

STUDY SKILLS & HABITS AT ETON

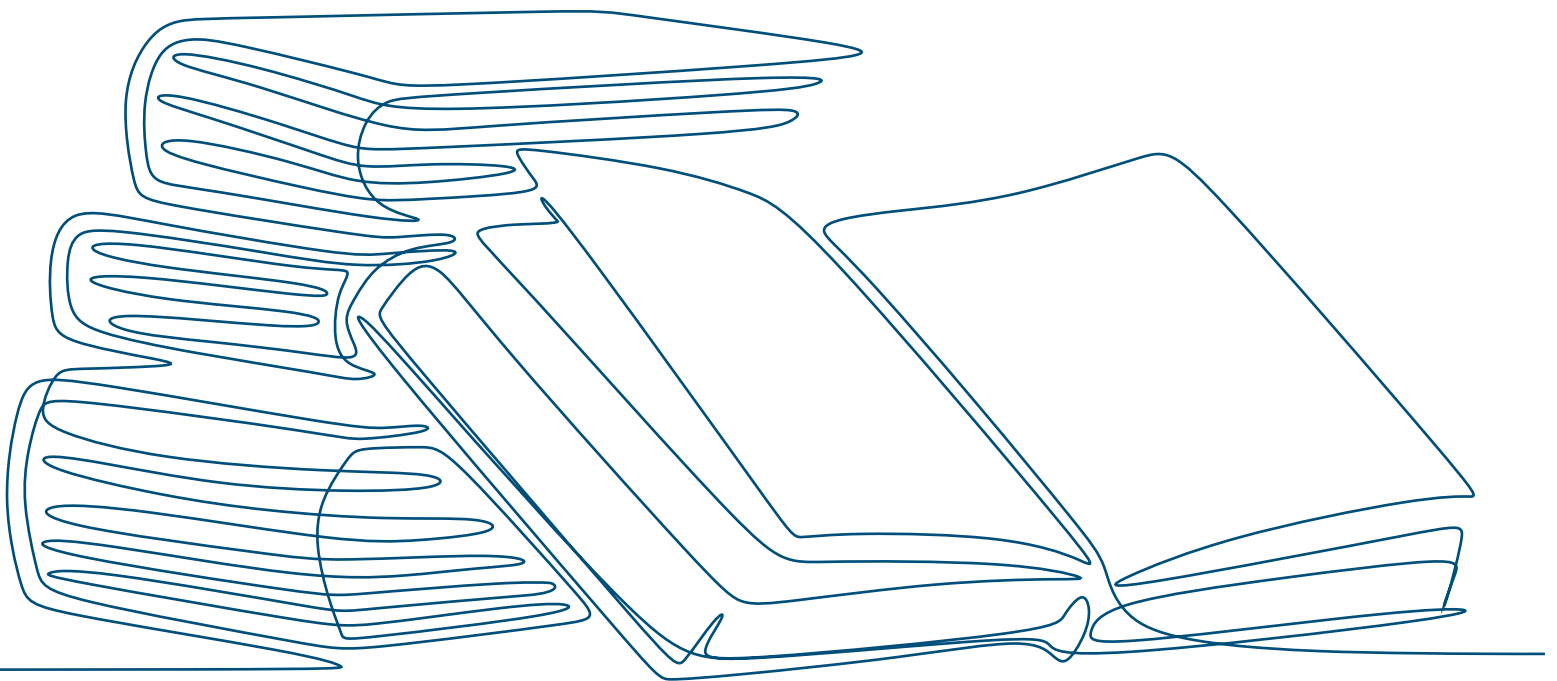
An overview of study skills and habits, and strategies for academic progress



ETON
COLLEGE

STUDY SKILLS AND HABITS AT ETON

An overview of study skills and habits, and strategies
for academic progress



With advances in cognitive science and a growing body of research in how learning happens, we increasingly know what students need to do to optimise their learning. By understanding how the brain processes information, we can develop study habits that align with the brain's natural tendencies, leading to more effective learning. This guide offers an overview of study skills Etonians require in order to be able to become effective and independent learners.

Study skills and study habits are often referred to as metacognition. Metacognition is our ability to understand, monitor, and regulate our own cognitive processes. It involves being aware of our thinking, knowing what strategies to use, and reflecting on our learning experiences. In essence, metacognition is thinking about our own thinking.

Metacognition consists of two key components: metacognitive knowledge and metacognitive regulation. Metacognitive knowledge refers to our understanding of how we learn and process information. It includes knowing our strengths and weaknesses, being aware of different learning strategies, and understanding the requirements of a task. Metacognitive regulation, on the other hand, involves actively monitoring and controlling our cognitive processes to optimise learning.

Metacognitive strategies can be categorised into three main types: planning, monitoring, and evaluating.

Metacognition plays a crucial role in learning and academic success. When students possess strong metacognitive skills, they are better equipped to regulate their learning processes and adapt their strategies to different contexts. They are more likely to engage in effective learning, problem-solving, and critical thinking. By being aware of their own thinking, they can identify and correct errors, seek additional information when necessary, and make connections between new and existing knowledge.

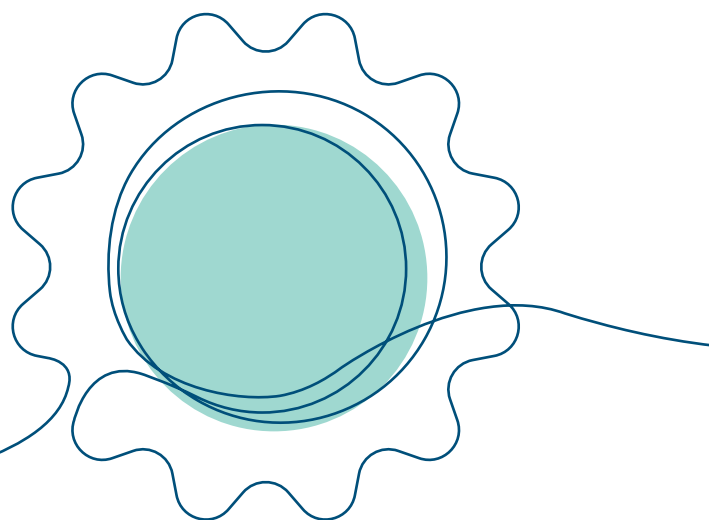
Metacognition is not limited to school life; it is a skill that you will require when you leave Eton. It is particularly valuable in complex and rapidly changing environments, where individuals must continuously acquire new knowledge and skills and adapt to evolving circumstances, such as university or the workplace.

This guide will provide Etonians with skills and habits which go beyond academic success. It prepares you for lifelong learning, cultivates a scholarly mindset and also ensures that an Etonian education is one where students become well-rounded individuals capable of applying critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-reflection to all aspects of their lives.

1 When planning, students set goals, select appropriate strategies, and create effective study plans.

2 Monitoring involves keeping track of one's understanding and progress during learning. This can involve self-questioning, checking comprehension, or seeking clarification when needed.

3 Evaluating entails reflecting on the effectiveness of one's learning strategies, assessing learning outcomes, and making adjustments for future learning.



STUDY SKILLS AT ETON

What we currently do

The Learning Support team provides explicit instruction in study skills. While their primary focus is on helping individual boys who need learning support, they offer a wide range of resources and workshops to benefit all boys and Masters. As an example, they conduct drop-in sessions on revision techniques before trials and public exams.

Study skills are also taught, explicitly or implicitly, in academic subjects. For example, Computer Science covers Artificial Intelligence and Digital Literacy as part of their F curriculum. The resilience that boys cultivate while coding through a process of trial and error may not be immediately apparent but is noteworthy. Essay-based subjects, such as History, stress the importance of academic honesty when writing essays, a habit that is needed throughout the boys' academic journeys. Similarly, boys develop the skill of identifying and using the right resources for their work as they evaluate sources for their essays. English provides dedicated time in F Block when boys can read beyond the curriculum and develop their curiosity, vocabulary and critical thinking. Sciences, such as Biology, offer practice in time management and procrastination through Practical Investigations, but also explicitly cover the importance of sleep and diet as part of the E Block curriculum. Music showcases how listening is a crucial skill which is assessed throughout the Blocks. Languages, with their emphasis on vocabulary learning, provide boys with skills to improve their memory and utilise strategies that will optimise their learning.

An integrated approach to Study Skills and Habits

Starting in 2023-2024, we want to ensure all boys are taught a comprehensive programme of study skills and habits. We have divided those into character and academic skills. This stems from the evidence that there is a clear link between looking after one's physical and mental health and academic achievement.

Starting in F Block all boys will engage with study skills resources and materials. A lecture will be given to all F Block boys, as part of their core induction programme, on 'Becoming an independent learner', providing guidance and advice on how to thrive in a new academic environment. Also, all F Block will complete a year-long study skills course, hosted on EtonX. The six sessions will be followed by discussions in tutorials to consolidate the techniques covered, as well as provide tutors the opportunity to identify areas where boys might need to pay more attention. The topics covered in the course are:

- Becoming an independent learner
- Metacognition
- Getting organised
- Learning and revision techniques
- Prioritising and time-keeping
- Building confidence for exams

Throughout the year, assemblies will be given to boys in all Blocks which will spotlight some of the strategies covered in this guidebook. Alongside those we will provide EWs, PowerPoints and other resources which departments and individual Masters can use in their lesson planning. For example, Latin will provide boys with EWs on how to use AI effectively and maintain critical thinking. Languages will include techniques in developing effective strategies for managing exam stress during orals. This guidebook, tailored to meet the specific needs of boys, will serve as a foundation for assistance that boys can access at their convenience. Moreover, it will be complemented by a variety of resources made available throughout the year.

Lastly, SPHERE will place an emphasis on character skills, such as collaboration and listening, and re-emphasise the need for sleep and a healthy diet. There is a dedicated strand looking at mental health and wellbeing which will provide boys with the necessary strategies to look after themselves physically and mentally. Our pastoral provision, through SPHERE, goes beyond the statutory guidance as the school places emotional and physical health at the core of its strategic priorities.



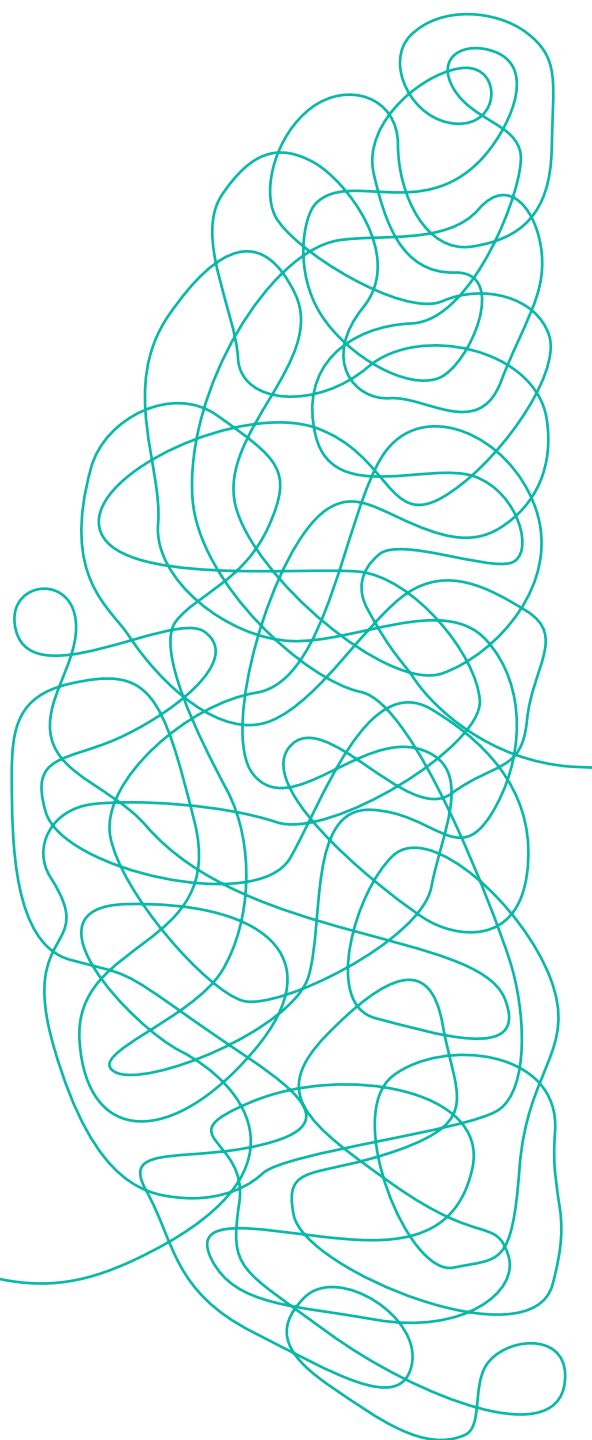
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ACADEMIC SKILLS



