## Studying for exams

## The pressure of the exam stimulates you to draw upon the strands of your study and to acknowledge where you need to put in more effort. A mind set for revision involves creativity, interactive study techniques, a high degree of motivation, time management, and being able to draw on your skills of selectivity, critical thinking and memory.

## Enhance your revision:

* Read past papers to become familiar with the format of the exam.
* Gather information and prepare notes on each module.
* Make a revision schedule that is both appropriate and realistic.
* Create revision aids for your own use or for use with a study group.
* Practice writing exam essay answers.
* Stay healthy- sleep, take breaks, eat well, exercise, hydrate
* Use online revision tools to provide a break from reading printed material.

Develop an on-going revision mentality

* Make your lecture notes clear, visual, colourful and memorable.
* Leave space in your notes to add new information later.
* Create flash cards of key information as you go along
* Use mnemonic devices to help remember
* Place Post-it notes with key facts around your home to jog your memory
* Review your notes at regular intervals

Manage your time

* Start early
* Develop a revision schedule
* Use spare time for revision with flash cards

Ask for help

* Join or assemble a study group
* Arrange revision sessions with friends
* Ask course tutors how exams differ from course assignments

Revise by ear

* Record yourself answering questions;
* Use a DVR, TextHelp Read and Write Gold or your mobile phone to record your work
* Play the recording over and over- listening to your own voice can help your memory

Use exam papers from previous years

* Examine which questions have been repeated
* Make an outline to answer past questions
* Discuss questions with others; work out a plan together
* Consider in advance what details are needed and what can be left out of an answer
* Draw mind maps to identify the information required to answer questions thoroughly

NUI Galway’s [Disability Support Service](http://www.nuigalway.ie/disability/) provide academic workshops on ‘Exam skills and Revision’ during the academic year. [Skills4Study](http://www.library.nuigalway.ie/media/jameshardimanlibrary/content/documents/support/Skills4Study%20Student%20Guide.pdf), part of Blackboard’s Learning Centre provides an online module on Exam skills that demonstrates how to prepare for exams with effective revision methods and strategies for answering different types of exam question, as well developing reflective skills so students can evaluate their performance in order to improve results.

## Practice exam essays

* **Read past papers.** Get to know the format of the exam papers. See: <https://www.mis.nuigalway.ie/regexam/paper_index_search_main_menu.asp>
* **Prepare the ‘likely’ topics, key themes or issues.** Identify these from your lecture or study guide notes, lecturers, tutors, past exam papers, etc. When studying, focus on key words and phrases that you should include.
* **Collect relevant information on the topics** including definitions, factual statements, evidence, examples, information from assigned readings, opinions, etc. Organize the information you have collected under theme headings.
* **Practice writing answers to questions you are likely to be asked.** Identify the main points you will want to make (if you are asked that particular question) and practice recalling them in the right sequence.

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