



Wallace Hall Academy

"Together we grow, learn and achieve"

Qualifications Scotland Exams 2026

This booklet contains a range of information that you may find useful.

1. Exam Information for Learners
2. Key Points for the Day of Exams
3. Study Opportunities:
 - Silent Study Classroom
 - Study Seminars
4. Supporting Learners with Effective Revision Strategies
5. Supporting Young People with Stress Management Strategies
6. Template of a Study Planner

Please also read the 'Your Exams 2026' booklet issued by Qualifications Scotland which has been emailed to you.

1. Exam Information for Learners

Please refer to your personal exam timetable so that you know the exact date and time of each exam you are sitting and where the exam is taking place.

By observing the following key points you will ensure that your exams go smoothly and that you have the chance to do as well as you can. You should also refer to the '**Your Exams 2026**' booklet. This contains very important information about your exams.

2. Key Points for the Day of Exams

When you have an exam you should:

- Take your Scottish Candidate Number (SCN). You will be issued a card you can write your SCN on to take into your exams.
- Wear school uniform.
- Bring some water to drink in a clear bottle.
- Make sure you have some pens (black or blue), a pencil if necessary for rough work, and any other equipment you may require: for example a calculator, ruler or a dictionary.
- Arrive in school in good time. If you sleep in or have a problem getting to school on time, contact the school immediately.*
- Look at the exam notice board outside the Bailey Hall each day you are in school in case we have added any additional important information.
- **Aim to be at your exam room 10 minutes before the start of the exam.**
- Wait to be invited into the exam room by the invigilator.
- Leave any bags and personal possessions in your locker or a safe place. You cannot take your bag into any exam room.
- **Remember you must not take a mobile phone or any electronic device (except a calculator in certain exams) with you into an exam.**
- You are not allowed to bring a watch into your exams but clocks will be provided in all exam rooms.
- Quietly find your seat in the exam room and settle down quickly and compose yourself for your exam. You will be given a seat number for every exam. This information will be on your exam timetable and also on the exam notice board.
- Listen carefully to all instructions the invigilators will give you.
- Check you have the correct exam paper.
- Only begin the exam when you are told to do so.
- Read the instructions and questions carefully.
- Work carefully through the exam paper remembering the advice your teacher has given you.
- Remember you have not finished until you see the words, 'End of Question Paper'.
- Read over your answers making sure you have done exactly as the questions ask and that your answers make sense.
- Expect to remain in the exam room until the invigilator gives you permission to leave.

*If you sleep in, miss the bus or have any problems getting to school in time for any exam, contact the school office immediately. When you then arrive in school, report immediately to the school office. There is no guarantee that you will be allowed to sit the exam, although we will do our best to make sure you can.

If you are unwell on the day of any exam, contact the school immediately. You will need to provide a medical certificate. Dr Fulton will liaise with you and your parents or carers about your eligibility in applying for Exceptional Circumstances.

3. Study Opportunities

- **The Qualifications Scotland exam diet starts on Thursday 23rd April and ends on Thursday 28th May.**
- **Study leave starts on Thursday 23rd April and runs to Friday 29th May inclusive.**
- **The new timetable starts on Monday 1st June.**

You can study at home or you may want to study in school.

- **The school will be closed on Monday 4th May and Friday 29th May.**
- Intervals and the lunch break will be at normal times.
- During the study leave period you are expected to show consideration to learners sitting exams and all other members of the school community. Remember learners in S1-3 will be busy working.
- During this period teachers will be busy developing new courses but they will also be happy to help you with revision whenever possible. Please do not disturb teachers, however, when they are teaching classes.

If you are in school to study, we expect you to follow the guidelines below.

- Sign in at the office when you arrive in school and sign out if you leave before the end of the school day.
- Do not hang around in corridors or in the Street area.
- Wear school uniform and behave appropriately at all times.

Silent Study Classroom (Room A0008)

- Room A0008 will be reserved for silent study for each period during study leave.
- Room A0008 has been set aside for this purpose but the classroom may change on certain days - check exam notice boards and the folder when you sign in each day.
- Sign in to the Silent Study Classroom. You must stay for the entire period.
- The Silent Study Classroom will be supervised by a member of teaching staff.
- The use of mobile phones is not allowed in Room A0008.

Silent Study - Outdoors

- Weather permitting, learners can use the tables outside for silent study. They are not permitted to use the library, canteen or social area.