SELF AWARENESS & SELF-REGULATION



A. Time management and procrastination

B. Improving your memory

C. Sustaining focus and completing tasks

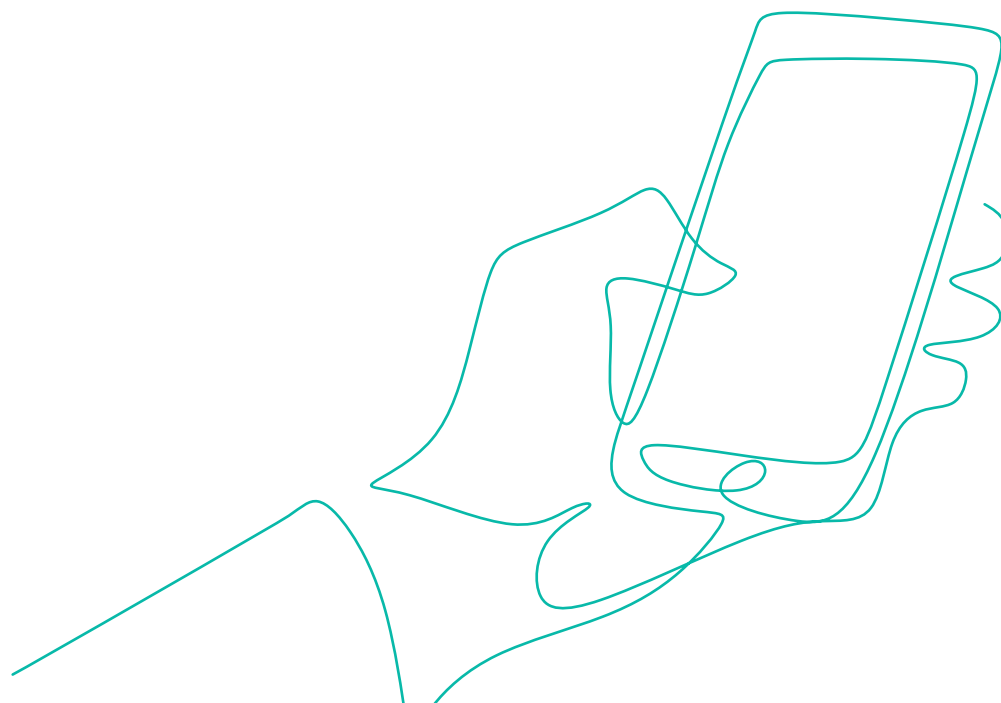
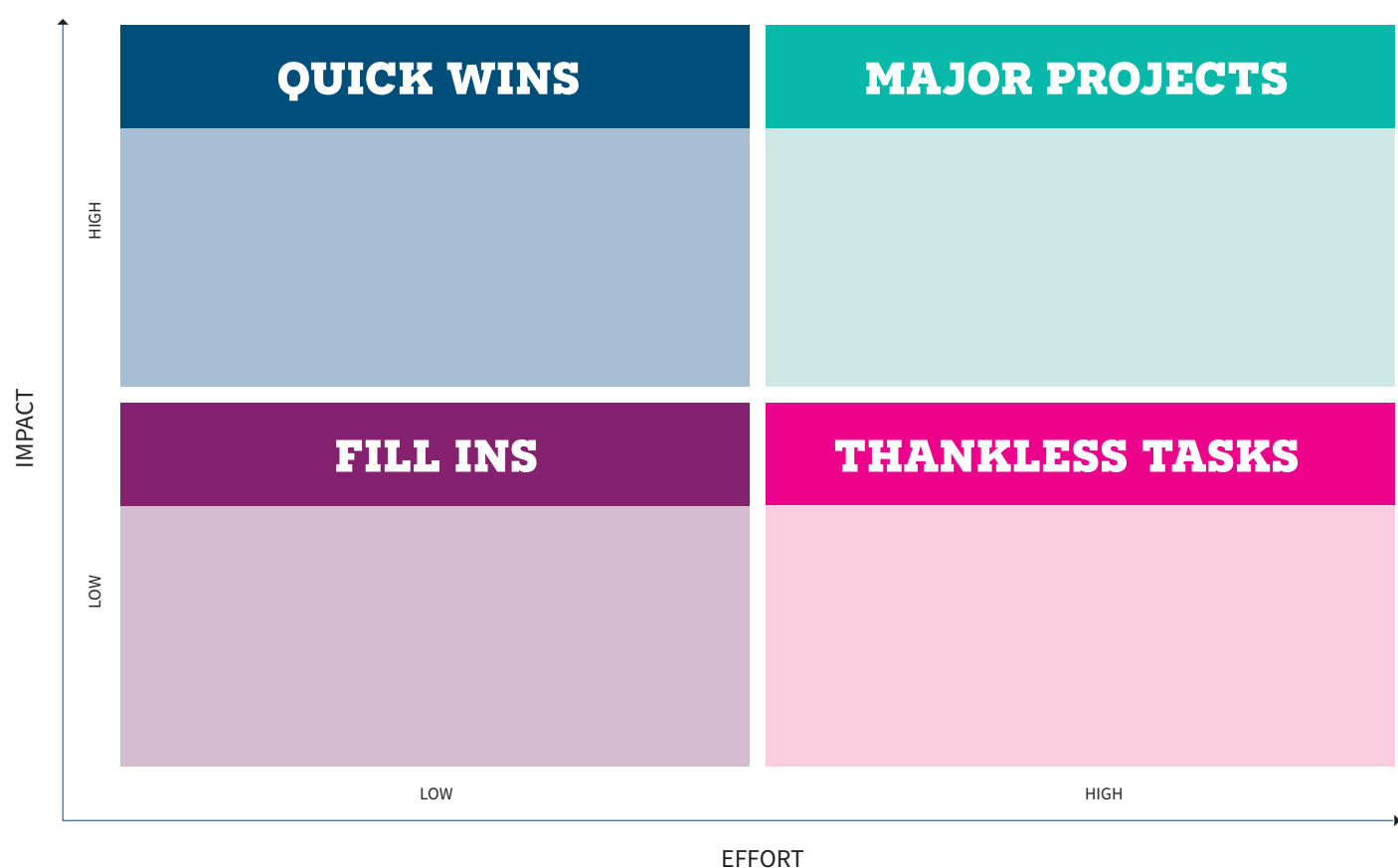
D. Self belief

E. Identifying strengths and weaknesses

TIME MANAGEMENT AND PROCRASTINATION

Here are some strategies that will help you with time management:

- 1. Prioritise tasks.** Prioritisation is crucial when deciding where to allocate time and energy. Use techniques like the Eisenhower Matrix or impact/effort matrix. This helps you focus on high-priority activities and save time.



2. Set specific goals. Setting clear and measurable goals is essential. Use the SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, time-bound) framework to set goals that are attainable and track your progress effectively. Or can you use the WOOP model which can also help you set goals.

S

SPECIFIC:

M

MEASURABLE:

A

ACHIEVABLE:

R

RELEVANT:

T

TIME-BOUND:

WISH

**WHICH GOAL DO YOU
WANT TO ACHIEVE?**

OUTCOME

**HOW WILL YOU FEEL WHEN
YOU ACHIEVE THE GOAL?**

OBSTACLES

**WHAT ARE YOUR
MAIN OBBSTACLES?**

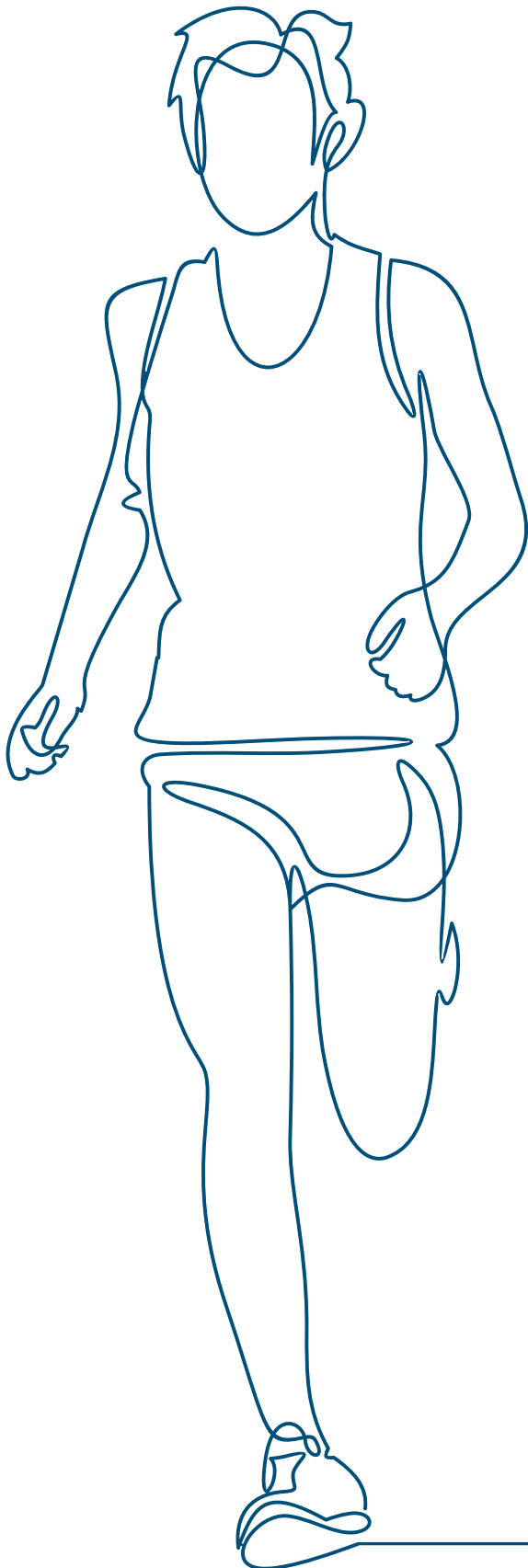
PLAN

**HOW CAN YOU TACKLE
THESE OBSTACLES?**

3. Overcome procrastination. Procrastination can affect your time management. There are many distractions which can contribute to procrastination, such as watching some more YouTube videos instead of starting that long essay for English. Often procrastination is linked to our belief that the task is too unmanageable or difficult to complete. Getting started is often the most difficult part of the process. In order to avoid procrastination, break large tasks into smaller, manageable parts, set deadlines for each part, and use self-imposed rewards to overcome procrastination tendencies. For example, allow yourself to watch one or two videos after completing a part of your task.

4. Practise time awareness. Being aware of how you spend your time is crucial for effective time management as we tend to underestimate how long things take. Keep a time log or use time management apps to monitor and analyse how you allocate time to various academic and non-academic activities. For example, you might think that you only spent half an hour watching a series, but in reality you might have spent a lot more than that.

TIME	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
06.00							
07.00							
08.00							
09.00							
10.00							
11.00							
12.00							
13.00							
14.00							
15.00							
16.00							
17.00							
18.00							
19.00							
20.00							
21.00							
22.00							
23.00							
24.00							



5. Learn to say no. Setting boundaries is important as life at Eton gets very busy. Learn to say no to non-essential commitments or activities that may distract you from your academic and co-curricular responsibilities. There are a lot of things that might seem fun or interesting, but are essentially just distractions which might take away valuable time.

6. Maintain a healthy study-life balance. Balancing academic commitments with personal well-being is very important as things get busy and you tend to forget how crucial it is to sleep and eat well. Allocate time for relaxation, hobbies, exercise, and social activities to avoid burnout and maintain overall productivity.

IMPROVING YOUR MEMORY

1. Retrieval practice, which involves actively recalling information from memory, is a highly effective learning strategy. Research consistently shows¹ that practising retrieval through quizzes, self-testing, or other recall-based activities strengthens memory retention. In order to successfully store information in your long-term memory you need to leave spaces between learning and revision sessions. The forgetting curve is the process whereby we forget information quickly after first learning it. To counteract the effects of this, it's important to review and recall the information you want to remember. Ebbinghaus found that by reviewing material at strategically spaced intervals, with longer and longer spaces, you can significantly improve long-term retention.

2. Interleaved practice involves mixing different types of subjects or topics during study sessions. Research indicates² that interleaved practice enhances learning and long-term retention compared to massed practice. Instead of spending a whole day on subject A and another day on subject B, it is more useful to mix the subjects, especially if they are somehow related, e.g. different Humanities or Sciences studied together.

3. Elaboration techniques, such as explaining concepts in your own words or creating meaningful associations, aid memory and learning. Mnemonic devices, such as acronyms or vivid imagery, can be effective for remembering detailed information.

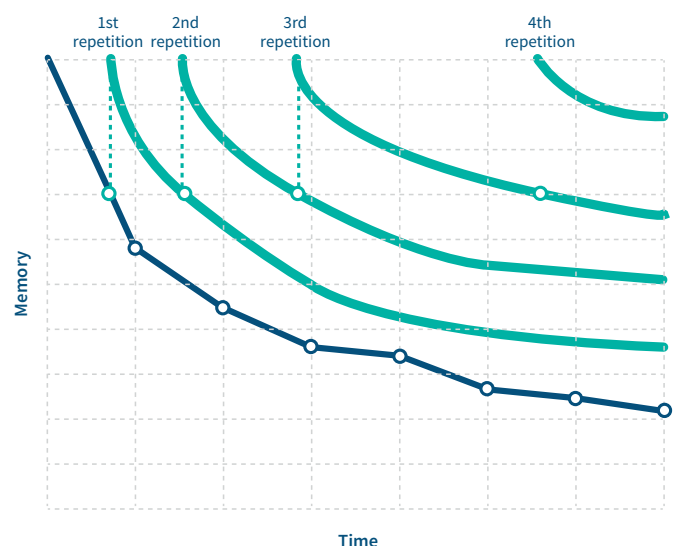
4. Dual coding involves combining verbal and visual representations of information. Research indicates³ that the use of visual aids, diagrams, or mind maps alongside written or spoken explanations can enhance memory and learning. Dual coding leverages both visual and verbal memory systems, reinforcing associations between concepts.

5. Metacognitive strategies, such as self-reflection, monitoring comprehension, and self-assessment, play a vital role in learning and memory. Research suggests⁴ that learners who engage in metacognitive processes, such as setting goals, planning, and evaluating their own learning, demonstrate better memory and learning outcomes.

6. Adequate sleep is essential for memory consolidation. Research indicates⁵ that sleep facilitates the transfer of information from short-term memory to long-term memory, leading to improved retention. Getting at least 7-9 hours of sleep each night will help you remember better and feel more energised for study sessions.

CURVE OF FORGETTING

For newly learned information



1. Roediger, H. L. III, & Butler, A. C. (2011). The critical role of retrieval practice in long-term retention. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 15(1), 20–27. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2010.09.003>

2. (former 1) Taylor, K., & Rohrer, D. (2010). The effects of interleaved practice. *Applied Cognitive Psychology*, 24(6), 837–848. <https://doi.org/10.1002/acp.1598>

3. (former 2) Paivio, A. (1991). Dual coding theory: Retrospect and current status. *Canadian Journal of Psychology / Revue canadienne de psychologie*, 45(3), 255–287. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0084295>

4. (former 3) Stanton, J. D., Sebesta, A. J., & Dunlosky, J. (2021). Fostering Metacognition to Support Student Learning and Performance. *CBE life sciences education*, 20(2), fe3. <https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.20-12-0289>

5. Alhola, P., & Polo-Kantola, P. (2007). Sleep deprivation: Impact on cognitive performance. *Neuropsychiatric disease and treatment*, 3(5), 553–567.

6. Schmidt, S. J. (2020). Distracted learning: Big problem and golden opportunity. *Journal of Food Science Education*, 19(4), 278–291. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1541-4329.12206>

7. Thomas, C. (2021). Study shows how taking short breaks may help our brains learn new skills. *National Institutes of Health*

SUSTAINING FOCUS AND COMPLETING TASKS

1. Minimise distractions. Distractions significantly impact on focus and task completion.

Research supports⁶ creating an environment conducive to concentration by minimising external distractions, such as turning off notifications on electronic devices, finding a quiet study space, or using noise-cancelling headphones. You also need to make sure that you have notifications off while you are trying to concentrate on a task and that you keep your phone in a different space rather than next to you while studying.

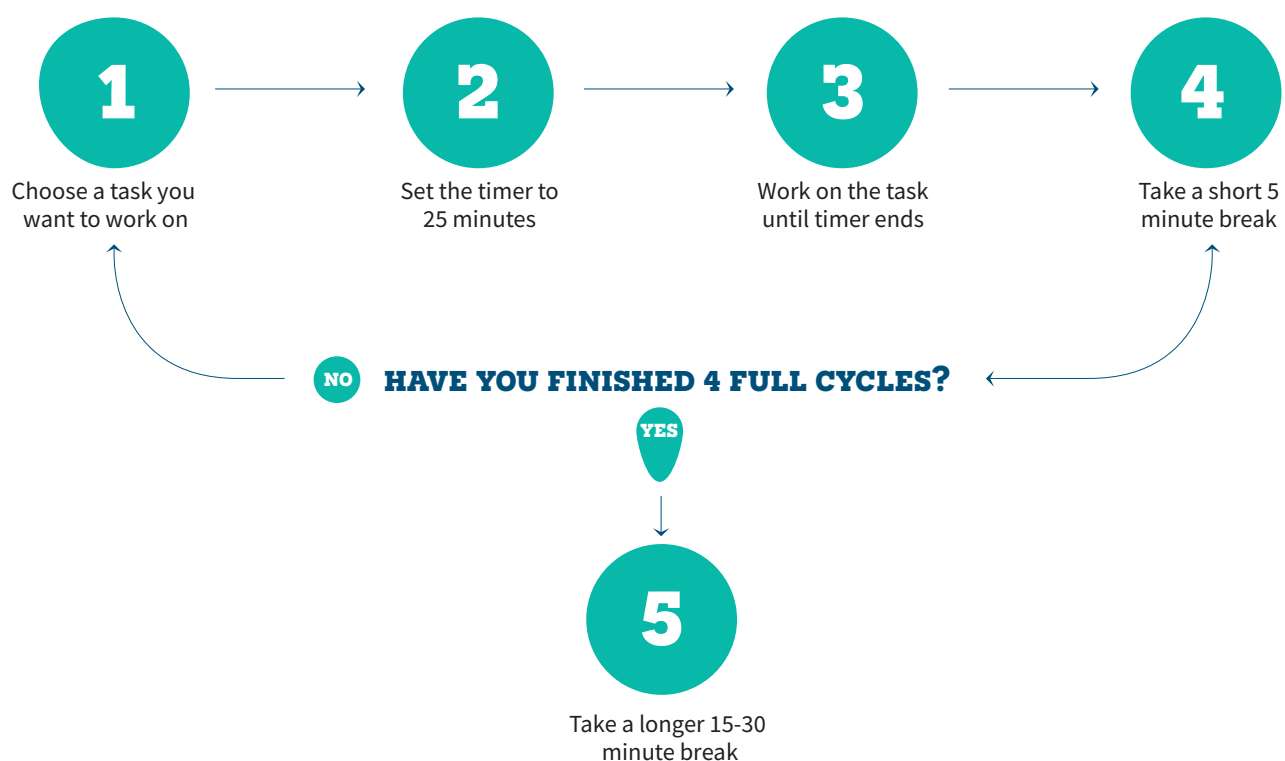
2. Try meditation or a breathing technique. This can improve your attention and concentration on a task.

