

St Columba's School

Study Skills Guide



Introduction

At St Columba's we aim to provide an environment which nurtures pupils' unique talents and skills so that they can reach their full potential. We also place great emphasis on the care and well-being of all our pupils. Feedback from pupils and parents has identified coping with exam stress and the need for sound study skills as areas of great importance in achieving this aim.

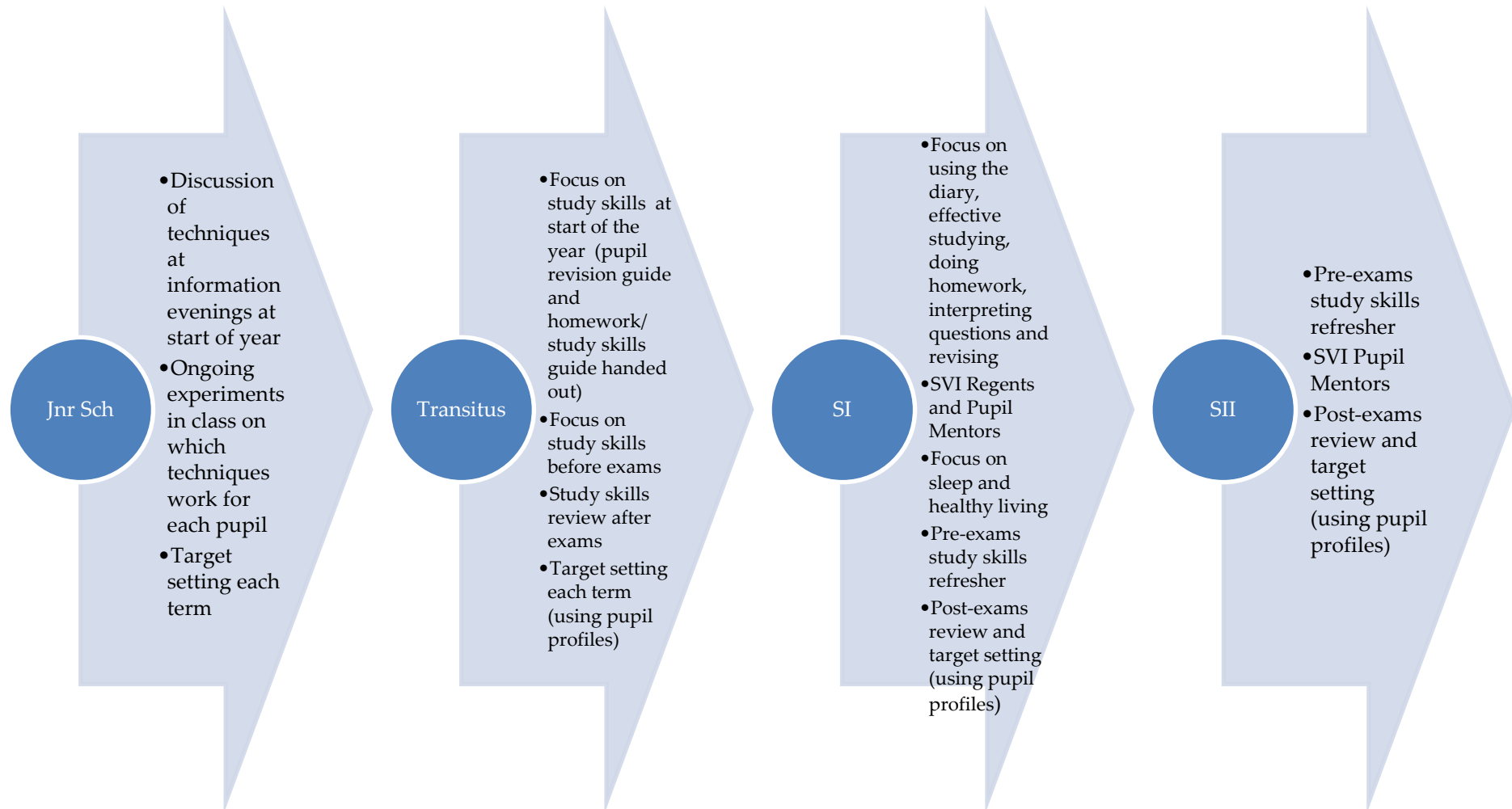
There is also increasing evidence that suggests stress and anxiety are growing problems for Scotland's children. A recent study carried out by the NSPCC found that academic worries were the biggest cause of stress for nearly 50% of children. Further research has confirmed that exam worries cause children more stress than peer pressure to be 'trendy' or finding a boyfriend or girlfriend.

