

SNAPREVISE



**THE EXTENSIVE
GUIDE TO
SMASHING YOUR
A-LEVEL MOCK
EXAMS**



Contents

1 Managing your revision time

Organising your weekly schedule to meet your predicted grades

2 Understanding different learning styles

A look at the three most common ways we learn

3 A look at the specification in action

How to structure your notes around a specification point

4 Tips from the SnapRevise Tutoring Team

Our A* Oxbridge tutors share their advice

5 Mastering Mock Exam Techniques

Pointers that will help you crack an exam paper

6 General tips for your mock exams

Steps to take on the day

7 Practising for Mock Exams

Four steps to replicating exam conditions at home

Managing your revision time

Organising your weekly schedule to meet your predicted grades

Breaking up your time effectively is key in understanding how much you can achieve with the time you have, especially when it comes to fitting in revision between your classes, exams and social activities.

The best way to do this is to have a defined revision calendar, which will allow you to track your progress effectively, as you will be able to see what you have covered already and what you have left. Knowing exactly where you are is key in staying organised and reducing your stress.

Weekly repeating schedules are a great way to plan out your time in the run-up to your mock exams, as this will allow you to develop a regular routine that you can use for all exams. If something comes up that clashes with your schedule, knowing this in advance will allow you to be more flexible in finding a new time to reassign those revision hours when adjusting your calendar.

	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	SUN
9 A M							
10 A M							
11 A M							
12 P M							
1 P M							
2 P M							
3 P M							
4 P M							
5 P M							
6 P M							
7 P M							
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Understanding different learning styles

A look at the three most common ways we learn

Different people prefer to learn in different ways, with three main styles of learning being the most common. These are visual, auditory and kinaesthetic.

Visual learners prefer to see and picture information when recalling it, auditory learners prefer to talk, listen and hear when recalling information and kinesthetic learners learn by doing, so touch, movement and practical tasks are the best way for them to learn.

If you have an idea of what style you might prefer, try to use the learning methods that will suit you.



Visual

- Create visual notes
- Design information posters
- Use colour to differentiate
- Stick post-it notes around



Auditory

- Look for podcasts and videos
- Record and listen back to notes
- Talk to and quiz yourself
- Create revision rhymes or songs



Kinaesthetic

- Visit museums
- Use revision cards
- Play pair up games with them
- Act out what you are learning

There are various different ways to revise, such as reading, note-taking, past papers, videos and online learning. It's important to rotate these different styles to engage different parts of the brain and to keep revision fresh and different.

A look at the specification in action

How to structure your notes around a specification point

Taking a look at the A-level AQA Biology specification, we can see the points required for a specific topic in the specification - in this instance, proteins.

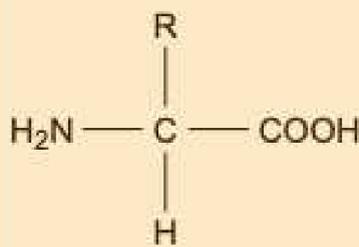
Below is an example of how you might make notes based off of the highlighted specification points for AQA 3.1.4 Proteins, ensuring that you have covered everything that you would need to know for the exam for this particular topic point.

3.1.4 Proteins

3.1.4.1 General properties of proteins

Content

Amino acids are the monomers from which proteins are made. The general structure of an amino acid as:



where NH_2 represents an amine group, COOH represents a carboxyl group and R represents a side chain. The twenty amino acids that are common in all organisms differ only in their side group.

A condensation reaction between two amino acids forms a peptide bond.

- Dipeptides are formed by the condensation of two amino acids.
- Polypeptides are formed by the condensation of many amino acids.

A functional protein may contain one or more polypeptides.

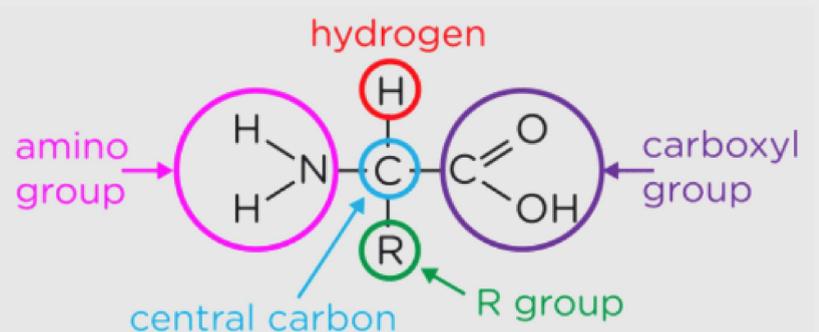
The role of hydrogen bonds, ionic bonds and disulfide bridges in the structure of proteins.

