

Exam Revision: Using Effective Tools & Techniques

Memorization

To commit something to memory, you need to consider repetition, variation, and spacing. Most people need to view material several times to get it to stick in their mind. This retrieval of information also needs to be performed repeatedly at regular intervals, spaced out over a period of time. Little and often is the key! If you can, it's a good idea to mix up topics and use a range of strategies to help important facts stick in mind.

Apps can do some of this work for you, in part through built-in algorithms designed to aid memorization. They are also a really good way to turn learning and revision into a daily habit. Trying something new and different will also make whatever material you are learning more memorable.

Try finding a new resource for memorization, quizzing and making flashcards to test yourself; tested material sticks better in the mind, even more so if testing is repeated (Mok and Chan, 2016).

[Quizlet](#) - make quizzes and flashcards.

[Memrise](#) – memorise vocabulary and test yourself.

[GoCongr](#) – learning app, with free flashcard maker and many other features.

[StudyBlue](#) – log in to make flashcards, take smart quizzes, make review sheets and access a range of crowdsourced material: the site will also return results instantly that show you where you need to focus. Free and works on any device.

Be sure to make your own material that meets your course and its learning outcomes. If you do use crowdsourced material use your critical judgement!

There are some more suggestions for learning apps available on the [UniSkills webpages](#) and why not try using the [UniSkills Revision Checklist](#), or adapt and create your own.

Memory Techniques

You may also wish to try out some memory techniques. These usually work by placing material in context, or by association. They may seem odd or unusual at first, but that is part of how they work! Explore some ideas below:

[Memory palace](#)

[Mnemonics](#)

[Chunking](#)

[Music](#)

[The Student's Guide to Exam Success by Eileen Tracy](#) – this eBook is an excellent guide to tackling exams and has a full chapter dedicated to associative memory techniques.

[The Memory Book: How to remember anything you want by Tony Buzan and James Harrison](#) is a guide to improving memory, with lots of ideas!

Active Revision Techniques – Synthesising Information

Once you are organised and have a targeted plan in place, make sure you take the next step and revise actively!

[Mind-maps and Assistive Technology](#)

- Try [Inspiration](#) or [Mind View](#) for mind-mapping, connecting material from across your course, and planning answers.
- Try a screen reader for your revision notes so you can listen and learn.
- Try writing a Q and A, and use the screen reader to listen and test yourself.
- Be creative with your mind-maps – add pictures, doodles, acronyms, links – whatever it takes to aid your memory and make connections across material. Stick it on your wall!
- Make a mind-map collaboratively if revising with friends.

Annotation

- Try active note-making, rather than highlighting or copying out – add your thoughts, write why and how something is important, as well as what it connects to.
- This also makes it easier for you to recall your thought processes when you return to the material.

Peer Support

- In person, via social media, on your own - say it aloud!
- Try testing each other.
- Try teaching each other: if you know a topic really well you should be able to teach it! Try summarising the key issue, explaining complex terms, and take questions from your 'students' as a group activity. If you divide out the topics you can also cover more ground in one 'class' together.

Presentation Skills

- Try booking a [UniSpeaks workshop](#), or speaking to one of the [Student Engagement team](#), if you are feeling nervous about public speaking.

Practice Questions

- Do try writing practice questions or using mock papers, and practice giving answers under exam conditions.
- If your exam has an unseen element, you can't escape the uncertainty completely, but you can work to make sure you are as ready as possible for day itself to help ease some of the worry.