure of thinking about what you are going to do.
3. Allows you to make future plans.
4. Gives you a target score to aim at.
How to Research your Career Options

You are surrounded by different careers. Think about the local shopping centre and the different careers involved:

- Architect (designed the centre);
- Engineer (helped design the centre);
- Secretary (works for the Architect);
- Builder (built the centre);
- Painter (painted the centre);
- Interior Decorator (designed the colour schemes and more);
- Signwriter (did the signs);
- Entrepreneur (owns a shop);
- Shop Fitter (made the shop fittings);
- Retail Manager (runs a shop);
- Sales Assistant (works in a shop);
- Centre Manager (runs the centre);
- Cleaner (cleans the centre).

Ask yourself these questions:

1. I wonder what it is like to do that job? Would I like it?
2. What would I need to learn and study to do that job?
3. Who could I talk to, to find out more about that job?

Read

Obtain a copy of the following books:

- The TISC Guide, published by the Tertiary Institutions Service Centre each year. Contact TISC on 9347 8000 or visit their website at www.tisc.edu.au for information on where to purchase a copy.
- The Job Guide, published by the Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations and distributed to Year 10 students each year. Phone 1800 682 133 to order one. Their website http://jobguide.dest.gov.au has all the information.
- Information on TAFE courses is now found on the web. Visit their website at www.tafe.wa.edu.au for course information. Note that TAFE is now called Training WA.

Get your own copy of each book and download course information. **Circle the jobs and the courses you like** the sound of, jot down a couple of sentences to explain why you like them and cross off the ones you don’t like. If you do this over breakfast each day, and you spend ten minutes per day crossing and circling and making notes, it won’t even take you a month to complete going through all sources of information. If you combine this with follow up phone calls, within only a few weeks you will have figured out what you are interested in, and you’ll also know what you need to do to get there. **You’ll be way ahead of the rest, and can concentrate on doing well.**

Attend all Open Days

Go to **all open days** at institutions you’re interested in. Lecture rooms are open for inspection, information tents are set up, talks are given and question sessions are held. Find out as much information as you can, collect all the relevant brochures and speak to as many people as possible.
Where can I get Career Information?

Useful Web Sites
- Curriculum Council
  www.curriculum.wa.edu.au
- Tertiary Institutions Service Centre
  www.tisc.edu.au
- TAFE
  www.tafe.wa.edu.au
- Curtin University
  www.curtin.edu.au
- Edith Cowan University
  www.edu.edu.au
- Murdoch University
  www.choose.murdoch.edu.au
- Notre Dame University
  www.nd.edu.au
- University of W.A.
  www.uwa.edu.au

Career Sites
A range of self-assessment quizzes can be found on the net. They highlight your interests, abilities and personality, then suggest a range of jobs for you to consider. They won’t make the decisions for you, but they are a great starting point. Here are some that you may like to try:
  http://www.getaccess.wa.gov.au
  http://www.ecugreatcareers.com
  http://www.careerkey.org/english/
  http://www.nycareerzone.org
  http://www.careergames.com
  http://www.myfuture.edu.au
  http://www.gradlink.edu.au
  http://www.jobguide.dest.gov.au

TEE Assistance
- TEE Specialists produce a series of Study Guides. Details are at
  www.teespecialists.com.au
- Saturday and holiday TEE revision classes run by Academic Task Force. For details, check out their website at www.academictaskforce.com.au

- Saturday and holiday TEE revision classes run by Academic Associates. For details, check out their website at www.academicassociates.com.au
- Mid-year revision courses are available through Wesley College. Information is available on the Wesley College website at www.wesley.wa.edu.au and click on Wesley Community, then TEE Seminars, and the courses usually run in July through Wesley Extend.
Career Information Centre
A free service open to the general public is at Level 2, City Central Building, 166 Murray Street Mall, Perth, (phone 1800 026 134). Services include:
- JIIG-CAL – computer based career planning tool (bookings needed)
- Career Compass – computer based career program for students aged 12-14 (bookings needed)
- OZJAC – occupational and course research data base
- Videos, DVDs and CR ROMs – on a wide range of occupations, job search, interviews and resumes
- University and TAFE Handbooks
- Private Training Provider information
- Information on Apprenticeships/Traineeships
- Information on writing resumes and job hunting
- Industry specific information
- Internet access for career and training searches

University Entrance
Check out the course information in each of the University Prospectus Guides. The University Guides are published for the start of the Open Days (these usually occur in Term 2):
- Curtin University
  Future Students Centre, Bentley Campus, Kent Street, Bentley, 6102.
  Phone: 9266 100 or visit www.futurestudents.curtin.edu.au
- Edith Cowan University
  Student Recruitment and Careers Office
  Mt Lawley Campus, 2 Bradford St, Mt Lawley, 6050
  Joondalup Campus, 270 Joondalup Dr, Joondalup, 6027.
  Phone: 134 ECU (134 328) or visit www.reachyourpotential.com.au
- Murdoch University
  Prospective Students’ and Admissions Centre, 90 South St. Murdoch, 6150.
  Phone: 1300 MURDOCH (1300 687 3624) or visit www.murdoch.edu.au
- University of W.A.
  Prospective Student Office, Admission Centre, 35 Stirling Hway, Crawley, 6009. Phone: 6488 2477 or visit www.studyat.uwa.edu.au
- University of Notre Dame Australia
  Prospective Students Office, 19 Mouat Street, Fremantle, 6959.
  Phone: 9433 0555 or visit www.nd.edu.au
Setting Targets

TISC Online Website (www.tisc.wa.edu.au)

- This has a TEE Calculator where you can calculate your ATAR. Enter TISC calculator into Google and put in your TEA (a score out of 400, obtained by adding your percentage score of your 4 best TEE subjects (this must include 1 x List A and 1 x List B subject). Put in 2014 as the Year 12 completion date and hit the calculate ATAR key. This gives you a rank which is used to determine your eligibility for University entrance.

- A second link is entitled Main Cut-Off Ranks. By clicking on Curtin, ECU, Murdoch or UWA you can find out all the current cut-offs for entrance into University courses available at each of these Universities.

A man without a goal is like a ship without a rudder.
~ Thomas Carlyle ~

If you don’t know where you are going, you will probably end up somewhere else.
~ Laurence J. Peter ~

When you determined what you want, you have made the most important decision of your life. You have to know what you want in order to attain it.
~ Douglas Lurtan ~

In life, the first thing you must do is decide what you really want. Weigh the costs and the results. Are the results worthy of the costs? Then make up your mind completely and go after your goal with all your might.
~ Alfred A. Montapert ~
ACTIVITY 1: Estimate your ATAR Score

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Semester Mark</th>
<th>Exam Mark</th>
<th>Final Score (75% of exam)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>3</td>
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**Step 1** Estimate your Semester marks, exam marks and final score for each of your subjects.

