

# Preparing for SQA Exams



**Fortrose Academy 2025**

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# Signing up for MySQA

In order to get your results by text/email you need to sign up for MySQA. We recommend you do this as it allows you to check personal details such as your home address before results day:

## GET RESULTS READY

MySQA is your direct link with SQA. It lets you view your qualification information, check the personal details we hold for you and if you're sitting exams you can get your results sent by email and text message.

### Step 1 - Sign Up

You will need your SCN (Scottish Candidate Number) to do this.

It's available from your centre if you don't already know it.

[Sign up](#)

[Learn more](#)

### Step 2 - Activate

You will need:

- The activation code we sent you
- Your SCN

[Activate account](#)

[Forgot activation code?](#)

### Step 3 - Login

Username

Password

[Forgot Username?](#)  
[Forgot Password?](#)

Login

You will need your Scottish Candidate Number to sign up, if you don't have this look at the SQA notice board on the wall opposite Guidance. Please check the details held are correct, for example the name is as you wish it to appear on your certificate - see Mrs Rhynas if any of the details are incorrect.

**My Scottish Candidate Number:**



# Your Fortrose Academy exam timetable



You will receive a personalised exam timetable like the example below:

**NOTE: This is the provisional timetable. All entries MUST be checked against the master timetable to ensure no examinations are missed. Please tell your teacher if your name, address or date of birth is incorrect, or if the list of examinations does not match what you expect. Please check the time and date of each examination is accurate. If special arrangements have been made for you, amend this sheet accordingly.**

	Subject/Title	Date	Start	End	Room	Seat
<b>C847</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>					
National 5	Paper 1 Non-calculator	04/05/2022	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Theatre	83
National 5	Paper 2	04/05/2022	10:45 AM	12:15 PM	Theatre	83
<b>C824</b>	<b>English</b>					
National 5	Reading for Understanding, Analysis and Evaluation	12/05/2022	9:00 AM	10:00 AM	Theatre	70
National 5	Critical Reading	12/05/2022	10:30 AM	12:00 PM	Theatre	72
<b>C810</b>	<b>Business Management</b>					
National 5	Question Paper	18/05/2022	9:00 AM	11:00 AM	Theatre	31
<b>C807</b>	<b>Biology</b>					
National 5	Question Paper	19/05/2022	1:00 PM	3:30 PM	Theatre	49

The **times may be different to the SQA website** because we change times to fit in around bus times and extra time. **You MUST FOLLOW THESE TIMES, not the SQA website.**

When you get your own timetable, check it carefully:

- Are all subjects/levels correct?
- Have assessment arrangements been included? Eg extra time, room other than the theatre etc.
- If you are being presented for an exam by a different organisation eg UHI Inverness, then you must check the notice board outside room 14 and manually add these exams to your timetable.

**TAKE A COPY/PHOTO AND SHARE WITH PARENTS/CARERS!  
MAKE SURE YOU HAVE A COPY WITH YOU ON EXAM DAYS**

# On the day of an exam

- Ensure you know how you are getting to/from school for all your exams. You can still take the school bus.
- Make sure you check days/dates and be aware that exams can take place on Friday afternoons - if you need support to get home let Mrs Rhynas know.
- Make sure you have a copy of your exam timetable with you so you know what times exams are, what room to go to and what seat to sit in.
- A master exam timetable will be on the wall opposite the Guidance office.
- Take along your card with your SCN.
- Plan breaks eg do you need to take water/snack with you as you may not have much time between papers.
- Take resources eg blue/black pens (don't do exams in pencil), ruler, calculator if needed. Avoid pens which can be erased as these do not copy well. Normal blue/black biro is best!
- Arrive at your exam room at least 10 minutes before the start of the exam.
- **Do not take the following into exam room:**
  - Pencil case
  - Phone/smart watch/air pods
  - Notes/books
  - Bags/school bag



**You cannot leave the exam room early**

**Speak to someone if you are feeling anxious, we can find you a quiet space before your exam starts  
... remember it is normal to feel anxious**



# What if you are late/absent?

## Late?

- SQA exams are held at approximately the same time across the whole of Scotland and you cannot sit exams on a different day/time.
- If you are going to be late, phone the school to let us know and try to get to school as soon as you can. Please be aware however that we may not be able to let you sit the exam.
- Make sure you set a couple of alarms and share your exam days/times with parents/carers.

