



# **Year 11**

# **Revision Strategies Guide**

**Name:**

**Form:**

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*This handbook is designed to support students and parents with effective strategies and techniques for revision. We want to ensure that all students and parents feel they are well supported in preparing for all examinations. Students should use this guide to help them trial different revision strategies. It is important that you practice different types of revision to see what works for you. What works for one person, may not work for all. In addition, we hope that the additional details about working memory will help you to understand why revision is important. This handbook has been created in collaboration with several members of staff, I have specifically labelled each section with the staff members' name. Therefore, if you would like more advice specifically on one area, please contact that staff member. We hope you find this handbook useful. Should you require any additional support, please feel free to contact us and we will be happy to provide further advice.*

*Good luck!*

*Miss Galbraith: Assistant Vice Principal - Teaching, Learning and Curriculum*

*You are now embarking on the final straight of your time here at Charlton School. So far you have excelled in adapting to the challenges placed at your feet by the global pandemic. This will be your first full year in school since Year 9! However this has not hindered your success and achievements in Year 10 and I know you will continue to excel this year. I have hidden the fact that you guys will be sitting exams in the summer of 2022, these exams will be a challenge and for some of you these exams will be a daunting prospect. However I have said and will always say the following – if you have done everything you can to prepare for these exams and you can hand on heart tell yourself that there is nothing else you could do to prepare then all that matters is you did your best. You know that I love a good motivational video but I can't place one in this revision guide so instead here is a quote that I think is rather apt for your revision and these last few months at Charlton:*

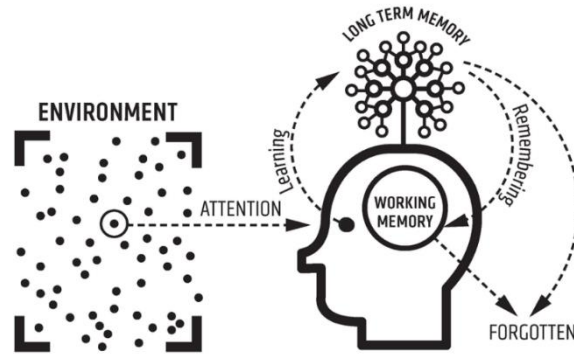
*'Everyone can rise above their circumstances and achieve success if they are dedicated to and passionate about what they do.' – Nelson Mandela*

*Good luck with your revision and remember all you can do with the time you have is prepare and at the end of it you will get the outcomes and successes you deserve.*

*Mr Redman: Head of Year 11*

## Memory – the science of learning

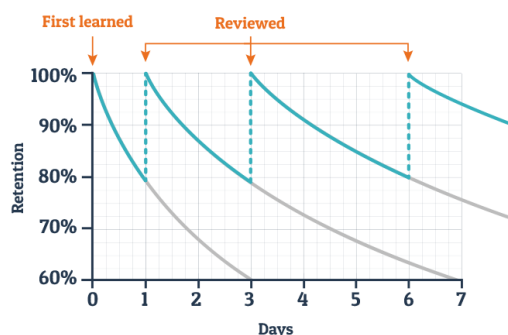
There has been lots of research around the science of learning and how we learn and retain information. In summary, if we think of the learning process using the following diagram, it will help us have a greater awareness of the most effective revision strategies based upon the available research.



1. We have a certain amount of attention to pay and this can be limited and can dramatically vary depending on the individual or the environment.
2. Our **working memory** is finite and we can only absorb a limited amount of information at a given time. This may be up to 30 seconds.
3. Information is processed into our **long-term memory** through 'learning'. This long-term memory is effectively unlimited, and we can retrieve information from here back into our working memory as needed in a given moment.
4. Information in our **long-term memory** is interconnected and linked with prior knowledge. Anything that is not connected or not successfully stored well enough in our long-term memory is forgotten and this is completely natural.
5. If students undertake enough **retrieval practice**, generating the information in our long-term memory, it increases a level of fluency within the subject. Practice makes perfect!