**Step 2** Choose your best 4 subjects. They MUST be Stage 2 or Stage 3 subjects. Your four MUST include a List A (English or Humanities) and one must be a List B (Maths or Science) even if they are not part of your best four. English or Maths do NOT have to be in your best four. For working out your final score, take 75% or your exam score and add it to 25% of your Semester mark (in Year 12, half your marks come from the TEE Exam, but a high proportion of your school marks come from the Semester 1 and 2 Exams as well). If you are using a 2A/2B subject in your best four (in Year 12), deduct 20% from your final to estimate the impact of scaling (scaling deductions range from 15-25).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Semester Mark</th>
<th>Exam Mark</th>
<th>Final Score (75% of exam)</th>
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<tbody>
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**TEA Score**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TEA Score</th>
<th>ATAR Score (based on 2010 data)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>340 (average of 85%)</td>
<td>98.95 (top 1.05% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>320 (average of 80%)</td>
<td>97.45 (top 2.55% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>300 (average of 75%)</td>
<td>94.85 (top 5.15% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>280 (average of 70%)</td>
<td>90.2 (top 9.8% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>260 (average of 65%)</td>
<td>83.9 (top 16.1% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>240 (average of 60%)</td>
<td>75.9 (top 24.1% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>220 (average of 55%)</td>
<td>67.4 (top 32.6% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>200 (average of 50%)</td>
<td>59.2 (top 40.8% of students)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>180 (average of 45%)</td>
<td>51.35 (top 48.65% of students)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Step 3** Add your 4 marks together to make up a score out of 400 (TEA).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total (out of 400) = TEA</th>
<th>ATAR Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. Organisation

The difference between a good result and a great result are the little things. Here is a list of some of the little things that you can do to maximise your study performance.

Make the Most of your Class Time
To achieve this you should:
1. Listen and take notes
Especially when you hear things like: "You'll need to know this for your exams" or "This will be in the assessment task" or "This is critical" or "You need to know this".
It is often in the in-class discussions that teachers give you hints on what to expect in exams and assessments.

Taking good notes is a three-stage process in which there are certain things you should do before class, during class, and after class. Here are the three stages of note taking and what you should do during each stage.

- Get Ready to Take Notes (Before Class)
Review your notes from the previous class session before you come to class. This will help you remember what was covered and get you ready to understand new information your teacher provides. Complete all assigned readings before you come to class. Your teacher will expect that you have done this and will use and build upon this information. Bring all note taking materials with you to class. Have several pens and pencils as well as your notebook.

- Take Notes (During Class)
Keep your attention focused on what your teacher is saying. Listen for "signal statements" that tell you that what your teacher is about to say is important to write in your notes. Examples of signal statements are "The most important point ..." and "Remember that ...". Be sure to include in your notes information that your teacher repeats or writes on the board. Write quickly so that you can include all the important information in your notes. Do this by writing abbreviated words such as med for medicine, using symbols such as % for percent, and writing short sentences. Place a ? next to the information in your notes which you are unsure about, or where you are unclear about the meaning.

- Rewrite Your Notes (After Class)
Rewrite your notes to make them more complete by changing abbreviated words into whole words, symbols into words, and shortened sentences into longer sentences. Make your notes more accurate by answering any questions you had when writing your notes in class. Use your textbook and reference sources to obtain the information you need to answer your questions. If necessary, ask your teacher or other students for help. Check with other students to be sure you did not leave out important information. Having good class notes will help you to be better prepared for tests.
Research indicates that the amount of information you retain after 30 days when you listen is only 10%; when you take notes it goes up to 40-50%; when you are actively involved AND take notes is up to 90%.

■ **If you don’t understand something, ask.**
If you don’t understand the answer, ask again or see the teacher after class.

2. **Create an ideal study environment** (refer to page 23)
To be more effective when you study you should:

■ **Have a good attitude**
Approach your study from a positive frame of mind. Focus on what you want to achieve and how you’ll feel when you have achieved it.

■ **Study in a quiet environment**
Research shows that today’s music (which beats up to 140 beats per minute) lowers your brain’s ability to retain information. So unless the music has a rhythm of 60 beats per minute (e.g. classical baroque) which can actually help study, background music is not advised. Don’t study in front of the TV, but try to find a quiet, private place.

■ **Be organised**
Have all the equipment and material that you need, and have a place for everything, AND keep it there.

■ **Your study area** should have good lighting, good ventilation, and a comfortable chair. Use good pens. Find out whatever works for you. Pens are the tools of the trade, so spend the extra dollars and get the pens you like. If you regularly use a computer, get a good keyboard.

3. **Take study breaks**
You should take breaks when you study. Most people can concentrate for about 45 minutes to one hour. That is about the time frame to study and then take a break. **Five minutes is a good break time as taking them too often or too long may cause you to lose momentum.** If you go on for too long, you will burn out, and feel like your brain is going numb. You need to keep fresh, or you will not take the information in. The same thing can occur when you work too late at night. **Try working earlier if you can, or getting up early in the morning to study.**
4. **Study for the right amount of time**

Set a minimum amount of time you will study each school night and on weekends, but also set a maximum. Here is a plan that would be suitable for **Year 12 TEE students** for this stage of the year:

**In normal school nights**
- **Monday to Friday**: A minimum of three hours and a maximum of four.
- **Saturday**: Study in your normal school hours and have the night off.
- **Sunday**: Maintain a day of rest

**During school holidays**
- One week – Monday to Saturday: Normal school hours
- Second week: Have a week’s break

Be organised enough not to need to do an ‘all nighter’ in the lead up to the exams. These usually do more harm than good.

5. **Make use of all available resources**

Your teachers are your most valuable resource. Teachers know the material, they know the problems and they know the little things that will give you the edge. **Always ask for help when you need it.** Teachers are absolutely committed to helping you achieve. They are nearly always happy to help, if they can. Libraries, newspapers and study groups are valuable resources.

6. **Keep up to date**

It is very important to **keep-up-to-date** with all your assignments and with making your **summary notes** and your **executive summaries**. Allow time each week or each night to update these sets of notes. It’s far too difficult to do these sets of notes the month before exams. Do them as you go because once you get behind, it is very difficult to catch up.

7. **Get the big picture**

Don’t be satisfied with just remembering your texts. Develop **an understanding** of your work. This understanding will massively improve your exam performance because your answer will flow better.

8. **An easy way to begin**

Start by reading the **syllabus**. See your teacher if they haven’t already given you one. Examiners use these when constructing TEE questions.

9. **Get real life examples**

Stay up-to-date with current events and issues, especially for subjects like English or Geography. Put a plastic sleeve at the start of each subject and place **relevant newspaper clippings** in it. **Read the newspaper when you can** and spend just 5 minutes scanning it for articles.
10. Organise your study notes
There are different ways to store your notes, including the purchase of note books, already divided into different sections (available from Officeworks, for example). This can work well, particularly if you are not the most organised person, and you tend to lose pieces of paper. You do need several of these notebooks (one for each subject); it is more expensive; probably heavier; and a little more restrictive. The following method is recommended as it is the most versatile and works best for most students. All your notes should be on loose leaf and stored in large two-ring lever-arch folders. If you type your notes and print them, hole punch them and store them in the same way. You should have the following:

- One folder, with dividers for all your subjects. Keep your initial notes, handouts and assignments on all the topics you are currently working on at school in this folder. This is the folder that you take to and from school. It is better to have the one folder to reduce the weight of things that you need to carry around with you, and it keeps everything in the one location.

- One folder per subject at home with all your previous initial notes in it. Use the dividers to keep them organised in topics, with handouts and returned assignments in topics, and a section for tests and exams. Don’t forget to have a look at these prior to your next test or exam. No matter how well or how badly you have done in the past, you can always reinforce the good things you have accomplished in the past, and learn something about how to do something better by looking back over previous papers.

- One folder per subject at home for your summary notes and exam preparation. Keep these organised and use file dividers as well. Put a large divider behind your summary notes and store your executive summary here (for the difference between these, refer to 'The Four Step Study Formula'). Store copies of practice papers and other revision material here, in a designated section.

You may not need as many folders as this. Come up with your own system, if you like. The most important thing is that you have a system and that it is clearly and uniformly labelled. However, the use of folders and dividers is highly recommended.
5. Have a Good Place to Study

You need a good study place to be prepared to study. You should be able to answer YES to all of the following questions:

1. Is my Study Place available to me whenever I need it?
Your Study Place does you little good if you cannot use it when you need it. If you are using a Study Place that you must share with others for any reason, work out a schedule so that you know when you can use it.