3. Implement a reward system. Reward yourself for completing tasks or reaching milestones. These can be small rewards such as having your favourite snack, or checking your phone, or going to meet a friend. These can provide incentives and increase motivation, which will keep you on track.

4. Practise self-discipline. You need to set clear boundaries and establish rules for yourself (e.g. no social media during studying time).

5. Take regular breaks. Research suggests⁷ that brief breaks, especially when accompanied by physical movement or stretching, can help prevent mental fatigue and enhance cognitive performance. Use breaks to recharge, engage in light physical activity, or practise relaxation techniques.

6. Try the Pomodoro technique:



SELF BELIEF

Self-belief, also known as self-efficacy, is a psychological concept developed by Albert Bandura, a well-known psychologist. It refers to an individual's belief in their own ability to successfully accomplish specific tasks, achieve goals, or perform effectively in various situations. Put simply, self-efficacy is the confidence a person has in their own capabilities to handle different challenges and succeed in various tasks.

This belief in one's abilities influences how individuals approach and handle tasks, their level of motivation, the amount of effort they invest, and how they persevere in the face of difficulties or setbacks. Self-efficacy, or self-belief, is not a global trait but is context-specific, meaning a person may feel highly confident in some areas while lacking confidence in others.

Self-efficacy is influenced by various sources, such as:

A

Mastery experiences, which are successful experiences in the past that demonstrate competence in a particular task or domain.

B

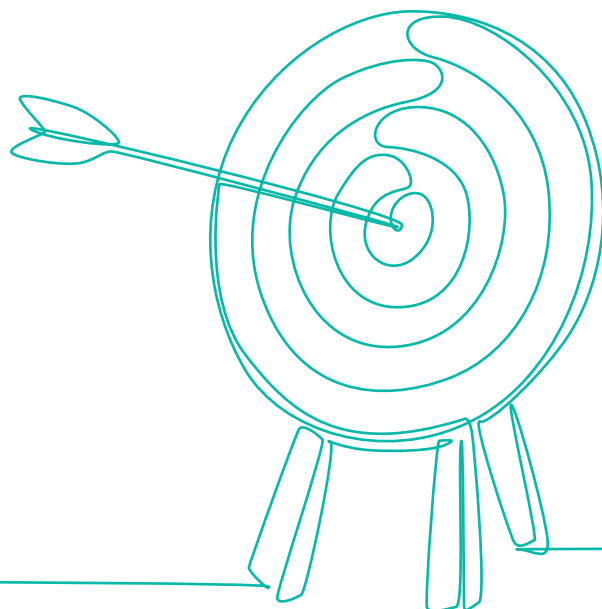
Vicarious experiences, which includes observing others succeed or fail in similar situations.

C

Social persuasion, which comes from encouragement, feedback, and positive reinforcement from others.

D

Emotional and physiological states, whereby positive emotional states and a sense of calm can enhance self-efficacy, while anxiety or stress can decrease it.



High self-efficacy leads people to set ambitious goals, invest effort, and persist in the face of challenges, increasing the likelihood of success. Conversely, low self-efficacy may result in avoidance of tasks, diminished effort, and a higher likelihood of giving up when faced with obstacles. Developing self-efficacy is a gradual process and needs consistency about what habits you engage in, but there are evidenced-informed strategies which can help you improve your self-efficacy:

- 1 Set achievable goals.** Start with setting specific, realistic, and attainable goals. Break larger tasks into smaller, manageable steps, and celebrate each achievement. Successfully reaching these smaller goals will reinforce a sense of competence and boost self-efficacy, which, in turn, will ensure you remain focused on your long-term goals.
- 2 Focus on strengths and past successes.** Reflect on past accomplishments and moments of success. Remind yourself of the challenges you have overcome in the past and the skills you have developed. This positive self-reflection can bolster self-confidence and self-efficacy.
- 3 Embrace mistakes and failures.** View mistakes and failures as opportunities for growth and learning rather than as reflections of your abilities. Embrace a growth mindset, understanding that effort and perseverance lead to improvement and success.
- 4 Seek and utilise feedback.** Welcome constructive feedback from teachers, coaches, and peers. Use feedback as an opportunity to learn and improve rather than as a judgement of your abilities. This can be written or verbal feedback that you receive in your EWs, sport, drama, or other co-curricular activities.
- 5 Face challenges gradually.** Gradually expose yourself to more difficult tasks or situations. You don't have to achieve the most difficult goal straight away. Set realistic goals, which are challenging just above your current level, and build on that gradually.

You can also take the survey below, and identify areas for improvement. Rate yourself from 1 (not true at all) to 4 (true all the time).

	Not at all true	Hardly true	Moderately true	Exactly true
All questions	1	2	3	4

1. I can always manage to solve difficult problems if I try hard enough.
2. If someone opposes me, I can find the means and ways to get what I want.
3. It is easy for me to stick to my aims and accomplish my goals.
4. I am confident that I could deal efficiently with unexpected events.
5. Thanks to my resourcefulness, I know how to handle unforeseen situations.
6. I can solve most problems if I invest the necessary effort.
7. I can remain calm when facing difficulties because I can rely on my coping abilities.
8. When I am confronted with a problem, I can usually find several solutions.
9. If I am in trouble, I can usually think of a solution.
10. I can usually handle whatever comes my way.

IDENTIFYING STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Being aware of your strengths and weaknesses is a very important part of self-reflection and an essential component of personal growth and development. It allows you to leverage your strengths to your advantage and work on improving your weaknesses, ultimately leading to academic progress and better performance in school life.

Look through past EW feedback, comment cards, and other information with your past performance in academic subjects or co-curricular activities and see where you consistently excel or could be doing a better job. Keep a reflective log like the one below.

POSITIVE FEEDBACK I HAVE RECEIVED	NEGATIVE FEEDBACK I HAVE RECEIVED
CHALLENGES I WAS FACED WITH THIS HALF	WHAT I FEEL I DID WELL THIS HALF

You could also identify a subject or an activity you want to work on and use a SWOT analysis to identify steps forward.

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

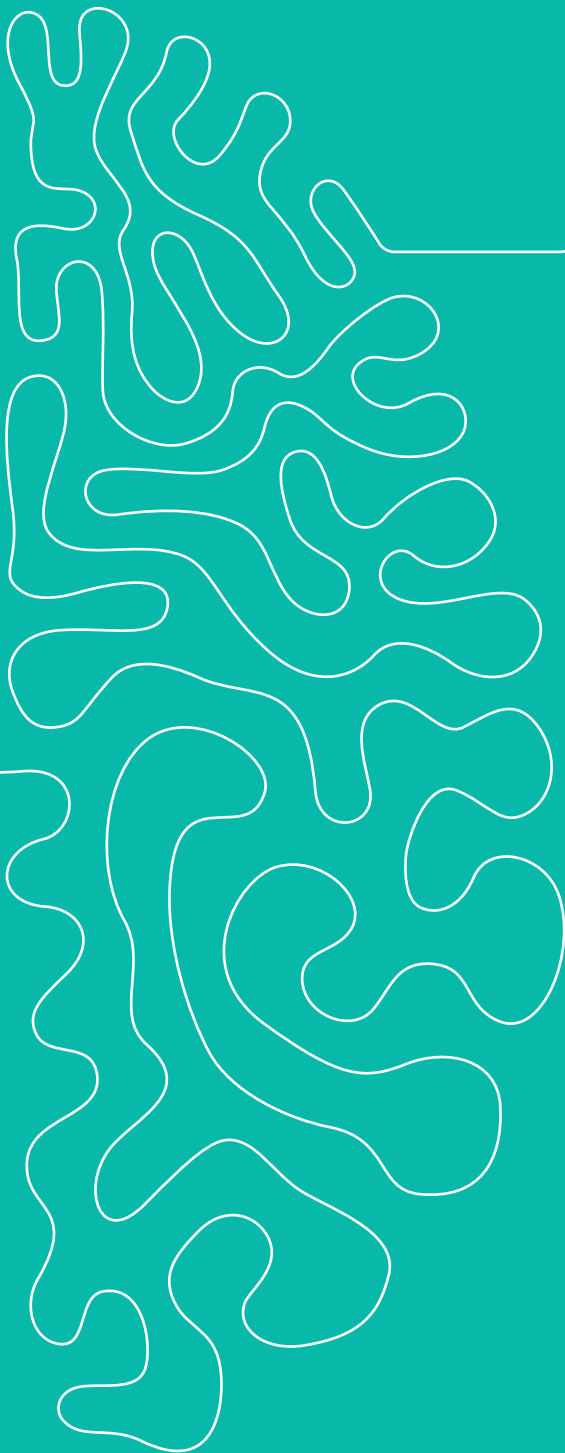
Identify one area you want to improve on related to the House and talk to your House Master and Dame about:

1. What you are good at
2. What you need to improve
3. Ideas of how you can improve

Work on their ideas for a few weeks and keep a log of how things are progressing. Report back to them after a few weeks and notice how much you have progressed in your goal.



ACADEMIC INTEGRITY & INTELLECTUAL CURIOSITY



A. Note taking

B. Active listening

C. Critical thinking

D. Artificial Intelligence and academic honesty

E. Identifying and using the right resources
and tools

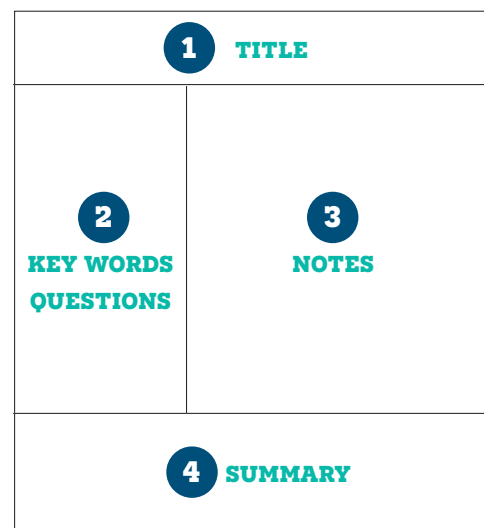
F. Preparing for university

NOTE TAKING

There are several techniques you can use for effective note taking.

Cornell Method

This method involves dividing your page into three sections: a narrow column on the left for questions, a wider column on the right for notes, and a summary section at the bottom. During reading or listening to something, take notes in the right column and use the left column to write down key words, questions, and key concepts to aid in review and recall. Afterwards, use the summary section to recap the main points.



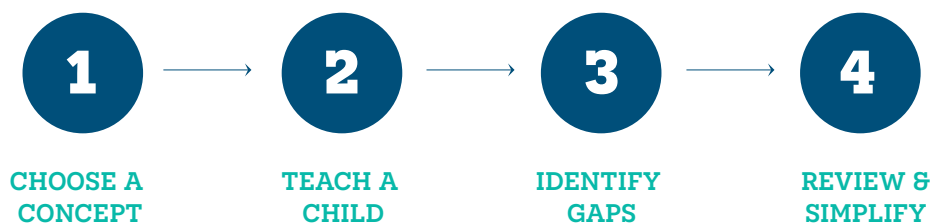
Mind maps

Mind maps are visual representations of information with the main topic at the centre and branches extending outward to subtopics and related ideas. This technique helps to see connections between different concepts and enables you to understand the specific information of topics.



The Feynman Technique

Named after the physicist Richard Feynman, this approach involves explaining a concept in simple terms as if you were teaching it to a child. This technique can expose gaps in your understanding and reinforce your learning.



ACTIVE LISTENING

Hearing is a passive activity. You can be sitting in a lesson and hearing what your teacher is saying, but unless you listen attentively, it is unlikely you will retain much of the information. The same applies to conversations you might be having with others, for example, when you are doing some group work or having to debate a topic in one of the lessons.

Here are some techniques you can use:



CRITICAL THINKING

In the world of Facebook, Twitter (X), TikTok, and so on, the barrage of information which comes with all these social media platforms means that practising critical thinking (CT) is very important and valuable. There are various frameworks which define CT. For example,

Dick (1991) suggested the following skills related to CT:

1. Identify arguments. This includes themes, conclusion, reasons, and organisation.
2. Analyse arguments. This includes assumptions, vagueness, and omissions.
3. Consider external influences. This includes value, authority, and emotional language.
4. Scientific analytic reasoning. This includes causality and statistical reasoning.
5. Reasoning and logic. This includes analogy, deduction, and induction.

Alwehaibi (2012) focused on the development of five particular skills: causal explanations, determining the reliability of sources, arguments, predictions, and determining part-whole relationships.

However, the most widely accepted framework is the one developed by Facione (1991). Critical thinking in this framework consists of:

1. INTERPRETATION

categorisation
decoding significance
clarifying meaning

2. ANALYSIS

examining ideas
identifying arguments
analysing arguments

3. EVALUATION

assessing claims
assessing arguments

4. INFERENCE

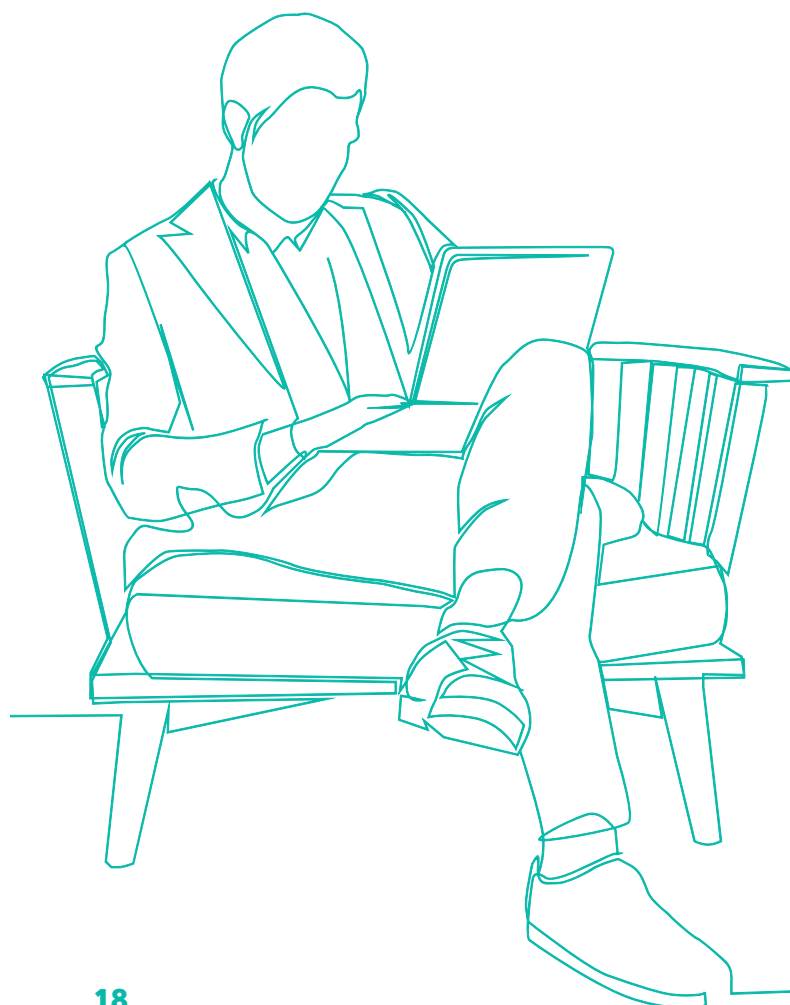
querying evidence.
conjecturing alternatives
drawing conclusions

5. EXPLANATION

stating results
justifying procedures
presenting arguments

6. SELF-REGULATION

self-examination
self-correction



In practice, what all these frameworks amount to is your ability to come to your own conclusions after carefully considering the evidence and facts. How can you develop critical thinking?