## Absent?

- You should make every attempt to sit your exams but there may be circumstances which prevent you from sitting the exam eg bereavement or illness.
- In this case you and your parent/carer must complete a form to request an exceptional circumstances submission to the SQA. We have only 10 days following the missed exam to do this.
- Evidence of your assessment work eg prelim, will be sent to the SQA and they will use this to provide a grade on your August certificate.
- You cannot appeal this grade.

*Let us know if something happens during exams, we can't do anything once exams are over or results arrive.*

# Online Revision Resources



## Achieve Resources

<https://achieve.hashtag-learning.co.uk>

School Code

**nPXiYxLz**

## SCHOLAR

See your subject teacher or Mrs Rhynas if you would like to use Scholar and don't know your password (username is your Scottish Candidate Number).

## E-SGOIL

Live study sessions and **Easter study courses** available - see Mrs Rhynas to get your glow email and password to access these. **Easter study courses** on for a wide range of courses - sign up in March.

## BBC BITESIZE

Resources available for many National 5 & Higher courses.



*Try something different!*



# Revision Strategies

## LEARNING

Research tells us you need to learn things **3 times for it to sink in** - try learning in 3 different ways

## REVISING

Reinforcing what you know and driving these facts and thoughts into your long-term memory

## PRACTICING

Use what you have learned to try past paper questions - you must test your knowledge/skills

Whatever revision strategy you use it has to involve *'testing'* the knowledge you have learnt. Use past papers, get someone to quiz you, use flashcards to test yourself or even cover up notes and read aloud to yourself to see if you know what you have learnt. For subjects with numerical questions eg Maths/Accounting, it can be hard to revise; these subjects (as well as all others!) require practicing questions - even if you have done them before.

### Revision strategies to try:

- Reading and writing out your notes (try condensing down further)
- Flash cards
- Cornell note taking
- Mind maps
- Retrieval practice

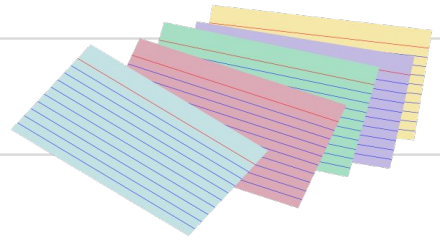
Just a few to try!

### RESOURCES

Have your resources around you and speak to your teacher if you are missing a booklet/text etc. Using a different coloured notepad for each subject can help organisation.



# Strategies to try ...



## FLASH CARDS

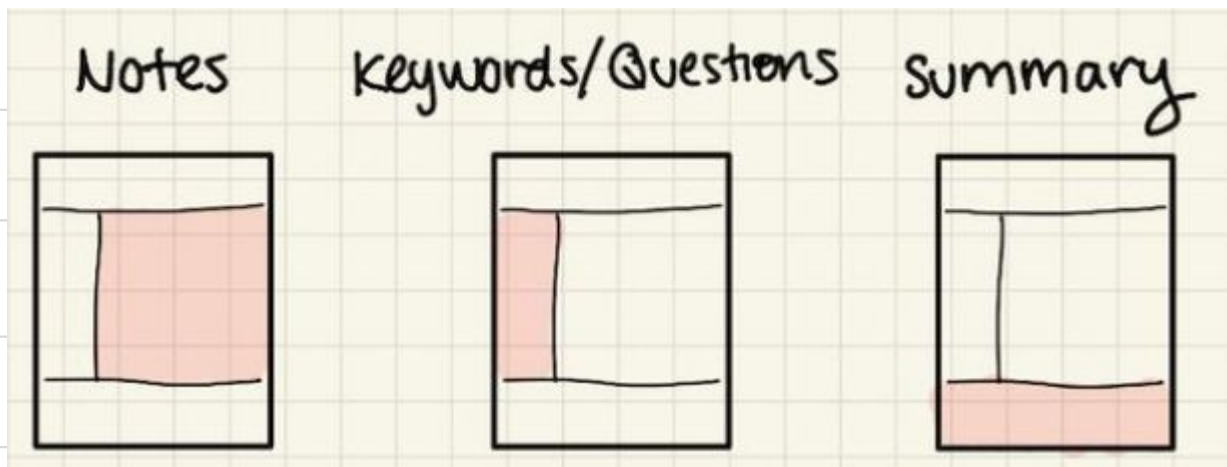
Preparing flashcards is a great way to prepare resources to test your knowledge and the process of writing them out also helps you learn. Use different colours for different topics/units/subjects. You can use them to prepare questions and answers or one-word prompts with details on the back.