2. Is my Study Place free from interruptions?
It is important to have uninterrupted study time. You may have to hang a DO NOT DISTURB sign on the door or take the phone off the hook.

3. Is my Study Place free from distractions?
Research shows that most students study best in a quiet environment. If you find that playing a stereo or TV improves your mood, keep the volume low.

4. Does my Study Place contain all the study materials I need?
Be sure your Study Place includes reference sources and supplies such as pens and pencils, paper, ruler, calculator, and whatever else you might need. If you use a computer for your schoolwork, it should be in your Study Place.

5. Does my Study Space contain a large enough desk or table?
While working on an assignment or studying for a test, use a desk or table that is large enough to hold everything you need. Allow enough room for writing and try to avoid clutter.

6. Does my Study Place have enough storage space?
You need enough room to store your study materials. Be sure you have enough storage space to allow you to keep your desktop or other work surface clear of unnecessary materials that can get in the way.

7. Does my Study Place have a comfortable chair?
A chair that is not comfortable can cause discomfort or pain that will interfere with your studying. A chair that is too comfortable might make you sleepy. Select a chair in which you can sit for long periods while maintaining your attention.

8. Does my Study Place have enough light?
The amount of light you need depends on what you are doing. The important thing is that you can clearly see what you need to see without any strain or discomfort.

9. Does my Study Place have a comfortable temperature?
If your Study Place is too warm, you might become sleepy. If it is too cold, your thinking may slow down and become unclear. Select a temperature at which your mind and body function best. Having a good Study Place is important for good studying.
6. Effective Study Habits

A habit is ‘a regular tendency or practice’. **Study is NOT something that you can do in the week before exams or the night before the test.**

ACTIVITY 2: Do you have good study habits?
Answer the following questions and add up your score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>All the time</th>
<th>Sometimes</th>
<th>Very rarely</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have difficulty deciding where to start</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am disturbed by noises outside</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I leave everything until the last minute</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I do all-nighters for assignments</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have no study plan</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I avoid study in the holidays</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My notes are mixed up</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t do summaries of my class notes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t read all the handouts I’m given</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I often forget to do homework</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study on the bed for comfort</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study in the lounge room for company</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I study in front of the computer</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have the radio on when I study</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I never get all my work done when I say I will</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can’t understand my notes</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put my social life before my study</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I put part-time work before my study</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I daydream when I am at my desk</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t see any purpose in studying</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am not sure when my assignments are due</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I study in big, long sessions | 2 | 1 | 0
I’m not sure how to study | 2 | 1 | 0
I hate making study notes | 2 | 1 | 0
I study, but I can’t remember what I study | 2 | 1 | 0

**Total – add your score for each column**

**Grand Total – add your column totals**

To find out if your study habits are effective, read the description that matches your score.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 – 10</td>
<td>You are doing really well! It can never hurt to get a few more tips though.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 – 20</td>
<td>You are clearly a good student, but there is room for improvement. You would benefit from fine tuning your studying techniques.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 – 30</td>
<td>Not bad at all. By applying what you can learn about study techniques, you will greatly improve.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 – 40</td>
<td>There is some work to be done here. You have a fair idea of what is going on, but you are lacking structure and time management skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 – 50</td>
<td>You have some serious work to do. Don’t panic though. If you start now, there is time to make a difference. Take your time and work on one area at a time. By learning how to study, you are more likely to be focused when you sit down and do it.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


You can’t cram your way to success. Achieving great results comes from hard work and preparation – in fact, from **sustained hard work**. You must start to develop good study habits now, rather than waiting till the last moment before you get serious.
7. Overcoming Procrastination

What is the Killer of Effective Study Habits?
It’s called procrastination. This is when we put off doing our study and find other things to do. We are all guilty of doing this from time to time. However, excessive procrastination can result in guilt feelings about not doing a task when it should be done. It can also cause anxiety since the task still needs to be done. Further, excessive procrastination can cause poor performance if the task is completed without sufficient time to do it well.

Why do Students Procrastinate?
There are many reasons – here are the most common:

1. Perfectionism
A student's standard of performance may be so high for a task that it does not seem possible to meet that standard.

2. Fear of Failure
A student may lack confidence and fear that he/she will be unable to accomplish a task successfully.

3. Confusion
A student may be unsure about how to start a task or how it should be completed. No clear direction.

4. Task Difficulty
A student may lack the skills and abilities needed to accomplish a task or may lack the knowledge about how to study.

5. Poor Motivation
A student may have little or no interest in completing a task because he/she finds the task boring or lacking in relevance or may lack the discipline.
6. **Difficulty Concentrating**
A student may have too many things around that distract him/her from doing a task.

7. **Task Unpleasantness**
A student may dislike doing what a task requires.

8. **Lack of Priorities**
A student may have little or no sense about which tasks are most important to do. This can occur by looking at all the tasks as one big challenge, rather than breaking them down into smaller, manageable ones.

**So what most often leads to procrastination?**

**Disorganization**

This would be the **number one characteristic of unsuccessful people**.

Disorganization is apparent in three main areas:

1. **Poor time management and a lack of routine.**
2. **Forgetfulness.**
3. **Poor study environment.**

**How Do I Know if I Procrastinate Excessively?**
You procrastinate excessively if you agree with five or more of the following statements:

1. I often put off starting a task I find difficult.
2. I often give up on a task as soon as I start to find it difficult.
3. I often wonder why I should be doing a task.
4. I often have difficulty getting started on a task.
5. I often try to do so many tasks at once that I cannot do any of them.
6. I often put off a task in which I have little or no interest.
7. I often try to come up with reasons to do something other than a task I have to do.
8. I often ignore a task when I am not certain about how to start it or complete it.
9. I often start a task but stop before completing it.
10. I often find myself thinking that if I ignore a task, it will go away.
11. I often cannot decide which of a number of tasks I should complete first.
12. I often find my mind wandering to things other than the task on which I am trying to work.
If procrastination is the opposite of good study habits, then the way to develop good study habits would be to **counteract the causes**.

**What Can I Do About Excessive Procrastination?**

1. Motivate yourself to work on a task with thoughts such as "There is no time like the present," or "Nobody's perfect."
2. Prioritize the tasks you have to do.
3. Commit yourself to completing a task once started.
4. Reward yourself whenever you complete a task.
5. Work on tasks at the times you work best.
6. Break large tasks into small manageable parts.
7. Work on tasks as part of a study group.
8. Get help from teachers and other students when you find a task difficult.
9. Make a schedule of the tasks you have to do and stick to it.
10. Eliminate distractions that interfere with working on tasks.
11. Set reasonable standards that you can meet for a task.
12. Take breaks when working on a task so that you do not wear down.
13. Work on difficult and/or unpleasant tasks first.
14. Work on a task you find easier after you complete a difficult task.
15. Find a good place to work on tasks.

Above all, **think positively and get going**. Once you are into a task, you will probably find that it is more interesting than you thought it would be and not as difficult as you feared.

You will feel increasingly relieved as you work toward its accomplishment and will come to look forward to the feeling of satisfaction you will experience when you have completed the task.
If you find that you lack motivation to study, welcome to the club. Just about every student experiences this problem at one time or another. Motivation is important for good studying. When you are motivated, you will find it easy to stay focused over a period of time. When you are not motivated, you will not only find it difficult to stay focused, but you will find it difficult to get started in the first place. Here are some ways to increase your motivation to study:

1. **Reward yourself for studying**
   For example, after a successful study session, have a treat like a nice big ice cream cone. Go crazy and add some cherries and nuts.

