

**The King Edmund School**

A Business & Enterprise and Applied Learning Academy

# GCSE Revision Guide

[www.kes.essex.sch.uk](http://www.kes.essex.sch.uk)

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***“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world”*** Nelson Mandela.

***“Education is the passport for the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today”*** Malcolm X

***“Education is not the filling of a bucket, but the lighting of a fire”*** W. B. Yeats

# Preparing for your GCSE Examinations



## Step 1: Preparing to Revise

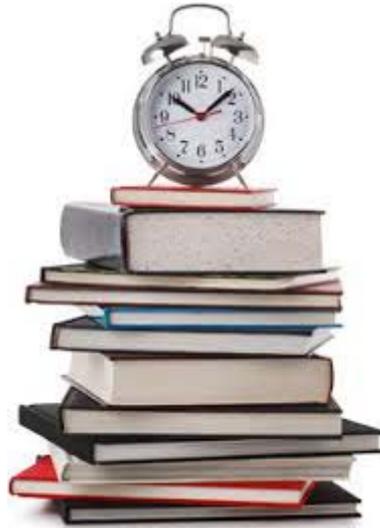
Before you start revising you must know which exams you have:

- How many exams do you have?
- When do the exams take place? Date/time?
- Where will they take place?
- How long will each examination last?
- What equipment is needed for each exam e.g. a calculator, protractor etc
- What is the format of each paper? Do they consist of short answers / essays or a mixture of both?

The following may also be useful:

- Folders
- Plastic Wallets
- Highlighters
- Coloured Pens and Pencils
- A3/Coloured Paper
- Flash Cards
- Subject specific material

## Step 2: Construct a Revision Timetable



You will need a Revision Timetable which can be used to structure your revision. An example of one is at the end of this guide. There are other types you can use. You should be aiming to revise 3 hours a week night, and 5-6 hours at a weekend. Be realistic - don't plan a schedule you can't manage!

Some other useful things to bear in mind are:

- Be disciplined - stick to what you say you will do
- Choose the right time of day to revise - some people like to study early in the day, others prefer to study later on
- Revise efficiently – we advise the Pomodoro Technique, which is revising for 25 minutes, and then having a 5 minute break (revising for too long is inefficient in one sitting)
- Try to give each subject equal time
- Schedule breaks in your working day - for fun, food, relaxation and exercise, but not all at once (IMPORTANT)
- Don't try to do all of the hardest topics at once - spread them around evenly with the easier ones
- Reward yourself when you achieve targets or goals!

### Step 3: Select a Suitable Working Environment



Your study environment should be:

- Calm and quiet
- Well lit
- At a good temperature
- Full of nice, fresh air to keep you awake
- Free from distraction (i.e. mobile phone, PC, TV etc).

Your study environment should contain:

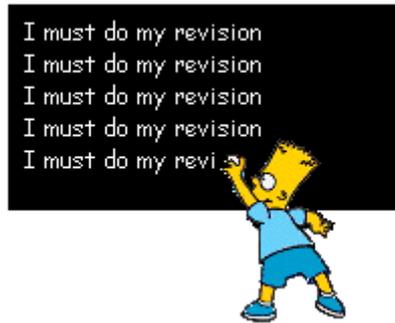
- A large table or desk
- A good chair
- A dictionary and thesaurus
- Stationery and other study aids (as above)
- A drink or something to nibble on while you study

You may find it hard to study in the same place every day. Try thinking of other places to study, such as:

- Learning Resource Centre
- A public library
- At a friend's house

The most important point to remember about wherever you choose to work is that you are there to revise and not to socialise!

## Step 4: How to Revise

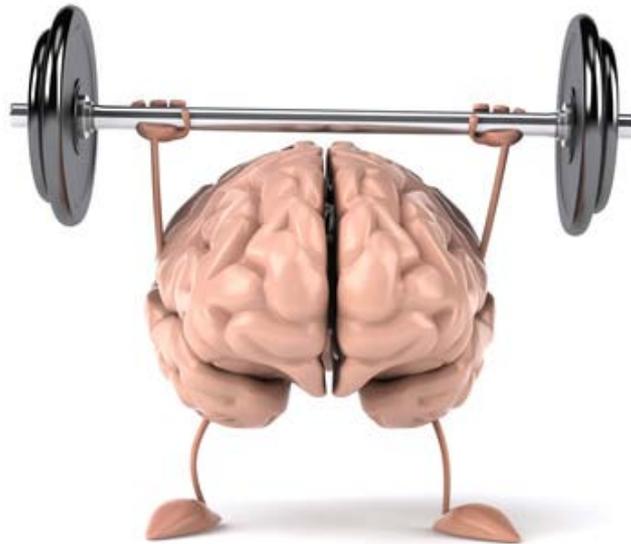


The most effective methods of revision are to start early (using your revision timetable) and to practise exam questions. You also need to use a variety of methods.

As a school we suggest you use the 'spaced revision' theory. This is an evidence-based strategy which involves 4 stages that repeat over a period of time. Each learning topic should span two days, with the first two stages on day 1, and the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> stage on day 2.