## CORNELL NOTE TAKING

Cornell note taking method includes writing key points or questions in the recall column and a summary of the main points at the bottom. Google the method to find out more.

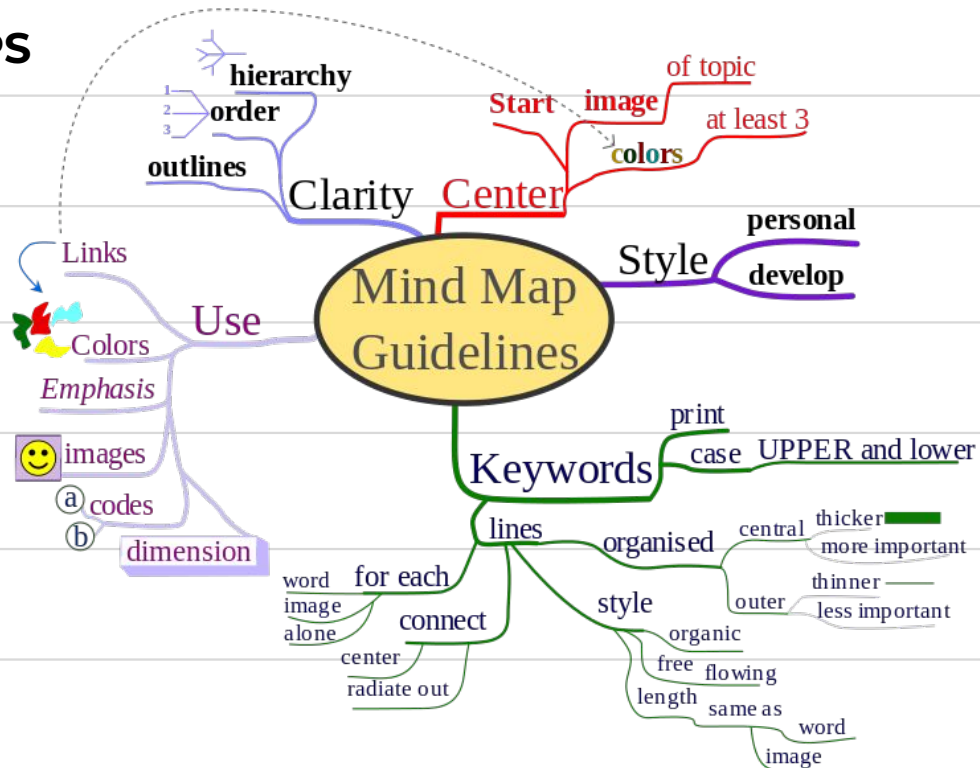
<https://www.goodnotes.com/blog/cornell-notes>

Name	Date
Subject	Page #
recall column	notes column
summary	



# Strategies to try

## MIND MAPS



A complex idea can be conveyed with just a single image, making it possible to absorb large amounts of data quickly. Useful for testing knowledge too - once you have learnt a topic, can you map it out? This could be used in a retrieval practice way by using it to test knowledge learned, going back to notes for a short period of time and then trying to add more to it. This could be repeated until all the information for that topic has been mapped.

## Good Study Habits

- Have a set study area as this helps you get into the revision mindset. Have all your resources around you and leave your phone in another room. Although you may think music helps, research says studying is more effective in a quiet environment
- Plan what needs to be covered for each subject - think about how long it takes to study a topic and set daily/weekly targets of what you want to cover
- Study in blocks of 45 minutes with a **short** break
- *'If you don't know it now...'* nonsense, it's amazing what you can learn last minute! Keep going!
- Speak to teachers, think about attending after-school study - don't sit at home worrying about something, get in touch.