2. **Study with your friends**
   Don’t make it party time, but you can have fun as you do this.

3. **Remind yourself of your long-term goals**
   The achievement of your goals will most probably require educational success. Educational success requires studying.

4. **Eliminate distractions**
   If you are surrounded by things you would rather do than study, you will probably do those things instead of studying.

5. **Develop interest in what you have to study**
   This will make studying more enjoyable.

6. **Take breaks**
   When you feel that you need to take a break, try to stop at a point where you are at something that is easy for you. This will make it easier for you to resume studying after your break.

7. **Establish a comfortable environment**
   You will be more inclined to study if you feel comfortable.
8. **Establish reasonable goals for a study session**
   You probably won’t get very far if you look at your study session as "mission impossible."

9. **Use a motivational poster**
   Place the poster where you can see it as you study. The poster should include positive words and a picture depicting success. You can buy one or even make your own. You can also read inspirational stories about real people who have achieved success through effort.

10. **Just do it**
   You will feel a lot better than if you are worried about getting it done.

**Consider the consequences of not studying.**

9. **Ten Habits of Successful Students**

   Successful students have good study habits. They apply these habits to all of their classes. Read about each study habit. Work to develop any study habit you do not have. Successful students:

1. **Try not to do too much studying at one time**
   If you try to do too much studying at one time, you will tire and your studying will not be very effective. Space the work you have to do over shorter periods of time. Taking short breaks will restore your mental energy.

2. **Plan specific times for studying**
   Study time is any time you are doing something related to schoolwork. It can be completing assigned reading, working on a paper or project, or studying for a test. Schedule specific times throughout the week for your study time.

3. **Try to study at the same times each day**
   Studying at the same times each day establishes a routine that becomes a regular part of your life, just like sleeping and eating. When a scheduled study time comes up during the day, you will be mentally prepared to begin studying.
4. **Set specific goals for their study times**
   Goals will help you stay focused and monitor your progress. Simply sitting down to study has little value. You must be very clear about what you want to accomplish during your study times.

5. **Start studying when planned**
   You may delay starting your studying because you don't like an assignment or think it is too hard. A delay in studying is called "procrastination." If you procrastinate for any reason, you will find it difficult to get everything done when you need to. You may rush to make up the time you wasted getting started, resulting in careless work and errors.

6. **Work on the assignment they find most difficult first**
   Your most difficult assignment will require the most effort. Start with your most difficult assignment since this is when you have the most mental energy.

7. **Review their notes before beginning an assignment**
   Reviewing your notes can help you make sure you are doing an assignment correctly. Also, your notes may include information that will help you complete an assignment.

8. **Tell their friends not to call them during their study times**
   Two study problems can occur if your friends call you during your study times. First, your work is interrupted. It is not that easy to get back to what you were doing. Second, your friends may talk about things that will distract you from what you need to do. Here's a simple idea – turn off your cell phone during your study times. Call them back once you have finished.

9. **Call someone when they have difficulty with an assignment**
   This is a case where "two heads may be better than one."

10. **Review their schoolwork over the weekend**
    Yes, weekends should be fun time. But there is also time to do some review. This will help you be ready to go on Monday morning when another school week begins.

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**TIP**  
Find out what the teacher wants, do that, and exceed their expectations.
10. Study Techniques

Getting up and actually doing the study, that is the hard part. The best way to get started is to have a plan and just do it. There are no tricks or formulas; it takes willpower. However there are ways to remind yourself of why you should study, which can help to strengthen your willpower, as well as ways to reward yourself and keep going. Books such as ‘Treading Water while the Sharks are Circling’ by Jim Elliott or ‘Mastering the TEE’ by Peter Sheahan and Liz Ramsay are a great place to begin, and there are courses run by Academic Task Force, Academic Associates and Wesley Extend.

Active Study

A large number of students mistake reading their textbook or their notes for the act of study. Most of what you read does NOT wind its way into your memory. You must do something to successfully plant information into your mind so that you can use it again later. Some examples of active study that will make the study worthwhile follow. Different techniques apply better to different subjects, but the key is regular use.

■ Summarise topics
When you get to the end of a major topic in a subject, an important task is to make a summary of the whole topic, for two reasons.
1. To make a summary you will need to think what the essence of the topic is all about. One way of working out what belongs in the summary is to think of the sheet as the one page of notes that you could be allowed to bring into the test. Only the absolute essentials should be written down.
2. In revising later, you will have a much shorter amount of material to read and to remember.

■ Practise examples
In Science and Maths, it is useful to try extra examples of problems. The library will have books where you can find some of these, or your teacher can assist. This allows you to become familiar with the different types of problems and the different ways that questions can be asked, so that you have less chance of getting them wrong.

■ Make definition and formula cards
In most subjects, there are formal definitions to remember and some subjects also include an array of formulae. It can be useful to put the terms on one side of a card and its definition on the other. This can also be applied to learning vocabulary in Indonesian. The act of making the cards helps you to learn the information, and later use of the cards to test yourself further improves your knowledge, and can be used by someone else to test you.

■ Practice drawing diagrams
Students often copy important diagrams and graphs into their notes, and then never draw them again until they front up to an exam. Then they are drawing that diagram for only the second time. Not surprisingly, bits are missed out or incorrectly labelled. This can be overcome by going over the
diagrams a few times. It should be done on scrap paper, checked, and thrown away. It is the **practise** of drawing it a few times that is important.

- **Say things aloud**
  It can help to **read certain passages out aloud**. It especially helps in learning difficult terms – most notably those that are hard to spell or pronounce. It works because you are using more of your brain, your ears and mouth, rather than just your eyes. **Romans 10:17 says that even “faith comes by hearing the message ...”**

- **Go over assessed work**
  When you get an assignment back, it should be possible for you to identify what elements of it did not gain full marks. Use the marker’s comments (if there are any) as a guide to study those aspects of the subject where you lost marks. If you can’t tell why you got a certain mark, you should go and talk to the person who marked your work. This includes the times when you got a high mark and you’re not really sure how you got it. The objective is to make sure that next time you are able to **learn from your previous attempts**, so that you can do better. The worst thing you can do is to get embarrassed and throw away or ignore your previous work.

- **Do some active reading**
  There are occasions where just reading for its own sake is valuable – such as in English or Literature. But mostly your reading should include some action like taking notes, underlining, highlighting (or **all of these**). This way **you are likely to remember far more of what you are reading.**

**The 4 Step Study Formula**

**Step 1 – Initial Notes**

**Initial Notes** consist of the following:
1. In-class notes.
2. Homework.
3. Textbook questions.

Initial notes are the first round of personal notes you make. They are the **summaries you are asked to do** for homework or the textbook questions you are required to answer. They are the notes that you might jot down in class while the teacher is talking and/or they are the teacher’s notes put on the board or in a handout. Initial notes must:
1. Be very **detailed**.
2. Have **examples** to illustrate the points.
3. Include the **date and have clear headings**.

A long and detailed set of notes is difficult to study and memorise for tests or exams, and so a summary is needed.

**Step 2 – Summary Notes**

This involves organising and summarising your initial notes, re-writing **in your own words the main points** from your initial notes. When summarising you are cutting out less important information and listing the most important information in point form.
The keys to a **good set of summary notes** are:
1. Notes should be written under topics (or headings) and then topics within the topics (or sub-headings).
2. Include only relevant information.
3. Headings, sub-headings and using point form helps make the notes easy to read.
4. Maintain the same system throughout all of your notes. Memorising becomes even easier if you simplify your summary notes more.