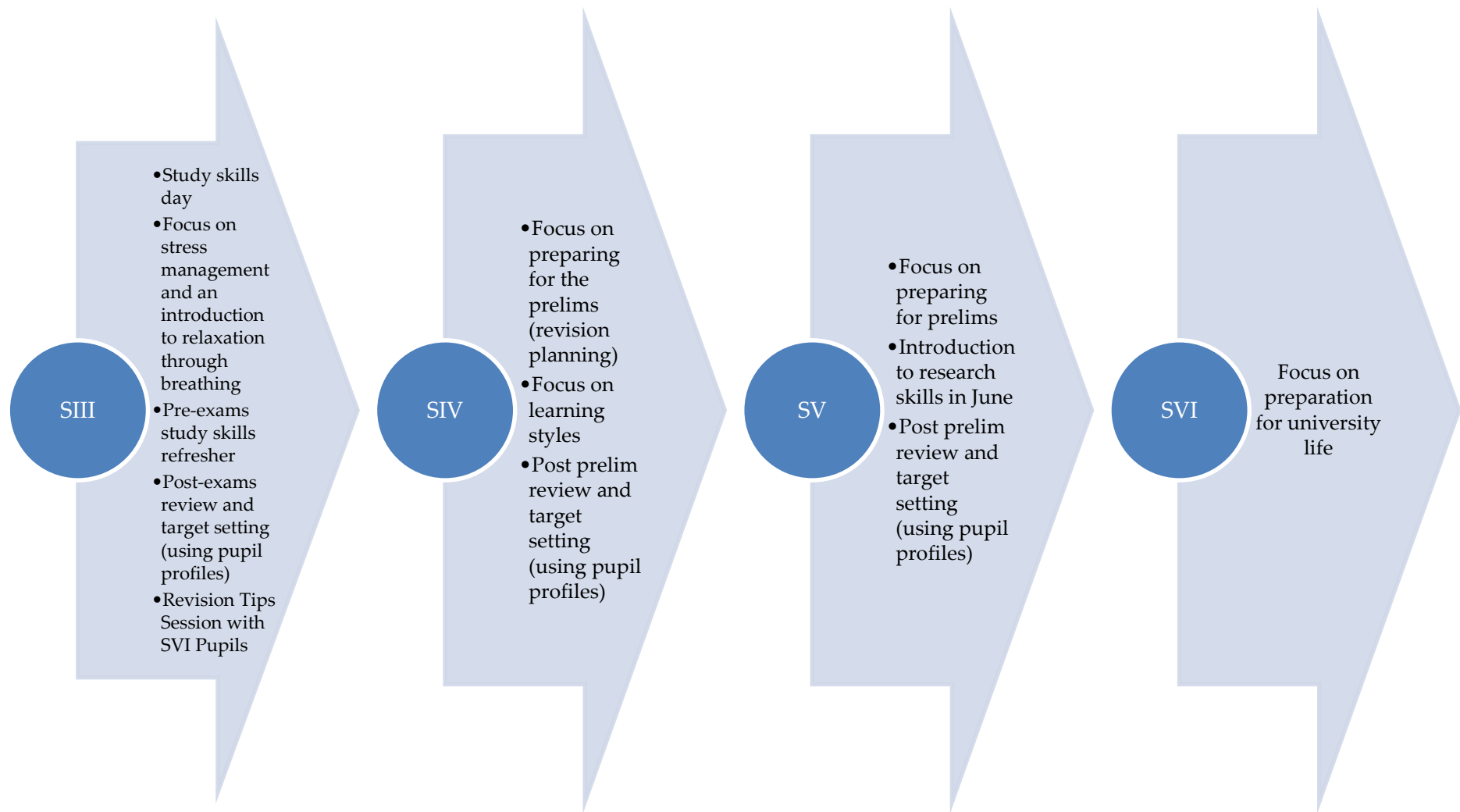
This booklet aims to outline the school's approach when developing pupils' study skills and their ability to manage stress. It also identifies lots of top tips for pupils and parents. It contains:

Review of the school approach to study skills:	Page 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An outline of when study skills are taught (generally in PSE)• Examples of the help pupils will get in subject classes	
Strategies for successful studying:	Page 6
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A list of strategies that pupils can use to study effectively• Tips for good note taking• Tips for successful study/revision	
Strategies for managing stress:	Page 9
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A list of ideas for managing stress• Tips for sleeping well• A list of times when school can be at its most stressful	
Subject study advice:	Page 14
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some key study tips from each subject	

Review of school approach to study skills

Study Skills are taught regularly within subjects; nevertheless they are a focus at other times, generally through the PSE curriculum:





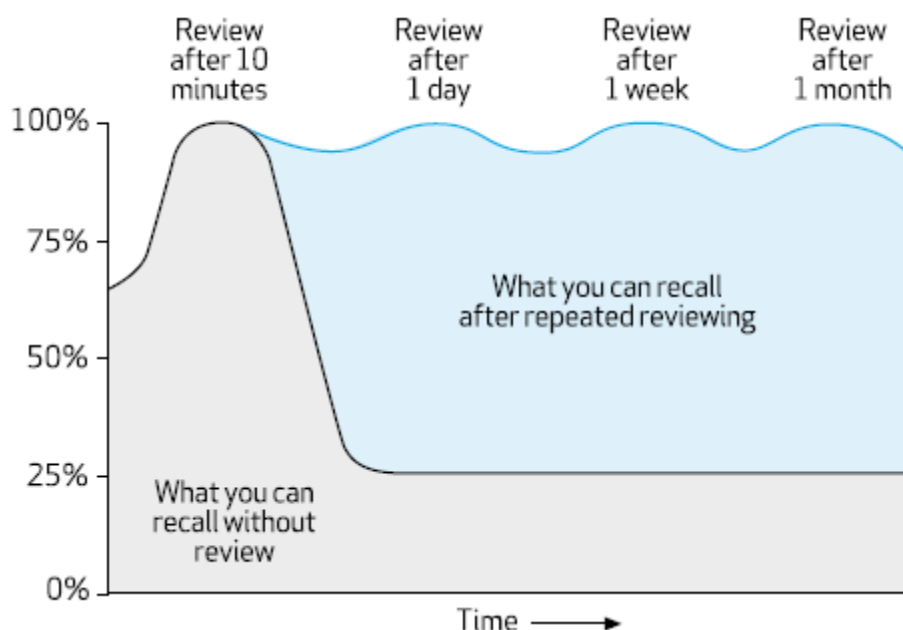
Study Skills are taught in all subjects at all times. Subjects tend to help with:

- Subject specific word lists
- Exam revision tick lists/learning outcome lists
- Target setting and discussions of how pupils learn effectively
- Exam review sessions
- Self-evaluation sessions
- Peer-evaluation sessions
- Ideas for revision that work in that subject (see the end of the booklet for examples)
- Suggestions for appropriate revision guides/textbooks
- Summary notes
- Chances to do past paper questions and get them marked
- Teacher-led revision sessions in class time
- Exemplar answers review
- Help outwith class (some run extra classes, but all have open doors for pupils to ask for extra help during breaks)
- Criteria and guidelines for projects
- Checks that homework diaries are properly completed

Strategies for successful studying

- Mind maps – use colour and pictures to make them memorable (flipchart paper is ideal)
- Growing mind maps – add to each time a topic is revisited over the course of a year
- Labelled/coloured diagrams, pictures and posters (flipchart paper is ideal)
- Revision notes – see tips below
- Active reading (never just read) – read, then cover the page and test
- Past paper questions – complete, then check marking schemes to see what the markers are actually looking for
- Timed question practice
- Practise understanding exam questions – highlight key words and plan an answer
- Online help
- Family and friends test you
- Plan essays
- Key words – identify them, then perhaps write on post-its (displayed around the house)
- Flash cards
- Highlighting
- Colour coding
- Reading out loud – it helps to move about when learning
- Make podcasts
- Chant/rap/dance/sing
- Write own questions
- Teach a friend

Reviewing is crucial! - it is very important to keep coming back to topics you have covered (regardless of the technique used above). Otherwise it will quickly leave your memory.¹



¹ Graph taken from <http://www2.open.ac.uk/students/skillsforstudy/revision.php>

Tips for good note taking:

- Think about the purpose of your note.
- Notes should be concise and with relevant detail.
- Use abbreviations.
- Leave plenty of space around notes and only write on one side of the paper. This leaves room for later additions, alterations and references.
- Always use your own words. It is then easier to understand and remember.
- Use colour to highlight and/or underline main points. This will aid memory.
- Notes should be neat and visually attractive. They are then easier to use.
- Use indentations, headings and sub headings and a numbering or bullet point system.
- Store notes in an orderly, safe and easy-to-access system.
- Once written, condense and then read, write and cover to see how much is remembered.

Tips for successful study/revision:

