

Education Scotland –Parentzone - Supporting Study

All information below is from the Education Scotland website, which can be accessed via the web address below. It is better to access it this way, so that you click on all of the links.

<https://education.gov.scot/parentzone/learning-at-home/Supporting%20study>

Preparing for exams

It is important that children and young people are supported at home and school to prepare them well for internal assessments in school and external exams.

The type of support required may depend upon the course assessment. Assessments may be carried out using one or two of the following methods:

- assignment
- case study
- practical activity
- performance
- portfolio
- project / research investigation
- question paper/test

Regular attendance throughout the year will help to ensure that your child or young person keeps up with course work and homework. If they do fall behind, through illness perhaps, you should speak to the school about any support which can help them catch up.

Talking to your child or young person to reassure and encourage them and taking an appropriate level of interest in what they are doing will help them get through what can be a stressful time and will help them to do their best.

Managing their time

The number of competing priorities on a child or young person's time often makes it difficult for them to decide where to start and what to do next.

Preparing for assessments and exams is often something that some children or young people only begin to think about in the last few weeks (and sometimes only days) before the event.

Encourage your child or young person to start revising in good time to avoid cramming and panic.

Help your child or young person to plan a realistic timetable of study for each subject. Their school may have given them a revision planner which can be used / adapted to plan their own time. Subject teachers will give students information on when internal assessments will take place.

Getting organised

- Talk to your child or young person and help them decide on a fixed area at home where they can study with the least amount of distractions. Make sure that they have everything they need eg pens, pencils, paper, notebooks.
- Ensure that snacks and water are available to prevent any unnecessary distractions and make sure the study area is comfortable and well lit.
- Speak to other members of the family, particularly younger children, about respecting this study area and as far as possible ask them to try to avoid interrupting.
- If it is difficult to study at home perhaps your child or young person could make use of the local library or ask your school if they can help.
- Encourage your child or young person to get their notes in order for each subject before starting. Having notes organised into topic areas for each subject may be helpful.
- Check the dates of each exam and keep a record of them somewhere you can see them easily. Schools will provide pupils with an exam timetable detailing the subjects being presented. You can access the full [exam timetable](#) on the SQA website. Pupils can also use the SQA [Personal Timetable Builder](#) facility to create their own timetable.

Remember: Sometimes an exam is on a public holiday. The exam will definitely take place on that day and there will be no opportunity to sit it on another day. Schools and colleges are allowed to change the start times of exams slightly, so you should double-check the times of examinations with your child or young person's school / college. Courses will typically also have a second assessment element e.g. an assignment or a practical activity, depending on the subject being studied (or some courses may not have an exam element at all). These additional assessments may not take place during the official SQA timetable period. Your child or young person's school will be able to give you more details on what this involves and the timing of any assessment.

Tips to encourage studying

- Exam times can be stressful so encourage your child or young person to take breaks. Hour long revision sessions with short regular breaks of 10 minutes can be effective for children and young people.
- They may prefer to complete each task and then build in a break rather than stick to definite time slots. It is the quality of studying which is important.
- Some children or young people can focus better in the morning while others prefer the afternoon or early evening. Encouraging them to study at their preferred time may be more beneficial.
- Ask your child or young person how you can best support them with studying. They may find it useful for you to read through revision notes with them. Alternatively, asking them what they have learned in their revision may be helpful.

Keeping well

- Encourage your child or young person to get plenty of sleep. This is particularly important the night before an exam as it can help them perform better.
- Encourage your child or young person to eat well. On the morning of an exam encourage them to have a healthy breakfast, or lunch if the exam is in the afternoon.
- Help your child or young person to avoid any unnecessary anxiety or panic by making sure they are in plenty of time for each exam and have everything they need for it eg pens, pencils.
- Encourage exercise.

Useful websites

Revision guides

- [Study guides: SQA Study Guides](#) are designed to help children and young people prepare for their exams no matter what subject they are studying.
- [BBC Bitesize](#): Revision guide: Resources and information to support school work and homework.
- [Pointers for Parents and Pupils - Supporting Learning and Revision](#) - Revision tips and essential information from the National Parent Forum of Scotland.

Past papers and marking instructions

- [Past question papers](#): Download SQA National 5, Higher and Advanced Higher past papers and marking instructions.

Exam dates

- [SQA Examination Timetable and Personal Timetable Builder](#): The Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) NQ Examination Timetable with information on the online and mobile personal timetable builders.

Additional support needs/disabilities

- Children or young people who have additional support needs or a disability can get assessment support when they are studying for SQA qualifications. Parents and carers should contact their child's school to discuss the different types of support available.

'Nationals in a Nutshell' guides

- [National 4 in a Nutshell](#) - A series of summaries of the National 4 qualifications from the National Parent Forum of Scotland for parents and carers.
- [National 5 in a Nutshell](#) - A series of summaries of the National 5 qualifications from the National Parent Forum of Scotland for parents and carers.
- [Highers in a Nutshell](#) – Written for parents and carer, these are clear concise guides to the new Highers.

Related links

[SQA support for parents](#) - Information to help you support your child or young person if they are studying for National Qualifications exams.

[Support for pupils](#) who are worried about exams on the Reach website.