**Step 3 – Executive Summary**
This is simply a summary of your summary notes. It is the set of notes you wish to study from, and should **only include the main points**. These will be far easier to remember. These main headings should trigger the more detailed information that you included in your initial notes and summary notes. This **executive summary should look like an essay plan** for an exam question.

**Step 4 – Memorise**
It is important to remember a number of main points under a particular topic. Some students find the **rapid repetitive memory technique** helpful.
1. Take a clean sheet of paper.
2. Review the executive summary.
3. Write down 1 – 5 (depending on the number of points) down the page in **several columns**.
4. Begin to list the 5 (in this example) main points as quickly as you can on the first set of numbers. Compare against original list and add any points that you might have missed.
5. Covering up the first list, do it again.
6. Continue to do this with all sets of numbers
7. Repeat again the next day, to see if you can remember all the points.

**Memorisation**
To get the best results, the following four steps apply: first, you must have an initial set of notes (initial notes); you must then organise and summarise them under headings (summary notes). In order to make remembering your summary easier, you must further simplify that summary, including only the main points (executive summary), and finally you must memorise it. Whether you use numbers, graphs, flow charts or acronyms, these four critical steps are needed to prepare for exams.
**Acronyms**
Simplifying the main points into key words (which is done when making an executive summary) becomes very beneficial when using acronyms. Some people find it much easier to remember a word made up of the letters which start the key points that you are trying to remember. These letters jog your memory, which can then become the outline of your answer.

- **Identify the key word from each point**
  For example, the five key arguments for deregulation could be: *Flexibility; Unemployment; Standards; Suitability; Agenda*

- **Choose one letter from each word and form a new word**
  Juggle the letters around to make a word that is easy to remember. In the example used, the letters are in bold. In this case it was the first letter of each word, which is ideal. The word to remember is **FUSSA**. This then reminds us that F stands for Flexibility, U stands for Unemployment, and so on.

- **Memorise that word**

- **Memorise what each letter stands for**
  Use the rapid repetitive memory technique (covered on page 23), but replace the numbers with your letters. The word **FUSSA** is the acronym, i.e. the word formed by using the letters of other words.

The most **successful students tend to use multiple study techniques**. They work out which ones work best for them and combine different techniques all together. Different techniques suit certain subjects.

**Mind Maps (sometimes called Concept Maps – Tony Buzan)**
These are a more **visual method of study**. To make a mind map, you start with a blank page, put the central topic in the middle of the page, representing it as an image, and extend the main points like tree branches from the centre.
The minor points are extended from these, out to the outer parts of the paper. As this is a visual tool, it is hard to explain it in words. They do enable the student to picture the concept in their mind, and allow them to see the connections between the various points. This method actually duplicates how the brain works. It can be helpful to draw the mind map up on a poster and stick it up in your room.

**Audio Notes**

This involves you recording your notes and listening to them again later. It is good to record your executive summary in this way and to add examples and relevant statistics. Another advantage of this method is that you can listen to them while you are getting ready for school, or on your way to school, on the bus etc. By speaking out the notes and listening to them again, you are using more of your senses to remember the material; and you are going through your notes more frequently. It can also be a quick way of jogging your memory just before the exams. Voice recordings tend to work better if you: speak slowly and very clearly; stand up while you are speaking and pretend that you’re giving a speech on the topic; say it as though you’re teaching it; speak in an enthusiastic tone, and make sure your notes are very well organised.

**Study Groups**

A study group is a group of students who come together to share study notes and ideas. You really learn something when you have to teach it to someone else. They work best when:

1. Members study the same subject (a group for each subject works best).
2. Members should be the same, or higher ability than you.
3. 2-4 people are enough (too many is confusing).

**How do study groups work?**

1. Each week, every member presents a 10 minute talk on a subject (as though they are teaching it).
2. Set weekly assignments to research real-life examples to support current topics.
3. Discuss the topics and texts you are reading.
4. Practice tests and essays and mark each other’s work.
5. Invite a teacher to come and sit in.

N.B. Only invite people who are serious. You don’t want your study group to become a chat session.
Flash Cards
Flash cards can help you remember information such as the meanings of vocabulary words, mathematical formulas, history facts, and spelling. They are a great tool for remembering information. Flash card strategies include:

■ Make flash cards as you learn and study
Carry a stack of blank cards with you (3” x 5” size works well). Whenever you come across a piece of information you want to remember, write the information on a card. Organize your cards into decks, one for each subject or topic. If you place cards for different subjects or topics in the same deck, you will only become confused.

■ Use both sides of a card when appropriate
When learning a new vocabulary word, write the word to be learned on the front of the card and a short two or three word definition on the back of the card. For a historical fact, you might write "George Washington" on the front and "first U.S. president" on the back. Flip the cards over from time to time. Sometimes you will see "George Washington" and will have to remember that he was the first President of the U.S. Or will see "first U.S. president" and have to remember that it was George Washington. This strengthens recall.

■ Use flashcards in several different colours
Use colours to help you recall a characteristic about the information on a flash card. If you are using flash cards to remember vocabulary, use a different colour for words that have different connotations. Positive words such as delightful, excellent, and nutritious could go on blue cards. Negative words such as resentful, suspicious, and threatened could go on red cards. You can use neutral colours such as white or tan for words that are not positive or negative. The particular colours don't matter as long as you are consistent.

■ Illustrate the cards
Draw pictures on a card or cut pictures from a magazine and paste them on the card. The more you work at making a card distinctive and interesting, the easier you will find it to recall the information on the card.

■ Don't put too much information on any one card
The biggest mistake students' make is putting too much information on a single flash card. Each card should contain just one piece of information.

■ Carry your cards with you
Review your cards whenever you have a chance. You can review your cards while eating a meal, riding on the school bus, waiting on a line, during long trips, in bed before you go to sleep, and so on. Make reviewing your cards a daily habit like brushing your teeth or taking a shower.

■ Change the order of the cards frequently
Shuffle the cards each time you review them. Questions on a test about the information on your cards may come in any order. If you always study the cards in the same order, it will be difficult for you to remember a piece of information when it is not in the order you studied.
11. Written Assessments

Why do we Assess Student Learning?
Through your assessments your teacher can provide you with feedback that can help you to improve your performance. They also generate a score or grade and show how well you are achieving the subject’s outcomes.

What are the Benefits of Assessment?
Assessment:
1. Motivates students.
3. Gives students the opportunity to apply and practice skills and concepts.
4. Provides direction and learning targets.
5. Provides evidence of achievement of learning outcomes.
6. Enables student’s work to be graded.

Approaching Assessments
Approach them positively. Start as soon as you receive your assessment.

**TIP** If you are having problems at any stage, talk to your teacher (at an appropriate time) and get help.

**Preparation**
- Read all the assessment tasks you are required to do (it helps to write notes all over the assessment sheets).
- After your first lesson, begin your first assessment straight away.
- Check that you understand the directions and key terms.
- When your teacher explains the assessment, take copious notes so when you read them later, it will be clear what you need to do.
- Ask questions. If you looked at the assessment earlier, you may be better prepared, and be able to get a hold of the resources that you need.
- Figure out what you know already; re-read your class notes and do some basic research and reading.
- Approach your teacher to sort out any ambiguous terms or to clarify any issues related to the content or format or presentation. Do this by identifying specific issues and asking well thought out questions.

**Semester Planning**
- Put all your assessment due dates for all your subjects onto a calendar/wall planner.
- Make a date to complete the first draft of each assessment (well before the assignment is due).
Look at the ‘overall picture’ and make adjustments so that you do not have any periods when you will be overloaded.

Break the semester planner into a **weekly timetable**, which indicate the days and times that you will tackle each subject.

