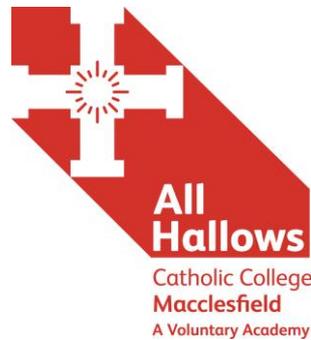


**All Hallows Catholic College  
Macclesfield**

*“Aspire not to have more but to be more”*



**Revision Booklet**

**Year 11**

**2017-18**

**The advice in this booklet is based on research and the personal experience of many people who have been successful in public examinations.**

“Learning *can* be fun, but it also requires determination, resilience and stamina.”

“Thorough preparation for public examinations takes organisation, a degree of self-sacrifice and lots of time. There are no short cuts.”

“Success in public examinations is a gateway to opportunity.”





## Why Revise?

- Revision literally means "*seeing again*" or "*revisiting*".
- Think about what your GCSEs demand from you.
- Can you remember what you did in your first Science, MFL, English or ICT lesson in year 9?
- No?
- Well you will be expected to in the exam!!
- The only way to be sure that you **know** and (just as importantly) **understand** what you have studied in each of your subjects is to go back over the work you have done again. In other words to *revise*.

## Where to Revise

You need somewhere:

- **Quiet**
- **Well lit but not too bright**
- **With a comfortable chair**
- **With a surface to work at – a table or desk**
- **Where you won't be distracted**

Many young people don't like to hear this next bit because it isn't fun. **BUT.....**

- **You can't revise with the telly on.** Research shows that watching television whilst trying to revise drastically reduces the amount that is learned.
- **You can't revise for long periods listening to music** either. Research shows that for a short time, having music on helps learning. Sadly, the positive effect of music quickly disappears and it becomes a distraction, and the amount learned is reduced. The feeling that music helps learning is an illusion – it simply helps to pass the time.

(It may well be worth having some (gentle) music on for ten minutes to get you started, and then switching it off. Then again why bother, save the music for your leisure time – you'll enjoy it all the more!)

## What you will need

- A full set of exercise books
- Textbooks/revision guides
- Pens, pencils, ruler
- Highlighter pen
- Calculator
- Lots of scrap paper
- Revision lists from your teachers
- Post-it notes

## **How to Revise**

- There are a range of tried and tested revision techniques which work for everyone.
- Some students ignore the conventional wisdom about revision and assume that they know better. "It doesn't work for me" - is an attitude to be avoided.
- Effective revision methods sometimes seem boring and too time consuming for some young people. In reality, there is no magic formula and thorough preparation for public examinations takes organisation, determination, a degree of self-sacrifice and lots of time. There are no short cuts.
- Different subjects and even different skills within subjects require different revision methods (which is why you need to be familiar with, and use, a range of methods).
- Revision should be fully planned and broken down into manageable time periods, with breaks in between and leisure time planned into the schedule.
- You should not be revising for more than a few hours a day or for longer than 1 hour without a break.

## **Revision Methods**

### **• "Reading over"**

This method applies to all subjects, but is particularly important when ideas need to be understood.

- It is absolutely essential to read through your notes and/or standard texts. Reading over a topic several times will help you to remember facts, sequence knowledge and deepen understanding.

- To fully understand a difficult idea, concept, principle or rule, you will have to read through it fully several times slowly with meaning.

Reading over should always be followed up by some consolidation such as past exam questions, note taking or read/cover/write.

### **• "Note-taking"**

This applies to all subjects.

- Re-write your notes in shortened form picking out the ***key words or phrases***.

- Why not use a highlighter pen to emphasise key points?

- Why not use post-it notes to signify key sections or pages? You could write pointers on them as well.

- Summarise your knowledge and understanding in flow charts/mind maps/spider diagrams or as bullet points. Use mnemonics (memory rhymes) to help you remember important facts.

- Some students have a box of index cards with all of their revision summary notes on them which they carry around and can be referenced at any time.

- Why not produce a set of poster sized summary sheets for your bedroom wall?

This is usually one of the first steps in effective revision after you have produced your revision timetables.

- **“Read/cover/write”**

Subjects such as Languages, Science, Geography and History expect candidates to answer many examination questions by **recalling facts from memory**. This skill is also required to a lesser extent in many other subjects as well.

- The problem is, how do you commit all of these facts to **memory** so that you can recall them faultlessly and achieve full marks in the exams for this type of question?

- **The answer is by learning things “as a fact”/“by heart”/“by rote”**

- This means being able to write things out **exactly** from memory.

The method:

- Memorise some vocabulary, a fact, a short section of text, a diagram or a formula.
- Cover it up and using a blank piece of paper, try to write it out exactly from memory.
- This will take several attempts – usually three – before you can write it out faultlessly.
- Repeat in small sections until you can recall all of the knowledge required.

This is one of the most powerful revision methods and one of the best because for recall type questions it is foolproof.

- **“Past paper questions”**

This applies to all subjects.

- This method needs no explanation, but make sure you have an official mark scheme and/or have your answers checked by your teacher.

