

Students learning from home

Effective study strategies



Strategy 1: Review your notes and the learning goals for a topic

List the learning goal/s

Make a list of the learning goals set by your teacher in a single document with two columns:

Learning goal/s	Mastery

Assess your mastery of the learning goal/s

A self-reflection tool such as a traffic light system can work well. Use coloured ticks or shading to indicate if each goal is:

- red — I have not achieved this goal
- amber — I have partially reached this goal
- green — I am confident I have mastered what was required.

The completed tool will provide you with vital information that will focus revision activities. You can ask your teacher for support in the areas indicated red and amber.

If learning goals were not set for the topic use the unit objectives in the syllabus as a guide for checking your learning.

Resources

- Your notes
- Syllabus objectives for the topic, available from the QCAA website:
www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects.



Strategy 2: Review the subject matter

When reviewing subject matter that is required to successfully complete internal assessment (IA) and external assessment (EA) the following sequence of strategies can assist.

- Work with one piece of information at a time.
- Read or view information provided by your teacher.
- Write down everything you can remember about each chunk of information.
- Ask who, what, when, where, why and how questions about the information and try to answer them.
- Construct a summary of all the information learnt.
- Draw a picture or symbol that best represents the information for you and justify your choice.

Share your symbol, summary and the answers to your five W and how questions with your study group, parents or teacher via email, chat etc.

Resources

- Cornell notes — a useful notetaking structure
- Class notes
- Readings and documents provided by your teacher
- Syllabus subject matter and unit objectives.



Strategy 3: Ask the right questions

Ask and answer the who, what, when, where, why and how questions mentioned in Strategy 2. When asked about new information, this is called elaborative interrogation and strengthens learning and retention.



Strategy 4: Use spaced practice

When organising a study schedule, blocking off time to study key concepts or subject matter over multiple study sessions is more effective than cramming, e.g. read information, practise a skill or problem then read or practice the same information again one week later.

This spaced study strengthens your brain's capacity to store information over long periods of time.



Strategy 5: Align study with external assessment questions

When revising, identify a question in the sample EA that aligns to the topic and the learning goals set by your teacher or the unit objectives.

Identify key elements

Using different coloured markers, identify the key elements in the question:

- subject matter
- cognition, signalled by the cognitive verb which may not always be explicit
- procedure.

Consider:

- do you know what the question is asking you to do?
- can you perform the cognition? (see the syllabus glossary for an explanation)
- how would you go about answering the question?

Then:

- discuss your initial thinking with your online study group and your teacher
- answer the sample question in the EA, noting the queries that arise as you answer

- share your questions with your teacher or study group
 - What came up for others while they were working the question?
 - Can your questions be answered?
- obtain feedback from your teacher.

Resources

- Sample EA
- Syllabus glossary
- Practice techniques
- Sample annotated assessment items

These are available on the QCAA website: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/senior-syllabus-resource-search.



Strategy 6: Interleave your practice

An effective study technique is to switch between ideas or problems in a subject rather than study one type of problem or idea for a prolonged period. This is called interleaved practice.

The idea is to take things that are related but not similar and study those ideas in varying orders in a block of time. You may initially feel your accuracy or speed are reduced during study but they will be strengthened over time.



Strategy 7: Strengthen writing techniques for assessment

Use the sample assessments for the unit of study to develop your writing techniques for assessment.

- Attempt the sample assessment.
- Use the sample annotated response to self-reflect on the quality of your response before teacher feedback.

Resources

Sample assessment resources are available on the QCAA website: www.qcaa.qld.edu.au/senior/senior-subjects/senior-syllabus-resource-search.



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