Study Seminars

- Teachers are providing a range of subject specific Study Seminars. A list of these is contained later in this booklet.

Returning Books and Other Resources

- Once you have completed your exams in a subject and before the end of exam leave, you must return any text books and other resources to your class teacher.

Leavers' Forms

- If you are leaving school, after your final exam please get a leavers form from the school office and ensure that you have returned your locker key.

Study Leave FAQ

What is Study Leave?

Study Leave is time that pupils are given to prepare for their exams. They are not required to attend their normal timetabled classes and should instead use the time to revise for their upcoming SQA exams. This revision can be completed at home or in school. Pupils are only required to attend school on the days of their exams. However, there will be an organised programme of study classes (see next couple of pages).

When is Study Leave?

Study Leave starts on Thursday 23rd April and will finish on Friday 29th May inclusive. Pupils will move forward into their new year group on Monday 1st June. Any pupils leaving school can hand in their Leavers Form on the day of their final exam. Leavers forms can be collected from the Office.

Who gets Study Leave?

All pupils who are studying more than 3 exams are entitled to Study Leave. Those that are not doing this number of exams have been given the opportunity to pursue opportunities around employability. Mrs Hunter will be in touch if you are involved.

Where can I study during Study Leave?

Every day of Study Leave will have a 'Study Room' available that will be supervised by members of teaching staff. This will be in room A0008 because it has desks and computers available. Pupils can use this room as little or as often as they wish.

Will there be study classes during study leave?

Yes, there will be a programme of study classes run by teachers for most courses. A timetable of these can be found on the next couple of pages.

What transport is available during study leave?

School buses run as normal during Study Leave and the Service buses from Dumfries (236 and 246) will run at the usual times also. Pupils are permitted to enter and exit the school at other times throughout the day but would be required to arrange their own transport.

Will I be able to attend for part days on Study Leave?

Yes, pupils can arrive at school when they wish and they leave when they wish, although they will be required to sign in and sign out so we can keep track of who is in the building. A folder will be at the Office to allow them to do this.

Do I need to wear school uniform for Exams and Study Classes during Study Leave?

Yes, pupils should wear school uniform any time they are coming to school. This includes attending the study room, study classes or for exams. Pupils who do not attend in uniform will be asked to go home.

Study Seminars available during Study Leave

Subject	Level(s)	Date	Period(s)	Teacher	Room Number
Music	H & AH	23/04/26	1-2	Miss Girvan	A1018
Business Management	N5	23/04/26	1-2	Miss Young	A2024
Engineering Science	N5	23/04/26	1-4	Mr Lees	A0034
Geography	N5	23/04/26	1-4	Mr Miller	A2014
French	N5, H & AH	23/04/26	3-4	Ms Linh	A2019
Business Management	H	23/04/26	5-7	Miss Young	A2024
English	N5	23/04/26	6-7	Mr Pape	A1016
English	N5	23/04/26	6-7	Mrs Robertson	A1014
English	N5	23/04/26	6-7	Miss Brown	A1015
English	N5	23/04/26	6-7	Mr McClair	A1017
French	N5, H & AH	24/04/26	1-2	Ms Linh	A2019
English	H	24/04/26	1-2	Mr McClair	A1017
Biology	H	24/04/26	1-3	Mrs Weir	A2011
Biology	AH	24/04/26	1-3	Mrs Simpson	A2006
English	H	24/04/26	4-5	Mr Pape	A1016
Biology	N5	24/04/26	4-7	Mrs Weir	A2011
Music	N5	24/04/26	6-7	Miss Girvan	A1018
English	H	24/04/26	6-7	Miss Brown	A1015
Biology	N5	27/04/26	1-2	Mrs Belford	A2010
English	H	27/04/26	1-2	Ms Carson	A1013
English	N5	27/04/26	4-5	Mr Pape	A1016
English	N5	27/04/26	4-5	Mrs Robertson	A1014
Biology	H	27/04/26	5-7	Mrs Simpson	A2006
English	AH	27/04/26	6-7	Mr Pape	A1016
Biology	N5	28/04/26	1-3	Mrs Weir	A2011
Drama	AH	28/04/26	1-5	Mrs Griffin	B1038
Admin & IT	N5 & H	28/04/26	1-7	Miss Park	A2023
Drama	H	28/04/26	6-7	Mrs Griffin	B1038
French	N5, H & AH	29/04/26	3	Ms Linh	A2019
English	AH	29/04/26	4-5	Ms Carson	A1013
English	H	29/04/26	6-7	Mr Pape	A1016
French	H	30/04/26	3-4	Ms Linh	A2019
French	N5 & AH	01/05/26	1-2	Ms Linh	A2019
Admin & IT	N5	01/05/26	3-5	Miss Park	A2023
Drama	N5	01/05/26	4-5	Mrs Griffin	B1038
Admin & IT	H	01/05/26	6-7	Miss Park	A2023
History	N5	05/05/26	1-3	Miss Brain	A1008
Maths	H	05/05/26	1-4	Mrs Scott	A0013
Maths	N5 & AH	05/05/26	1-7	Mr Blair	A2016
Design & Manufacture	N5 & H	05/05/26	6-7	Mr McKenna	A0024
Design & Manufacture	N5 & H	06/05/26	1-3	Mr Lees	A0034
Maths	H	06/05/26	2-5	Mr Bell	A0006
Graphics	N5	06/05/26	6-7	Mr Corrigan	A0018
Graphics	N5	07/05/26	1-2	Mr Corrigan	A0018
Maths	N5	07/05/26	1-5	Mr Bell	A0006
Apps Maths	H	07/05/26	1-5	Mr Watt	A0008
Chemistry	AH	08/05/26	1-2	Mrs Mack	A2013
History	H	08/05/26	3-7	Mr Gray	A1012