Reserve **regular revision blocks** for each of your subjects into your weekly planner. If you are having difficulty working this into you schedule, why not try getting up earlier and doing an hour before you go to school?

**Research**
- Work out the skills and knowledge that you already have.
- Identify the gaps in your skills and knowledge. What skills may you need to develop? **What do you need to find out and where can you find it?**
- Consider the direction of your assignment. **What approach are you going to take?**
- Set **boundaries and limits** for the amount of studying and research in gathering the information.
- Accept that there may be some ‘chaos’ at first as you develop skills, search for information or generally get started on your approach.
- Consider your time management (and **set down a set starting time and date**) particularly if you have a tendency to procrastinate. It is better to do something imperfectly, than to do nothing flawlessly. Do things as best as you possibly can.

**Writing your Assessment**
- Ensure that you have something worthwhile to say.
- Be clear about the **purpose** of the writing.
- Make a **plan** for your assignment. Make sure that you are aware of the conventions of the form of the assessment that you are undertaking, e.g. essay, report, case study.
- Consider your **point of view** in relation to the assessment.
Check your sources carefully. Are they credible and reliable? Be especially critical of internet material, such as the use of Wikipedia.

Check your teacher’s expectations for the requested writing style. Do you need to use first person or third person, for example. In most cases, avoid a ‘journalistic’ style of writing, or writing the way you may speak. Avoid generalisations, emotive words and colloquial expressions or slang phrases. Make sure that you write using a proper paragraph structure and check your spelling.

Write a draft and edit it. You may complete more than one draft before you are satisfied that the assignment is completed. Ask yourself the question, is this the best that you can do? If the answer is yes, then you have finished. Be sure to edit your final copy carefully and check spelling, grammar, punctuation and referencing.

Be aware of your reader. Is your writing interesting, relevant and meaningful?

Have you answered the question, the whole question, and nothing but the question?

If you need to prepare a title, make sure that it matches the content of your assessment.

If needed, use a cover sheet. Include your name, the subject, teacher and date due. Avoid plastic folders (these slip and slide and can get lost).

If unsure, show your teacher your work ‘in progress’. Check that you are on the right track. Teachers like to see the evidence of planning, note-taking and drafting.

Emphasise the process not just the product aspect that teachers want to see as part of learning and assessment.

Check that you are presenting the Bibliography correctly. Does the teacher require you to cite all your sources/web pages etc? Do you know the required layout/format for listing your sources? Any sources of information which you use should be listed at the end of your piece of work, in the correct format.

Check the presentation requirements (i.e. whether it should be handwritten or word-processed). Does the teacher have specific requirements about the font, font size, double spacing, margins, etc.?

Do NOT plagiarise. This refers to the case where a student copies someone else’s work and passes it off as his or her own. This may be done either by copying directly (cut and pasting), without acknowledgement, or by re-wording the ideas and not giving credit to the original source. This is never allowed and will receive a significant penalty, if detected.
Critical Thinking
Many assessments involve some degree of critical thinking. Critical thinking can occur when you are:
■ Planning and thinking about your task.
■ Identifying and locating sources of information (see the librarian).
■ Deciding on the relevance of the information.
■ Applying the information to the set task.
■ Establishing and expressing your main ideas.
■ Preparing a well-reasoned argument appropriate to the task.
■ Putting aside your own assumptions and bias in the communication of ideas.
■ Including the evidence collected with your conclusions and including relevant examples.
■ Organising your information so that it is clear, logically expressed and convincing.
■ Reviewing your work to make sure that you have covered all significant parts of the topic. Make sure you have addressed the question comprehensively and correctly.
■ Expressing your material in an **appropriate format**, e.g. essay, report.

■ Writing appropriately – both **style and language**.

**Assessment Checklist**

■ Have you developed a plan for completing all the assignments for the semester?

■ Did you closely analyse the assessment tasks, and break it down into its different components and requirements?

■ Have you read the set texts, references and taken notes?

■ Are you clear about the approach you will take?

■ Did you read and **research widely**?

■ Have you put in place things like **deadlines** to avoid procrastination?

■ Have you made an assessment, essay or report plan?

■ Have you decided how much you are going to devote to the various parts of the assessment?

■ Have you written a draft and **edited it carefully**?

■ Have you had **someone else read through it** to check it?

■ Have you addressed the assessment task, and **answered the question**?

■ Did you submit the assessment on time and in the **correct format**?

■ Have you **kept a copy** of your assessment?

■ Will you go through the assessment carefully, once it is marked, to pick up pointers for next time, **so that you can improve in some area**?

"Try not to become a man of success, but rather try to become a man of value."  
- Albert Einstein.
**Keywords**

Note the differences in the keywords when you approach questions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compare</td>
<td>Are the things alike (similar) or are there important differences? Which is best? Why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contrast</td>
<td>Look for the differences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Criticise</td>
<td>Use evidence to support your opinion on the value or merit of the theories, facts or views of others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Define</td>
<td>Give the meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Describe</td>
<td>Write in detail.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiate</td>
<td>Explain the difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discuss</td>
<td>Write about the important aspects of the topic in more detail. Consider the arguments for and against.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distinguish</td>
<td>Explain the difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Judge the importance or success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Explain</td>
<td>Make clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Illustrate</td>
<td>Give examples which make the point clear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpret</td>
<td>Explain the meaning in your own words, referring to the source.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justify</td>
<td>Give reasons to support an argument or action.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline</td>
<td>Choose the most important aspects of the topic.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relate</td>
<td>Show the connection between things.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
<td>Write briefly the main points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarize</td>
<td>Bring together the main points.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trace</td>
<td>Show how something has developed from its origins.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Referencing**

A list of all sources of information should be provided at the end of every piece of work. Items should be listed in alphabetical order, by author, if there is one, or by title if there is no author. For example:

**Books**

Humble, R.  *The Voyage of Magellan.*  

**Magazine**

Talbot, S.  “Peace Conference”, *Time Australia.*  
Vol. 6, No 45, 1 November 1991, p.20.

**Encyclopedia Article**


**CD-ROM Reference**

Moore, Don “History of Machines”, *The Way Things Work 2.0 [CD-ROM]*  

**Internet Article**

12. Examinations

Preparing for Exams

■ Timetable
You should allow plenty of time to study for your exams. Be aware of when your exams are when you are doing your weekly planning and always know what is coming up at least four weeks in advance. **Don’t leave it all to the last minute.** A little bit of study over a long period of time is better than a lot of study in a short time.

■ Memorise
You should be memorising your executive summary leading up to the exams. This means you should have done your executive summary well before the exam. This is simply a summary of your summary notes, and only includes the main points (i.e. the key words and phrases) because they will be far easier to remember.

When you are able to remember the main points in an exam, it will usually trigger the more detailed information (in your notes) that you have learned.

■ Past papers and practice essays
Past papers and practice essays are valuable in your exam preparation. Not only will they give you a good idea of the types of questions that will be asked, they also test your knowledge of the material and get you used to the timing.

■ Use the marking criteria
If possible, get a copy of the marking criteria. Ask your teachers for a rough explanation of what markers expect to see.

■ Glossary of terms
There are many different terms used in questions, such as ‘explain’ or ‘evaluate’ and each is asking for a different response. It is essential that you know what each one means. Ask your teachers.

■ The night before
Study the night before is very beneficial. It should be aimed at memorising your executive summaries, not introducing new material. Avoid introducing new material as it may well confuse you as well as add to your levels of stress.

During the Exam
Timing Issues

■ Use all the available time. Don’t daydream.

■ Take advantage of every minute. You have spent all these years at school to get you here. **Don’t waste a second.**

■ Stick to your finishing times for each question.
■ If you run out of time, finish off the answer in point form. Use asterisks and sub-points if you have to.

