



## Being Well-prepared for Senior School Assessments in Term Two

As we move into term two it is important to note that examinations and other formal assessments are on the horizon.

- **Semester One Examinations** - Year 10 students and ATAR Year 11 and 12 students will have their Semester One Examinations in Weeks 6 and 7.
- **OLNA** - OLNA tests will take place during Weeks 2 and 3 for all students who have not yet obtained their proficiency in reading, writing or numeracy.
- **Externally Set Tasks** - Year 12 Externally Set Tasks (ESTs) for all General and Foundation courses will take place during Weeks 4 and 5.

With a heavy load of assessments ahead, it is therefore important that students clearly map out revision and study plans so that every opportunity to attain personal success is utilised.

- **Year 10** - results are paramount to ensure that students obtain the prerequisites required for the courses and Pathway they may wish to study in Year 11.
- **Year 11** - for ATAR students, course work and exam results will determine which Pathway students continue to follow. Students must achieve 55% overall with pass marks in their exams to remain in ATAR courses.
- **Year 12** - course and exams results are paramount for ATAR Pathway students for early offers from universities but more importantly towards final school-based marks which contribute significantly to the final ATAR. For General students, the ESTs account for 15% of their overall mark so it is important to achieve the highest mark of which they are capable.

## The importance of preparing for examinations

**Assessment of Knowledge:** Exams serve to assess students' understanding of the material covered in class. Preparing for exams, and mastering the knowledge ensures that students have a comprehensive grasp of the subject matter, allowing them to perform well on assessments.

**Academic Achievement:** Adequate exam preparation often correlates with academic success. By thoroughly preparing study notes, reviewing course materials and practising multiple exam-style questions, students can improve their performance and achieve higher grades.

**Retention of Information:** Engaging in exam preparation requires students to revisit and review the content learned throughout the course. This repetition helps reinforce learning and enhances long-term retention of information. This technique is the spaced practice and active recall study method outlined in the previous Tartan.

**Reduction of Stress:** Proactive exam preparation can alleviate anxiety and stress associated with exams. When students feel well-prepared and confident in their abilities, they are better equipped to manage exam-related pressure as they feel more in control of their performance in the examination.

**Development of Study Skills:** The process of preparing for exams allows students to develop essential study skills, such as time management, organisation, and effective notetaking. These skills are beneficial not only for exams but also for future academic and professional endeavours.

**Identification of Knowledge Gaps:** Through exam preparation, students can identify areas of weakness or gaps in their understanding. Students should use the 'traffic light system' with their syllabus or course outline documents as well as their study notes to identify gaps in their knowledge. This enables them to focus their efforts on areas that require additional review and reinforcement.

## Strategies and methods students can use for examination preparation

**Creating Study Guides:** Summarising key concepts, formulas, and definitions into concise study guides can help students review material efficiently. Reviewing a set of well written study notes is much more manageable than reading all of the required sections in their text book or their complete set of class notes.

**Practice Problems:** Solving practice questions and past exam papers allows students to familiarise themselves with the exam format and identify areas for improvement. These should first be done with access to notes, and then students should progress to doing these under timed examination conditions without access to their notes.

**Group Study Sessions:** Collaborating with classmates to discuss course material, explain concepts to one another, and quiz each other can enhance understanding and retention.

**Flashcards:** Using flashcards to memorise vocabulary, equations, or other information can be an effective way to reinforce learning through repetition.

**Mind Mapping:** Creating visual diagrams or mind maps to organise and connect related concepts can aid in understanding complex topics and their interrelationships.

**Teaching Others:** Explaining concepts to friends or family members can deepen understanding and reinforce learning through verbal articulation.

**Utilising Online Resources:** Revise Online (available for some Year 11 and 12 ATAR courses) and interactive quizzes can provide additional resources and support for exam preparation.

**Taking Regular Breaks:** Incorporating breaks into study sessions can help prevent burnout and maintain focus and productivity.

Ultimately, the most effective exam preparation methods may vary depending on individual learning styles, preferences, and the nature of the subject matter. Experimenting with different approaches and strategies can help students find the methods that work best for them.

## How parents and guardians can assist their children

In our busy and hectic lives, putting aside time for meaningful study can seem like an almost impossible and sometimes overwhelming task for some students, particularly with the added pressure of sporting commitments, work, and socialising. However, there are some simple ways that parents and guardians can help children to stay focussed during the lead up to formal assessments and examinations.

- **Organised study space** - Provide a calm and quiet space that mimics exam conditions (silent, free from music). Preferably not in a bedroom, but sometimes this is unavoidable.
- **Removal of distractions** - Have a family protocol with a routine for removing distractions, particularly mobile phones and other technology.
- **Study timetable with accountability** - Have the student establish a study routine which is shared with the family, which includes the student involving family members in conversations regarding accountability.
- **Health and well-being** - ensure that students leave time to attend to their own wellbeing and have a healthy sleep routine.

With these basic structures and routines in place students will be afforded with every opportunity to attain success.

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