Chemistry	H	11/05/26	1-3	Mrs Hunter	A2017
Chemistry	N5	11/05/26	1-3	Mrs Mack	A2013
Mod Studs	H	11/05/26	6-7	Ms Stuart	A1007
Design & Manufacture	N5 & H	11/05/26	4-7	Mr McKenna	A0024
History	N5	12/05/26	1-3	Miss Brain	A1008
Chemistry	N5	12/05/26	1-3	Mrs Hunter	A2017
Design & Manufacture	N5 & H	12/05/26	1-4	Mr Lees	A0034
History	H	12/05/26	1-5	Mr Gray	A1012
Apps Maths	N5	12/05/26	1-5	Mr Watt	A0007
History	N5	13/05/26	1-2	Miss Brain	A1008
Design & Manufacture	N5 & H	13/05/26	1-3	Mr Lees	A0034
PE	H	13/05/26	1-5	Mr Steele	PE Classroom
Mod Studs	H	13/05/26	4-5	Ms Stuart	A1007
Apps Maths	N5	14/05/26	1-5	Mrs Marshall	A0009
Apps Maths	H	14/05/26	1-5	Mr Watt	A0008
Mod Studs	N5	14/05/26	3-4	Ms Stuart	A1007
Mod Studs	N5	15/05/26	1-2	Ms Stuart	A1007
PE	H	15/05/26	3-7	Mr Steele	PE Classroom
Mod Studs	N5	18/05/26	1-2	Ms Stuart	A1007
PE	H	18/05/26	1-3	Mr Steele	PE Classroom
Mod Studs	H	18/05/26	6-7	Ms Stuart	A1007
Physics	AH	19/05/26	3-5	Dr Fulton	A2007
Physics	H	19/05/26	6-7	Dr Fulton	A2007
Physics	N5	20/05/26	1-4	Mr Evans	A2005
Art	H	20/05/26	1-4	Ms Black	A1030
Physics	H	20/05/26	1-7	Dr Fulton	A2007
Physics	N5	21/05/26	1-3	Mr Evans	A2005
Art	N5	21/05/26	1-4	Ms Black	A1030
Practical Cookery	N5	27/05/26	3-4	Miss Tofield	A0014

4. Supporting Learners with Effective Study Strategies

What are effective study strategies?

It is important to understand what study strategies are most effective and least effective in helping you to prepare for your exams. Techniques such as reading, rereading, highlighting and rewriting of notes is relatively ineffective. Although they are common approaches which are usually favoured, they don't require you to think about what you are supposed to be learning. They can help us become more familiar with content but being familiar with something doesn't mean that you have understood it, or that you have learned it. Active study requires thinking. Building in retrieval practice (including self-quizzing) and spacing into your revision is key.