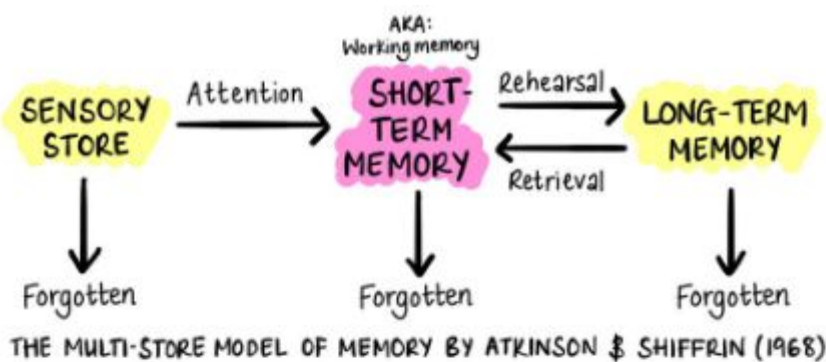
# How to revise effectively

Plan your time carefully to ensure all subjects and topics are covered in shorter chunks over a longer period of time. This is called **spaced practice**.

Blocked practice involves studying one topic thoroughly before moving to the next topic. Interleaving is a process where you mix and combine multiple topics and subjects. Interleaving has been shown to be more effective leading to better long-term retention.

## RETRIEVAL PRACTICE

This is the act of recalling learned information from memory (with little or no support) and every time that information is retrieved, or an answer is generated, it changes the original memory to make it **stronger**!



**Peterson & Peterson (1959)**

→ Almost all information stored in short-term memory that is not rehearsed is lost within 18 to 30 seconds!

'Using your memory shapes your memory'

**RETRIEVAL STORAGE**

→ how well information is embedded in long-term memory

**RETRIEVAL STRENGTH**

→ how easily a piece of information can be brought to mind when required

Learning = a change in long-term memory  
'if nothing has changed nothing has been learned'

Meaningful learning is about producing organised, coherent and integrated mental models that allow people to make inferences and apply their knowledge. (Karpicke, J. 2012)

### THE BENEFITS:

- ① Retrieval practice aids later retention  
'every time you retrieve a memory it becomes deeper, stronger and easier to access in the future'
- ② Testing identifies gaps in knowledge
- ③ Testing causes students to learn more from the next learning episode
- ④ Testing produces better organisation of knowledge



