

Learning

How to beat the exams



Part One - What to learn

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It's not complicated

There are 3 key steps

1. Knowing exactly what to learn

This may seem like a strange thing to say, but do you really know what to learn, many students rely on their text book and / or their class notes, but this is in many ways the first red flag on the route to failure.

2. Knowing how to learn

After all these years in school, how is it possible to now know how to learn? Learning for exams requires a different skill set than learning for a test, so it is important to learn how to learn.

3. Actually starting to learn

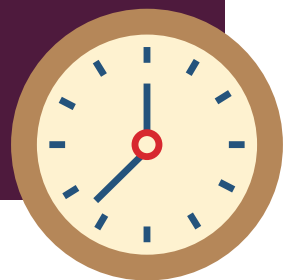
Finding the motivation to start can be really tough, but leaving it to the last minute is another reason students don't do as well as they could. While schools put lots of revision in, you need to do your bit as well.

ACTION STEPS

1. DOWNLOAD EXAM SPECIFICATIONS

2. RAG ALL SPECIFICATIONS

3. CREATE AN EXAM TIMETABLE IN SMART TERMS



DATE:

S M T W T F S

What to learn

SUBJECT

NO PAPERS /
OPTIONS

EXAM BOARD

iGCSE English

2 Papers

Edexcel



EXAM BOARDS

Most schools have two favourite boards, just be careful to check if it is an "international" or a full exam and if there are different levels like foundation or higher. Also whether there is course work to be submitted that will count towards your final grade.

TOP TIP

This may sound fundamental, but you must know the subject, exam board, (any options) and the number of papers you will be sitting.



INFORMATION

GCSEs are usually sat in year 11 and study typically begins in year 10, although schools start foundation knowledge in year 9. A levels are sat in year 13. The GCSE grade is a baseline for university entrance although most colleges will offer a place based on attainment of certain grades at A Level.

COURSE WORK DUE DATES

If you have course work to submit and it could be worth 40% of the exam grade - if you pass this well you will already have nailed a pass in your final exam!



STEP ONE

DOWNLOAD YOUR SPECIFICATION

From the list you created on page 3, go to each exam board and print of your exam specification.

The links are all here



Each exam specification tells you exactly what you need to learn, and what you need to be able to do with the knowledge you have learnt.

Print these off and put them inot a subject file.

EXAM BOARD QUICK LINKS

[AQA](#)

[Edexcel](#)

[CCEA](#)

[OCR](#)

[WJEC](#)

ACTION STEPS

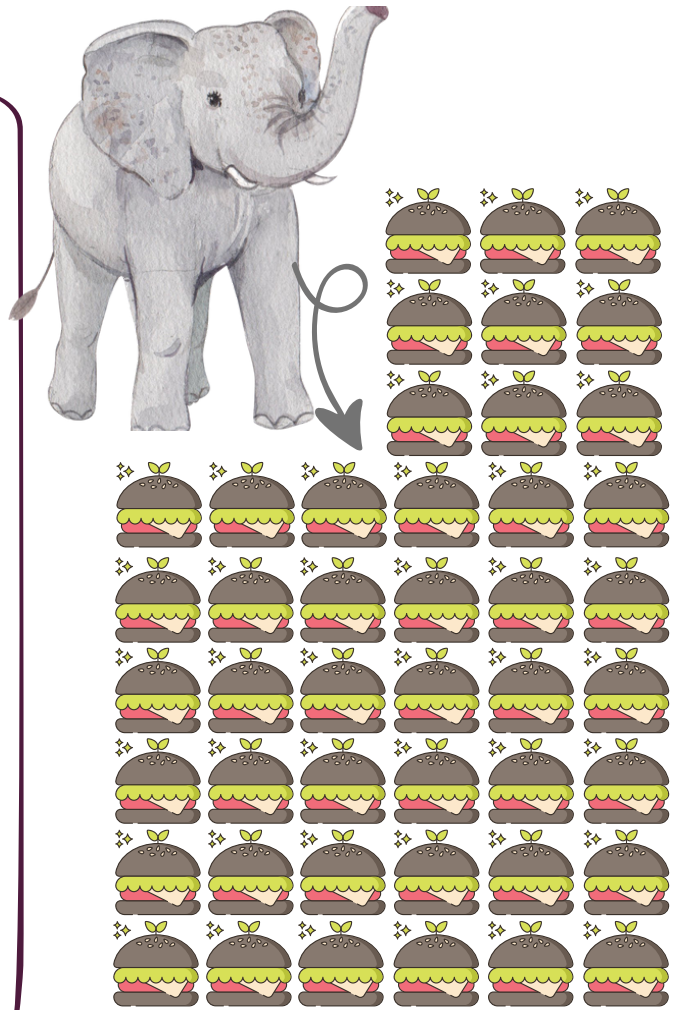
You should now have between 8- 10 folders with all your information you need to know in them. This is where I tell you about ELEPHANT BURGERS.



ELEPHANT BURGERS

If I dropped a full-size elephant on your table at tea time and said eat it all up, I think you may struggle, but if I said, here is an elephant we need to eat it all, I guess the sensible thing would be to chunk it up into manageable meals and finish it slowly over a few months of two years.

Guess what this is exactly the same strategy to apply to your revision. Lets look at how to do that.



PS - this is just an example no harm was ever intended to the elephant and no elephant was hurt using this example

THE CHUNKS

Nearly all exam specifications are written in criteria, so in many ways the "chunks" are done for you. There are also some awesome apps out there, that have "chunked" up specifications for you.

I love Adept <https://getadapt.co.uk/> this is available on google or apple and I think is free but there are lots of others out there as well.

The Chunks

Taken from the Edexcel
GCSE Business Specification

Topic 1.1

Enterprise and entrepreneurship

1.1.1 Why new business ideas come about:

The dynamic nature of

- changes in technology business
- changes in what consumers want
- products and services becoming obsolete.

How new business ideas come about:

- original ideas
- adapting existing products/services/ideas.

USING THE SPECIFICATION

This is cropped from the Edexcel business specification and you can see it is quite specific in what it wants students to know.

if a question comes up about why a new business idea comes about, they want you to include these points.

If you are asked how a NEW business comes about you will add these additional points

RAG IT!

Your next job is to work your way through the specification and RAG it. This simply means asking your self the following questions.

1. Do I understand this?
2. Can I recall this?
3. Am I sure I know this?

Next to each criteria you put a colour - RED; AMBER; GREEN

I don't know or understand this.

You will have to learn this whole section from scratch. Ask your teacher, hire a tutor or go online.

I could possibly answer a question now - not great but could try.

You understand the basics, but could do with some refreshing and deeper knowledge

I know this

You understand this topic, you are confident in your knowledge and it needs little refreshing

Now your revision is ready

Start with RED topics, move to AMBER and if you have time refresh your memory on GREEN.

If Step One has helped you may want to check out our other units.

These cover

How to learn

Motivation and Time Management

Exam Skills