Read, Cover, Write, Check, Correct, Repeat

Rather than reading, rereading and copying notes passively, you should try to read, cover, write, check, correct, and repeat. Take the information you want to learn and read it, cover it, write it out from memory, check what you have written against the statement, correct any mistakes you have made (different colour), and then repeat this until you don't make a mistake.

Flash Cards

Flash cards are small note cards that can be used to test your knowledge of something. You would use your notes to create a question on one side of the card, and write the answer on the other side:

Name four Aesthetic aspects	Colour Shape Texture Style
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Quiz yourself or you can ask a parent or friend to quiz you. While it is the act of testing that will be of most benefit to your learning, there is also some value in creating your own cards, rather than having them made for you. Turning statements into questions forces you to think about them, so the creation of flash cards is also a form of active study.

Practising Test Questions

Practising test questions, such as multiple-choice or short response, ensure that you have to think about particular content. For this to have more value:

- You could be directed to the best problems to practise by a teacher. These may be ones you have previously practised or can access online (Qualifications Scotland Past Papers).
- Have access to the marking scheme, so that you can check your learning.

Creating Test Questions

As well as practising answering questions, you should be encouraged to spend time creating your own. An hour spent creating test questions will often result in more learning than an hour spent practising them. Useful types of questions for you to create include short response or fill-in-the-blank. For example, you might create short response questions for yourself, such as:

- What are the two different types of plastics categories?
- The material property _____ is its ability to withstand either tensile, compressive or _____ force without permanently breaking or deforming?

Elaboration Questions

Elaboration is concerned with you exploring your own thinking. This might involve you trying to explain or describe something to yourself or someone else, without reference to your notes, and then checking the accuracy against notes afterwards.

For example, if you have been learning about fossil fuels, you might elaborate on this by writing down everything you know about it or try to tell a friend the same. Elaboration might also involve you querying material as you are studying it, asking yourself questions such as:

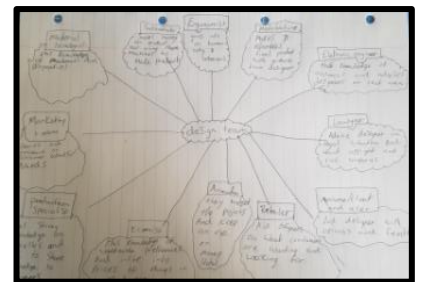
- Why is that?
- If *this* is the case, then is *this* also the case?
- Is *this* an example of *that*?

You would then take steps to find answers to these questions, perhaps by referring to your notes or other resources.

Summarising

Summarising is concerned with condensing content into key points, such as:

- Graphic organisers
- Sketch notes



Graphic organisers offer a means to organise information in a non-linear way. Examples include mind maps, Venn diagrams and flowcharts. As

well as helping you to summarise key points, they can help you to make connections between facts and concepts. Sketch notes summarise information using text and illustrations. Typically, they take a less structured approach than graphic organisers. **Most value will come with creating these from memory.**

Overview

These techniques are only effective under the right conditions. Important factors that can influence this are study space and environment along with getting the correct amount of sleep. This has proven to give us more capacity and increase our cognitive load (i.e. the more information we are able to process).

We need to use retrieval practices to bring the information from long term memory to short term memory to help us learn it. Some revision activities don't help with this process.

Active study requires you **to think and retrieve**. Carrying out retrieval revision activities over a spaced length of time will help with your ability to remember what you have learned in your exam.

5. Supporting Young People with Stress Management Strategies

Stress is a natural part of preparing for Examinations but there are strategies pupils can use to help to manage and/or alleviate stress. Avoidance is a common strategy employed by us all when stressed and it may work in the short term but in reality it doesn't solve a problem in the long term. The following strategies give this process a bit of structure which may be helpful.

Just choosing not to think about something is not always going to work, instead try to reframe the way in which you think about it. A useful method for that is given below:

1. We should **prepare** to face the stress.

‘What do I have to do here?’

‘Can I come up with a plan?’

‘This could be hard. How can I best cope?’

2. We should keep thinking our way through the stress as we are **facing up** to it.

‘Keep thinking – don't jump to conclusions’

‘Expect the stress to be there – live with it’

‘Take it one step at a time’

3. We should **review** how it went so we can learn from how we coped (or didn't cope).

‘How did I do?’

‘Did the plan work?’

‘Can it be better next time?’