- **Where to study** – have a quiet, dedicated space, with no distractions (especially not mobile phones and computers), that is well lit, has fresh air, is a comfortable temperature, has a suitable desk and chair, has everything needed nearby (stationery and books) and ideally isn't too near where you sleep.
- **What to study** – have a revision timetable, don't avoid least favourite subjects (perhaps mix up good/bad subjects to stay motivated), set targets for the tasks to be completed (rather than the time to spend), prioritise the topics that need most work (those that are worth most marks/hardest), listen to teacher suggestions.
- **How to study** – do it in short bursts (max 30/45 minutes) then have a reward (5/10 minute break away from the desk). Where possible set aside time for homework and revision.
- **When to study** – don't put it off, start early and get into a good routine. Consider whether you are a morning, afternoon or evening person or if you work best immediately you come home from school. Try to do homework early so that you can seek help if you struggle.
- **Be organised** – and use your homework diary effectively and write a revision timetable in the lead up to exams (and stick to it!) that doesn't just list the subjects, but identifies when you will cover each topic (when planning, work back from the exam date). Make sure you have a complete set of notes that are up-to-date and organised (neat, labelled, in order). If you haven't, then speak to your teacher. They may also recommend some good revision books.
- **Make study active** – reading a book only leads to 10% retention; use mind maps, notes, bullet point lists and post-its
- **Set targets** – break your subjects into manageable chunks then set targets for topics covered rather than time passed. Take a break when you reach your target, this will help stop you from daydreaming to pass the time.
- **Consolidate your learning** – revisit topics (after a break, a day later, a week later, a month later) and try to make sure you learn them in more and more depth.
- **Timetable in exercise, eat well and drink water** – avoid too many sweets or fizzy drinks and don't rely on caffeine drinks to keep you awake.
- **Don't give up** – homework is supposed to be hard, sometimes you need to keep trying a problem for 30 minutes (particularly when doing problem solving questions!).
- But, **know when you have done your best** for the day then relax – sometimes study becomes counter-productive and you end up staring at a piece of paper.
- **Work out what works for you** and use this to your advantage – in SIV you will do a Futurewise test that will identify your learning styles and suggest some good ways to study effectively. Use these, but also look at the suggestions it gives for how you can develop your ability to learn in different ways.

Strategies for managing stress

- Be healthy (eat, exercise, sleep).
- Use relaxation methods: breathing exercises (take three deep breaths), relaxation tapes, yoga and meditation. Practise them; it may not be easy to relax at first. Learn to breathe properly.
- Take time out to enjoy something new or something that makes you feel happy. Do something that has no goals - other than enjoyment or fulfillment.
- Find a quiet place or go outside and enjoy the view.
- When studying give yourself rewards, little and often (e.g. a five minute break every half hour). Try to break down your work into small chunks so that it doesn't become overwhelming.
- Take steps to overcome problems. Don't keep things bottled up. Keep things in perspective. Think positively.
- Talk to friends/family or speak to teachers and try to deal with the source of the stress. Talk about how you have solved problems in the past, maybe these strategies will work again.
- Read a fiction book that takes your mind off your studies.
- Have a laugh (perhaps watch an episode of 'Friends' or your favourite YouTube clip of a funny animal).
- Sleeping well is crucial (see the sleeping tips on the next page).

On exam days

- **Before the exam** – have a good breakfast, give yourself plenty of time to get to the exam, know where you are supposed to be, make sure you have the right materials (pack your pencil case and bag the night before), go to the loo, don't let your friends wind you up.
- **In the exam** – listen to, and read the instructions carefully, read the questions carefully (circle or highlight key words) to make sure you understand what is being asked for (perhaps take notes or write a plan), watch your time, take three deep breaths if you feel stressed, if you get stuck move on and come back to it later.
- **After the exam** – don't try to mark your exam through discussions with others- it will only upset you.

Poor sleep will affect your performance and stop you remembering things. Some top tips for good sleep are:

- Keep a regular sleeping pattern, don't stay up working all night, it will make your study the next day harder and your exams are all in the morning and afternoon.
- Keep to your sleeping routine at the weekend, if you try to accumulate extra sleep you may end up with a 'jet-lag' effect.
- Get into a routine before bed that includes a relaxing hour before sleep. Switch off your mobile phone, TV and computer.
- During that hour avoid: caffeine, backlit screens (e.g. on your iPad), eating, strenuous exercise and arguments.
- If you struggle to sleep try: a milky drink, lavender on your pillow, dim lights, listening to relaxing music, reading for pleasure, some deep breathing exercises.
- If your dreams are ruined by worries about work then think about studying somewhere other than your bedroom. Make sure you have completed your work an hour before bedtime. Make sure you are ready for the next day (a written to-do list might stop you worrying about things you will forget to do).
- Aim for 8 or 9 hours sleep every night.

The following tables show you the key demands on pupils over each year. Pupils will need to be very organised and prioritise their work to keep on top of it (for example, if some work counts towards an SQA mark, it should take priority over a check-up test):

Transitus

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils settling in to new homework expectations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> November/December exams – first experience of testing across a range of subjects 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May exams

SI

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanities and Science rotation exams approx. 21st September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanities and Science rotation exams approx. 9th November and 14th December Exams for all other subjects late November/early December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanities and Science rotation exams approx. 1st February 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanities and Science rotation exams approx. 14th March 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humanities and Science rotation exams approx. 9th May Exam diet (2 days) starts approx. 16th May

SII

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science rotation exams approx. 21st September 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science rotation exams approx. 9th Nov and 14th Dec Exams for all other subjects late November/early December 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science rotation exams approx. 1st February 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science rotation exams approx. 14th March 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Science rotation exams approx. 9th May Exam diet (3 days) starts approx. 16th May

SIII

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exams for all subjects late November/Early December 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exam diet (10 days) starts approx. 10th May