SAMPLE NOTES

Specification Reference: 3.1.4.1 General Properties of Proteins

Amino acids are the building blocks used to make proteins - they are monomers. All amino acids have the same basic structure:

- They have a central carbon (C) atom bonded to a carboxyl group (-COOH), an amino group (-NH₂), a hydrogen atom (-H), and an R group (-R)
- There are 20 naturally occurring amino acids that each have a different R group



Each amino acid has a different R group which can vary in size, polarity or charge. This gives every amino acid different properties

Tips from the SnapRevise Tutoring Team

Our A* Oxbridge tutors share their advice

"Don't study in bed.

Whilst it may seem comfy to study in your bed, it is an easy way to get distracted. Your brain associates your bed with relaxation, so when you try and study there, it is much more difficult to keep focused."

"Dump your information.

Before you go into an exam, get a piece of paper and write down all the key information you can remember about a topic. This also works well for important questions before a maths or science exam. The aim is to get you thinking about the content before you sit down to start the exam and calm your nerves slightly."

"Read before lessons.

Reading over your notes from the last lesson means that the content will be fresh in your mind as soon as the lesson starts. Doing this will make it much easier to cope with new information and also link them to the things that you have learnt previously."

"Don't make it pretty.

If you know that taking notes is a good revision method for you, then don't be afraid to do it. But know that your notes do not have to be perfect every time. Once you have your summaries or class notes to study from, any notes following can be scruffy, because their main aim is to cement them in your long term memory."

"Bite the bullet. When it comes to revision or doing your homework, start with the subject you enjoy the least. Once you get it out of the way you'll feel much more relaxed and may even be able to enjoy it. This also ensures that you don't end up leaving it until the last minute and getting even more stressed."

"Take your time. Everyone learns at different speeds, so don't panic if your peers seem to understand things much faster than you do. Take your time to go over the material and you'll soon reach the same level of understanding."

Mastering Mock Exam Techniques

Pointers that will help you crack your mock exam paper

The first thing to do to a question is to break it up and identify its context, command word and directions.

CONTEXT

is information in the question and identifies which part of the specification it is from.

COMMAND WORDS

are the instructions that tell you how you should write your answers.

DIRECTIONS

tell you what information you need to include in your answer to get full marks.

These will be key to structuring your answer, as question types are indicated by their command words. For example, in the question:

This question is about a laser pen.

Define the terms phase difference and coherence [2 marks]

Context is shown in green, command words are shown in red and directions are shown in blue.

Command words are key in how you structure your answers - these and the marks available are the two pieces of information that will indicate the type of question you are answering. When you know the question type and have an understanding of the description, you will be able to answer it effectively.

A few typical command words you might come across include:

Assess	Make an informed judgement
Calculate	Work out the value of something
Define	Specify meaning
Describe	Give an account of
Evaluate	Judge from available evidence
Explain	Give reasons
Name	Identify using a recognised technical term
Outline	Set out the main characteristics
Sketch	Draw approximately
State	Express in clear terms
Suggest	Present a possible case

General tips for your mock exams

Steps to take on the day

On top of your preparation for the kinds of questions you're going to face in your exams, it's also important to keep in mind a few other general tips to keep you ready and prepared to hit your targets.

Manage your time

It's very easy to get wrapped up and spend lots of time writing as much as possible. Try and avoid this - it's a waste of time, instead, think about how much time you have per mark. For example, if your exam is worth 78 marks and you have 2 hours, you should be aiming to spend 1.5 minutes on each mark available.

Reread the question

It sounds like common sense, but it's surprisingly easy to get wrapped up in the stress and pressure of an exam and glance over a question without properly taking it in. Make sure you understand exactly what the question is asking of you, and double check before you start planning and writing your answer.

Never leave early.

Even if you complete your exam at a good pace, use the rest of the time you have to make sure you're achieving all the marks possible. Go back over your answers, review them and make sure you've done as much as you can to get the highest grade.

Come prepared.

Make sure you've practised an exam at least once and bring everything you might need with you - be that enough pens and water to keep you going throughout the course of your exam.

A key place to find useful information in preparation for your exams will be the examiner comments from last year. These will often give an indication of what students found difficult about the previous year's exam and should give you an idea into the types of mistakes that you should avoid in your exam.

Practising for Mock Exams

Four steps to replicating exam conditions at home

Before taking a driving test, it's likely that you'll drive a few of the prospective routes with your instructor. This is the same principle as doing a past paper - what you're doing is familiarising yourself with the situation, so when you walk in on exam day, you'll be comfortable and ready for the conditions that you'll face during your test.

1. Pick one day and follow your prospective exam day routine.

Think of this as a rehearsal to the main event. Theatre actors would never go on stage without a full run through, so why not pick a day to do a run through of your own. Think about; what you will eat for dinner, for breakfast, your bedtime, when you'll wake up and when your exam will be. Play it out to see how you perform under these conditions.

2. If you have to, break the exam down into chunks.

If you don't have three straight hours in one day to do a full exam, why not take the questions from an exam and do them over a few days. Figure out exactly how much time you would split for each one in the exam, and just do one question in this time.

