Exams: the countdown is on…

Briefings



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It is around a month to go until the CTA and ATT exam season begins. I remember from my days of studying that it can be a very stressful time.

If you are completing exam-style questions but find that you are running out of time, or that you have missed a number of points in the mark scheme, it can feel as though there is still a mountain to climb before you edge towards the magic 50%.

I wanted to share my top three strategies to help you in the final sprint towards exam day. There is still time to make a difference!

1. Mindset

Perhaps you have failed a previous paper or found this one particularly challenging. This can make it difficult to find the motivation to complete practice questions under timed conditions. Do not be too hard on yourself over what has happened in the past. Focus instead on learning from your experiences and putting together a plan so that you can do your best in your upcoming paper.

You will be more successful if you view making mistakes as a learning opportunity, rather than as confirmation of any previous ‘failure’.

2. Have a plan

As you will by now have a sense of which topics you find more challenging, ensure that you focus more on them during your revision sessions (rather than working through topics in ‘textbook’ order). Be sure to balance study sessions with topics you are more comfortable with. Mixing up topics in this way can help to strengthen your later recall of the material.

Make sure you continue to block out time for study sessions in your diary and treat them like client meetings. If you miss the odd one, do not beat yourself up but look at ways you can catch up.

The key is to be consistent with your studies and to persevere.

3. Downtime

Your plan should also include time for you to do activities you enjoy. For example, if you play a weekly game of football with friends, keep it going. If singing in a choir gives you a dopamine hit, then keep it up.

Doing activities you enjoy reduces stress, boosts your mood and improves focus. Taking some time out for yourself can therefore help you study more effectively. Balance is key, even in these last few weeks.

In the 24 hours before the exam, make sure you also take time to relax as much as possible (I know, easy to say). Take a brief look over your notes if it helps to calm any anxiety you have but the focus should be on eating, resting and sleeping well. Treat yourself. Bring on the October exams. You have got this!

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