Be critical of new information. Think about the author and their motives. Do not accept what they say at face value but be critical of why they have such opinions and what authority they have to be sharing these ideas. You also need to be critical of the source. Is the source trustworthy or does it lack credibility? Is it funded by people with certain agendas? Even when the source and the author are credible, it is worth considering whether they have their own biases included in the information you are reading.

Consider various perspectives. Humans tend to side with the opinions they are familiar with and feel comfortable defending. However, considering other points of view can help you strengthen your arguments and identify areas you might not have thought of.

Ask open-ended questions. Being curious is an important aspect of critical thinking. Asking ‘why’ can help you identify new ideas, new avenues to explore, and new threads of enquiry.

Don’t rely only on social media to get your news. Quick access to news can be beneficial since it means you have a good overview of what is happening. But often what is shared on social media can be biased and full of emotive language to make you feel certain things. Question the biases of the people who post but also your own assumptions. Turn to more reputable sources to get the news and the story behind the soundbites. McKinsey found that 39 percent of people under 24 prefer to get the news (anything which ranges from celebrity gossip to other events) from social media, and 34 percent seek out trusted news sites or apps when it comes to current events.

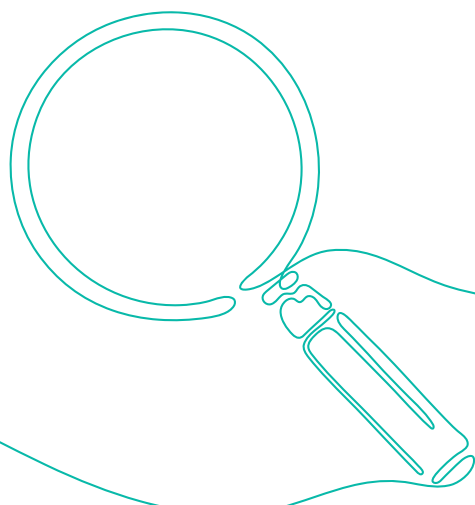
Be mindful of how you come to conclusions. Even when we are trying to be objective, our personal perceptions can skew our decision-making process and cloud our judgement. One of the causes of this is the availability heuristic. Heuristics and biases are ways to speed up the process of finding solutions or coming to conclusions. The availability heuristic is just one type of heuristic. In this process, people use the most easily accessible information to inform their decision-making. This information comes from what we can easily remember, something that had an impact on us, or events that happened recently. Being aware of this phenomenon can help us think more critically when we need to make decisions.

Alwehaibi, H. (2012). Novel program to promote critical thinking among higher education students: Empirical Study from Saudi Arabia. *Asian Social Science*, 8(11), 193
Dick, R. (1991). An empirical taxonomy of critical thinking. *Journal of Instructional Psychology*, 18(2), 79-93

Facione, P. (1990). *Critical Thinking: A Statement of Expert Consensus for Purposes of Educational Assessment and Instruction, Research Findings and Recommendations*, American Philosophical Association, Newark, Del.

McKinsey & Company (2023). *Mind the Gap*.

Tversky, A. and Kahneman, D. (1973). Availability: A heuristic for judging frequency and probability, *Cognitive Psychology*, 5(2), [https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285\(73\)90033-9](https://doi.org/10.1016/0010-0285(73)90033-9).



ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE AND ACADEMIC HONESTY

The pace at which artificial intelligence tools have developed, including conversational AIs such as ChatGPT and Bard, is unprecedented. In the world of education, many are excited about the possibilities but others are worried about misuse of the technology. These new AIs pose many questions around academic honesty; it is admittedly easier to ask ChatGPT to write your essay for you rather than spend hours planning, writing, and editing! This is why a better way to describe AI in educational contexts might be augmented intelligence, since it has the capacity to almost instantly make you feel that you know a lot more than you do (Currie, 2023). In this case, AI can be truly beneficial. It can be used to interrogate the content being taught or it can enrich your note taking. However, there are various issues around using AI in producing work. In addition to plagiarism, the most important is the fact that tools such as ChatGPT are prone to errors and fabrication of information which poses a risk to ethics and integrity (Currie, 2023).

Indeed, ChatGPT provides its own guidelines when it comes to how you can improve the work it has produced for you:

- Review and revise the text: carefully review the text generated by the AI language model and revise it as necessary. This may include adding or removing information, correcting errors, and rephrasing sentences.
- Check for factual accuracy: AI language models may not always produce text that is factually accurate, so it is important to check the content for any errors or inconsistencies. Use reputable sources to verify the accuracy of the information in your essay.
- Incorporate your own ideas and analysis: while the AI language model can help generate ideas and provide a starting point, it is important to make your own analysis and perspective dominant in the essay.
- Use proper citation style: make sure to properly cite any sources used in the essay, using the appropriate citation style. This is important for academic integrity and will also help to support the arguments in the essay.
- Edit and proofread: carefully edit and proofread the essay to ensure that it is well written and free of errors. This may include checking for grammar and spelling mistakes, as well as ensuring that the essay is well-organised and flows logically.

(Cotton et al., 2023)

The below strategies will enable you to use Conversational AIs in a way which will make the most of AI while ensuring ethical use and academic honesty.

What they can be used for

Good

- Getting quick information about a non-controversial topic
- Asking questions about ideas you are finding difficult, perhaps asking it to summarise or simplify a complex passage of text
- Generating summary tables

Better

- Generating activities to help you with your studies:
 - Multiple choice quiz, e.g. Electricity topic; types of component in a circuit
 - Odd one out, e.g. English topic; characters in a play with a focus on motives
 - If this is the answer, what is the question? e.g. History; factors that lead to a war

Best

- Prompting the AI to act as a personal tutor that will help you improve without giving the answers
- Asking an AI to use the 'socratic method' is a good start:
"I am a [insert subject name here] student and want to deepen my understanding of [insert topic name here]. Use the Socratic method to test my understanding. Don't immediately tell me the right answer if I make a mistake, tell me where I've gone wrong and ask me to try again."

How to use them appropriately

If you use an AI to cheat and 'write an essay for you' – you are not only doing your education a disservice, you are committing plagiarism.

The potential long-term good that can come from using an AI properly far outweighs the short-term gain of cheating. In the 1980s, Benjamin Bloom undertook some research into how students performed when taught in different ways. When compared to a control group of students, students allowed the time to fully master a topic before moving on to the next showed a standard deviation improvement. A third group of students were given personal 1-to-1 tuition, and showed a 2 standard deviation improvement over the control group. The problem (at the time) was the shortage of personal tutors, but AIs have the potential to fill this gap. (Bloom, 1984)

Always be critical of the AI

Just like humans, they sometimes make mistakes – fact checking is vital!

An AI can be ‘confidently wrong’. For example, you might ask it for a list of 10 items but it only knows 8. The AI might invent the last 2 to make the list complete. Conversational AIs have been trained to produce outputs that people find satisfying. Given the choice of “I don’t know” vs “Sure, here you go”, human users prefer the latter. In that respect, there is a mismatch in alignment between the goal of the AI (pleasing the user) and the goal of the human user (getting accurate information).

You can always refine your prompt or try again

Every time an AI generates something it is different. Don’t be afraid to keep trying.

Clearly acknowledge your use of AI, giving prompts used and (where possible) the sources the AI used.

Share success stories and ask for help if perplexed

If you’ve written a prompt that was really helpful, share it with others. This technology is in its infancy. If we collaborate on what works well and what to avoid, we stand to collectively gain the most from the experience.

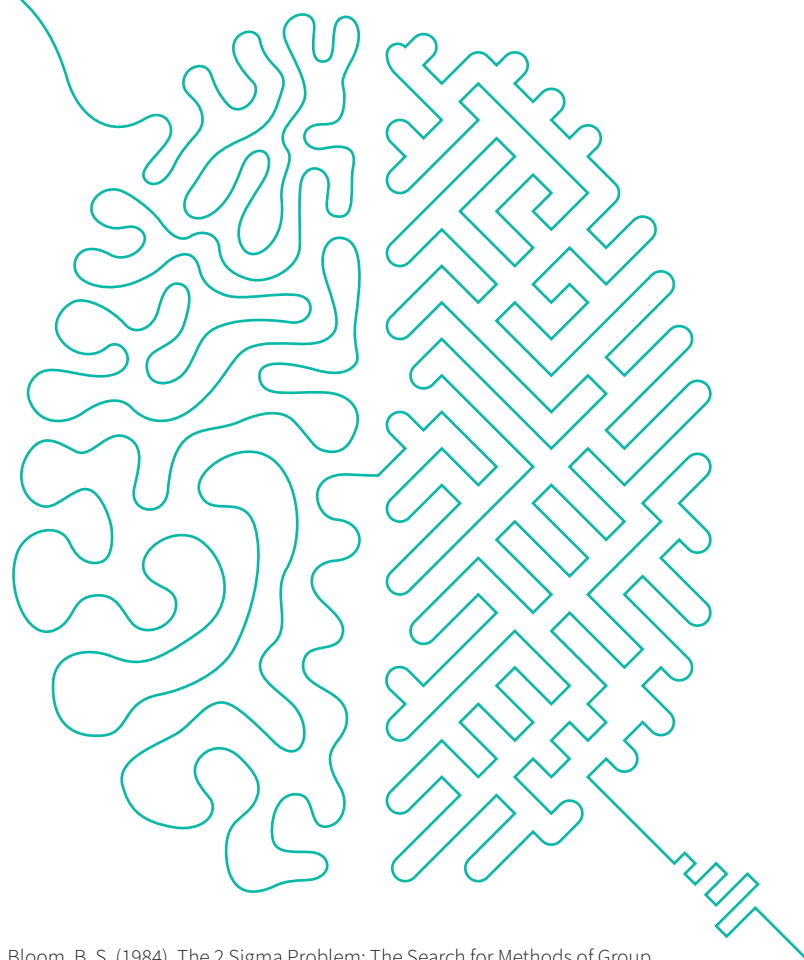
It is vital to remember the following: learning is hard work. Don’t build up a false sense of confidence with all this AI ‘knowledge’ at your fingertips.

How to get started

There are several conversational AIs available with pros and cons:

Name of conversational AI	How to use it	Pros	Cons
ChatGPT by OpenAI	iPhone / iPad app, Android app, or <i>chat.openai.com</i>	Has a head start over the others and there are lots of resources on the web to help	The best features, including access to the live internet, require a paid ‘plus’ account Doesn’t show sources
Bing Chat by Microsoft	Available when using the Edge web browser (available on nearly all devices)	Can do searches of the web for up to date info Can generate images Shows sources	Thread length (size of a conversation) is limited Reluctant to answer questions on controversial topics
Bard by Google	<i>bard.google.com</i>	Can do searches of the web for up to date info Uses a different training model to ChatGPT and Bing* Shows sources	Currently only for those aged 18+

*This is good news because if ChatGPT and Bing fail at a task, Bard might be able to achieve it, and vice versa.
Make sure you use the School’s AI policy at all times



Bloom, B. S. (1984). The 2 Sigma Problem: The Search for Methods of Group Instruction as Effective as One-to-One Tutoring. *Educational Researcher*, 13, 4-16.

Cotton, D. R. E., Cotton, P. A. & Shipway, J. R. (2023). Chatting and cheating: Ensuring academic integrity in the era of ChatGPT, *Innovations in Education and Teaching International*, DOI: 10.1080/14703297.2023.2190148

Currie, G. M. (2023). Academic integrity and artificial intelligence: is ChatGPT hype, hero or heresy?, *Seminars in Nuclear Medicine*, 53(5), pp. 719-730.

FINDING THE RIGHT RESOURCES AND TOOLS

When embarking on any information gathering, whether it be for a creative project, an essay, a solution to a problem or material to support your personal growth, finding the right resources is central to your success. In the age of Google and social media it is easy to think the information you need is just a few keystrokes away, but being able to identify the most relevant and effective resources for your specific needs requires careful consideration and research.

What resource do you need?

Understanding what information you need will help you to identify the resources that are best for you. Think about what you are trying to achieve, your ultimate aim. Understanding your goal will help you narrow down the specific resources you need, and make it easier to filter out those irrelevant and stop you being overwhelmed with information. You can also consider the quantity of information you require. Will identifying and using one resource be enough or do you need to consult several to explore different ideas and perspectives?

What types of resources are there?

Your main source of free information is the internet. There are a number of free databases and resources as well as a wealth of websites and search engines. The important thing is knowing where to go and what to do when you get there.

For resources that are subscription only (for example journals), be sure to consult your local library, who may provide access.

Web databases

A database is a collection of information or data that has been systematically collected to aid easy searching and retrieval stored on a specific website. A large majority of academic works, for example journals and some ebooks, are stored on databases, and the best way to find material is to go to that site specifically and use their search functions rather than using a search engine like Google. Some material is behind a paywall, but sites like JSTOR offer a filter when you search which will show you material free to view. The information stored in databases, in particular academic ones, will be curated to ensure the information is reliable and is of the best possible quality.

Websites

Target websites that are well known organisation or societies, and are experts in their field. Looking at the URL of a website will help you to understand what type of organisation is behind their website. For the UK in particular, a URL ending in gov.uk is a government website, ac.uk, a university. If you are still not sure look at their 'about us' page, and make use of their search functions.

Search engines

Search engines are a good place to start to get an overview of not only your information query, but also other resources that you could explore further. Don't limit yourself to just a search engine, but dig deeper and explore the specific websites identified, making use of their browsing and search functions. Also be critical of the information you are retrieving and using. Unlike the databases mentioned above, there is little control over the information being published, so be critical of the quality of the material found.

For more academic results, start using Google Scholar, which targets journals and books more than websites.

Videos and social media

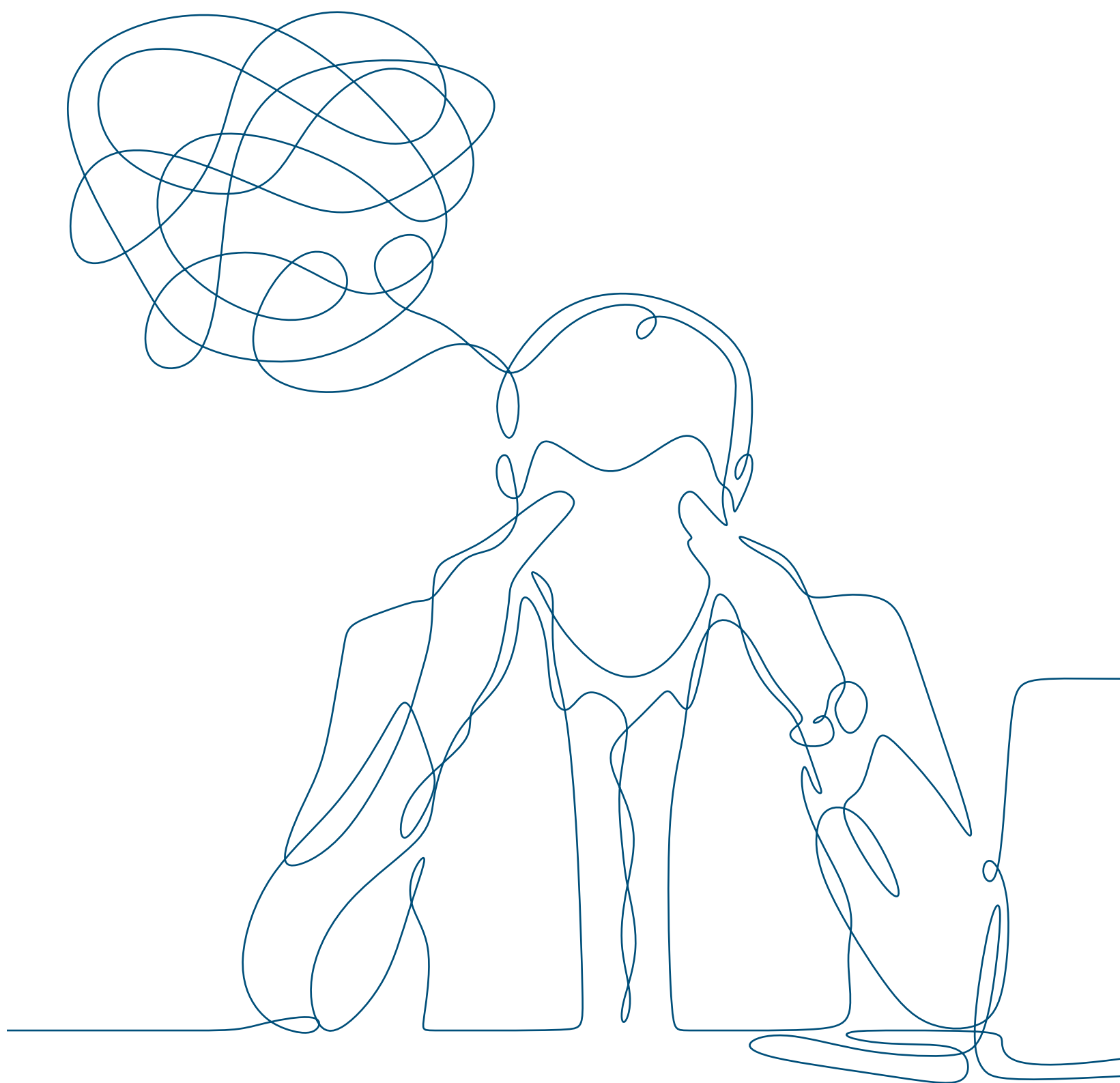
Sites like YouTube and TikTok can provide interesting explanations and opinion pieces on topics, and can be a great way to get an introduction to your subject interest. With these resources, it is essential that you use them in conjunction with other sources, as there is little regulation on what is published and it is easy to come across misinformation.

