Effective Revision

Steve Cope
Student Learning Advisory Service

Email: learning@kent.ac.uk
Phone: 01227 82(4016)
Twitter: @unikentSLAS
www.facebook.com/unikentSLAS

Monday – Friday 11 a.m. – 1 p.m. Templeman

You should know

• Number of exams
• Exam dates/times/places
• Type of exams – e.g. essays/multiple choice/problem questions/exercises/
• Duration of exams
• Exam/coursework weighting
• Credits
• Your coursework performance so far
• Your understanding of the topic

The principles of effective revision:

• Clear objectives
• Clear realistic targets
• Achievable schedules
• Clear time-lines
• Sustainability

The principles of effective revision:

• Continual self-testing
• Variety of methods
• Working with your own learning style
• Maximising your concentration
• Recording your revision
• Working with others
What to revise?
- Facts (numbers, percentages, dates, names, places, events)
- Processes (stages/steps/order)
- Components (of a system - order/importance)
- Theories/concepts
- People/roles/ideas
- Your beautiful notes
- Legislation/rules/regulations/requirements/guidelines

Break it down
- Lists
- Relationships
- Formulae/equations/rules
- Definitions/meanings
- Examples/cases/case studies
- Articulate an essay from a list of points

How to memorise?
- Depends on individual
- Depends on content
- Write it down!
- Past Papers
- http://www.kent.ac.uk/campusonline/

Use as many different ways as possible

We remember...
according to Flanagan (1997)
- 20% of what we read
- 30% of what we hear
- 40% of what we see
- 50% of what we say
- 60% of what we do
- 90% of what we see, hear, say and do!

Left brain/right brain
Try Different Techniques

- Leave gaps – effective cramming is a myth
- Experiment with new ways of memorising
- Practise what you will be tested on – essays? Reading is not enough – timed essays...
- Re-arrange notes, ideas, relationships – do not simply try to memorise them
- Do not spend ages colouring in your notes

Memory Aids

- Mnemonics - colours of the rainbow
- DREK
- Listening record yourself reciting key facts etc.
- Work in pairs, test each other
- Association
- Post-it notes / posters in your room
- Regular re-reading of revision notes
- Rhymes

Clear objectives

- Always start each revision session with a clear sense of what you want to achieve
- What methods will you use to revise?
- What do you want to achieve?

Clear targets

- Define clear topics for the whole module
- Define clear topics for each revision session
- Not just “a module” etc. but specific topics/issues/practice questions/parts of past exam papers etc.
- Always narrow down targets/ academic content: use past papers etc.
- Carry out a ‘module audit’
- Focus revision topics so you achieve...

Realistic schedules

- Daily/weekly/monthly.
- Include rest and relaxation
- Sensible and flexible: you should review and change from time to time
- Set up monthly schedules, and focus in particular on weekly schedules
Time-lines

- Don’t revise just up to the exams, but *through* the exams.
- Revise between exams
- Develop a sense of the time you have in front of you and how you will use it.

Sustainability

- Don’t exhaust yourself!
- Remember that short, active revision is more effective than long, tiring sessions.
- Develop your concentration: BBR (Block + Break + Review)
- Put in gaps across the day
- Pace yourself
- Vary activities

Carry out continual self-testing

- Continually check and review what you have learnt
- Check practice answers.
- Set up regular short reviews
- **Mon** Topic 1 + 2 & end of day review; **Tues** Topic 1 + 2 & end of day review; **Wed** Review 1 & 2 + move on, Topic 3; **Thurs** Review 3, move on...Topic 4

Use Variety

- Don’t just read and note...explore different techniques!
  - Times
  - People
  - Modules
  - Socialise evenings only
  - Reward yourself
  - Set timer for breaks

Your Learning Style

- Strengths, limitations & preferences:
  - Be flexible and adventurous!
Maximising your concentration

- Listen to your body:
  - nutritious food
  - enough exercise
  - enough rest
- Develop a sense of order and continuity.
- Use a regular study area: organised and systematic.
- Need a soundtrack?
  - http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bh7B5Xl558

Recording your revision

- Set and plan targets.
- Record what you have achieved.
- Use your records to boost morale and identify next targets.

Share your revision experience

- Shared perspectives = more knowledge
- More enjoyable
- Schedule regular meetings
- Social networking > but distractions
- Team working skills

Go Forth and Revise!

The Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS)
Canterbury

- Email: learning@kent.ac.uk
- Phone: 01227 82(4016)

www.twitter.com/unikentSLAS
www.facebook.com/unikentSLAS