**TIP** Write your planned finishing times above all the questions, to avoid over-answering one question at the expense of another.

**Style Issues**
■ Have a clear strategy. Go into the exam knowing how you plan to approach it.

■ Attempt all questions. Mark the questions that you can’t answer and come back to them.

■ Know the weightings of each question. Don’t go overtime on a question worth 10 marks at the expense of one worth 20 marks.

■ Don’t over-answer a question, attempting to score the last one or two marks at the expense of another question. The first few marks are always easier to get than the last few.

■ Answer the questions you are most confident about first. You wouldn’t want to be left short of time on a question you’re very competent in. Doing this will also build your confidence as the exam goes on.

■ Stick to your plans.

■ Assume the examiners know nothing about the subject when you give your answers.

■ Don’t waste time on really wordy answers. Short, concise answers are usually best.

■ Take mini 30-second breaks at the end of each section. Stretch out your writing hand. This will allow you to clear your head and rest your hand ready for the next question.

**TIP** Make full use of all the available reading times in exams, reading each question TWICE.

**Other Issues**
■ Try to avoid making spelling mistakes, especially with the major terms, concepts or names.

■ If you get a mental block, take a couple of deep breaths and try again; move on and come back to it later. Ask yourself: who, what, how, why, when?

■ Remember that examiners are not trying to trick you.
Managing Exam Stress
This kind of stress comes in the days leading up to the exam and on exam day. **There are a number of things you can do to minimise exam stress:**

- **Light revision**
  Avoid introducing new or heavy material to your brain the night before or on the morning of the exam. You are likely to feel overwhelmed by new material such a short time before the exam. **Spend the time consolidating the main topics and memorising your executive summaries.**

- **Vitamins**
  Look after yourself in the lead up to exams. Stress can lower your body’s immune system making you susceptible to colds, coughs, headaches. Some people believe in Vitamin C supplements and fish oil tablets (often referred to in health circles as ‘brain food’), or multi-vitamins. The last thing you need is to be unwell during exams, so it is worth a try. Stay warm and dry, as much as you can.

- **Sleep**
  **Under no circumstances** should you ever try to do an all nighter. Research indicates drastic reductions in our ability to function properly when we are fatigued. Attempt to **get a good eight hours sleep.** It is much more effective to set the alarm early during your revision timetable, and study early in the morning (when you are fresh). This allows you to go through the key topics before the exam.

- **Eat a light breakfast**
  Light does not mean small. You definitely don’t want to be hungry during an exam. **Eating light simply means not eating greasy foods.** Avoid takeaway breakfasts and big, heavy fried breakfasts. These are not brain foods. Have some cereal, some toast and some fresh fruit.

- **Avoid sugar**
  **Avoid soft drinks and confectionary that is high in sugar.** Your sugar levels will spike and your mind will begin to race directly after your ‘sugar hit, making it very difficult to concentrate. Then your sugar levels will plummet and you will feel tired – not a good way to be during an exam.

- **Avoid pre-exam complaint sessions**
  Don’t join in a conversation with people who like to **compare what little work they have done in preparation for an exam.** Even though they pretend to be proud of it, they are really scared like everyone else.
Stay hydrated
Dehydration causes a massive reduction in the capability of our short-term memory, so have water before an exam and take in a bottle with you. But be careful not to drink too much water before the exam or you might find that you have to visit the toilet several times.

Breathe
Butterflies and anxiety can be overcome by taking in some deep breaths. Just stop for 30 seconds and take some deep breaths.

Exam Techniques
What should you do on the day of the exam?
■ On the morning of the exam, make sure you eat something, but not so much that it makes you sleepy.
■ Wear a watch in case there is no clock in the exam room.
■ Make sure you allow plenty of time for things like traffic jams or parking problems, but don’t arrive so early that you make yourself nervous.
■ Quietly read through your notes. If you can, avoid talking to others about the exam. Statements such as “... there’s bound to be a question on ...” or “... most people failed this exam last year ...” are all guaranteed to panic you.

TIP Read each question carefully, and in the second reading, go back over it and underline the key words. Many students have misinterpreted questions or overlooked things due to anxiety at the start of the exam, because they are racing through hoping to find the things they have studied.

What should you do during the exam?
Normally, you will be given reading time to read the instructions before the exam starts. Make sure that you know all of the following:
■ The number of questions and whether they are arranged in sections.
■ How many questions in total you must answer, and how many from each section.
■ Are there any compulsory questions? Clearly mark these.
■ Are you asked to answer questions in any particular order?
■ How many marks is each question worth?
■ What types of questions are there?
■ How are your answers to be recorded?
Plan your time carefully and accurately and stick to your plan
Work out how much time you should allocate to each section/question. Failure to do this can result in questions being left out or rushed through. Try to leave time at the end for checking. You will receive no marks for questions you have not attempted. **If you do run out of time, write short notes outlining your answers.** It will at least give the examiner some idea of your knowledge.

**TIP** Never spend too much time finishing one question at the expense of not starting another question. The first marks are easier to obtain than the last few.

Carefully Read the Questions
If there is a choice of questions, choose those you are best able to answer.

- Make your decision quickly. Tick those that you think you can do. Do the questions you find easiest first as this will give you confidence.

- Make sure your choice of questions accurately follows the instructions. For example: "One question from Section A and two from Section B."

- Ensure that you number your answers correctly.

**TIP** Plan your response before writing.

Answer the Questions
**Essay/Short Answer Questions**

- Analyse the question carefully. Underline the key words etc.

- Make an outline (include the major arguments, minor points, examples etc). Before you start your answer, make sure you know how it will end.

- Write clearly and succinctly.

- Take care with handwriting, spelling and grammar.

- Does your answer meets the specified length (if there is one)?

**TIP** You can’t get more than full marks for any question (and rarely that).

**Objective Questions** (e.g. multiple-choice)

- Check the method of response e.g. tick, cross, circle the number, blacken a space. If you fail to do this accurately in a computer marked paper you may not get credit, even if you know the answer.
Read the question carefully. Do you have to choose the ‘best response’ or the ‘correct response’?

Be careful of negatives. For example, “Which of these is not ...” or “All of these except ...”

Read ALL the alternatives, even if you think the first one is correct. There might be a better answer further on.

If you don’t know an answer, eliminate the answers you think are certainly wrong, and make a calculated guess.

Answer ALL questions, unless the instructions specify that marks will be taken off for incorrect answers (as in the Westpac Competition).

Answer all questions as you come to them, even if you are not sure of the answer. If you leave a question you may forget it or not have time to return to it. If you are unsure about an answer, write the answer you think is the most likely, then note its number (put an asterisk next to the number) so that you can check it later.

If you change your mind about an answer, alter it, but only after careful consideration.

**TIP**  Your first answer is more likely to be the correct one.

At the End of the Exam

Never leave the exam room before your time is up. Continual checking/proofing can only help.

Make sure that you have attempted all the questions you’ve had to do (it is easier to get the first 5 marks for a 20 mark question than to get the last 5, i.e. to go from 15 to 20).

Check all answers. Look for words that are misspelt or illegible.

Re-read your written answers for spelling, grammar, tense and sense.

Avoid going through your exams afterwards. It is too late now and almost always depressing. You have other exams to prepare for.

**TIP**  Don’t waste time in post-mortems.  When an exam is finished, focus on the next subject.

What Should you do if Things go Wrong?

Panic Attacks

Symptoms include accelerated heart beat, increase in breathing rate, sweating, uncontrollable shaking, and a feeling of anxiety.
Prepare yourself so thoroughly that there is little chance of uncertainties creeping in to create panic.

