



Revision and exam technique

Adapted from 'How to pass exams' in Burns & Sinfield:
Essential Study Skills: the complete guide to success @ university



What are exams?

No – they are designed to test your knowledge, not your memory!

Or...where you show the links between that lesson

A form of torture developed by the staff?

That piece of coursework and ALL those books you were supposed to read!

Exam myths ...

1



- Exams are just for people with good memories.....
- You can improve your memory
- You can apply what you have learned
- Look at past papers to prepare - and practice timing yourself!

Exam myths...

2



- Exams are designed to catch you out! They will just make me feel like a fool!
- Because exams are trying to get you to apply your knowledge in new situations, it can feel like this
 - Do Not give up! There are lots of things to help
 - TIP: look at past exam papers

And ...

3

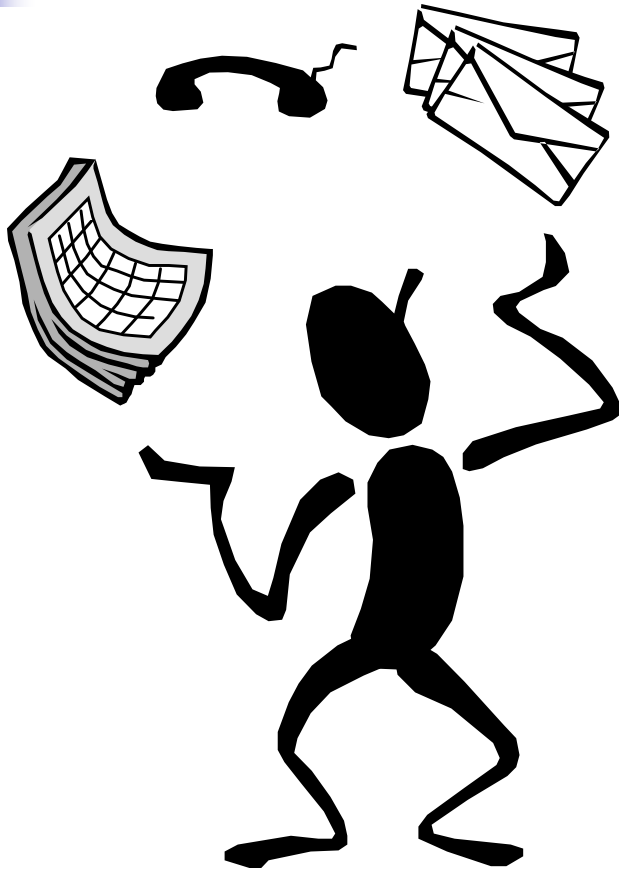
- It's all right if you can write really fast...
- In reality, examiners are looking for quality, not quantity
- Examiners don't want you to write all the things you know about a topic - they want you to answer the question by applying your knowledge





4

is....



How can you learn twelve weeks work in two weeks?

- Contrary to popular belief, revision doesn't start just before exams - that's when people can panic!
- Learn by thinking about, using and remembering what we learned over a whole course.....

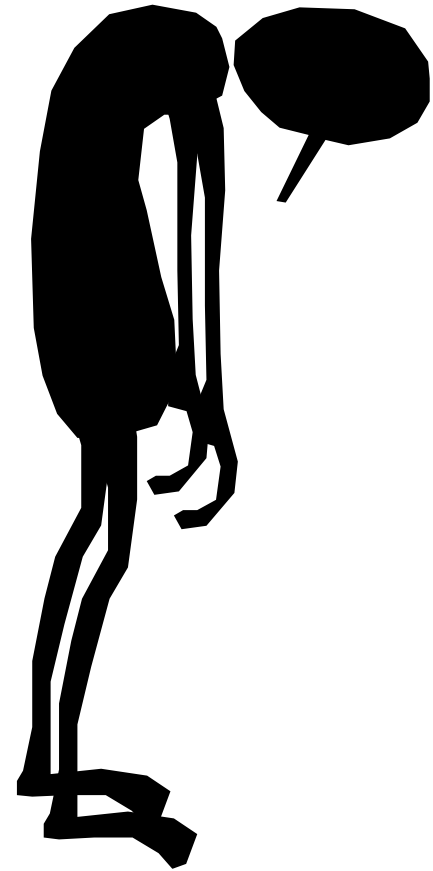


And finally, myth ...

5

If I fail then the whole thing will have been a waste of time.....

- Nobody likes to fail an exam, and nothing here can take the sting away...but you can learn from mistakes you make in the exam, correct them and pass next time!





Do you have a good memory

Usually – people think, NO!

But – there is a difference between
short- and long- term memory...

Students need to build long term
memories



Short & long term memory

Short:

- SMALL: 5-9 pieces of information
- Brief stay (little persistence)
- Immediate input – it goes in or not
- Immediate access – it's there or not

- NOT useful for students ...



