Exams

There are two parts to exams: before and during. By planning ahead from the beginning of the semester you can maximize the effectiveness of your study and feel real satisfaction at what you are able to achieve.

Before

Plan and organise in a calm and orderly way:
• As the final weeks approach, make a revision timetable.
• Share the time between your subjects according to need.
• Keep sensible hours for sleeping.
• Make use of those times that are usually kept for aimless thoughts—under the shower, on the bus, lunchtimes.
• Prepare your materials. Collect pens, rubbers, calculator, and ID info. into a little bag or pouch so it’s all ready.
• Check that you know the time and place.
• Check travel arrangements.
• Read old exam papers. (check library website)
• Familiarise yourself with types of questions.

During

Reading time
Read the entire paper thoroughly. Think about the amount of time you might spend on each section. Next:
• Consider which the questions you will answer.
• Re-read them and think about a strategy you might use.
• Consider options for multiple choice questions.

Answering questions
Start planning the most difficult questions, but answer the easier questions first. This often helps boost your confidence and provides clues or prompts for answering questions on other less familiar topics.
Tips for success in exams

1. Adjust your watch to match the clock in the room.
2. Read the instructions carefully and check all the pages.
3. Plan your approach … which questions first? It is often good to start with easier questions to build your confidence.
4. Plan your timing according to the number of questions and marks for each—write it down.
5. Attempt all questions.
6. Read/analyse each question carefully—identify instructional or content words.
7. Answer the question – do not simply write everything you know.
8. Use a step approach to both short answer and essay questions
   - Read and analyse the question
   - Recall what you know
   - Select the relevant facts
   - Jot down initial ideas
   - Organise into logical order—follow basic essay procedure, i.e. introduction, points, conclusion
   - Begin writing
9. Write clearly.
10. Move on after the exam. Avoid post-mortems!

Tips for multiple-choice questions

- Preview the questions – number and difficulty.
- Read carefully. Look for … always, never, rarely, sometimes, many, some or double negatives eg “not lacking in”.
- Do the questions you know first, then do the others.
- Try to recall the answer from memory. Cover the answers—recall and compare.
- Check your answers. Cover your answers – if the new answer is the same as original—probably right. Do not change an answer unless you are very sure it is wrong.
- If you run out of time guess the answers.

Tips for managing stress

Full yoga breathing is recommended for calming yourself before or during an exam. Do this by:

**Inhaling**

1. Take 4 counts to fully expand the diaphragm muscle
2. Use a further 2 counts to expand the rib cage
3. 1 count completes the breath into the top of the lungs
4. Pause a moment

**Exhaling**

5. Use 4 counts to retract the diaphragm up into the bottom of the rib cage
6. Use 2 counts to contract the ribs
7. One final count to expel the last bit of breath from the top of the lungs.