Recognise the onset of panic and know what to do. Think about breathing long, slow deep breaths. Think positive. You know you're prepared. You know you can pass. And pray. God says, “I’ll never leave you nor forsake you.” (Hebrews 13:5)

Memory Blocks
Everyone has an occasional memory block. You know the information is in there, but you just can’t recall it.

Don’t panic. Relax. Think back over your notes. Try to remember other facts associated with the point that you are trying to remember. If it doesn’t come, leave it and return to the question later.

Thorough preparation is the best way to prevent memory blocks; they usually come out of last minute cramming.

Writer’s Cramp
Your writing hand aches dreadfully and it feels like you can’t continue to write.

Practising writing past exam papers helps in writing copious quantities quite quickly. This helps build up your hand muscles.

During the exam, take frequent short breaks, and allow your hand to dangle limply by your side.

Mild shaking, and alternate contracting and relaxing of your hand also helps.

Physical Fatigue
If you have been working very hard in the lead up to the exams, and extending study time into sleep time, fatigue may well become a problem.
- Obtain adequate and regular sleep and pay careful attention to your diet.
- Sufficient daily exercise in the lead up to the exams is important.
- During the exam, occasionally stretch your arms, neck, back and legs.

**TIP** Problems are best dealt with by prevention. Start your exam preparation early – prepare and practice.

**Exam Checklist**
- Do you have an exam strategy? Have you worked out what time to spend on each part?
- Do you know what to do if something goes wrong?

**TIP** NEVER, NEVER, NEVER leave an exam early. There is ALWAYS something more that you can do.

**Specific Exam Hints for Particular Subject Areas**

**English**
- Re-read your copy of the English course document. You can download one from http://newwace.curriculum.wa.edu.au if you don’t have it.

- Focus on the course outcomes and content so you know exactly what aspects you will be expected to demonstrate.

- Highlight significant words and make sure you know what they mean. Study the course glossary of terms. Do word searches to find out which significant words appear in the syllabus.

- Set your own questions from each section of the essential content of the course. Ask your teacher to comment on your practice writing.

**Studying for English**
Some teachers suggest that you should study English for 40 minutes every night.

- Maintain a journal. You can write in it one night, glue a magazine article or review another night and return to those pages at some future date to annotate, amend and develop your thinking.

- Review your learning. Write a brief description of each English lesson. Note down you teacher’s ideas and input. List key points made in group and class discussions.

- Create mind and concept maps of language concepts, adding to them as lesson series develop. There are many internet sites with good advice on mind maps.
Keep a log of your daily reading and viewing. Make room in your logs for comments about how the language in each text is suited to the audience, purpose and context.

Record your teacher’s constructive criticisms of your assessment.

Read, make notes and write reviews of your classmates’ English work.

**Know your Texts**

- Remember that texts you read and view are the vehicles through which you learn to apply course skills and concepts. Texts are not ends in themselves.

- For more detailed instructions and activities, read the English Teachers Association of W.A. publication called *‘Good Answers English’*.

**Science**

- Maintain a study plan and dedicate more of your time to the hardest topics. Start with a week-by-week plan and then plan each day of the next week. Include the exam weeks as well.

- Study with a buddy. Recite out loud what you understand about the concepts and listen to what your study partner says. The process of saying it out loud clarifies your thoughts, and having someone else to listen to you ensures that your understanding is correct.

- Use your calculator to the maximum, but make sure you write down your own notes. Do not copy someone else’s work because you won’t know what is in there and you won’t know that it is correct.

- Study from the syllabus, as the exam can cover only the content in the syllabus. Be prepared to see questions wrapped up in contexts with which you will not be familiar. When revising, try to determine the type of question you are doing and generalise the strategies for solving them so that you can recognise the type of questions in the TEE exam.

- In the Physics exam, don’t bother reading every short-answer question during the reading time. You will have to read them again anyway. Instead, spend your 10 minutes reading the comprehension-section text so when the exam starts you already have the comprehension passages read and are ready to write down a few initial answers.

**Mathematics**

**Before the Exam**

- Prepare notes for the exams. The sheets you use for tests and the Semester 2 exams can be easily updated on a computer. Organise your pages into sections for different topics and include examples from past TEE papers or test questions that you had difficulty with during the year.
Complete the last five year’s exam papers because examiners often use similar questions. Mark each paper honestly and learn from your mistakes. Search past papers for common questions and patterns of questions. Sometimes good questions are re-used with only minor modifications.

Revise work from first semester, updating your exam notes as you go.

The Curriculum Council publishes the examiner’s reports on each exam paper. You can access these at www.curriculum.wa.edu.au. These reports list common errors and things the examiners were looking for.

Practice your exam technique. Exams take 180 minutes and have 180 marks, meaning there is a mark a minute to earn. If a question is worth five marks, allocate five minutes and do not exceed it or you will run out of time.

Learn to use your calculator efficiently. Good knowledge of calculator functions can add additional marks, plus you gain valuable working time. Have extra batteries for your calculator.

**On Exam Day**

**Arrive early.** Take time to settle yourself so you are calm as you enter the exam room.

During reading time, **identify the easiest questions and attempt these first.** Read and understand the questions, don’t skim them. Each word is important. Break it down – write out the information that is given in the question and determine what you need to do. Draw a diagram, state any formulae required and set your work out neatly and logically. Examiners and markers want to see how much you know.

**Don’t leave questions blank.** Jot down something that at least shows you know a bit about the question – you may just fluke it.

You must **show your working** out in order to get full marks for any question – the answer alone is not sufficient. Make sure you include units and round your answer to the required level of accuracy. Visit www.mawainc.org.au/index.php for more tips.

**Geography**

**Hints for Revision**

Do not procrastinate. It is never too late to start.

Do not try to learn too many new sections just before the exams.

**Exam Technique**

Good examination techniques are as important as knowing the course content to your performance in the TEE. Each year examiners highlight the marks lost by students for failing to:
• Answer the question set. Answer THE question, the WHOLE question, and NOTHING but the question.

• Use appropriate terminology.

• Refer to any given maps, diagrams and data.

• Include examples and diagrams to illustrate your answers.

• Give each part of the question appropriate emphasis. Students must therefore not only know and understand the subject matter but also be able to understand what the questions are asking and then respond in an appropriate manner.

• Become familiar with the structure and the layout of the exam paper beforehand.

• Examine the phrasing of each question and decide what is expected by the marker. Highlight key content and action words.

• Plan the answers that require longer responses. Jot down key words and then reorganise these so that a logical sequence of paragraphs can be written. Indicate what diagrams you will use.

• Use clear, concise sentences, avoiding vague, emotional statements. Write for a reader who is intelligent, but has little knowledge of the topic.

• Use diagrams and sketch maps in your answer. Marks are awarded for sketch maps and diagrams and these should be referred to in your answer.

• Use specific examples to back up general statements.

• Use appropriate Geography terminology in your written answers. Words such as location, distribution processes, invasion, and urban morphology should be liberally sprinkled throughout your answers.

What NOT to do in Exams
• Do NOT re-write the question on the answer sheet, but DO remember to write the number of the question you are tackling in the margin.

• Do NOT use liquid paper. PUT a line through your mistakes and go on.

• Do NOT leave the exam room early. Check back through multiple-choice selections and whether you have answered the question. Guess any multiple-choice answers that you don’t know at the end of the exam, but try to eliminate the alternatives that are definitely wrong first. Double check the instructions. Have you answered the relevant number of questions?

TIP  If you are going to achieve excellence in big things, you develop the habit in little matters. Excellence is not an exception, it is a prevailing attitude. ~ Colin Powell ~