- 1. Review a topic** - For the first 20 minutes, utilise any technique you are comfortable with to review the topic. This could be highlighting, making notes, creating flashcards or using post-its. Often, you might stop after this and think 'my revision is done!'. But no, this is just the start of an effective learning technique.
- 2. Transformation task** - This is building on Stage 1. Here you need to transform the notes or highlighting that you have from Stage 1 into something different. This could be a mindmap, a drawing, a song, a poem. (Look at the suggested activities that are in your guide to help you).
- 3. Practise Testing** - With a friend, family member or one of the many websites online that have relevant quizzes – test yourself on the area that you have reviewed.
- 4. Exam Questions** - Finally, complete an exam question or questions on the area you have reviewed and mark this yourself using a mark scheme, or ask your teacher to mark it

## Step 5: Brain Boosters and Brain Drainers



<b>Brain Boosters!</b> 	<b>Brain Drainers!</b> 
<p>Slow release cereal at breakfast, eg: porridge</p> <p>Lean meats contain iron which is important for energy</p> <p>Grilled fish (rich in omega 3 oils which is good for brain cells)</p> <p>Boiled eggs and bananas – good for enhancing memory</p> <p>Water – dehydration results in poor concentration</p> <p>Milk – increases alertness</p> <p>Multigrain bread - good for concentration</p> <p>Apples, pears and berries – slow-releasing energy snack</p>	<p>27% of boys and 39% of girls skip breakfast some or all of the time. Research has found that skipping this meal significantly reduces students' attention and their ability to recall information.</p> <p>High sugar coated cereal – high blood sugar and then energy low</p> <p>Crisps – too much salt leads to dehydration</p> <p>Drinks with lots of E numbers, or sugar/caffeine lead to hyperactivity, over stimulation and poor concentration eg: coke and energy drinks</p> <p>Cakes and biscuits which contains 'trans fats' which hinder brain development</p> <p>Fast food will make you feel sluggish</p>

# Transformation Tasks and Revision Activities



([http://jamiedavies.co/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/transformation\\_exercises.pdf](http://jamiedavies.co/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/transformation_exercises.pdf))

The tasks are easy at the bottom, but increase in difficulty as you work your way up the ladder. The more challenging the task, the more advanced the skills that are required and the higher the GCSE grade you are working towards

## Remember tasks

- Write down all the key terms for the topic and define them
- Write down a topic in 10 bullet points
- Play keyword hangman with someone
- Create an acronym using the first letter of all key terms
- Create flashcards
- Highlight key information

## Understanding tasks

- Pick out 5 key points about a topic and explain them
- Reduce the key points down to less than 200 words, or even 50 words
- Verbally explain key terms to someone
- Create true or false flashcards

## Application tasks

- Explain why a topic is significant or important
- Explain how topics relate or link together
- Try applying it to short exam answers
- Research/find real life news/evidence which supports your topic
- Explain a topic using a cartoon/TV character

## Analysis tasks

- Compare and contrast by writing down similarities and differences
- Create a mindmap showing links and connections
- Create a flow diagram showing links and connections
- Use a piece of evidence to write a PEEL for one key point – Point, Evidence, Explain, Link

## Evaluation tasks

- Create a table of strengths and weaknesses for a topic, approach, theory etc
- Write a paragraph on whether you agree with something associated with your topic
- Opinionated Octopus: Evaluate the topic using 4 strengths and 4 weaknesses
- Use a piece of evidence to write a PEEL evaluation point – Point, Evidence, Explain, Link

## Creation tasks

- Transform a topic into a cartoon strip or storyboard
- Write a mark scheme to think about how it will be assessed, and compare this to the actual one
- Create a song or poem etc
- Create or plan your own experiment
- Create a role play or puppet show on a topic
- Produce a revision guide including key points and activities



# GCSE Pod

## A. Student Quick Start Guide

### What is it?

- Over 3,500 audio-visual podcasts
- Content produced specifically for mobile devices, tablets and PCs
- Designed to squeeze exactly the right knowledge you need for exam success into short 3-5 minutes chunks
- Helps you with learning, homework and revision



### How do I get it?

When your school has informed you that you have been registered with GCSEPod, simply follow these steps to activate your account.

- 1) Go to [www.gcsepod.com](http://www.gcsepod.com) and click "login"
- 2) Click NEW HERE? GET STARTED
- 3) Enter your name, date of birth and choose your school
- 4) Select a username and password (to be used when you next login) and select the subjects you study

### Key features

**My GCSEs:** Keep yourself organised by viewing a list of all your exams in subject or date order. View an exam playlist to see all the podcasts relevant to that exam, select the areas you find tricky and download to watch on the way to school.

**Playlists:** Create a new playlist, give it a name, add some podcasts and save. Watch the playlist online to brush up on your knowledge or download it and take it out and about with you on your device.

**Downloads:** Android/Blackberry/Windows users can download to a computer first or straight to your device. Apple users can download to iTunes or install the iPhone/iPad/iPod Touch app and save the podcasts for offline viewing.

**Assignments:** View homework set by your teacher, watch the podcasts they have selected and complete questions to help test your knowledge on a topic. Results are instant so you can see which areas you still need to work on.

## B. Why use GCSEPod?

### It's convenient and effective

GCSEPod podcasts are designed for mobile devices so it's like carrying a huge pile of textbooks and revision guides around with you everywhere. Have an expert read and explain everything for you clearly and precisely with all the right facts, quotes, keywords, dates and annotated diagrams on screen.

You won't need to use it for long before you feel the impact. Consistent use in just 10 minute chunks is proven to support achievement right up to A\*.

### It will help you get organised

It can be as discreet (or loud) as you are

Listen to GCSEPod podcasts anywhere with nobody knowing what you are doing. Listen privately on the school bus, when you're walking the dog or shopping in town.

If you want to show off just how much work you've been doing or even recommend a podcast to a friend you can use the social networking links on the site to connect with others.

Create personal podcast playlists to listen to in the run-up to a test or to help with homework. Use the viewing history feature to return to podcasts you found useful or access your favourite playlist to go over topic areas you find difficult. Download exam specific playlists, with everything you need to know for that exam all organised for you.

# Revision Timetable Template

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
9-10							
10-11							
11-12							
12-1pm							
1-2							
2-3							
3-4							
4-5							
5-6							
6-7							
7-8							
8-9							
9-10							

Break everything down into bite size topics using spaced revision  
Factor in breaks

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