

Preparing for Exams



Throughout the trimester

- Revise your textbook and notes regularly – the more information you retain during the course, the easier your exam preparation will be.
- Keep your notes organised and divided by week or topic.
- Ask questions or do extra reading when you don't understand a topic.
- Organise a weekly study group with your classmates to discuss and better understand course content.



A few weeks before the exam

- Identify the topics that are likely to be on the exam by talking to your tutor or looking at your course outline.
- Approach revision one topic at a time. Make a study timetable and allocate time to each topic. Set realistic study goals and make sure you give yourself regular breaks.
- Create mind maps or simplified notes for each topic in your own words – don't just read the notes you took in class.
- After revising each topic quiz yourself on what you have learned. Try writing practice answers to past exam questions or asking a friend to quiz you from your notes.
- Regular revision is the key to exam success. It's more effective to revise a little each day rather than cram your study into one day on the weekend.



In the week before the exam

- If possible, complete practice tests and revise past questions and answers to best understand the format of the exam and the type of answers expected.
- Use flashcards to help you memorize important terms or concepts.
- Review your study notes every day and spend extra time on those topics you find difficult.
- Take regular breaks when studying – this will help you to retain information and prevent anxiety.
- Look after your health. Eat right, get some exercise, drink water and get enough sleep.
- Listen carefully to your tutor's advice.
- Check the dates, times and locations for your exams.



On the day of the exam

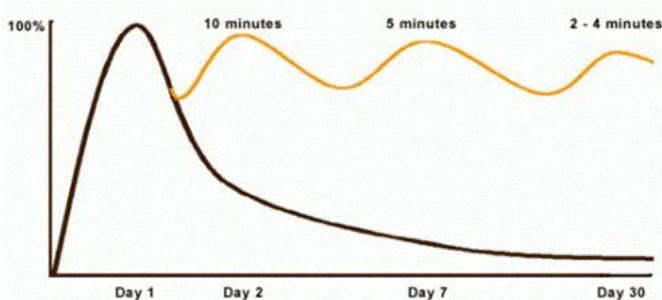
- Do not do a lot of last minute cramming. A fresh mind is more important.
- Arrive relaxed and well in advance of the exam time with all the equipment you need.
- Pay attention to all instructions given on the test paper or by the exam supervisor.
- Keep calm and do your best.

WelTec Study Skills Series

How to Revise

Why is revision important?

The purpose of revision is to try and remember the new information you are learning in your course. The secret to effective revision is doing a little revision often. On the Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve below the black line demonstrates how easily the brain forgets information. Just one day after a lesson most people will have forgotten more than 50% of what was covered and a month later they will remember less than 5%. However, the yellow line shows how much more you can retain if you revise the lesson for ten minutes the next day and again a week later.



Regular revision throughout the trimester will ensure you are well-prepared for assignments and exams. It will improve your grades and make exam preparation much easier.

How to make a plan for revision

Routine is essential for effective revision. Make a weekly timetable and work out regular times to revise your course content. You could arrive on campus 30 minutes before each class and go to the library to revise the last lesson or try revising every night after dinner. Variety is also important for revision – different strategies will suit different people.

Effective revision strategies



Form a study group

Revising with others is a great way to share knowledge and better understand complicated topics. There are quiet meeting rooms available in the Learning Commons where you can meet. Set up your own group or join on of the Learning Commons study circles.



Summarize your notes

Just reading your notes is rarely enough to remember them – you have to do something with the information! Make summaries of important points in a notebook or on flashcards or draw mindmaps to connect different ideas. Add pictures, colour and diagrams too. The more interesting your notes are to you and the better you understand them, the easier they will be to remember.



Practice, practice, practice!

It's true that practice makes perfect. For revision practice means using or applying the information you are learning. If your subject has exams, write practice answers to exam questions. If you have to write assignments or give presentations, share what you are learning with others – thus you will be practicing paraphrasing and summarising information.