

# STUDY GUIDELINES

---

## Practice and End of Year NCEA Examinations

1. ALL examinations will require thorough revision, no matter what the subject or your level of past performance.
2. Examinations are a search of your ability, commitment, preparation and performance on the day. They are, therefore, a Life Skill, as well as a path to higher qualifications and attainment. Give them respect for what they are.
3. The best way to prepare for examinations is to make your preparation part of your normal practice, not a special event. Develop academic routines of making study notes at the end of each topic; review work regularly; research or seek help with material that you do not understand; aim for quality in your work rather than just completing it.
4. Senior students have school examinations before externals. These examinations should reveal genuine misunderstandings or gaps in knowledge - not a lack of preparation. Try to treat the school examinations as you would your finals.
5. All students will need to write study notes, ie make summary notes. Your teachers will give you directions on how to write these. It is not only knowledge and facts that require study notes. Even skills / practical tasks that are examined require summary notes of the steps and procedures required, eg how to draw a graph; how to interpret a cartoon; how to conduct an experiment and so on.
6. Revise your study notes from earlier tests and / or examinations if they are of good quality.
7. Before you start writing study notes, make sure your class notes are completed and up to date. Familiarise yourself with your course outlines and make sure you know which work fits which headings.
8. Pay particular attention to work which you did not understand in class, or test questions where you scored poorly.
9. Make up a revision timetable, spreading your study around your other commitments, (eg sport). Weekends will have to be included. Calculate how much time you will need to thoroughly cover each topic and sub-topic for each subject. Calculate how much time you need from today!
10. For effective revision, study in 20 minute blocks with a 5 minute break between each.
11. Your studying room must be free from distractions and interruptions. Studying while watching TV or with the radio or stereo on is not that productive. You are training your mind to focus on a specific task.
12. Reinforcement is the key to learning your material. You need to thoroughly revise your work at least three times to remember it. This means reviewing work you have already covered at an earlier time.
13. Practice what you study under time pressure, ie test yourself, write practice essays, draw practice graphs, do revision exercises and so on. Generally, the more you do the best.
14. Study your hardest subjects first.
15. Spend an equal amount of time on each subject.
16. Be aware that your examinations are spread over a period of time. This needs to be considered in planning your revision.
17. In the last few days before your exams:
  - a. make sure you know when and where your exams are on
  - b. make sure you have adequate equipment
  - c. revising what you have already learnt is better than cramming new material on the day before your exam
  - d. stick to your normal bedtime and eating routines
  - e. everyone gets nervous to some degree, there would be something to worry about if you didn't! Don't worry.
  - f. stop studying 30-40 minutes before bed and do something relating. Do not take anything to help you sleep.