Physical resources

In an age of digital it might not be your first step to use a physical resource. However, these resources should not be forgotten. Not everything that is a physical book is available online, and you may find it easier to read content from a physical item than a digital one. For a non-fiction book, you do not need to read the whole book, but look at the contents page and index to find pages with the relevant topics to your research needs.

Ask for recommendations and consult references

Don't be afraid to ask others for recommendations. Speak to your teachers, other pupils or other individuals who can point you in the right direction. You can also look on library websites (in particular from education facilities) who can provide list of resources, sometimes curated by subject. If you find an article or website that is particularly useful, look at who they cite and follow up the resource.



How many resources do you need to look at?

The number of resources you consult depends on your research needs. For quick background information one or two resources may be enough. However, a comprehensive and cohesive essay will use evidence from a range of sources. This will ensure your essay has accurate information and that there are different opinions to aid discussion. By selecting where you will search for information you will be able to manage how much time you spend searching and make your research more manageable.

Can you trust your source?

When searching for information you should always be cautious about what you consult. For each website or video you are considering using, check the following criteria before including it in your research.

Authority. Is it clear who has written this material? Are they well known? Look at the 'about us' to see if it is a credible author.

Accuracy. Is the information well presented? Are their information sources clearly listed?

Objectivity. Look for any potential bias within the information. Could the author have an agenda they are trying to push?

Currency. How up to date is the material? When was it last updated?

URL. If you are unsure whether to trust your source you can also look at the site's URL. More reliable sources will have:

How can you keep track of what you have used?

Keep comprehensive notes of where you have found information and what resources you have used. This is not only useful to go back to as you conduct your query, but also for future reference when embarking on other projects.

Some simple ways to keep track are:

- Bookmark pages as you find them
- Copy and paste links to the resources in a Word document (later to be used for references)
- Make use of research management tools like Zotero or Mendeley

Ideally there should never be just one resource that you consult. Going to a variety of resources will make sure you gain a good overview of a topic and consider lots of different perspectives, and will make sure your research is trustworthy.

.gov	.org	.com	.ac	.edu	.co
Government bodies	Non-profit organisations	Commercial organisations	Academic institutions	American education	Commercial & general

PREPARING FOR UNIVERSITY

There are several skills you will need when you go to university, some of which you can develop during your time at Eton. This guide offers advice on a number of them such as time management, reading for comprehension, or looking after your mental wellbeing. There are some other skills which are not covered extensively here but some techniques are given below:

Research and Information Literacy. Familiarise yourself with how to conduct research online by finding credible sources and databases for academic research. Learn how to evaluate information for accuracy, relevance, and credibility. Using the CRAAP test can be a useful tool.

C = currency, which relates to the up-to-date nature of the source

R = relevance, which refers to the information it provides and the links with your question

A = authority, which refers to the credibility of the author

A = accuracy, which is about the reliability, truthfulness, and correctness of the content

P = purpose, which questions the reason a source was written

Critical Thinking. Cultivate critical thinking skills to analyse and assess information objectively. Engage in discussions, debates, and problem-solving activities to help you develop an enquiring mind. Writing for the Business Harvard Review, Helen Bouygues says there are three things we can do to develop critical thinking:

Question assumptions. Make sure that you question certain ideas you might have. You might want to consider alternatives as this will allow you to think more reflectively about beliefs or opinions you or others around you have.

Reason through logic. Logic helps us see the chain of arguments. When given an argument ask yourself: Is the argument supported at every point by evidence? Do all the pieces of evidence build on each other to produce a sound conclusion? Also, be aware of common fallacies and certain preconceptions which make us believe certain things without solid evidence.

Diversify your thought and perspectives. It's natural for us to group together with people who think or act like us. This happens especially readily online, because it's so easy to find people like us and the social media algorithms can narrow our perspectives further, serving up only ideas that fit our individual belief.

This can become a problem if everyone in our social circles thinks as we do, as we become more rigid in our thinking, and less likely to change our beliefs on the basis of new information. You need to seek out diverse opinions and be open to listening to those who disagree with you.

Collaborative Study Skills. Collaborate with peers in study groups to discuss concepts, clarify doubts, and reinforce your understanding of course materials. University is often about collaborative rather than individual work. To do this:

1. Be a good listener
2. Seek out other viewpoints
3. Develop emotional intelligence
4. Acknowledge other ideas and respectfully build on those
5. Be accountable and do your part

Reflect and Adapt. Regularly assess your study strategies and adapt them as needed. Reflect on what works best for you and make improvements. In order to do this, you need to be a strategic learner. Review the below and check which one mostly applies to you:

- A surface approach involves reproduction: coping with unit requirements, learning only what is required to complete a unit satisfactorily, and tending to regurgitate examples and explanations used in readings.
- A deep approach to studying involves transformation and is ideal for self-directed learning. This approach is about understanding ideas for yourself, applying knowledge to new situations, using novel examples to explain a concept, and learning more than is required for unit completion.
- A strategic approach involves organisation: achieving the highest possible grades, learning what is required to pass exams, memorising facts, and spending time practising from past exams.



Dealing with difficulties

It is almost certain that you will encounter difficulties when you start at university. Dr Morrissey, who is based at Oxford University, suggests you should consider what to do when you are faced with things which do not align with your strengths. One of the coping methods includes asking yourself the following questions:

- Can I do it another way?
- Can I draw on something I already know?
- Can I do something to prepare first?
- Can I find more information?
- Can I ask someone to help?
- Can I do it collaboratively?
- Can I use tools to help me?

Know your strengths

Often students do not know what they're good at but there are ways in which you can try to determine this. The following model can help assist you in thinking about your strengths. Once students have determined this then they are often more motivated to persevere with their subject at university.

4 DOMAINS OF LEADERSHIP STRENGTHS

EXECUTING

Achiever
Arranger
Belief
Consistency
Deliberative
Discipline
Focus
Responsibility
Restorative

INFLUENCING

Activator
Command
Communication
Competition
Maximiser
Self-Assurance
Significance
Woo

RELATIONSHIP BUILDING

Adaptability
Developer
Connectedness
Empathy
Harmony
Includer
Individualisation
Positivity
Relator

STRATEGIC THINKING

Analytical
Context
Futuristic
Ideation
Input
Intellection
Learner
Strategic

Adapted from University of Waterloo (2023) and from Dr. Dyedra Morissey's talk at Eton College (2022)

INDEPENDENT LEARNING AND MASTERY



A. Revision strategies

B. Presentation skills

C. Reading and comprehension

D. Following instructions

E. Essay writing

REVISION STRATEGIES

Your intuitions might not be right

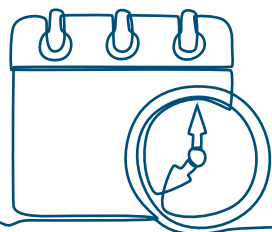
Our intuitions about which revision strategies are effective are sometimes inaccurate. The most effective learning strategies are often counterintuitive and the learning strategies we tend to think are most effective are sometimes among the least effective.

Common revision strategies are re-reading texts, highlighting material and 'cramming'. However, these are usually ineffective strategies and there are more effective methods for retaining and retrieving what we have learned.

This guide will help you revise in a more efficient way.

SPACED PRACTICE

The brain cannot effectively store a lot of information in a short period of time. To embed what we have learned in long-term memory and be fluent at recalling it, we need to move away from what we have learned and return to it at a later time. This process then needs to be repeated several times. Then when we recall and review our learning, it is best to approach it in different ways.



HOW TO DO THIS

1. Regularly return to what you have learned and review it, with spaces of time in between. Spaces can be several hours, days or weeks.
2. When you review your learning, try to do so from new angles and perspectives, raising new questions and connecting your learning with different things. Approaching what you have learned in a variety of ways helps to strengthen the connections you form between areas of your knowledge.
3. Revisit information in progressively longer intervals to increase the effort required to recall it. For example, start with three days, then a week, then three weeks. The forgetting curve on page 10 gives you an idea of the intervals and how retention increases with reviewing.

RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

Retrieving information enhances learning by retrieval-specific mechanisms rather than by elaborative study processes.

There is good evidence that tests or short quizzes can improve learning.

Cognitive scientists refer to retrieval practice as the 'testing effect'.



HOW TO DO THIS

1. Create 'desirable difficulties': even if you don't get the answer right, the process of trying has a significant impact on retention. This can be done in various ways; for example, try to vary the place of study, or organise the material in different ways. Instead of only reading the answer, try to answer the question yourself.
2. Try using different ways to test yourself, such as flash cards or an app such as Quizlet, or answer past papers under exam conditions.
3. Teach it to someone else: by trying to explain information to someone, you learn it better yourself.

Birnbaum, M. et al. 2013. Why interleaving enhances inductive learning: The roles of discrimination and retrieval. *Memory & Cognition*, 41:3, 392-402.

Carvalho, P. & Goldstone, R., 2014. Effects of interleaved and blocked study on delayed test of category learning generalization. *Frontiers in psychology*, http://www.indiana.edu/~pcl/papers/carvalho_goldstone_delayedgeneralization2014.pdf.

Dunlosky, J. et al. 2013. Improving Students' Learning With Effective Learning Techniques: Promising Directions From Cognitive and Educational Psychology. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 14:1, 4-58.

Dunlosky, J. & Rawson, K. 2015. Practice Tests, Spaced Practice, and Successive Relearning: Tips for Classroom Use and for Guiding Students' Learning. *Scholarship of Teaching and Learning in Psychology*, 1:1, 72-78.

INTERLEAVING

This is the opposite of blocked studying, i.e. concentrating on one subject on one particular day. The data thus far are clear in demonstrating the benefits of interleaving over blocking, mixing the subjects you revise, even if it feels intuitive that the right approach to remembering things is blocking (Birnbaum et al., 2013).



HOW TO DO THIS

1. Revise similar subjects together, as this will allow inductive learning to occur. By noticing similar patterns, you create connections between subjects and remember more information.
2. Ignore the perceived assumptions that you can learn more effectively by spending a whole day revising one subject. Even if it feels that you are being more effective in what you learn by concentrating on one subject, the general rule should be: even if you feel you should be revising English or Physics (or any other subject) for the whole day, you should probably not.

COGNITIVE LOAD THEORY

Cognitive load can be defined as the effort being used to hold information in the limited working memory. Learning involves transferring information from working memory to long term memory. (Leppink 2017).

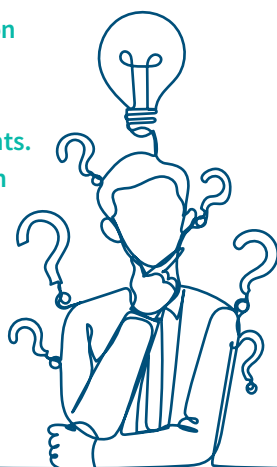


HOW TO DO THIS

1. Since working memory can be very limiting, try to break down tasks into more manageable steps. Perhaps start with what you feel you know a little better. Have regular breaks in between your studying sessions.
2. Scaffold your revision, by starting with information you feel more confident in.
3. Perhaps an obvious but often forgotten way is to avoid distractions and multitasking (such as mobile phones).

BEING INQUISITIVE

Psychological research has focused on identifying predictors of academic performance, with intelligence and effort emerging as core determinants. However, we propose expanding on the traditional set of predictors by adding a third agency: intellectual curiosity (von Stumm et al. 2011).



HOW TO DO THIS

1. Instead of accepting the answers at face value, try to answer 'why' the particular answer is correct (or not). Be critical of the information you receive and try to understand the steps which resulted in that particular answer.
2. Feeling curious about particular subjects can boost your memory even when it comes to information you find not so cognitively stimulating. Find the subjects which stimulate you and revise them alongside less 'interesting' subjects.
3. Think about your learning as this has the potential to give you a good indication of your abilities and what areas you need to work harder on.

Karpicke, J. & Blunt, J. 2011. Retrieval Practice Produces More Learning than Elaborative Studying with Concept Mapping. Science. <http://science.sciencemag.org/content/331/6018/772>.

Leppink, J. 2017. Cognitive load theory: practical implications and an important challenge. Journal of Taibah University Medical Sciences, 12:5, 385-391.

von Stumm, S. et al. 2011. The Hungry Mind Intellectual Curiosity Is the Third Pillar of Academic Performance, Perspectives on psychological science, 6:6, 574-588.

Weinauer et al., 2013. Grouping by similarity helps concept learning. <http://www.indiana.edu/~pcl/papers/weinauer2013.pdf>.

PRESENTATION SKILLS

Presentation skills are a large component of communication skills and are crucial to almost every aspect of academic and professional life. You will have to present while at school but also as part of university interviews or job applications. Employers value presentation skills, which often extend beyond being a confident speaker.

Delivering information can be tedious, unless it's unique or unusual. Conveying it through stories, gestures and analogies makes it interesting. A large portion of the impact of communication rests on how you look and sound, not only on what you say. Having good presentation skills allows you to make the most of your first impression, especially at university admissions and job interviews. Here are the top 10 tips for presentations:



1. Clear Structure and Flow. Ensure your presentation has a logical structure, including an introduction, main points, and conclusion. Use headings, subheadings, and bullet points to organise your content.

2. Engaging Introduction. Start with a captivating hook that grabs your audience's attention and introduces the topic. Clearly state the purpose and main points you'll cover.

3. Focused Main Points. Limit the number of main points to ensure clarity and avoid overwhelming your audience. Develop each point with supporting evidence, examples, and explanations.

4. Visual Aids and Formatting. Incorporate visuals such as images, charts, and graphs to illustrate key points. Use consistent fonts, colours, and formatting for a professional and polished look.

5. Transitions. Use transitional phrases or sentences to smoothly guide your audience through different sections and points. This helps maintain the flow of your presentation.

6. Engaging Language. Use vivid language, anecdotes, and relatable examples to make your content more engaging. Storytelling can help your audience connect with the content of your presentation.