- ⑤ Testing improves transfer of knowledge to new contexts



- ⑥ Facilitates retrieval of material that wasn't tested



- ⑦ Improves metacognition



- ⑧ Prevents interference from previous material when learning new content



- ⑨ Provides valuable feedback to teachers



- ⑩ Regular testing encourages students to study more

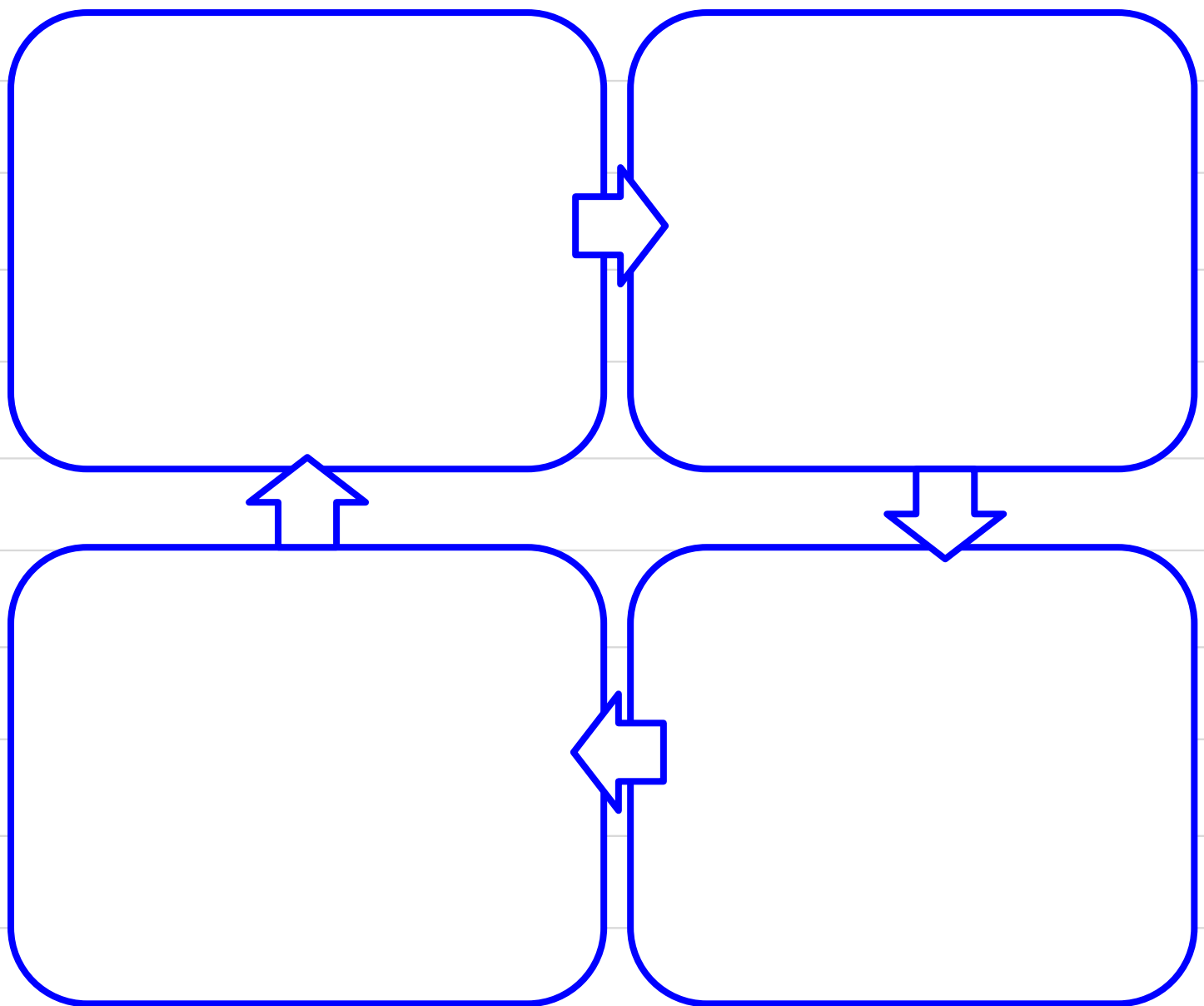


# Retrieval Relay Race!

- **STEP 1** - Choose a full topic you have studied or a past paper question you want to practice. Without using your notes, write as much as you can remember in the first box. (just split a landscape page into 4)
- **STEP 2** - Now spend 3 minutes (or a time you choose) to read your notes before putting them away again.
- **STEP 3** - Now add further information/points to the second box.

Repeat the steps, going back to notes, then adding more information to boxes 3 & 4.