3. Set up a desk as if you were in an exam hall.

Try and put yourself in the mindset of an exam day by going through the motions of what you'll experience on the day. Find a suitable place, put your phone away at the beginning, set yourself a time limit and manage your time to stick to it. All this practise will mean that when it comes to exam day, it will feel familiar and therefore you will be more relaxed.

4. Get someone to invigilate you.

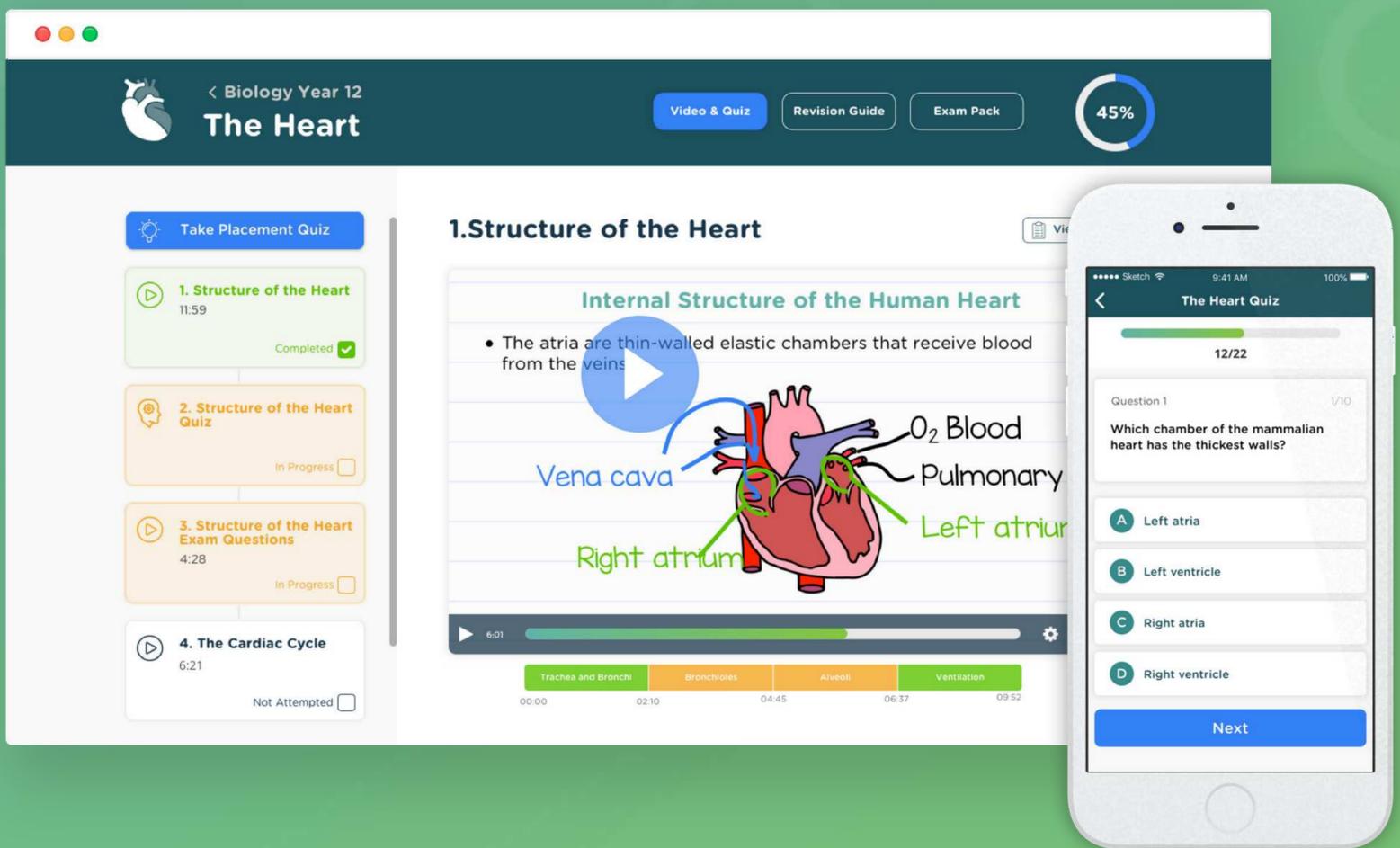
If you struggle to set yourself these conditions, why not ask a parent, teacher or friend to set them for you? This will force you to replicate the conditions without any possibility for distractions to creep in.



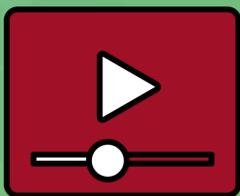


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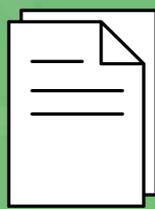
Achieve Better Grades with Less Stress



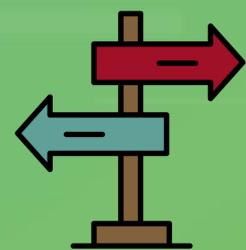
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