7. Evidence and Research. Support your points with credible sources, and research. This adds depth and authority to your presentation.

8. Strong Conclusion. Summarise your main points and reiterate the key takeaways. End with a thought-provoking statement, call to action, or a memorable closing remark.

9. Proofreading and Editing. Thoroughly proofread your presentation for spelling, grammar, and punctuation errors. Editing ensures clarity and professionalism.

10. Feedback. Seek feedback from peers, teachers, or family. External perspectives can provide valuable insights and help you identify areas for improvement.

A lot of the above is about the visuals you have prepared and the content of your presentation. Remember that a large part of your success when presenting comes to how you look and how you talk. Here is some advice:

Practise. Rehearse your presentation multiple times to build confidence and improve your delivery.

Body language. Maintain good posture, make eye contact, and use gestures to emphasise points.

Speak clearly and slowly. Articulate your words clearly and avoid speaking too quickly. Slow down your pace to ensure your audience can follow your presentation easily.

Vary your tone and pace. Use variations in your tone and pace to keep your audience engaged. Avoid a monotone delivery, as it can make your presentation seem dull.

Adapt to feedback. Pay attention to the audience's reactions and adjust your delivery accordingly. If you notice confusion or uninterest, consider rephrasing or elaborating on certain points.

Clear slides. Ensure you stick to one point per slide. Slides with too much information will detract from what you are saying as the audience might steer their attention to reading the text.

Time management. Practise your presentation within the allotted time to avoid running over or rushing through. Keep track of time during the actual presentation to ensure you cover all points.

Emphasise key points. Highlight important concepts with repetition, emphasising specific words, or using pauses when you want to draw the audience's attention to a specific point.

Role models. Think of a very good presenter and remember what they have done to be so engaging. Make a list of what you can copy from them.

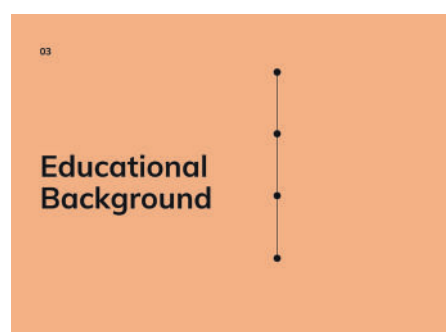
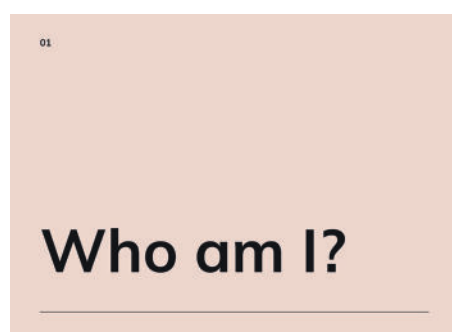
Lastly, it is always a good idea to use a template to create your presentation. An example is given here, that can be accessed for free on Canva (but there is other software you can use).

There are also times when you will have to present without any notes or without knowing the questions. An example of this is for an oral exam or a job interview. How you can prepare:

1. Re-read your notes, in particular parts of the content you found challenging.
2. Ask your peers or your teachers how they would answer a particular question.
3. Think about possible questions and try to come up with relevant answers. You don't want to memorise these as you don't want to sound rehearsed. However, having some ideas can help you feel less stressed on the day.
4. Don't lose sleep over this. Getting a good night's sleep is very important for your performance.
5. You can try some relaxation breathing before your presentation/interview/exam. Inhale for the count of four and exhale for four. Repeat this for as long as you can since it can relax your nervous system.

Dolan, R. (2017). Effective presentation skills, FEMS Microbiology Letters, 364(24), fnx235, <https://doi.org/10.1093/femsle/fnx235>

Van Emden, J. and Becker, L. (2004). Presentation skills for students. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.



READING FOR COMPREHENSION

Reading comprehension strategies are techniques and approaches that readers use to understand and retain the information they read from texts. These strategies help you engage with the material, make sense of the content, and retain the information more effectively. Here are some commonly used reading comprehension strategies:

Previewing. Before starting with the text, skim through headings, subheadings, illustrations, and the first and last paragraphs. This gives you an overview of the content and prepares you for what to expect.

Predicting. Based on the title, headings, and your prior knowledge, make predictions about what the text might be about. This helps activate your background knowledge and provides a framework for understanding.

Activating Prior Knowledge. Connect what you're reading to what you already know. This could involve recalling similar experiences, concepts, or information that you've encountered before.

Questioning. Formulate questions about the content as you read. This keeps you engaged and encourages active thinking about the material. Questions could be about the main idea, supporting details, or the author's purpose.

Visualising. Create mental images of the scenes, settings, or concepts described in the text.

Making Inferences. Draw logical conclusions based on the information presented in the text and your own background knowledge. Inferences involve reading between the lines and understanding implied meanings.

Summarising. After reading a section or the entire text, write a concise summary of the main points. This helps you synthesise and process the information, reinforcing your understanding.

Identifying Main Ideas and Supporting Details. Determine the central message or theme of the text and identify the key points that support it.

Chunking. Break down the text into smaller sections or paragraphs and focus on understanding each chunk before moving on. This prevents information overload and aids retention.

Using Context Clues. When encountering unfamiliar words, use the surrounding text to deduce their meanings. This improves vocabulary and comprehension.

Reflecting. Pause periodically to think about what you've read. Consider how it relates to your own experiences, beliefs, or knowledge.

Synthesising. Combine new information with what you already know to form a deeper and more integrated understanding of the topic.

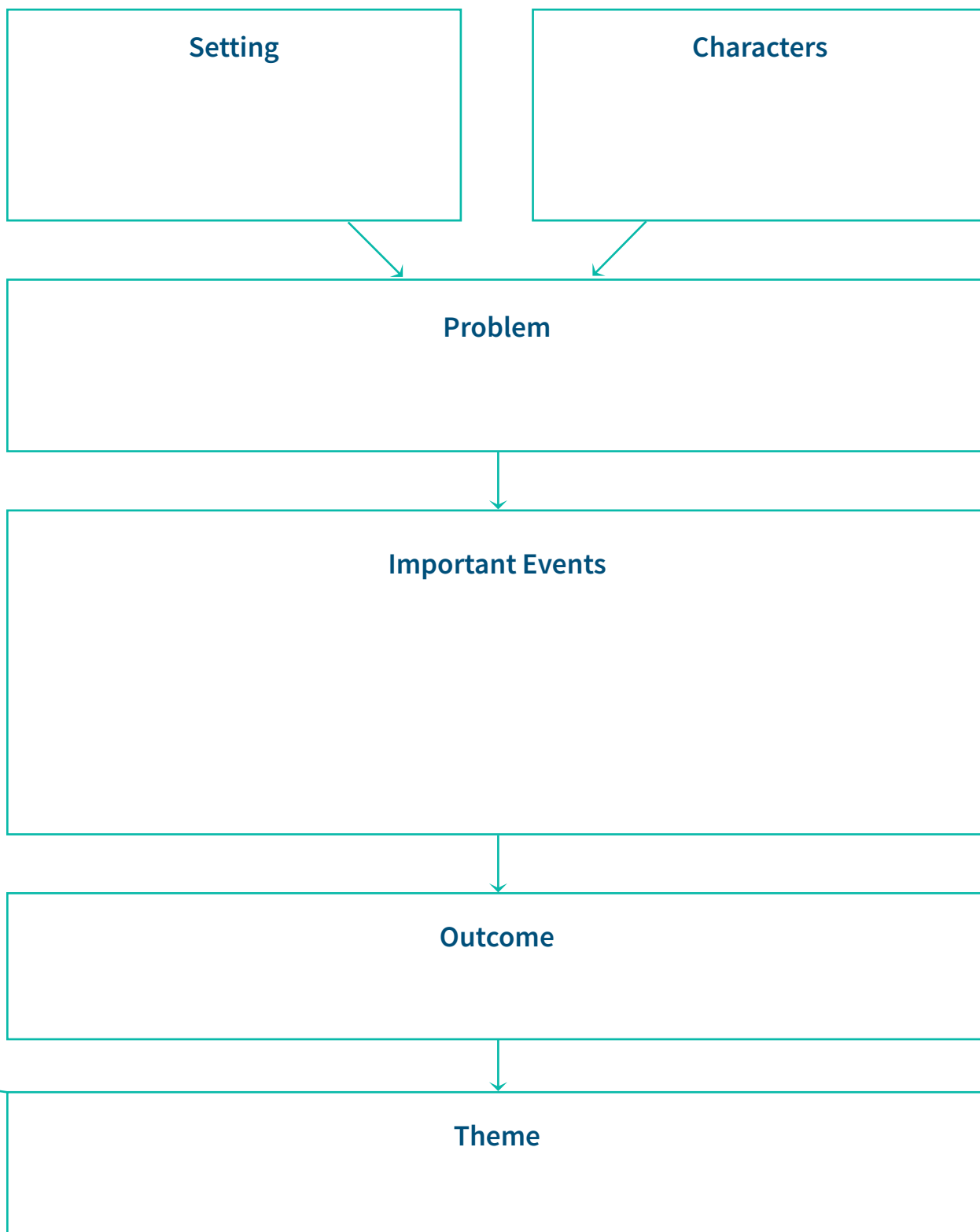
Researching. If there are ideas you are not sure of, look them up. Very often getting some extra information can help unlock parts of the text you were unsure of.

Using story maps. You can use a template like the one below to help you summarise the information in a visual way when reading narrative texts.



STORY MAP

Title: _____



FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS

In an academic environment, difficulty adhering to instructions can hinder the overall learning process and the desired results you might want. At a basic level, one might assume that following instructions involves reading the provided guidance or carefully listening to spoken directions and then carrying out the prescribed action accordingly. However, there is a lot more to the psychology of following instructions. There are a number of things that influence how well we follow instructions, including:

- a person's working memory capacity
- societal rules
- history effects
- self-regulatory behaviour
- instruction format

Working memory

Working memory serves as the brain's workspace, connecting perception, attention, and long-term memory. For instance, in a classroom, students process visual and auditory information, with only what they focus on entering their working memory. This information is processed, creating a mental representation that moves from working memory to long-term storage, playing a key role in learning. However, because working memory has limits, a person's ability to follow instructions can be hindered if the instructions exceed their working memory capacity, leading to information loss. Consider a student named Alex, who's distracted in class due to exam nerves, impacting his working memory performance. Consequently, he struggles to hold verbal instructions from the teacher, leading to inadequate long-term memory storage and task completion failure. To address this, two strategies are proposed:

1. Immediate action on the information, such as telling someone else what you just heard or writing it down
2. Varied forms of instruction, for example, both written and verbal

Societal rules and history effects

Following instructions is a behaviour that's often influenced by social context, particularly the presence of others. The "mere presence effect" highlights how human behaviour changes when another person is around. This can make individuals more pliant, meaning their behaviour is influenced by socially mediated consequences. For instance, a student might follow instructions to gain a teacher's approval, displaying pliance. However, history also plays a role in how well we follow instructions: if there are no consequences when instructions are not followed, we are more likely not to follow instructions.

Written v verbal instructions

Written instructions play to our strengths since we can quickly read information without overloading our working memory. Writing instructions according to the sequence of actions the reader needs to take may lead to better results. For example, "do A before doing B" is a superior form of wording instructions than stating, "before doing B, do A". On the other hand, verbal directions offer benefits of in-person interactions, like classroom settings. These spoken instructions are managed by the phonological loop, a segment of working memory dedicated to verbal information, known for its flexibility and convenience. Inherently, listening demands less effort than reading. Interestingly, people can't simultaneously read and follow visual elements. Combining text and images can strain working memory more than combining spoken words with visuals. (Dunham et. al. 2020)

Dunham, S., Lee, E., & Persky, A. M. (2020). The Psychology of Following Instructions and Its Implications. *American journal of pharmaceutical education*, 84(8), ajpe7779. <https://doi.org/10.5688/ajpe7779>

How can you ensure you follow instructions?

- 1. Active Listening.** Engage in active listening when instructions are given. Focus on the instructions, ask clarifying questions if needed, and avoid distractions to ensure you understand the task accurately.
- 2. Clarify Ambiguities.** If instructions are unclear or ambiguous, don't hesitate to ask for clarification. It's better to ensure you fully understand the task than to make assumptions. Check in with your peers or teacher.
- 3. Chunking Information.** Break down complex instructions into smaller, manageable chunks. This approach makes the task seem less overwhelming and enhances comprehension.
- 4. Prioritise Tasks.** If instructions involve multiple tasks, prioritise them based on deadlines, importance, or sequence. A clear plan of action prevents confusion and last-minute rushes.
- 5. Avoid Multitasking.** Focus solely on the task at hand without trying to multitask. This prevents errors and helps you stay aligned with the instructions.
- 6. Reflect on Previous Mistakes.** Learn from past experiences where you might have misinterpreted instructions. Identify common pitfalls and strategies to overcome them.
- 7. Read Properly.** Read carefully the instruction words. Does the task ask you to analyse, discuss, compare, or summarise? What do these instruction verbs mean? How many parts are in the instructions? Ensure you answer all of them and not just part of the instructions.

ESSAY WRITING

WHAT DO GOOD WRITERS DO?



The process of writing an essay is fairly similar across subjects, although there might be some subject-specific differences.

1. Analyse the question. Identify the content terms - key concepts that are specific to the task and help you narrow the focus of the question - and directive terms which tell you what you need to do in relation to the question, i.e. define, analyse, compare, discuss, etc.

2. Define your position. While you start planning and get ready to compose the essay, it's important to think about the stance you will adopt. This involves adopting a well-informed position or perspective regarding the subject introduced in the prompt, followed by outlining and introducing a distinct argument.

3. Use evidence. Your ideas need to be backed up by evidence. Ensure you include reliable sources which show how your argument relates to what has been written on the topic by credible authors.

4. Have a clear structure.

Introduction. The function of an introduction is to present your essay. Typically, it offers information in the following manner:

A broad statement concerning the subject that offers a backdrop for your standpoint.

A thesis statement that showcases your argument. You can employ direct introductions like 'This essay argues that...'

An outline of the essay's progression, elucidating how it will unfold and elaborate upon your argument.

Main body. The main body of the essay advances and expands upon your argument. It accomplishes this by constructing a logical argument backed up by evidence drawn from credible academic sources. Its structure aligns with the initial outline you presented in your introduction. The body of your essay must be organised into paragraphs, with each paragraph dedicated to expanding a central notion that reinforces your argument.

Conclusion. Your conclusion should refrain from introducing new content. The evidence and reasoning supporting your argument must already have been included in the main body of the essay.

Utilise the conclusion to concisely reiterate the primary argument and provide a brief overview of the discussed themes. Furthermore, consider including:

- The potential significance of your findings or the consequences of your conclusion.
- Any unexplored factors that lie beyond the essay's scope.
- The interconnection between your subject and the broader context within your subject.

Check in

Overall Structure

- Is your introduction explicit in presenting your argument?
- Does the arrangement of your essay align with the outlined structure in your introduction?
- Have you unmistakably demonstrated how your primary points substantiate your argument?
- Have you provided clear signposts for your reader to follow the transitions between each main point?