SIV

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework levels will increase as will the difficulty of work Homework will be given over Oct holiday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prelim exam diet starts approx. 16th November (2 weeks) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National 5 assignments/ portfolios (these can take place at any point in the course, but many will be at this time) Modern Language Talking exams Music Performance exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Class Tests Start of final revision for exams (including throughout Easter holidays) SQA exams begin late April Modern Language Talking exams Music Performance exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQA exams until early June

SV

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pupils work hard getting accustomed to Higher homework (pupils generally find early September very challenging) Higher assignments (these can take place at any point in the course) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early November lots of unit assessments and homework Homework will be given over the Christmas holidays Higher assignments (these can take place at any point in the course) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prelim exam diet starts approx. 18th January (2 weeks) English portfolio work Music Performance Exams Higher assignments (these can take place at any point in the course) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Higher assignments (these can take place at any point in the course) Folios must be completed Class Tests Modern Language Talking exams Start of final revision for exams (including throughout Easter holidays) SQA exams begin late April Music Performance exams 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQA exams until early June

SVI

Aug and Oct	Nov and Dec	Jan and Feb	Mar and April	May and June
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AH Geography Fieldwork during October holiday 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Early November lots of unit assessments Some early AH Science investigations due UCAS applications to complete and Oxbridge interviews Homework will be given over the Christmas holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Prelim exam diet starts approx. 18th January (2 weeks) Dissertation and investigation work over February holidays 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Folios must be completed Investigations and dissertations due Class Tests Start of final revision for exams (including throughout Easter holidays) SQA exams begin late April 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SQA exams until early June Music Performance exams

Subject study advice

Transitus - Numeracy

Teacher Tips

- Listen carefully as teachers go over what you will learn at the start of lessons.
- Keep reviewing your progress, do you understand what you have been taught.
- Ensure that lesson objectives and exercise details (book, page and exercise) are recorded accurately into class jotters. When revising, you can refer back to these exercises and practise some of the questions/examples again.
- Write down your notes clearly using the numeracy notes book (e.g. put all your processes and layouts in the style you are taught).
- Study your notes book regularly and practise/repeat numeracy processes.
- Review the exam checklists of numeracy concepts and attempt the linked textbook exercises.

Transitus – Language

Teacher Tips

- Listen carefully as teachers go over what you will learn at the start of lessons.
- Keep reviewing your progress, do you understand what you have been taught.
- Read a wide range of genres (fiction, reference, newspaper articles, etc.) to support close reading activities and expand your vocabulary.
- To improve the accuracy of your spelling, correct your errors independently and regularly use a dictionary.
- Use mind maps to plan ideas for writing activities and class talks and to help brainstorm ideas.
- In preparation for a writing assessment, study and review the various writing skills taught.

Art

Teacher Tips

- Rewrite essays
- Use mind maps

Biology

Teacher Tips

- Learn a topic then try to answer an essay type question. Use the essay questions from AYK questions at the end of each chapter in text book.
- Attempt the 'What You Should Know' passages at the end of each chapter.
- Go through and highlight learning outcomes.
- Work through multiple choice book for the relevant chapters covered.
- Make use of word banks.
- Work through past paper questions that you have been directed to do by your teacher.

Pupil Tips

- Mind maps.
- Write concise notes then say out loud.
- Rewrite essays.
- Mnemonics.
- Associate other rhyming words with key terms.
- Past paper questions.
- Highlight key phrases/words.
- 1 page chapter summaries (and no more so you just keep the key ideas).
- Post-it notes around the room with key ideas.
- Friends or family ask questions.
- Name your fish after biological terms.

Business Management

- Look at past papers by topic (Mrs Shaw's handout) – identify key topics that are asked on a yearly basis – then revise from the topics.
- Make notes for each unit/topic (bullet points).
- Produce study cards – for each unit (colour co-ordinated).
- Plan your time.
- Past papers must be completed under timed conditions.
- Learn Command Words – must use to answer questions correctly.

Chemistry

Teacher Tips

- Use self-evaluation booklets for units of work – this will give you all the learning outcomes for each key area.
- Do not leave all revision to just before the final examination – revise each unit thoroughly when it is completed.
- Complete homework, especially ink exercises, as these will help identify any weaknesses and allow them to be rectified before major assessments.
- Revise the units in manageable sections and do not move on to the next section until you have a solid knowledge of all key facts – remember to see your teacher for help with any problems.
- Attend after-school classes for help with problem areas and for more consolidation of class work – if you cannot attend these classes you can see your teacher during short break or lunchtime.
- Do practice questions for each unit to help identify problem areas.
- Use past papers/model papers to help you revise and identify any weaknesses.

