

Before exams	During exams
<p>Quiet</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It may be helpful to have a quiet place to go before your exam ● You might want to consider walking around a natural environment too, as this is shown to calm the mind 	<p>Perspective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● If you feel overwhelmed during the exam, keep the exam in perspective ● You have done all that you can at this stage and try to keep in the moment of the exam, rather than trying to predict the end result
<p>Music</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● It can also be beneficial to listen to slow, calming music before entering the exam 	<p>Re-read the question</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Go back to the initial question and take a moment to re-read it slowly
<p>Avoid cramming information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid last-minute cramming of information - Give yourself time to maintain calmness before entering the exam 	<p>Helpful phrases</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have a phrase in mind that can support you, e.g. 'I can do this, I can remain calm and confident'
<p>A little bit of stress can help</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You are highly likely to feel nervous and the 'butterflies' feeling in your stomach before your enter an exam - This is to be expected ● A certain level of stress can help us to achieve well and shows that you care about the exam 	<p>Avoid comparing yourself to others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Don't worry about what others are doing around you - This can make you feel more stressed if you compare yourself to where others are in the paper ● If you need to look away from the paper for a moment, you could close your eyes and take a few deep breaths instead

<p>Sleep</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Get plenty of sleep the night before the exam 	<p>Visualisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Have an image that you can visualise if you become stressed - It could be what you will be doing after the exam is finished, or something that makes you feel really happy, or the main motivator for completing the exam
<p>Avoid certain food and drinks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Avoid drinking stimulant based drinks before the exam, e.g. energy drinks and coffee ● Avoid foods with high levels of sugar, e.g. sweets ● Great brain food and drink include, bananas, nuts, dried fruit and plenty of water 	<p>Seating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Be aware of how you are seated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Are you hunched over? ○ Are your hands clenched? ○ Are your legs moving up and down continuously? ● Consider where you are holding tension in your body <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Keep your feet flat on the floor ○ Relax your arms and hands ○ Sit a little further back in your chair if you can, rather than hunching over the desk
<p>Slow, deep breaths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take slow, deep breaths and imagine that you are breathing in warm, calming air and breathing out self-doubt (Practice this a number of times before the real exam) ● Create a steady rhythm to help you maintain calmness - Inhale for 5, exhale for 5 	<p>Practice mindfulness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● You can practice mindfulness exercises leading up to the exam to support better concentration and bring you back to the present moment - Examples... <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Notice how the pencil or pen feels in your hand - Smooth? Rough? Does it balance easily? ○ Think about your posture. How does the chair feel against your back? ○ Consider the sounds around you. What subtle sounds can you hear in the room? What sounds can you hear outside?

After your exams

- Treat yourself! This might be something you like doing, a nice meal or your favourite drink. Don't spend time dwelling on the exam paper - You can't change your answers, but you can get ready for your next exam, learning from all the experiences of your previous one.

Your calming checklist *(Feel free to adapt this for your preferences)*

- Calming music playlist
- Quiet place to go before the exam starts
- Brain food (and drink!) - Banana, nuts, fruit, water
- Image to visualise during the exam if feeling under pressure
- Helpful phrase - 'I can do this, I can remain calm and confident'
- Inhale for 5, exhale for 5