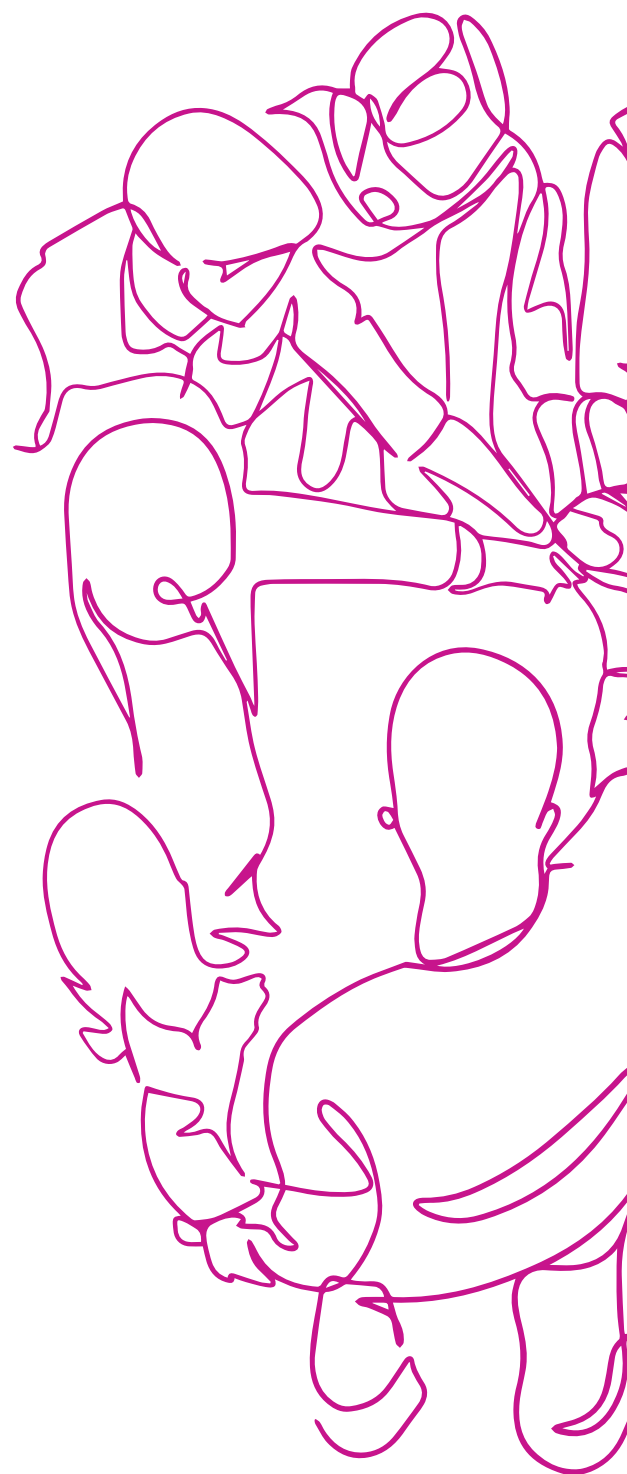
Paragraphs

- Does each paragraph introduce a singular key concept?
- Is every sentence within the paragraph pertinent to the main concept?
- Does each paragraph incorporate relevant evidence and logical reasoning?
- Does the sequence of paragraphs maintain a logical progression?

Sentences

- Are all sentences grammatically sound and complete?
- Is the spelling without errors?
- Are the connections between sentences easily comprehensible to readers?
- Have you avoided unnecessary duplication and repetition?

CHARACTER SKILLS



RESILIENCE & GRIT



A. Having a growth mindset

.....

B. Staying motivated

.....

C. Dealing with setbacks

.....

HAVING A GROWTH MINDSET

The academic achievement of students is shaped not only by their cognitive capacities and knowledge of content, but also by non-cognitive elements like their beliefs, perspectives, and principles. One noteworthy non-cognitive aspect is the perspective students hold about the stability of intelligence, known as “mindset”. Carol Dweck studied extensively the idea of mindsets and their influence on success. Students who see intelligence as a constant and unalterable trait are categorised as having a “fixed mindset,” and they often interpret difficulties or failures as evidence of their inability to excel intellectually. Consequently, those with a fixed mindset usually evade challenges, give up when faced with adversity, and ultimately attain lower academic accomplishments. Conversely, students

who believe that intelligence can be developed through effort and guidance possess a “growth mindset.” Such students are more inclined to embrace demanding tasks, persist in the face of challenges by employing new strategies or increasing their exertion, and consequently achieve higher academic success.

The mindset of students holds significant sway as it influences various other non-cognitive aspects, including the nature of goals they set, how they attribute their achievements and setbacks, and their coping mechanisms when confronted with challenges. Considering the broad impact of mindsets, understanding the development and transformation of students’ mindsets over time becomes crucial.

FIXED MINDSET	GROWTH MINDSET
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avoids challenges• Gives up easily on things that might be too hard• Does not respond well to feedback• Believes they will not be good enough• Finds feedback unhelpful or does not know what to do with it	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Embraces challenges• Responds well to feedback• Tries to find opportunities to improve• Believes they can improve with practice

HOW TO DEVELOP A GROWTH MINDSET

Embrace the power of “yet”. Use language which shows there is potential rather than thinking this is the end of the effort. For example, say “I don’t understand this topic... yet.” This simple addition reminds you that you can improve with effort and practice.

Embrace challenges. Instead of shying away from difficult tasks, you can willingly embrace challenges as opportunities to learn and grow. Seek out assignments or projects that stretch your abilities whether this is in academic subjects or co-curricular activities.

Cultivate a positive attitude. You can maintain a positive attitude towards learning, even in the face of setbacks. Focus on the process of learning and improvement, rather than solely on achieving high grades. Keep a log about what you think you have learnt even when your grades are not as good as you expected.

Use failure as a learning opportunity. Instead of being discouraged by failure, you can view it as a chance to learn from your mistakes and adjust your strategies. Seek feedback from your teachers, tutors, coaches, or anyone else who can provide you with some ways forward.

Practise self-reflection. Regularly reflect on your learning progress, strengths, and areas for improvement. Self-awareness can help identify areas that need more attention and guide future learning

efforts. Use the tools in this study skills guide to keep track of your reflection and other areas for improvement.

Develop resilience. Ultimately, a growth mindset is about resilience. You need to develop the ability to bounce back from setbacks and continue working towards your goals. Resilience is about not feeling disheartened after a setback but carrying on even if your plans and goals have slightly changed.

Stay curious and open-minded. Cultivate a curious attitude towards learning and be open to exploring new ideas and perspectives. Eton offers many opportunities for you to explore new interests and make autonomous decisions. Make sure you take full advantage of those as you never know what you might discover that will provide you with the room to grow.

Celebrate progress and effort. Recognise and celebrate your own efforts and improvements. Celebrating small achievements can reinforce a growth mindset and increase motivation. It doesn’t have to be something as big as winning a prize; there might be smaller things that happen every day and show growth. Do not overlook those. You don’t want to be overstating your achievements, as this can show arrogance, but there is nothing wrong with making a note of how well you have done in a particular area.

Dweck, C. S. (1999). Self-theories: Their role in motivation, personality, and development. New York: Psychology Press.
Limeri, L.B. et al. (2020). Growing a growth mindset: characterizing how and why undergraduate students’ mindsets change. IJ STEM Ed 7, 35. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40594-020-00227-2>

STAYING MOTIVATED

Motivation exists on a spectrum. You can be completely amotivated because you don't see the purpose of an activity or, on the other end of the spectrum, be intrinsically motivated, which means you complete an activity or engage in a task because you enjoy it.

In order to maintain your motivation when studying you can try some of these techniques:

Remember your purpose

Remind yourself what the purpose of your studying is. It might be something extrinsic, such as good grades or a university offer, or something intrinsic, such as an interest in a topic. Keeping in mind your goals is important to keep you engaged.

Don't get overwhelmed

Frequently, starting a task becomes challenging when faced with an overwhelming to-do list. Consequently, many students resort to procrastination due to the uncertainty of where to begin. However, the key here lies in initiating the process by taking the crucial first step. Rather than being preoccupied with all the tasks ahead, focusing solely on that initial step is essential.

Break your activities into smaller chunks

Dividing your work into smaller chunks can help you see how you can progress step-by-step. For example, if you have to write an essay, break it down into smaller steps such as research, planning, writing, editing. This way you can see how you can go from the first step to completing the task.

Create the conditions for studying

There are several things you can do to have the optimal conditions for studying.

For example, establishing a study schedule allows you to designate specific study time which helps in maintaining focus and sustaining motivation throughout the academic year. Utilise a digital or paper-based calendar to allocate study blocks into your daily routine, forming a consistent habit and linking certain times of the day with studying. Another idea is to craft an ideal study space in your room or at home. Ensure the space is clean, quiet, organised, and comfortable. Eliminate distractions like game consoles and other distractions by turning off your phone and using website-blocking extensions on your browser, optimising the productivity of your study sessions.

AMOTIVATION	EXTRINSIC MOTIVATION				INTRINSIC MOTIVATION
<div>↓</div> <div>Total Indifference</div>	EXTERNAL REGULATION	INTROJECTION	IDENTIFICATION	INTEGRATION	<div>↓</div> <div>Reward in itself, fun and pleasing</div>
	because we have to, for someone else	Assimilation of external motivators (status)	Alignment with personal needs	Complete internal alignment	
I will never learn, I give up	I have to learn, or else	I learn in order to be better than the others	I have to learn because it is important in life	I learn in order to become an educated person	I quench my thirst for knowledge and find it fun and rewarding

<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S187705091731356X?via%3Dihub>



DEALING WITH SETBACKS

It is essential to recognise that setbacks are a natural part of the learning process. By adopting healthy coping strategies and cultivating a growth mindset, you can develop resilience and turn setbacks into stepping stones toward success. Success never comes in a straight line, and there will always be ups and downs. The key is to keep trying despite the challenges and setbacks. The below strategies can aid you towards that:

Understand the causes

It is not useful to blame yourself, others, or the circumstances. The best approach is to understand the causes why something has happened. It might be that you did not study enough or you did not understand something. Taking ownership of what you could have done differently is important, as is making a plan for how you can avoid the same thing from happening again.

The 5/5 rule

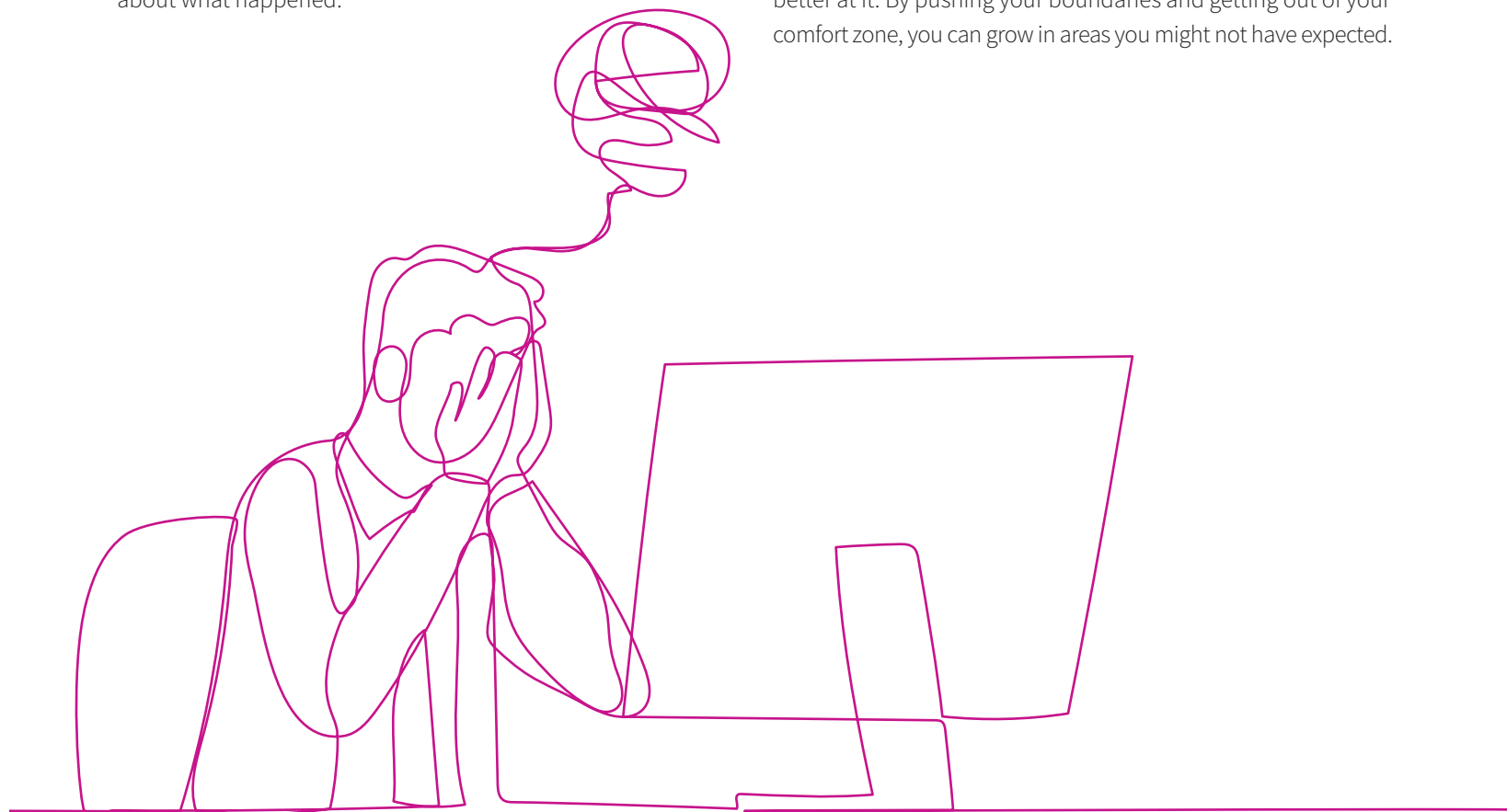
When you experience some kind of disappointment, take a moment to think about how much impact it has on you. The 5/5 rule says that if you think that this situation will not matter in 5 years, you should not spend more than 5 minutes worrying about it. So, acknowledge the negative feelings, but set a time limit for how long you will allow yourself to be upset or sad about what happened.

Think rationally

When you are dealing with a setback, it is easy to let emotions take over. Instead of letting anger, sadness, or frustration dictate the response, you should deal with the situation rationally. Make sure you focus on the information and the facts. For example, look at the feedback you have received and check what you can do to improve. Talk to your House Master, Masters, Dame, Tutor, or other boys and ask questions about how they would approach this situation.

Step out of your comfort zone

You should start looking at setbacks as opportunities for growth. Use difficult situations to look for ways you can become better and stronger. For example, if you think that a new skill is needed, use this opportunity to identify what that is and get better at it. By pushing your boundaries and getting out of your comfort zone, you can grow in areas you might not have expected.



RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS



A. Emotional intelligence

B. Teamwork and collaboration

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional intelligence is often discussed in comparison to IQ. IQ typically measures logical reasoning, problem-solving, memory, mathematical abilities, and language skills. All these fall under cognitive abilities. On the other hand, EI focuses on the ability to understand and manage emotions in oneself and others, which plays a significant role in social interactions, relationships, and personal well-being. One of the proponents of EI, Daniel Goleman, wrote extensively of the vital role of EI in leadership and fulfilling one's potential when in a professional role.

In his words:

IQ washes out when it comes to predicting who, among a talented pool of candidates within an intellectually demanding profession, will become the strongest leader. In part this is because of the floor effect: everyone at the top echelons of a given profession, or at the top levels of a large organisation, has already been sifted for intellect and expertise. At those lofty levels a high IQ becomes a threshold ability, one needed just to get into and stay in the game.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is a vital skill that impacts people's personal and academic life. Comprising four domains—self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management—emotional intelligence offers numerous benefits. By enhancing empathy and effective communication, EI strengthens relationships, leading to more profound connections with family and peers. Moreover, emotional intelligence contributes to stress management, enabling individuals to handle pressure and challenging situations more effectively, thus promoting better mental and physical well-being. Furthermore, decision-making becomes more balanced and thoughtful as EI encourages considering both rational thought and emotions. EI also aids in conflict resolution by fostering empathy and seeking cooperative solutions, de-escalating tense situations. EI enables individuals to regulate their emotions constructively, avoiding impulsive reactions and maintaining emotional balance. By fostering self-awareness, EI encourages introspection on emotions, strengths, and areas for growth, leading to personal development. Overall, emotional intelligence empowers individuals to navigate human interactions successfully, leading to fulfilment and success in both personal and academic aspects of life.



