

Student Name: _____

Study Skills - 7

Examination Performance

Can you deliver what you know effectively?

Below are some tips offered by students who achieved their goals and got the results they wanted. For each item, indicate whether you have used this method/technique in past exams. If you do, mark the box on the left - indicating that this contributes to achieving your target goals. If not, mark the box on the right, indicating that this is moving you away from your study goals.

Read the Instructions! Check the instructions at the beginning of each test paper carefully. There may be a small change in the exam format from year to year.

Read questions carefully: Read each question carefully. Highlight or underline the key words and phrases.

Check for compulsory questions: Tick the questions that must be answered in each section. Then tick off the question(s) you are likely to answer (using a different colour or symbol).

Allocate time for each question: This should be done before the exam itself. The amount of time spent on each question will be determined by the percentage of the overall marks going for the question. For example, the time you allow will double if the marks awarded are double those of other questions. Allow at least five to ten minutes at the start of the test to read over the paper and ten minutes at the end to read your answers. It's important that you try to stay within the time you have allocated for each question.

Begin with your best: Begin your exam with the question you feel you can best answer. If you do this you will build confidence in your ability to tackle the remainder of the test.

Plan your answer: Jot down an outline of your answers by noting the main points before you begin to work on the answer proper. It is good to let the examiner see this work.

Avoid clutter: Remember to allow plenty of space between points and sections and label all your answers clearly. Do everything you can to make the job of the examiner easier.

Keep an eye on the time: If you run over the allotted time when dealing with a question it may be better to leave a space and continue to the next question. Above all, avoid the disaster of not having time to attempt all the required number of questions.

Don't waffle: There are simply no marks going for repeating the same points or ideas. Be as clear and concise as you can. This does not mean that you don't explain things fully and give examples especially when you are expected to elaborate.

Understand typical question formats: Know exactly what is expected from you in an exam when asked to Compare, Contrast, Define, Discuss, Explain, Trace, Summarise, Describe and Outline. Take special note of words such as including, and, or.

Just a small dose of post mortem's: When your exam is over don't get involved in detailed post mortem's, turn your focus to the next exam. If you feel stressed or worried at the way things went it's best to chat with a sympathetic adult, or someone who can listen and offer you a balanced view of your performance.

If you have time to spare re-read your work: Don't stop working on your paper before time is up. There are no extra marks awarded for being finished early. Your exam is designed to be undertaken within the time allocated. If you have time left after you read over your paper read over it a second time. Ideas may come to you even at this final stage.

Use notes: It could happen that you discover that you have done something wrong, left a question out or perhaps misread a question. If time is not on your side, lay the correct answer out in note form first. Then elaborate on the notes. Try not to panic.

Bring a drink! Bring a drink of water into the exam hall with you in order to avoid dehydration.

What actions can you now take to increase your study success?