Pupil Tips

- Read and write notes on the work covered in class for each unit of work.
- Use self-evaluation booklets to find your weaknesses in each unit.
- Practise calculations from each unit, some of these will definitely be asked for in the exam.
- Buy a revision book for the subject (Bright Red books are very good).
- Complete as many past paper/model papers as possible, this will allow you to experience the style of questions likely to be asked in the examination.
- Do not leave your revision to the last minute, prepare well in advance for the examination.
- When revising do not have access to your phone/laptop/music, focus on your work.
- Remember to have breaks during revision time, you cannot work continuously for hours, have a snack and move about before returning to your work.
- Attend after school classes/see your teacher during short break or lunchtime to get help with problems or to do some consolidation work.
- For Higher: use the “Flash Revise” book for revision – only for Higher.
- For Higher/Advanced Higher: Remember to revise areas of National 5/Higher course not covered, as the first 5 multiple choice questions will cover these areas in your Higher/Advanced Higher paper.

Classical Studies

Teacher Tips

- Read a lot (wider reading).
- Make lists.
- Watch films to spot errors.
- Use flashcards with other people (test each other).
- When copying notes, use your own words.
- Place information into tables.
- Use bright colours to code information.
- Keep notes close at hand - accessible at all times so you can revise whenever you have time.
- Do not type notes – handwrite them!
- Create mind maps (and display on walls).
- Use arrows/mappings to create links between topics/information.
- Set yourself a time limit for studying (do not do too much in one go).
- Do something you can look forward to.
- Get your parents on board: “I can’t do this unless I have done this work!”.
- Reward yourself after studying.
- Experiment with different study styles (mix it up).

Design and Manufacture

Pupil Tips

- Read the course book.
- Re-write notes.
- Work through past papers.
- Produce mind maps.
- For the portfolio: use the sketchbook to practise sketching, generate design concepts and rendering.
- For the portfolio: use design websites (Stylepark, Pinterest, etc).