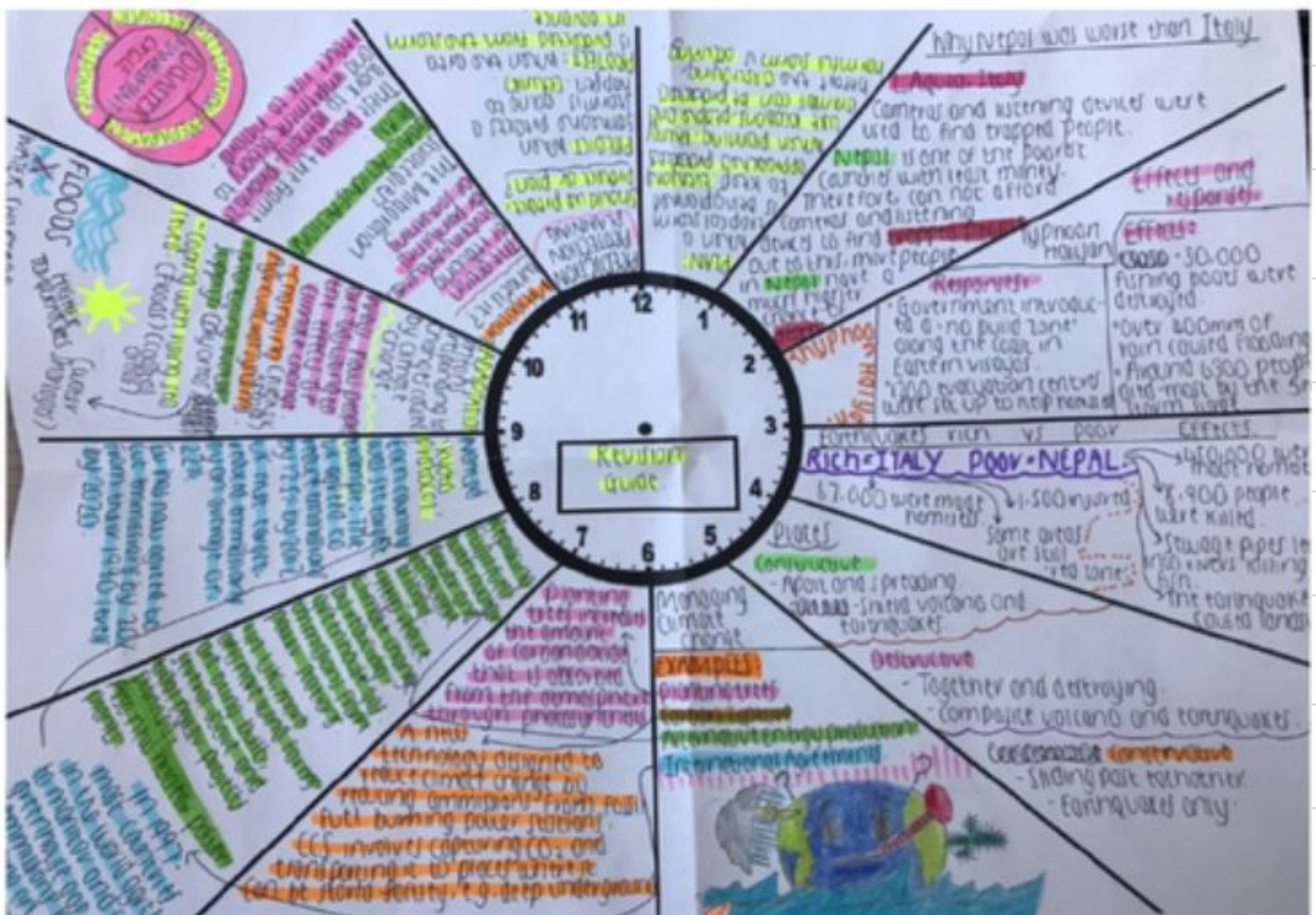
By box 4 you should have a complete answer or summary of the topic. Looking back at the earlier boxes will highlight gaps in your knowledge.





# Revision Clocks

- Use the template in your pack or split your paper into 12 segments (or indeed how many you wish to do). In each segment you can write a topic or an exam question you might get on this topic.
- Take 2 colours of pen. Using the first colour, spend 5 minutes completing each segment of your clock from memory. Check your notes, then take your second colour of pen. Add in any additional information/points that you missed the first time round.
- If using this with a past paper question, refer to the solutions and add points you have missed from the marking scheme.



# Looking after yourself

- Exams can bring feelings of anxiety ...
  - You put yourself under pressure to do well
  - Feel pressure from parents/carers to do well
  - Feel pressure from teachers to do well
  - Worry you don't have time to revise everything
  - Worry you won't do well
  - Worry about the future ...