As stated above, forgetting is completely natural. The following diagram outlines this process and is called the **Ebbinghaus Forgetting Curve** (1885).

Typical Forgetting Curve for Newly Learned Information



Ebbinghaus proposed that humans start losing 'memory of knowledge' over time unless the knowledge is consciously reviewed time and time again.

In summary, what do we know about **memory**?

- Consistent practice and revisiting previous material strengthens memory and boosts learning.
- Information, if not revisited, is 'lost' from our memory.
- Our working memory is finite and limited and so overloading this or cramming for revision doesn't work.

## The key principles of effective revision



Planning what you are going to revise and when you are going to revise is key in reducing stress and being successful.



- Divide your revision time into chunks
- Build your revision timetable around other commitments e.g. part time work and hobbies
- Break each subject into manageable chunks
- Keep your revision notes in folders so you can find each subject easily
- Use a variety of different revision techniques, there are some ideas below
- Your phone is not your friend unless you are using it for revision! Put your phone in a different room so you are not distracted during revision sessions.
- Reading your book is not revision! It's reading.
- Quality revision always wins!


**If you would like more support or advice about organising your revision, please ask Mrs Ventress**

## Passive vs Active Revision

Many students say that they do not know how to revise. Many more may be using revision techniques that are ineffective. It is vital to develop methods that will actually improve your performance in exams.

- Passive revision such as simply reading notes are generally ineffective, as you are not doing anything active with the information you are reading. This makes it difficult to retain the information.
- The most effective revision is methods that are active. Active revision means you are actually doing something with the information you are reading. An example of active revision would be making revision notes and then testing yourself on these notes.

## Active Revision Ideas



Post-it notes allow you to summarise information and are a great way to remember key details.

Mind maps can be a great way to identify connections between ideas. They don't need to be dull, you can use colours and images, which will help to aid memory.

Use songs, rhymes or stories to learn facts.

Flash cards allow you to practice summarizing information and can help you identify any gaps in your learning. You can use them in a variety of different ways:

- Condense notes about a specific topic on to a card
- Write a term on one side and a definition the other
- Write a question on one side and answer on the other



photoshot.com - 88389776



Use your phone to record yourself reading out short parts of your notes.

You can listen back to your recordings at any time, making it easy to find more short revision slots.

## Retrieval Practice

Recalling information from memory is simple and powerful. Retrieval practice is a learning strategy which makes you think hard and brings information to mind. It is the action of actively retrieving knowledge that boosts learning and strengthens memory. **It means trying to remember previously learned information as opposed to simply re-reading it.** Examples include:

- Knowledge quizzing and low stakes testing.
- Multiple choice tests.
- Completing past paper questions or practice answers.
- Answering verbal questions asked by teacher/peers/parents.
- Creating flashcards or revision materials where you can 'test' yourself.

**Flashcards:** Flashcards are generally a card containing a small amount of information as an aid to learning. The use of flashcards are for low stakes testing to improve recall and to strengthen memory. An effective flashcard may include the following (*in each subject they will be used in a different way*):

- A key term/key word with definition on the back.
- A key date with the event on the back.
- A key equation with its use in practice on the back.
- A past paper question and a model answer on the back.

**ATTRITION**

The action of rock fragments colliding into each other causing them to become smaller and rounder over time.

## USING FLASHCARDS TO REVISE

by @inner\_drive | www.innerdrive.co.uk

**1** Split a box into 5 different compartments and label them 1 to 5.



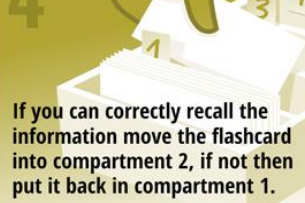
**2** Place all your flashcards in compartment 1.



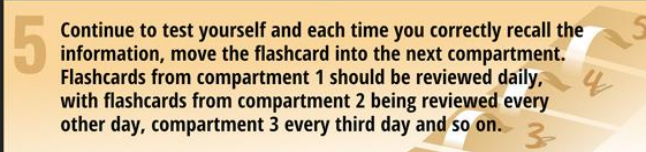
**3** Test yourself on a flashcard



**4** If you can correctly recall the information move the flashcard into compartment 2, if not then put it back in compartment 1.