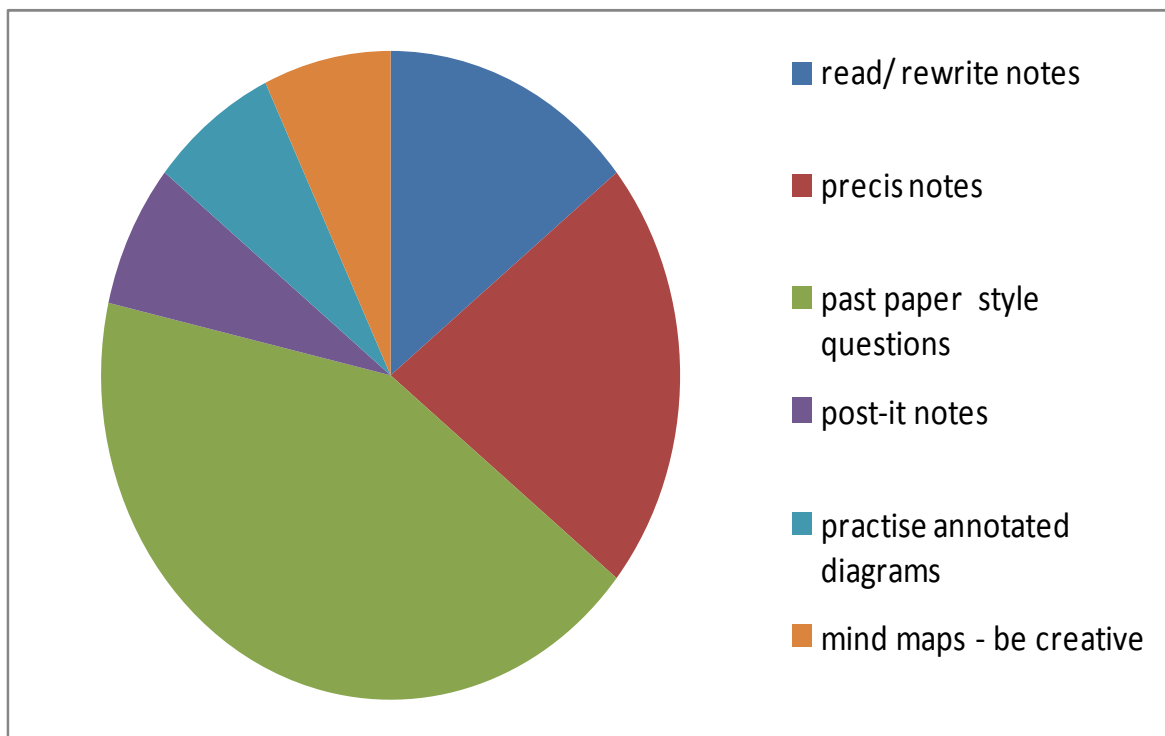
English

Teacher Tips

- Read from a wide range of literary genres to help vocabulary, phraseology and syntax. This will also help your general knowledge.
- Read more analytically from quality journalism! Think about the impact of word choice, imagery and sentence structure on pieces of writing. This will not only help with Close Reading-type exercises, but will also help you with your own persuasive/discursive writing.
- Revise given strategies for Close Reading, practising question types, using past papers, Flash Revision guides and language skills textbooks.
- Re-read your literary texts several times, so that you know in minute detail the events that occur and in what sequence they occur.
- Re-write your notes and add to them. Use mind maps, story boards, timelines, colour coordinated notes to represent themes and character maps or whatever helps you to study.
- Gather a quotation bank for each text and ensure that you contextualise the quotations so that you know why they are important and how they display and develop the central concern, themes, character, setting, etc.
- Think about what the different authors are exploring- what are the central concerns of your texts and how are they revealed? Characterisation, setting, theme, opening, symbolism, structure, stage direction... are just some to consider. Gather textual evidence to show where these central concerns are exposed.
- You should revise the Scottish Poetry by revising Poetic Techniques and practise writing about the use of imagery, sound imagery, word choice, sentence structure, tone, metre, form, narrative voice... and how the above-mentioned help you understand the central concerns of the poems.
- Look at model answers in 'How to Pass' study guides or ones shown in class for all the skills above.

Geography

Pupil Tips



Graphic Communications

Pupil Tips

- Read the course book.
- Re-write notes.
- Work through past papers.
- Produce mind maps.
- For the portfolio: Work on drawing board techniques.

History

Teacher Tips

- Use acronyms to remember key facts.
- Use flash cards.
- Highlight key phrases from your notes.
- Use timelines.
- Break topics down into subtopics.
- Read your notes, cover them, make more notes, uncover and add what you missed.
- Visualise a picture of the time in history in your head and imagine you are there.
- Use wordlists.
- Practise past questions for the sources paper under timed conditions.
- Read widely from good magazines such as Hindsight, 20th C Review and BBC History, especially for N5 assignments and Higher Extended Essay work.
- For Higher: use mind maps for the key factors in essays.
- For Higher: make detailed notes for each of the mandatory factors for the essay topics.
- For Higher and Advanced Higher: write practice essays (timed) and get them marked.
- For Advanced Higher: create detailed historiography files to ensure that you have different historical opinions for each part of the course.
- For Advanced Higher: read widely from good magazines such as Hindsight, 20th C Review and New Perspective and use the school articles in the library and on the shared area to widen out academic research.
- For Advanced Higher: Use SQA past papers.

Latin

Teacher Tips

- Use flashcards.
- Write notes on walls/mirrors.
- Learn stupid rhymes.
- Read a lot (books/look out for inscriptions, etc).
- Use everyday phrases (e.g. ad hoc).
- Try and think about how phrases might translate into Latin.
- Make revision/notes personal.
- Use Latin Grammar app.
- For interpretation: rewrite translations/make a list of 'key' phrases.

Mathematics

Teacher Tips

- Make a list of all topics you need to revise with the ones you find most challenging at the start of the list.
- Revise your topics in the order you placed them in your list (most challenging first).
- Read your notes thoroughly; highlight key words and phrases, before attempting questions on the topic. Then start with worked examples, easier examples and move on to more complex questions. Refer back to your notes regularly to help guide you through solutions.
- Summarise your notes using spider diagrams/mind maps/flash cards. Choose the technique(s) that work best for you.
- Once you have covered three or four topics go back and try questions from the earlier topics without reference to notes or revision aides and see if you are successful.
- Once you have finished revising each topic attempt questions from a mixture of topics. Most textbooks will contain mixed exercises, you will also get these from your class teacher as part of your revision pack for examinations or past exam papers can be used.
- If you continue to have difficulties, then make a note of the problem and discuss it with your Maths teacher during your next lesson.
- Alternatively you can get help at after-school Maths on a Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday from 3.50-5.00 (usually SIV and above). Help is also available at lunchtimes from 1.00 from various members of the Maths faculty.

Modern Languages

Teacher Tips

- Vocabulary lists and strategies for active learning.
- Grammar reference worksheets (coloured).
- Online resources (websites/ app Dualingo).
- Past paper questions.

Pupil Tips

- Use visual tools such as flashcards.
- Act out scenarios/ conversations in groups/ pairs.
- Chant new vocabulary/ grammar.
- Learn vocabulary following these steps: look, say, cover, write, check.
- Break down vocabulary into topics.
- Watch TV programmes, films or video clips to improve listening.
- Try to incorporate new vocabulary into writing so writing is constantly improving and it is easier to learn new vocabulary.

