Preparing for exams

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

• Where are exams held?
• How do I find out when they are on?
• What can I take in?
• What if I’m sick?
• What if I need special assistance?

www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams
Find out all you can about your exams

- What type of exam?
- What type of questions?
- How long?
- What’s it worth?

www.anu.edu.au/students/program-administration/assessments-exams
Semester planning: Break down your tasks

anu.edu.au/academicskills
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
Exam study schedule

![Exam study schedule image]

anu.edu.au/academicskills
Revision technique

Exam type
What is a successful revision activity you have used in the past?
Practicing

- Library website – limited number of past exam papers:  
- Course textbook practice questions
- Library textbooks
- Create your own  
  • [https://quizlet.com/](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
- Order to answer
- 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>
My first reaction when I see the question paper

Be flexible with your plan – in case of nasty surprises!
What approaches have you used to complete exams in the past?
Managing Exam Anxiety
ANU Counselling Talking Tips and Mental Health Resources

www.anu.edu.au/counsel

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.
During
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
During the exam

• 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
There’s a twist ...
Tips for sitting online tests

• 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
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?
THE FEELING WHEN YOU HAVE FINISHED ALL YOUR EXAMS
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

ANU Counselling

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 Crisis Support Line – after hours support

Phone (voice calls only): 1300 050 327
SMS Text message service: 0488 884 170
ACADEMIC SKILLS
WRITING CENTRE

We're here for you throughout your degree.

PEER WRITERS
10-15 minute drop ins

WRITING COACHES
30 minute booked appointments

LEARNING ADVISERS
45 minute booked appointments

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