



Thirsk School & Sixth Form College

April – 2024



Preparing for exams – Yr13 Parents & Carers

As the A-level exams draw ever closer, we thought it would be useful to put together a document with some important revision tips for students, and some links to ensure that students stay both **mentally** and **physically well** over the course of the exam season.

Many of our students are already working on a revision schedule and have a keen eye on the upcoming exams. Some are not – they take the approach that there is still time left and that it will all be fine.

The former group of students often become stressed and anxious because, through conversations with friends, they feel that what they are doing isn't enough even though they are spending many hours working. They convince themselves that they didn't start early enough; and they believe that others are doing more or are further ahead. This in itself can become self-defeating and impact the quality of their revision time. These are the students that need to balance their time with fresh air, exercise and quality down-time.

The latter group may well be inclined to stick their heads further and further into the sand as they struggle to work out how to get started, how to prioritise and how to make effective use of the dwindling amount of time that is left. In both cases, please remember that we want to support your child the best that we can and we appreciate communication from home letting us know your concerns.

As well as the Sixth Form pastoral team, students can access support from the Inclusion Unit. You may also find the following website guides a useful support:

[Exam Stress | How To Deal with Exam Stress | YoungMinds](#)

[Tips on preparing for exams - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Help your child beat exam stress - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](#)

[Your guide to handling revision and exam stress | The Student Room](#)

[Resources for managing test-related anxiety - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)

Website:

<https://thirskschool.org/>



Contact:

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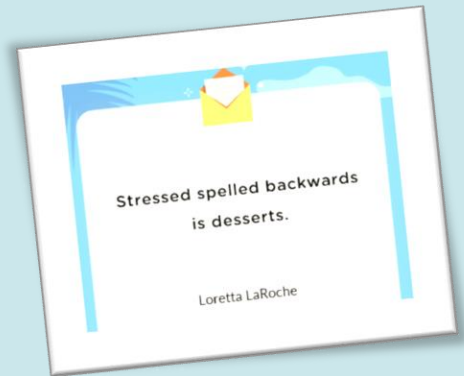


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What support is available in College?

- The Common Room is open for students to revise and work quietly from 7:30 am until 6:00 pm each day (4:30 pm on Fridays).
- Department support is available with some interventions plus advice on useful revision strategies and websites.
- Every Thursday afternoon P4 & P5 in Inclusion there are exam stress workshops which students can choose to attend.
- Students can also opt in to additional staffed silent study sessions.



Tips on preparing for exams:

1. **Make a realistic revision schedule** – allocate times that you know you can commit to so that you don't set yourself up to fail.
2. **Start with the things you don't understand or can't do** – it is easy to revise the things that we are already confident in as this reduces stress now, but it would be better to address the things that you don't know as this is where the real gains will be made in the exam. Research, ask a friend or ask your teacher and then keep reviewing this learning.
3. **Break revision down into manageable chunks** – set realistic sections to revise in one sitting.
4. **Pick a revision style that suits you** – copying out is rarely the best, most effective way to revise. Try mind maps; doing timed past exam questions; using marks schemes and examiner commentaries; using revision podcasts; tutor2U, Seneca, watching documentaries; flash cards....
5. **Customise your notes** – use colour, diagrams, flash cards - make the information memorable
6. **Build in breaks** – one every 45-60 mins in your revision is about right.
7. **Exercise** – do something active as this is a great way to relieve stress, anxiety and the mental fatigue of revision.
8. **Eat well** – important for physical health which will be useful for sleeping well and rebuilding your energy stores for work.
9. **Sleep well** - set yourself a time at which you always stop work— 9pm is probably late enough for most people — and be rigid about it. That will give you enough time to relax before you go to bed. Make sure you do things to relax before bed and remember that the blue light emitted from the screens of electronic devices such as smartphones, computers and tablets can disrupt our natural sleep cycles.
10. **Talk to people** – don't let stress and anxiety build up: talk to your family, your friends or talk to your teachers. It isn't an inconvenience and we all want to help. Lots of people find exam stress can be overwhelming and difficult to deal with so please don't feel worried about asking for support.

"Believe you can and you're half-way there".