Short & long term memory

Long:

- HUGE! Infinite number of memories
- Persistent – memories last & last
- Input is relatively slow – it takes time to build memories
- Access – depends on input – how you put it in is how you get it out ... SO:

Remember... Primary school

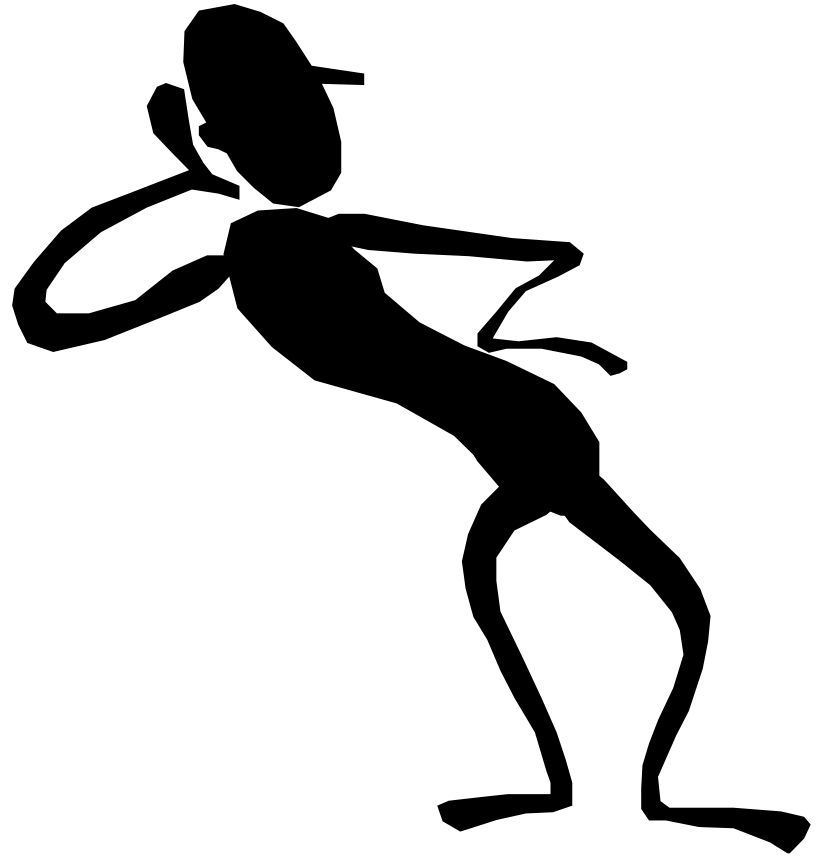
- How did you remember then?





What type of memory do you have?

- **Visual** - reduce a topic to a key word pattern with colour & cartoons
- **Aural** - reduce the key words onto your own tape and learn (singing along if you must...)
- **"Feel"** based memory - make learning maps, move around as you recite or act out key points





Strange but true...

Use Buzan's revision cycle

- After a study session, reduce your notes to key words (10 mins)
- A day later write out those key words from memory, refer to the actual notes and fill in the gaps (2 mins)
- A week later, write the notes out from memory & plug gaps again (2mins)
- A month later repeat this (2mins)
- Six months later repeat again (2 mins)

Use it or lose it



So- how to pass exams....

SQP4

Survey
Question
Predict
Plan
Prepare
And
Practice!



Which means...

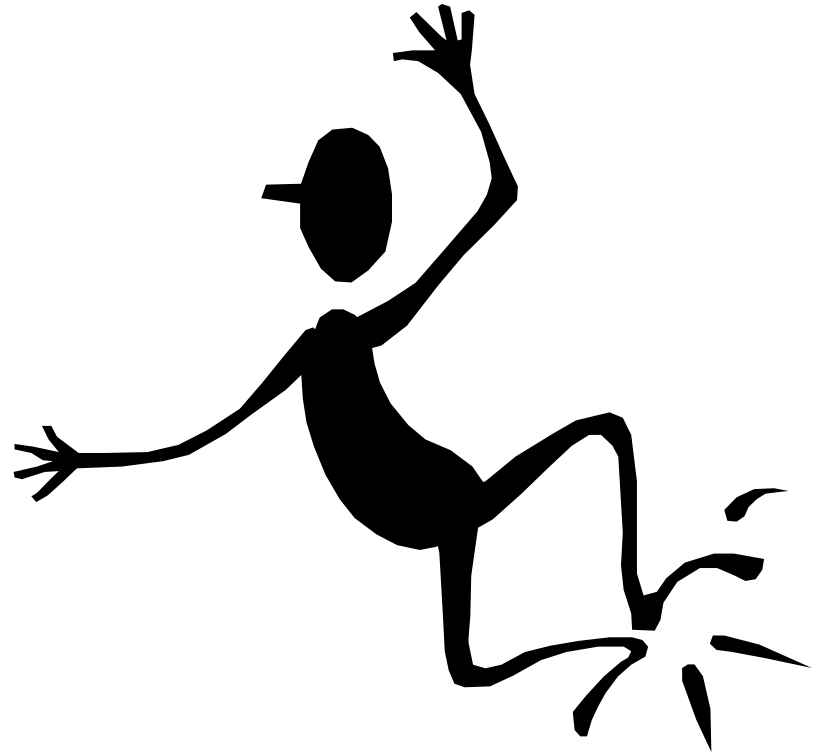
- Survey: past papers - know exam format, length, question style, topics -c.f. module aims & LO
- Question: what do I need to do and learn to pass this course (well!)
- Predict: topics that I will answer questions upon
- Plan: revision strategy & materials - make sure you see it, hear it, say it & do it
- Prepare: subject pattern notes; cue cards; mnemonics; revision games & tapes
- Practise: timed brainstorming & timed writing

Tips: *Test yourself and your friends; think of it like a driving test..*

And...think smart - be positive

Fear is normal - it does not mean give up and go home!

- I can handle it
- I am prepared
- I am looking forward to my exams
- I am responsible for my learning....





And....

Good Luck