Speak to someone

**It is normal to feel anxiety around exams. Research shows that anxiety does not impact your performance in an exam if you are well-prepared in terms of revision.**

Things to help you ...	Link
● <b>Dealing with exam stress</b>	<a href="https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/exam-stress/">https://www.youngminds.org.uk/young-person/coping-with-life/exam-stress/</a>
● <b>Best Apps for anxiety</b>	<a href="https://www.verywellmind.com/best-apps-for-anxiety-3575736">https://www.verywellmind.com/best-apps-for-anxiety-3575736</a>
● <b>Breathing exercises for stress</b>	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/breathing-exercises-for-stress/">https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/breathing-exercises-for-stress/</a>
● <b>10 Stress Busters</b>	<a href="https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/tips-to-reduce-stress/">https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/tips-to-reduce-stress/</a>
● <b>E-sgoil chill space</b>	<a href="https://e-sgoil.com/senior-phase/#H WCS">https://e-sgoil.com/senior-phase/#H WCS</a>

# Estimates & Appeals

## ESTIMATES

The school submit estimates to the SQA - these are based on your latest working grade, NOT your target grade. A teacher can only provide an estimate based on the evidence they have (prelims, class assessments). This estimate does not affect how you do in the exam or your appeal, it is simply information the SQA request prior to the exams.

## APPEALS

Alternative assessment evidence eg prelims and assessments are not required to be sent to the SQA. Instead, a **marking review is requested** of your SQA-marked assessment components.

A marking review will include checking that

- all parts of your SQA-assessments were marked
- the marking was in line with national standards
- the marks given for each answer were totalled correctly and
- the correct result was entered on our system.

Please note that after being reviewed, your result could stay the same, go up or go down.

Appeals 2025 will include a priority service for students with conditional offers for further education, training or employment. Contact Mrs Rhynas as soon as your results come in if this is the case.

Further information on appeals will be issued to parents along with information how to request back coursework eg Art & Design. Please note that if you appeal a grade, any coursework will be kept for 12 months by the SQA.



## Study leave arrangements

Study leave is from **Monday 24 April to Friday 23 May** inclusive. For students sitting exams after this period, see *below*, you should return to school the day following your final exam. Arrangements for the week beginning 26 May will be sent to students (new timetable begins 26 May).

- Monday 26 May – Art & Design - National 5 & Higher
- Tuesday 27 May – Biology – National 5, Higher & Advanced Higher
- Wednesday 28 May – Environmental Science – Higher
- Thursday 29 May – English for Speakers of Other Languages – Higher

Students who intend to leave school at the end of May can take the full period of Exam Preparation Time, provided all outstanding course assessments have been completed.

All returners sitting 6 subjects at National 5 or 3 or more subjects at Higher or above, may take the full period of Exam Preparation Time, provided all outstanding course assessments have been completed.

All returners sitting no exams should participate in an online programme of skills for life, learning and work combined with possible work placements. These programmes may be organised on a local grouping basis. Information will be sent to parents/carers.

All returners sitting a mix of National 4/5 subjects or fewer than 3 subjects at Higher may be allowed a reduced period of leave based on the timing and number of exams.

### **If you need help during study leave?**

Don't sit at home worrying about something, get in touch with your teacher eg through gmail. If you need to see your teacher, arrange a suitable time and sign in at reception.

## Next Steps?

Exam results will arrive on **Tuesday 5th August**. Following exam results you may think about what's next?

### Speak to your class teacher/ Mrs Rhynas

If you are unsure whether to appeal for a subject where you have not performed as expected or you need an appeal for a job/course

### Speak to Guidance

If results mean you want to change your options see Guidance as soon as you are back to school

### Speak to Lorraine McGarry at SDS

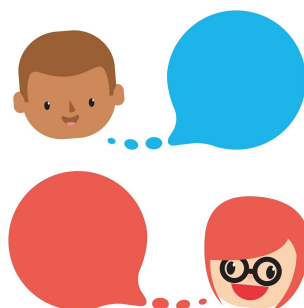
If you are not sure about your next steps, Lorraine from Skills Development Scotland can talk through different pathways with you

### What is Clearing?

If you have applied for Uni and you didn't get the results needed you may wish to apply through clearing for places still available on courses - you would need to do this quickly

### Speak to Guidance

If you have any concerns speak to your Guidance Teacher



### SPEAK TO SOMEONE



Life takes us in different directions, there are many ways to reach your goals, exams are just one step in your journey!



# Notes

# Notes

**If you have any questions please  
see Mrs Rhynas  
and best of luck in your exams!**