Often the usual response to stress is ‘I'll just not think about it’. Although most of us would think this was the right thing to do, it isn't. You should do the exact opposite, i.e. think about it – **prepare**, then **face up** then **review**.

It is much the same with actions. A lot of people say, ‘I'll do that (or go there) once I feel more confident’. This sounds right. But, again, it is wrong. We've got to turn this on its head – until you try to do it, your confidence will never get a chance to grow.

Everyone knows what to do if you fall off a horse – you get straight back on. Because if you leave it to the next day, your chances of success have dropped. Same with stress – the sooner you face your fears, the quicker your self-confidence and self-esteem will get a chance to grow.

The following is five-step face your fears practice that pupils could do or parents could use to discuss, stressful situations such as exams. You will see that it involves preparing, facing up and reviewing (from breaking stress up).

1) What is the fear to face? Clearly state the problem. – e.g. exams

2) What do I think will happen when I face my fear? – More confidence entering the exam

3) Work out a plan: Preparing – See teacher to get all learning outcomes, study timetable, seek feedback, ask if there are things you don't understand, practise past papers under timed conditions, mark and review. Give yourself an opportunity to switch off the night before the exam, get a good night's sleep.

4) Face up –do it – Turn up and complete the exam

5) Reviewing – Think about what you did? Could you have done anything more to increase your chances of success? Make changes for the next exam(s).

Mindfulness

Mindfulness is the idea of being aware of what's going on around you and being present. It encourages us to forget the 'what ifs' and 'if only' thoughts and focus more on what is happening in the here and now. Many people use mindfulness as a form of relaxation.

There are some great apps for mindfulness such as 'Calm' and 'Headspace'. These could be particularly useful for people who need to calm their mind before bed.

Encourage pupils to rationalise thoughts

This is a simple technique we can encourage pupils to do which is to realise that thoughts are exactly that, just thoughts. An example could be a thought such as '*I'm going to fail my English exam*'. If pupils can begin to realise that our day is filled with thoughts, not all of them helpful then they can begin to rationalise the useful thoughts from the less-useful thoughts.

Have a structure to days

This is particularly useful for when pupils are on exam leave, especially if there is no parent there to supervise! If days are planned and have a clear structure then pupils will gain more of a sense of achievement by sticking to that structure.

For pupils that struggle with stress and anxiety generally sometimes 'dead time' in a day can be the time when thoughts can be most damaging. If there is a clear structure of things to do then it can allow them to achieve more in the day and that can breed confidence and self-esteem. A blank study plan is included at the end of this booklet.

Set achievable goals

Following on from having a structure is to set achievable goals. These goals could be very personal and should be specific to what it is pupils find stressful. For example, if a pupil is stressed about their Physics exam they could set themselves a goal of attending study support every week until exam leave, attending Easter School and completing a certain amount of **meaningful** revision each week. Again, achieving small goals like this can breed confidence and reduce anxiousness prior to exams.

Take regular exercise

Exercise helps any form of stress but in particular depression. Exercise can be used as a way to get back on top.

Aim for 30 minutes five days a week. This can be broken up into 15 minutes, twice a day. Moderate is as good as hard exercise. 'Moderate' means your heart rate should be up but you are not so out of puff that you couldn't talk easily (or sing a song). 'Hard' exercise would be when you are out of puff. Fine to do this if you want but moderate works as well as hard.

Try to do a form of exercise that you enjoy as you will be more likely to keep it up. A brisk walk is as good as anything. Remember, you must get your heart rate up to get any benefit. Don't expect quick results.

Reduce Caffeine Intake

Try to cut down on caffeine if you feel it is a problem. Wean rather than cut out all of a sudden. Caffeine can be found in most fizzy drinks, energy drinks, e.g. Monster, and tablets (ProPlus), tea, coffee, chocolate, some medications, e.g. headache tablets. See www.caffeineinformer.com for more.

Switch to decaf tea and coffee, pure fruit juice; try to avoid energy drinks and tablets (ask yourself why you think you need them); try to avoid pain-killers if possible (but ask your doctor if these are prescribed).

Relaxation – can take many forms

There are relaxation techniques which can be very successful such as belly breathing and progressive relaxation. There are lots of helpful videos on Youtube about this. Alternatively, pupils need to find whatever it is that relaxes their mind and use these when feeling stressed and/or before going to bed. A lot of pupils may think using phones/social media relaxes them but the reality is that it can have the opposite effect.