**5** Continue to test yourself and each time you correctly recall the information, move the flashcard into the next compartment. Flashcards from compartment 1 should be reviewed daily, with flashcards from compartment 2 being reviewed every other day, compartment 3 every third day and so on.



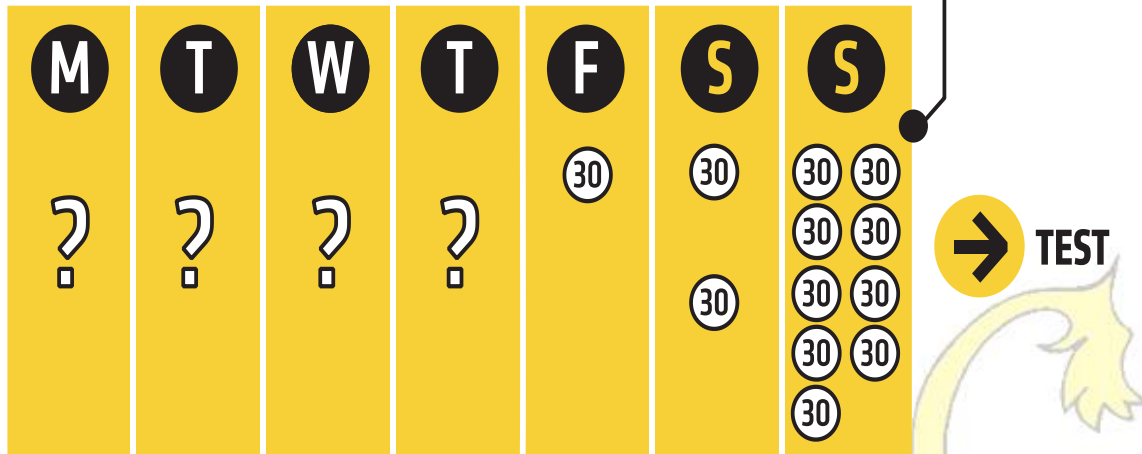
**6** Eventually, all your flashcards will have been transferred to compartment 5 and the information they contain stored in your long-term memory.



## Spacing and Interleaving

**Spacing** out your revision into smaller chunks over a period helps you to remember the material better and ensures you are less stressed with your revision.

Let's say you have a test one week and you have 5 hours to prepare for it broken down into 30 minute chunks. Very often that process looks like this.



Instead of mass practice, a much more effective way of revising is to space out your revision like this:



By breaking up your revision into 30 minute chunks and spacing out the time between revision, you will consolidate what you have learned and retain the material much more effectively.

**Interleaving** involves switching between ideas and topics during a study session. This ensures that you are not studying one idea or topic for too long. Mixing up your revision and chunking it supports learning and strengthens your memory.

For example, instead of organising your revision week like this:

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE
MACBETH	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	CREATIVE WRITING	UNSEEN POETRY	JEKYLL AND HYDE

A much more effective way of organising your revision would be like this:

<b>M</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>F</b>
MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE	CREATIVE WRITING
AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE	CREATIVE WRITING	MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY
CREATIVE WRITING	MACBETH	UNSEEN POETRY	AN INSPECTOR CALLS	JEKYLL AND HYDE

As you are doing this, another highly effective strategy is to try to think of connections between topics you are studying considering similarities and differences.

Studying one topic for a long time can give them impression you have mastered it but often this can be misleading.







## The importance of Habits and Routines

Within your revision, it is vitally important to establish a strong routine. Having goals are good for setting a direction. What do you want to achieve in *this* revision session?

