



DEALING WITH EXAM STRESS

It's important to recognise that 'stress' is a natural human response that prompts us to address challenges in our lives. Stress can actually be really positive as it encourages our body to release adrenaline which helps us become more alert in these situations. Exam stress can begin well before the exam itself. Below are some tips for each stage of the examination process.

BEFORE THE EXAM

- Create a checklist, make sure that you have all the revision guides and additional resources you need for each subject.
- Create a revision timetable and ensure that you include 'wellbeing time' for yourself.
- Create a revision space, it's best if this isn't in your room because you want your bedroom to be your sanctuary where you can switch off.
- Prepare all your equipment the night before the exam, this means that you won't be rushing around in the morning and will have the time to have a nutritious breakfast.
- If you feel like you're struggling talk to somebody. Whether that be a friend, parent or carer or a member of staff at school. We are all there to support you on this journey.

THE DAY OF THE EXAM

- Believe in yourself. If you experience a negative thought try and replace it with a positive one.
- Take a couple of key cue cards with you to school, having too much to focus on can cause you to become overwhelmed. Look over these before the exam to help trigger your memories of this content.
- If you know that you normally require additional paper ask for this when the exam begins, that way you don't need to stop your flow of thought.
- Break down the question, this gives you time to think through the processes it needs to answer the question.
- If you're feeling overwhelmed, stop and breathe. Try 'box breathing' by breathing through your nose as you slowly count to four in your head and exhale for another count of four, repeat 3-4 times.

AFTER THE EXAM

- Reward yourself, you've worked hard. Do something you enjoy.
- Try not to discuss the exam with your peers. This isn't helpful for you or your peers.
- If you are feeling upset give yourself a brief moment to process the disappointment and then focus on the steps you can take to improve moving forward.
- Remember exam success doesn't define you as person. Employers don't just look at grades they also want to know about your transferable skills.