- When reading a text, attempt it first without a dictionary to challenge yourself and develop your 'linguistic instinct'.
- Read out loud and practise Speaking tests with parents/ friends.
- Ask a parent/ friend to quiz you.
- Make notes of 5 things per day and slowly build up knowledge.
- Use funny ways to remember vocabulary or grammar points.
- E.g. accents.
- A cute rabbit hopped up the hill and fell to its grave.
- mère/ père/ frère/ collègue= all annoy me! Send them to their grave!
- Rewrite grammar rules, verbs and vocabulary.
- Record yourself speaking and listen to yourself while reading your notes/ without notes.
- Colour co-ordinate verbs and tenses/ nouns and gender.
- Make posters for verbs and tenses.
- Go over Writing in your head while doing sport.
- Complete Listening past papers/ exercises while doing 'keepie uppies'.
- Ask your teacher to record your Speaking passage to improve your accent.
- Associate foreign words with images.
- Associate foreign words with English words (e.g. louer= to hire, sounds like 'loo', to hire a loo, louer= to hire!).
- Learn songs/ poems to remember grammar points (e.g. 'être verb' poem).
- Write pronouns on note cards then write endings of verbs on other note cards. Try to match them up. Works for all tenses!
- Stick short essay phrases/ vocabulary on post-it notes and put them around your bedroom/ bathroom/ house.
- Create mind maps for individual topics (e.g. sport, health, school, etc).
- For Higher: learn generic sentences/ phrases that can be used in a range of topics.
- For Higher: learn paragraphs and mix and match depending on essay questions.

Modern Studies

Teacher Tips

- Write summary notes of key essay plans, pieces of evidence and good quotes.
- Review your How Could I Do Better Booklet so you don't make the same mistakes twice.
- Get good examples for the topics you are studying by watching the news or reading newspapers.
- Follow some good Twitter feeds.
- Read widely from Politics Review and other quality journals, especially for National 5 assignments and Higher essays.
- Use flash cards.
- Highlight key phrases from your notes.
- Write practice essays (timed) and get them marked.
- Use SQA past papers.

Pupil Tips

- Write out essay plans neatly.
- Read a newspaper and keep up-to-date.
- Practise timed answers.

Music

Teacher Tips

- Use mind maps for each topic (e.g. vocal music, orchestral music or 20th/21st century).
- Use acronyms to memorise key features of concepts (e.g. a madrigal).
- Use flashcards, put a concept on one side (do a few each day) and the meaning on the other and use them to test yourself.
- Create storylines to remember lists (use senses, exaggeration, location, personification and humour to aid your memory).
- Try to find meaningful links or images between concepts.
- Record yourself performing, listen back to your recording and evaluate your performance. Identify areas of strength and any developmental needs.
- For Advanced Higher: use the help sheets given (e.g. A Guide to Writing a Listening Commentary).

Pupil Tips

- Listen to as much music as possible from different genres (it will help you develop listening skills, your knowledge of concepts and aural awareness).
- Listen to music outside your comfort zone.

- Get involved in the Ensemble and sing in the Choir (it will help to develop your musical ear).
- Practise your instrument as much as you can (every day), establish a routine where it is part of your homework (use it as a break from written homework for other subjects).
- For SQA Exams: use the NQ listening website.
- For SQA Exams: complete as many past papers as possible (they help with exam technique, help you understand what the question means and allow you to recognise different ways questions can be asked).

Physics

Teacher Tips

- Review your study guides using traffic lights. For anything you are unsure about check the notes and worked examples.
- Make neat notes.
- Check your homework against the numerical answers and if you have made mistakes then revisit your notes or speak to your teacher.
- Review your post assessment review notes to plan what you need to revise.
- Attend after-school classes for help with problem areas and for more consolidation of class work – if you cannot attend these classes you can see your teacher during short break, lunchtime or possibly during a period (usually at the end of the lesson).
- Do as many past papers/model papers as you can. This form of practice is essential for success in the final exam.

Psychology

Teacher Tips

- Studying is not the same as reading! - you read novels, but you have to study theories and empirical evidence – you have to transfer this information into your long term memory!
- Take notes on the text - taking notes is an active strategy to help you study. Try highlighting the key points or putting the theories and studies into your own words. However, do not make the mistake of writing down too much - this undermines the whole point.
- Keep your folder tidy - there is a lot of information to take in within each topic, keeping your folder tidy and in sections will help you remember what studies should be used within each topic.

- Practice Papers - the use of practice papers will test your knowledge and will help you to use the theories you have learned in an appropriate way, remember to evaluate throughout all your responses.
- Remember it is so important to answer the question!

Philosophy

Teacher Tips

- Use mind maps.
- Use news stories to discuss argument structure and ethics.
- Use films that look at reality to discuss idea in metaphysics and epistemology.
- Read criticisms and analysis of philosophical theories.
- Follow current philosophers/thinkers on Twitter and YouTube – Baggini, Singer, Dawkins, Gladwell, etc.
- Use i-TunesU for extra information, lectures and notes.
- Use websites such as Stanford Encyclopaedia of Philosophy and Early Modern Texts for further explanation of ideas and theories.