In order to support the forming of good revision habits, there are a number of areas to consider:

- **Start small and build up** – reduce distractions where and when you revise and get your family to encourage the creation of a revision timetable and placing it somewhere visual in your house. Ensure someone else is knowledgeable of this timetable to enable accountability and aid support.
- **Make it attractive** – collaborative focused revision is beneficial (alongside attending interventions or revision sessions) but you could also ensure there is a ‘reward’ at the end of a revision session. *If I complete this, I can do this.*
- **Make it satisfying** – challenge yourself, track your own revision progress and ensure you stick to your revision timetable. Small steps build success and motivation. Use PLCs or checklists to support.
- **Make it obvious** – revise in one area, leave your materials out ready to support organisation and ensure routines are stuck to. Ensure your environment is clear, uncluttered and comfortable.

## Subject Specific Top Tips for Revision

### English Language

- Use past/sample paper questions to revise.
- Use Knowledge Organisers to embed and test knowledge.
- Familiarise yourself with mark schemes and Assessment Objectives so that you understand how marks are awarded.

### English Literature

- Learn key quotations for your set texts.
- Use Knowledge Organisers to embed and test knowledge.
- Use GCSE Pod to revise plot, characters, themes and language.

### Maths

- Make sure you learn the formulae that isn't provided.
- Always write down your workings, even if it is a calculator paper.
- Practise, practise, practise. You can't learn Maths from reading revision guides and copying notes.

### Science

- Dissect exam questions and make sure you learn what each command word means
- Use checklists to help you RAG rate your confidence on topic area before you start revision
- Condense key knowledge down onto mind maps or flash cards

### History

- Timelines are help you remember the chronology of the content we learn (e.g. Crime and Punishment), whereas mind maps or revision cards/ clocks are useful for detailed depth studies (Wolsey in Henry VIII).
- Exam questions are an excellent way to practise the different exam skills in History but also helpful for revision, to apply our knowledge to different style questions.
- Knowledge organisers and revision guides are useful to help us remember key content, especially if we create our own questions and then test ourselves to answer them.

### Geography

- Use your Revision Workbook at it provides examples of exam style questions.
- Complete the revision clocks for all of the topics.
- Use GCSE pod to address any gaps in your knowledge.

## Languages

- Use Quizlet to revise vocabulary from the different themes and take the Quizlet test. It will tell you which vocabulary you need to practise the most.
- Use online resources specifically for listening (e.g. slow-german / deutsche welle)
- Use past papers (Edexcel) to practice listening and reading skills.

## PE

- Get someone at home to verbally test you on key terminology and knowledge using the mind maps and retrieval sheets provided and always try to provide a sporting or fitness example.
- Break down long answer questions: **A01 Knowledge** (e.g. define, state, outline) **A02 Apply** (e.g. explain, describe, discuss), **A03 Say why** (e.g. evaluate, justify, suggest).
- Use Charlton's Interactive Revision PowerPoint which has the GCSE pod resources and hyperlinks to other useful materials embedded.

## Art

- Follow the deadlines set – this will help manage the workload. I break all the work down into manageable chunks.
- Pick a topic that you can easily take your own photos of or draw from.
- Talk to me, your parents and your friends about your work – Other people are brilliant for generating new thoughts and ideas.

## Music

- Use practice exam questions to help you revise
- Ask for help and advice
- Talk to me, your parents and your friends about your ideas – other people are brilliant for generating new thoughts and ideas.

## Computer Science

- Plan and complete practice exam questions
- Create flash cards with a question on one side and details to include in the answer on the other
- Use revision guides and workbooks

## Business Studies

- Plan and complete practice exam papers
- Use your revision guides and workbooks
- Use GCSE pod as a starting point for each topic

## Technology (Engineering Design, Health and Social Care, Hospitality and Catering & Art: Textiles):

- Plan and complete practice exam questions.
- Create flash cards with a question on one side and details to include in the answer on the other.
- Use revision guides, PowerPoints from doddle and workbooks
- Follow the deadlines set – this will help manage the workload.
- Pick a topic that you can easily take your own photos of or draw from. (Art: Textiles)
- Talk to me, your parents and your friends about your work – Other people are brilliant for generating new thoughts and ideas. (Art: Textiles)