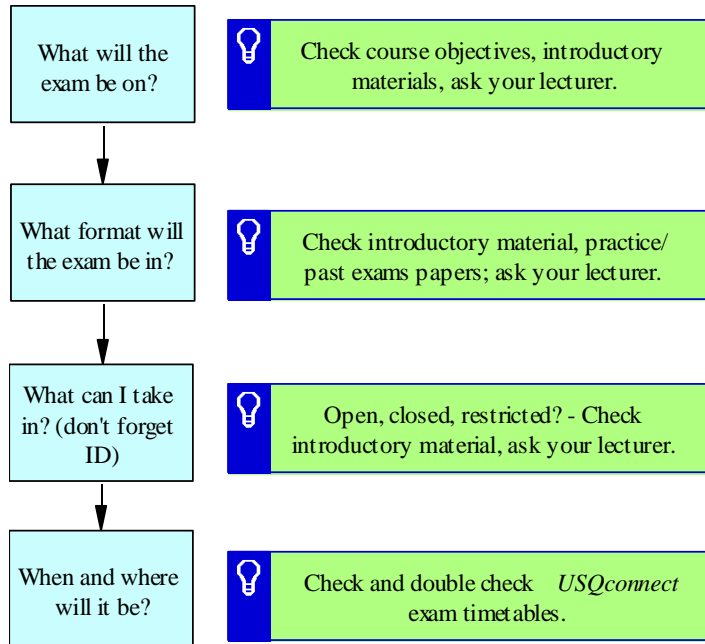


## PREPARING FOR EXAMS

### WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW



### Exam preparation starts from day 1

Exams often cover a whole semester's work. Your semester timetable, weekly plans and summaries are the basis of effective and efficient exam preparation.

As you go through the semester, keep your notes and summaries up to date. Use these in your weekly revision times.

### THREE WEEKS BEFORE THE EXAM

#### Develop an exam revision timetable

- Plan to revise topics at least twice before the exam.
- Work out which days will be used to cover each module.
- Some modules will require more work than others, so allow time for this.
- Work in short sessions - half to three quarters of an hour, covering one or more concepts at a session.
- Take a regular break during study sessions of five to ten minutes.
- After 2-3 hours of study take a longer break of half to 1 hour.

#### Develop useful study techniques

- Study actively, for example, highlight text, make summaries, do activities or redefine concepts in your own words.
- Work in a STUDY GROUP from time to time. This can save time, help you to clarify material and provide motivation and self-confidence.
- Make up SUMMARY CARDS for easy reference and quick revision, particularly useful during the week of the exam or if you have an 'Open' exam.

#### Plan for the exam

- Ask yourself, 'how long is the exam?', 'what is each question worth?' - have a way to work out how much time to spend on each question during the exam.
- Do time trials on past exam papers.
- If you get very anxious, talk with a Student Services counsellor <http://www.usq.edu.au/student-services/>
- Check what type of exam it is (e.g. multiple choice, short answer questions, essay style questions, etc.).
- Check carefully what you can bring into the exam (e.g. Is it an open, restricted or closed exam?)

**THINK POSITIVELY – "IF I PUT IN THE WORK, I CAN SUCCEED!"**

## THE NIGHT BEFORE THE EXAM

- You general revision will now be complete, glance through your summaries for a quick refresh.
- Gather the materials needed for the exam - ID card, pens, ruler, calculator etc.
- Check transport arrangements and parking, and **check (twice!) where and when the exam is.**
- Use relaxation techniques and try to have adequate sleep.

## THE DAY OF THE EXAM

- Eat a good breakfast.
- Arrive 20-30 minutes early.
- Glance through summaries.
- Think positively, and try to relax.

## DURING THE EXAM

### Perusal time

- Read instructions carefully.
- Decide what questions/parts are compulsory and where you can make choices.
- Calculate the time available for each question.
- Plan the order in which you will complete questions. Put questions you know vaguely at the bottom of the list and ones you know well at the start.
- Begin to analyse the questions – identify key words, tasks.
- Jot down ideas/graphs/formulae for answers on the paper (if this is permitted).

### Working time

- Work the questions in the order decided in perusal time. Doing the easiest first can build your confidence.
- Keep an eye on the time and stick to the time for each question planned during perusal.
- If you find that one question is taking longer than planned then move to the next question.
- Start each question on a new page and label clearly.
- Write legibly and allow plenty of space. Double-spacing is sometimes requested by examiners.
- PLAN short written answers and essays in your exam book.
- What if you get a mental block? – Use the relaxation techniques prepared earlier - relax, breathe deeply, talk positively to yourself. If necessary leave that question and plan to return to it later.
- Stop after each question/set of questions and take a short break - stretch or have a drink of water.
- Check your answers if you have time. Don't leave early, you can't come back!
- Out of time? Quickly write notes to finish the question.

**After the exam?** Take some time to relax, especially if you have another exam the next day.

## RESOURCES

- Other QUICK TIPS FOR STUDENTS <http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/tips.htm>
- Online resources  
<http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/alsonline/assessment/exam/>
- Attend a Learning Skills workshop  
<http://www.usq.edu.au/learningcentre/workshops>
- Talk with a tutor at The Learning Centre ([tlc@usq.edu.au](mailto:tlc@usq.edu.au))