Preparing for exams

ANU Academic Skills
ANU Counselling Centre
Before
Preparation is the key
Find out the ANU rules

- Where and when are exams held?
- What if I’m sick?
- What if I need special assistance?
- [www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams](http://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams)

- Prepare for online exams by consulting the Proctorio FAQs:
  - [https://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams/proctorio-faqs](https://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams/proctorio-faqs)
Find out all you can about your exams

Consult your Course Outlines, Wattle sites, and Convenors to learn:

• What type of exam?
• What type of questions?
• Online or in person?
• How long?
• What’s it worth?
Semester planning

anu.edu.au/academicskills
Weekly notes
- Lecture notes
- Tutorial exercises
- Readings
- Assessments

Topic summary sheet
- Terms
- Themes
- Theories
- Theorists

Course summary sheet
- Systematic, schematic overview
- Retrieval system to work backwards
Summarising and note-taking...
Cornell note-taking system

**Cue column:** for comments/definition/s/connections/items for follow-up etc

**Notes section:** Add in notes where the slides aren’t clear. Underline, asterisk, circle

**Summary section:** What was the key message/theme of the lecture?
Self Care

The Healthy Mind Platter

- Sleep Time
- Physical Time
- Focus Time
- Time-In
- Downtime
- Playtime
- Connecting Time

The Healthy Mind Platter for Optimal Brain Matter

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Closer to the exam
Create an exam study schedule

anu.edu.au/academicskills
What is a successful revision activity you have used in the past?
Some revision techniques

• Revisit your notes from the semester
• Create summary sheets to consolidate your notes and your learning
• Library website – limited number of past exam papers:
  · http://anulib.anu.edu.au/collections/past-exam-papers
• Course textbook practice questions
• Create your own questions and quizzes
  · https://quizlet.com/
• Form peer study groups to quiz and support each other’s learning
Make an exam plan

Based on what you know about the exam:

- Allocate approximate time for each section/question
- Consider your plan of attack for each question type
- Allow reading and planning time
## Sample plan for 3 hour exam

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>question type</th>
<th>value</th>
<th>total time</th>
<th>approx. time per question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>30 multiple choice</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>1½ mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 short answer</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>50 mins</td>
<td>5 mins</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 essay</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>65 mins</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time to review answers</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>20 mins</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Be flexible with your plan – in case of nasty surprises!
What approaches have you used to complete exams in the past?
ANU Counselling Talking Tips and Mental Health Resources

Getting help at ANU

Counselling website
http://www.anu.edu.au/counsel

Exam anxiety – information

Managing exam anxiety – podcast
https://soundcloud.com/user-273047072/managing-exam-anxiety/s-1y2U5

These resources will teach you how to recognise useful anxiety and how to "wrangle" the unhelpful; enhancing your optimal performance during exams.

There are also general anxiety management tips and strategies explored that may be of help during exam situations.
What not to do!

• Answer: All of the above
What to do!

• Answer every question
• Ensure every answer is on point
• Use all the time allocated
Read carefully and stick to the question

• Sample short answer question (Archaeology):

• You are interested in excavating a shell midden in South Australia. Who might you need to consult before you could implement such a task. Why?
Using your time

Be strategic and use your time effectively:

• Which order will you answer the questions in?
• How will you deal with questions you don’t know?
During the exam

- The **three pass** method
  - Which answers do you know? – 1\textsuperscript{st} pass
  - Which do you think you *might* know? – 2\textsuperscript{nd} pass
  - Which are you completely unsure of? – 3\textsuperscript{rd} pass

- Unlock information as you progress!
- If you run out of time, make notes for any incomplete answers

From: https://www.amazon.com/Safety-Last-Criterion-Collection-Blu-ray/dp/B00BX49C3S
However ...

- Some online exams will not enable you to move freely back and forth through the exam. Consequently:
  - Check the format/setup of the exam with your course convener
  - If this type of exam, be prepared to work within these limitations
  - Be strategic with your time management: give difficult questions as much time as feasible
Tips for sitting online exams

• For guidelines on sitting online exams, consult the Proctorio FAQs: https://www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams/proctorio-faqs

• Do much of what we’ve already discussed, e.g. keep to time, use all the time available, answer concisely and on point

• In addition:
  • Create an optimal work space
    • Comfortable, well-lit, free from distractions, reliable internet
  • Disable notifications on your computer/phone and close other programs
  • Use note paper to brainstorm, jot down thoughts and ideas, and keep a record of unanswered questions
After
Reflection

• How useful were your notes?
• Did you use the best revision strategy?
• Was your exam plan successful?
• What was your worst experience and what did you learn from that?
Celebrate!

Student tips and strategies
Questions?
ANU Counselling

➢ Free Counselling Sessions
➢ No referral required
➢ Confidential
➢ Professional
➢ Next Day Appointments – every week day
➢ Group programs
➢ Web resources

To make an appointment:
• T: 02 6178 0455
• Level 3, Health and Wellbeing Building 156, Kambri – next to Club Lime
• Opening hours – please check our webpage
• General enquires - E: counselling.centre@anu.edu.au

• http://www.anu.edu.au/students/contacts/counselling-centre
Groups:
Everyday Mindfulness (this is a 4 week course)
Working Well with Perfectionism
Achieving Your Goals
Stress and Anxiety Group

More information or registration visit:

ANU Wellbeing and Support Line – 24 hour support

Phone (voice calls only): 1300 050 327
SMS Text message service: 0488 884 170
ANU Academic Skills
Helping you to achieve academic success!

Peer Writers
- Ask us a quick question
- 10-15 min drop-ins
- Face-to-face or via Zoom
- During semester, Mon-Fri 11am to 1pm

Writing Coaches
- Check you're on the right track
- 30 min booked appointments
- Face-to-face or via Zoom
- Written feedback also offered
- During semester, Mon - Fri 10am to 4pm

Learning Advisers
- Excel in your research writing
- 45 min booked appointments
- Face-to-face or via Zoom
- Written feedback also offered
- Throughout the year, Mon - Fri 10am to 5pm
LET’S SPEAK ENGLISH!
Join fun conversation groups, make new friends and meet local students!
All ANU students welcome!

Weeks 1-12
Mon, Wed & Fri 1-2pm on Zoom
Tues & Thurs 1-2pm on campus
Marie Reay Room 5.02

TO JOIN ZOOM SESSIONS:
• In Wattle, enrol in the ‘Academic Skills appointments’ site
• Go to the Let’s Speak English section
• At the time, use the Zoom link

"Let’s Speak English has reinforced my communication ability and developed my fluency in English speaking."

anu.edu.au/english