Relaxation is a very individual thing and parents could encourage pupils to think carefully about what really allows them to switch off and relax.

Avoid alcohol and drugs

Alcohol and drugs can induce panic. Some people are more susceptible to this than others and we have made sure pupils are aware of the dangers of using these substances. This is something that could be backed up by parents.

Get a good night's sleep

Get the room fresh - At some point in the day, open the windows to let fresh air in.

Get the room at the right temperature - The room should not be too hot or too cold. Around 64°F or 18°C is best. Too hot makes us more restless, gives us less REM sleep and tends to wake us up more. Too cold makes it harder to get over and maybe gives us more nightmares.

Your bed - If your bed is past its best, and if you can afford it, think about a new one. Make sure your pillows are right for you. Don't have a duvet that makes you too hot.

Light - We are made to sleep in the dark. So make sure you have thick curtains or blackout blinds. An eye-mask works fine. Try to avoid bright screens, e.g. on your tablet, while reading in bed. Due to the light it gives off, switch your phone off or leave it in another room during the night.

Noise - If you can't stop the noise outside the house, use earplugs. You can also get an FM radio, tune it off the station so you get 'white noise'. This is good for swallowing up other noises.

Exercise - Exercise can be helpful but don't do this in the couple of hours before going to bed – early evening is perfect. A brisk 30 minute walk is fine or even two, 15 minute walks.

Food - Avoid big meals in the few hours before bedtime. Your digestive system wakes up and starts to work hard to deal with the food just when you want your body to be calming down. A slice of toast or a biscuit before bed should be fine. Avoid fatty or spicy food. Avoid cheese, nuts and bacon as these tend to wake us up. Bread and pasta, though, can be good for making us drowsy.

Drink - Try to cut down on how much liquids you drink in the evening. This may stop you from waking to go to the toilet.

Caffeine - This wakes up our bodies. So, cut back on tea, coffee, energy and fizzy drinks, some painkillers and headache tablets. Try to cut it out as much as you can from late afternoon onwards.

Milky drinks - The old wives were right! Ovaltine, Horlicks or hot milk might help you get over to sleep. Take these instead of tea or coffee at bedtime.

Body temperature - Just as I suggested that you need to go for the 'Goldilocks rule' for your bedroom, the same goes for you. So don't have a hot bath or shower straight before bed. And try not to be too cold before jumping into bed.

Worry time - Set a time in the evening to do your worrying – say 8pm. Do this well before your bedtime. So, if you start to worry in the morning, stop yourself and 'save' the worry until your Worry Time. Come 8pm, stop what you are doing and worry about all the things you have stored up over the day. Chances are you will have forgotten them. Or, even if you do try to worry, chances are you'll find it very hard to feel the worry.

Arguments - Try not to go to bed on an argument. So, work hard to make up before you try to sleep.

Relaxation - Use one of your relaxation tracks before going to, or when you are in, bed. Once you get good at it, you should be able to run the exercise through your head without having to listen to the track.

Bedtime routine - Do you have a bedtime routine? A transition between day and night? Give your body and mind a chance to build up a good routine. Go to bed at more or less the same time. Get up at the same time. Avoid long lies. Build up a routine at night that tells your body that you are getting ready for bed.

Relax before bed - Think of ways to slow yourself down in the hour before going to bed. Decide what you want to do – read? listen to music? chat? watch TV? And do it. If you have just come in from a night out or if you are studying, make sure you give yourself a space in which to switch off and relax.

Tech detox - See if you can avoid all technology in the hour before bed. Don't check texts, Facebook, Snapchat, etc while in bed. If you are charging your phone, make sure you can't see the blue light as this can disrupt your sleep.

Don't compare yourself to peers

A well-documented issue for teenagers is comparing themselves to peers or other people on social media etc. We have tried to encourage pupils to focus very much on themselves, block out the other distractions and avoid comparing themselves to peers as human nature usually means we feel worse after this process. This could be reinforced from home.

6. Blank template of a Study Planner

My revision schedule							
	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
8:00-9:00							
9:00-10:00							
10:00-11:00							
11:00-12:00							
12:00-13:00							
13:00-14:00							
14:00-15:00							
15:00-16:00							
16:00-17:00							
17:00-18:00							
18:00-19:00							
19:00-20:00							
20:00-21:00							