GOLEMAN’S FOUR PILLARS OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE



Goleman, D. (2007). Emotional Intelligence (10th ed.). Bantam Books.
Goleman, D. (2005). Introduction to the tenth anniversary edition. In Emotional intelligence. New York: Bantam.

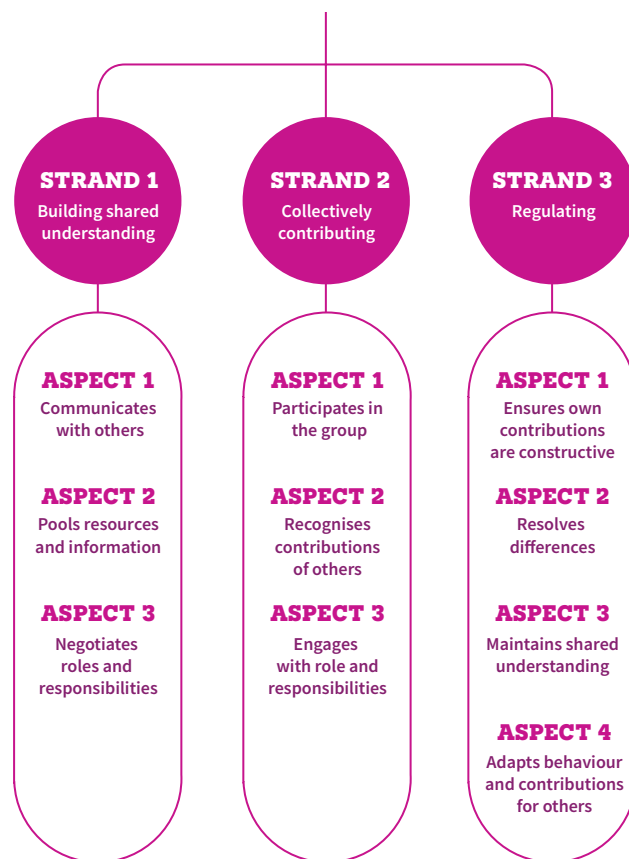
TEAMWORK AND COLLABORATION

Teamwork and collaboration skills are immensely important not only while you are at school and then at university but also later on in life. By working together with peers, you gain exposure to diverse perspectives and approaches, fostering creativity and innovative problem-solving. These skills are invaluable as you prepare for the real world, where collaboration is essential in professional settings. Collaborative projects also allow you to leverage complementary strengths, enhancing the quality of your work. You can develop essential communication skills, effective conflict resolution abilities, and efficient time management practices. These collaborative experiences provide opportunities for networking and leadership development, while also promoting emotional intelligence. In essence, teamwork and collaboration equip you with a versatile skill set that extends beyond academics, nurturing personal growth, career readiness, and the ability to navigate a globally interconnected landscape.

How can you show that you engage with others in a meaningful way? Researchers in Australia have developed different strands which all contribute to meaningful collaboration.

Also, remember that one of the best ways you can show collaboration and teamwork is by listening effectively. The rules we have seen previously are:

- Ensure your body language shows you are listening and are not being distracted by other things, such as your phone or someone else in the room.
- Encourage and acknowledge the other person's comments.
- Ask appropriate questions to clarify and ensure a good understanding. This can be done by asking open questions.
- Take the time to really make sure you have understood what you are being told by clarifying your understanding. Before you respond, take some time to process what the person has said and think about it. Don't just hear so you can then say your own point but take in the other perspective.
- Finally, repeat important points and summarise to ensure the other person feels heard and there are no misunderstandings in communication.



Scoular, C., Duckworth, D., Heard, J., & Ramalingam, D. (2020). Collaboration: Skill development framework. Australian Council for Educational Research. https://research/acer/edu.au/ar_misc/42

MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING



A. Managing exam anxiety

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B. Healthy competition

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C. The importance of sleep

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D. The importance of diet

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MANAGING EXAM ANXIETY

Test anxiety is a phenomenon well known to many students of different ages. For example, sources report that 16.4% of English secondary students suffer from test anxiety. Test anxiety is the feeling of unease that arises in situations where one's ability to achieve is at stake, particularly in cases like significant exams. This type of anxiety is complex, encompassing various aspects as described by Krispenz et al. (2019). Physiologically, individuals with test anxiety might encounter physical reactions such as sweating, heart palpitations, shaking, and nausea. Cognitively, it involves worrisome thoughts that revolve around negative self-assessments related to academic performance. Furthermore,

those with test anxiety might also grapple with social concerns, fearing negative evaluations from teachers, parents, and others. Emotionally, test anxiety is linked to distressing feelings of restlessness, lack of confidence, and powerlessness.

Test anxiety frequently coincides with academic procrastination, which refers to the deliberate postponement of significant tasks or choices, even though one is aware of the detrimental outcomes and personal unease that come with the delay. This behaviour is observed in educational settings, where tasks like preparing for exams or composing essays are affected the most.

Here are some strategies that can help you tackle exam anxiety:

BE ORGANISED	Make a revision plan ahead of time and stick to it as much as you can. This means that you will not get too stressed by feeling that you are behind as exams approach.
GET A GOOD NIGHT'S SLEEP	It is common to stay up late revising, or cramming, closer to the exams. But a lack of sleep can make you feel more stressed and really impacts on your performance. Ensure you get 7-9 hours of sleep every night.
HAVE A BALANCED DIET	Even though sugary snacks might look appealing when you are revising, ensure you have regular meals and avoid too much sugar. Instead opt for healthy snacks and remember to keep hydrated.
GROUND YOURSELF	<p>If you start getting stressed about the exam, you can try a grounding exercise:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find 5 things you can see • Find 4 things you can hear • Find 3 things you can smell • Find 2 things you can touch • Find 1 thing you can taste
MAINTAIN A WORK-LIFE BALANCE	<p>It is easy to feel that the only thing you need to do during exams is revise but this is not beneficial for your performance. Remember to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Take regular breaks 2. Meet up with friends 3. Do some exercise or take a walk outside 4. Keep doing some of your hobbies
BE REALISTIC	It is important to have ambitious goals but don't allow unrealistic goals to make you feel overwhelmed about the exams. Set realistic goals, after talking to your teachers, and remember that they are individual and you don't need to compare yourself with others.
TRY BOX BREATHING	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Sit comfortably upright; the aim is for your spine to be slightly curved inwards as this drops down your diaphragm and makes it easier to fully fill your lungs with each in- breath. If your lungs are fully filled with air, your belly should move in and out as you breathe. 2. Take a slow, deep breath in through your nose, for 3-4 seconds. Hold the breath in your lungs for 3-4 seconds. Slowly exhale through your mouth and make this last for 7-8 seconds. <p>You can tweak the timings of the breathing cycle, depending on what feels comfortable. The general rule of thumb is that you should exhale for twice as long as you inhale.</p>

Krispenz, A. et al. (2019). How to Reduce Test Anxiety and Academic Procrastination Through Inquiry of Cognitive Appraisals: A Pilot Study Investigating the Role of Academic Self-Efficacy, *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, DOI=10.3389/fpsyg.2019.01917

HEALTHY COMPETITION

At Eton, competition is part of the many learning experiences. Sometimes you'll have to compete against a friend and it can be hard to put that relationship aside during competition and play a good game. Serena Williams has reflected on playing

against her sister, Venus, and said that focusing on the future can help you get into the right mindset. She acknowledged that in 10 years' time these matches will not matter, what will matter is the relationships with her family.

Here are some strategies you can follow to ensure competition remains healthy and you showcase qualities which make you a 'good sport'.

Provide Support

- Refrain from directing disappointment at teammates in the face of setbacks
- Collaboration is essential in teams; mutual assistance holds great value
- Constructive reinforcement boosts productivity and efficiency
- Encouragement and gestures can reinvigorate focus

Maintain a Positive Outlook

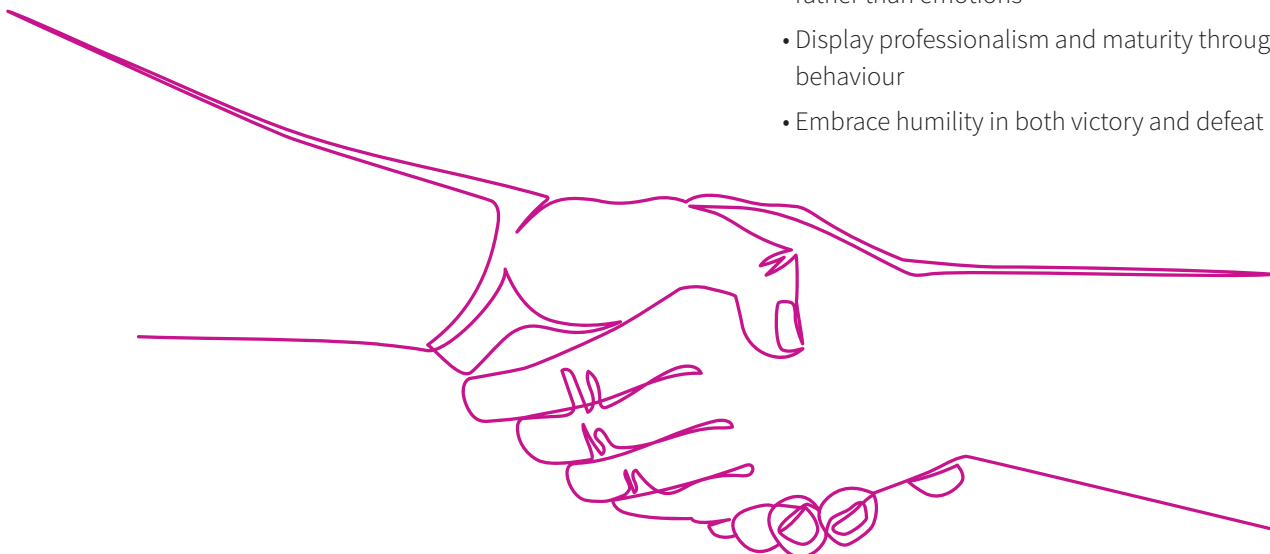
- Adopting a pessimistic view harms the whole team
- Negativity diminishes enjoyment and can reflect immaturity
- Positive attitude is crucial so be the one who fosters a vibrant spirit within the team

Show Respect

- Demonstrate respect regardless of the outcomes
- Avoid passive-aggressive behaviour or derogatory comments
- Harsh language towards opponents or teammates should not be used
- Complaining or disputing decisions shows poor conduct
- Play fairly and follow the rules with integrity
- Express gratitude to other players/teams/competitors
- Celebrate successes and efforts of all players

Embrace Willingness to Learn

- Use defeats as opportunities for personal growth
- Shift focus from frustration to analysing mistakes
- Refine techniques that hinder success for future improvement
- Learn from setbacks to evolve as a person or teammate
- Exercise self-discipline:
- Control emotions and maintain composure during competitive activities
- Deliberately concentrate on the activity you have to finish rather than emotions
- Display professionalism and maturity through controlled behaviour
- Embrace humility in both victory and defeat



THE IMPORTANCE OF SLEEP

Though scientists are still in the process of uncovering and clarifying all the roles sleep plays, numerous studies spanning decades have affirmed its essential role in maintaining our health and even ensuring our survival. It's becoming increasingly evident that regardless of how busy our lives might be, we can no longer disregard the insights provided by research regarding the significance of sleep for our mental and physical well-being and safety.

To illustrate, it's well-established that sleep plays a vital role in our waking cognitive abilities, such as clear thinking, maintaining vigilance and alertness, and sustaining our attention. Additionally, it's understood that sleep contributes to memory consolidation and holds a crucial function in regulating our emotions (Worley, 2018).

Think about these questions:

- Having trouble staying awake in History class?
- Find it impossible to get out of bed for school on Monday mornings?
- Have an unavoidable nap-attack the second you get back from lessons in the afternoon?

If you responded 'Yes' to any of these questions, you're not the only one in this situation. A lot of adolescents experience a consistent sense of fatigue. In the medical realm, the term "sleepiness" refers to the sensation of wanting or needing to sleep in situations and at moments when being asleep is not appropriate (like during a History class!).

Sleepiness is a universal experience that everyone encounters at some point. Usually, though not always, the cause is evident, such as having a series of late nights. Surprisingly, up to 40% of teenagers frequently grapple with excessive sleepiness.

While certain medical factors can contribute to feeling excessively sleepy, the majority of sleep-deprived teens simply aren't getting enough sleep. Scientific research reveals that to operate optimally, individuals in this age group require at least 7-9 hours of sleep each day. This surpasses the sleep requirement from your pre-teen years and will also exceed your future adult needs.

The reason teenagers require more sleep stems from the rapid physical, intellectual, and emotional growth you undergo during this phase. While getting sufficient sleep might not appear to be of significant importance, medical research indicates that teenagers who consistently don't get enough sleep tend to encounter difficulties in their academic pursuits. Why is that? Fatigue adversely affects memory, concentration, and most critically, motivation – the drive to achieve your goals (Canadian Pediatric Society, 2008).

5 TIPS FOR BETTER SLEEP



BE CONSISTENT

Go to bed at the same time and get up at the same time every day.

BEDROOM ENVIRONMENT

Make your bedroom quiet and dark.



DISCONNECT FROM DEVICES

Turn off the electronics at least an hour or two before bed.

AVOID LARGE MEAL

To give your body enough time to properly digest the food that won't disrupt your sleep.



STRETCHING & MEDITATION

To reduce muscle tension and calm your mind.

Canadian Pediatric Society (2008). Teens and sleep: Why you need it and how to get enough. (2008). Paediatrics & child health, 13(1), 69–72. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pch/13.1.69>

Worley S. L. (2018). The Extraordinary Importance of Sleep: The Detrimental Effects of Inadequate Sleep on Health and Public Safety Drive an Explosion of Sleep Research. P & T: a peer-reviewed journal for formulary management, 43(12), 758–763.

THE IMPORTANCE OF DIET

The impact of food on the brain and overall academic performance, as well as physical wellbeing, has been researched extensively. Studies across the world (Foster, 2014) found that regular healthy meals correlated with higher academic performance. This finding applies to young children (Florence et al., 2008) as well as those attending university (Burrows et al., 2017). On the other side of the spectrum, Foster has found that a “Western” dietary pattern

(high intake of take-away foods, red and processed meat, soft drinks and fried and refined food) at age 14 is associated negatively with 17-year-olds’ thinking abilities, especially reaction time and memory. The adolescents they studied had poorer scores in mathematics, reading and writing. In contrast, they found a diet richer in fruit, yellow and red vegetables and whole grains was associated with better academic performance.

HEALTHY DIET

INCLUDE A VARIETY OF FOODS

Be sure to include fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, and dairy in your diet. This will provide you with the necessary nutrients to maintain your health.

DRINK ENOUGH WATER

Stay hydrated by drinking enough water throughout the day. Avoid sugary drinks and opt for water, tea or unsweetened infusions.

LIMIT CONSUMPTION OF PROCESSED FOODS

Highly processed foods are typically high in saturated fat, added sugars, and sodium. Try to limit your consumption and opt for fresh and natural foods whenever possible.

REDUCE THE CONSUMPTION OF SUGAR & SALT

Excess sugar and salt in the diet can be harmful to health. Limit consumption of sugary foods and drinks, as well as processed foods that contain high levels of salt.



Burrows, T. L., Whatnall, M. C., Patterson, A. J., & Hutchesson, M. J. (2017). Associations between Dietary Intake and Academic Achievement in College Students: A Systematic Review. *Healthcare*, 5(4), 60. <https://doi.org/10.3390/healthcare5040060>

Florence M.D., Asbridge, M., Veugelers, P.J. (2008). Diet quality and academic performance. *Journal of School Health*, 78, 209-215.

Foster, J. (2014). Brain food: diet's impacts on students are too big to ignore. *The Conversation*.