Past papers are best done under exam conditions and also left until later on in revision when they can be used as a means of checking and validating what you have learned.

- **Revising “skills”**

Some subjects such as Art, Music, Maths, Drama, DT and IT have a strong practical skills base. However, all subjects have some skills which need to be acquired.

- It is essential that skills are practised.

- This may be done by practising model solutions to certain types of problems eg in Maths.

- The skill may be in the form of a performance which needs to be practised eg in Drama or Music.

- Some subjects have techniques which must be learned eg in Art, DT or IT.

Not all subjects have a strong practical skills base and it is important that your revision method is appropriate to the demands of the subject or the topic. Your teachers will be able to advise you as to the most appropriate method.

## • Using ICT

There is now a wide range of computer based resources which include commercial software and on line learning packages which can be used to support all subjects.

- BBC Bitesize.
- Mymaths.
- Why not customise your revision programme on your own pc?
- The school's computer rooms are open every lunchtime and after school.
- Many useful resources can be found on the internet by web search.
- Ask your subject teachers if there are any subject specific resources available.

ICT is not an alternative for other forms of revision. It should be used to support learning ***along with*** other revision methods.

### **Things to avoid in revision**

- Not preparing a revision timetable.
- Not having any leisure time.
- Not having all of your materials to hand.
- Just reading through your notes and doing nothing else.
- Just answering questions and doing nothing else. If you don't know the answers, you won't learn anything!
- Using only one revision method. Remember, different subjects, different topics, different learning styles.
- Carrying on as normal. You will have to change your habits for the next few months for maximum success.
- Doing nothing!

### **Leisure**

- Getting the right balance between recreation and work is very important particularly during a revision period.
- Leisure time helps to relieve stress, maintain motivation and provides rest periods. It is essential to include enough (but not too much!) leisure time in your revision schedule.
- Getting the balance right is easy. It's not very exciting, but the simple answer is to include blocks of time in your revision timetable dedicated to leisure.
- The key is sticking to your timetable. This is where discipline and self sacrifice are required. Allowing yourself extra leisure time instead of revising is unfortunately a recipe for underachievement.

## Revision Timetables.

### Term

Time	Day						
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9-11am							
11am-1pm							
1-3pm							
3-5pm							
5-7pm							
7-9pm							

### Holiday/Study Leave

Time	Day						
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
9-11am							
11am-1pm							
1-3pm							
3-5pm							
5-7pm							
7-9pm							





## **What's in it for me?**

- 3 months of studying, self discipline, self-sacrifice, a complete change to your normal routines, effort, frustrations. What's it all for?

- Well, that's just the down side.

- What about a sense of satisfaction, achievement, learning new skills, expanding your knowledge base, improving your thinking skills, study skills, understanding and developing a greater appreciation and sense of wonder at the world around you?

- A period of intense study like this approached correctly will also improve your mental powers permanently. Yes – you will be smarter after your GCSEs than before!

- Then there's the fact that by the end of June it's all over and you can do whatever you want!

- The real reason for GCSEs though, is that they are a gateway to opportunity. Without good GCSEs, many pathways in life will not be open to you – jobs, careers, college and university courses – are all influenced by the grades you achieve at GCSE.

- Your GCSE grades will be important to you for the rest of your working life. In twenty/thirty years time, any job application or interview you have will be influenced by the GCSE grades you achieve in just a few weeks.

- Most students don't get a second chance either. Sometimes students re-sit a small number of GCSEs, but most people never re-take them. The grades achieved in a few weeks will be with you permanently. These exams are not a rehearsal, they are the real thing!

- In the light of this, proper preparation for these examinations is essential – the guidance for this is all in this booklet.

## **Final Thoughts**

- Remember your spiritual health. Saying a few prayers is good for us!

- Eat well and healthily – the food you eat really does affect mental function!

- Eat fruit and drink plenty of water but go easy on the salt, sugar and fat. Eat plenty of carbohydrates such as pasta, rice, potatoes and bread. Fish, chicken and vegetables are also very good for the brain.

- Avoid coffee and other caffeine stimulants like Red Bull. Regulating your sleeping pattern by going to bed early and getting up early is a much better way to stay alert – early to bed and early to rise really does make you **healthy, wealthy and wise!**

- Sounds like an athlete's preparation for a major competition? Well in many ways the comparison is a good one – particularly in light of the importance to you of good GCSE grades.

- You are on a journey – all journeys need adequate preparation, the right equipment and being in the right physical shape. A journey may even need a guide – and you've got seventy of those right here in school – your teachers!

- Use your teachers as a source of advice, guidance and support. Ask plenty of questions and don't be reluctant to ask for help.

- Finally, all of the staff at All Hallows Catholic College wish you the very best of luck. Our thoughts and prayers really are with you as you aim to do the very best that you can.

## **Notes**

## **Prayer**

Dear Lord,

We ask you to bless us at this time. We ask that you look kindly upon us and keep us in faith. We pray that through the Holy Spirit we have the stamina and determination to work to the best of our ability.

We ask Our Lady, Mary, the mother of Our Lord Jesus Christ, to bless all of our efforts and to grant us peace.

We ask this through Our Lord Jesus Christ,

Amen