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Future



EXAM HELP



THE ULTIMATE PLOTR REVISION GUIDE

THE ULTIMATE PLOTR REVISION GUIDE - P.3

Exam time is nearly here, and revision is your key to success. Unlock the gates of your potential with Plotr's ULTIMATE revision guide!

HOW IMPORTANT ARE PAST PAPERS WHEN REVISING FOR EXAMS? - P.5

How important are past papers when you're revising for exams? We explore how past papers help, how to use them and where to find them!

7 STEPS TO SUPREME EXAM GLORY - P.8

On your marks... get set... GO! Feeling pumped, prepped and ready? Put the finishing touches to your exam plan with Plotr's ultimate guide!

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Are exams important? You'll have lots of next steps open to you however you do, but here are some reasons to give exams your best shot.



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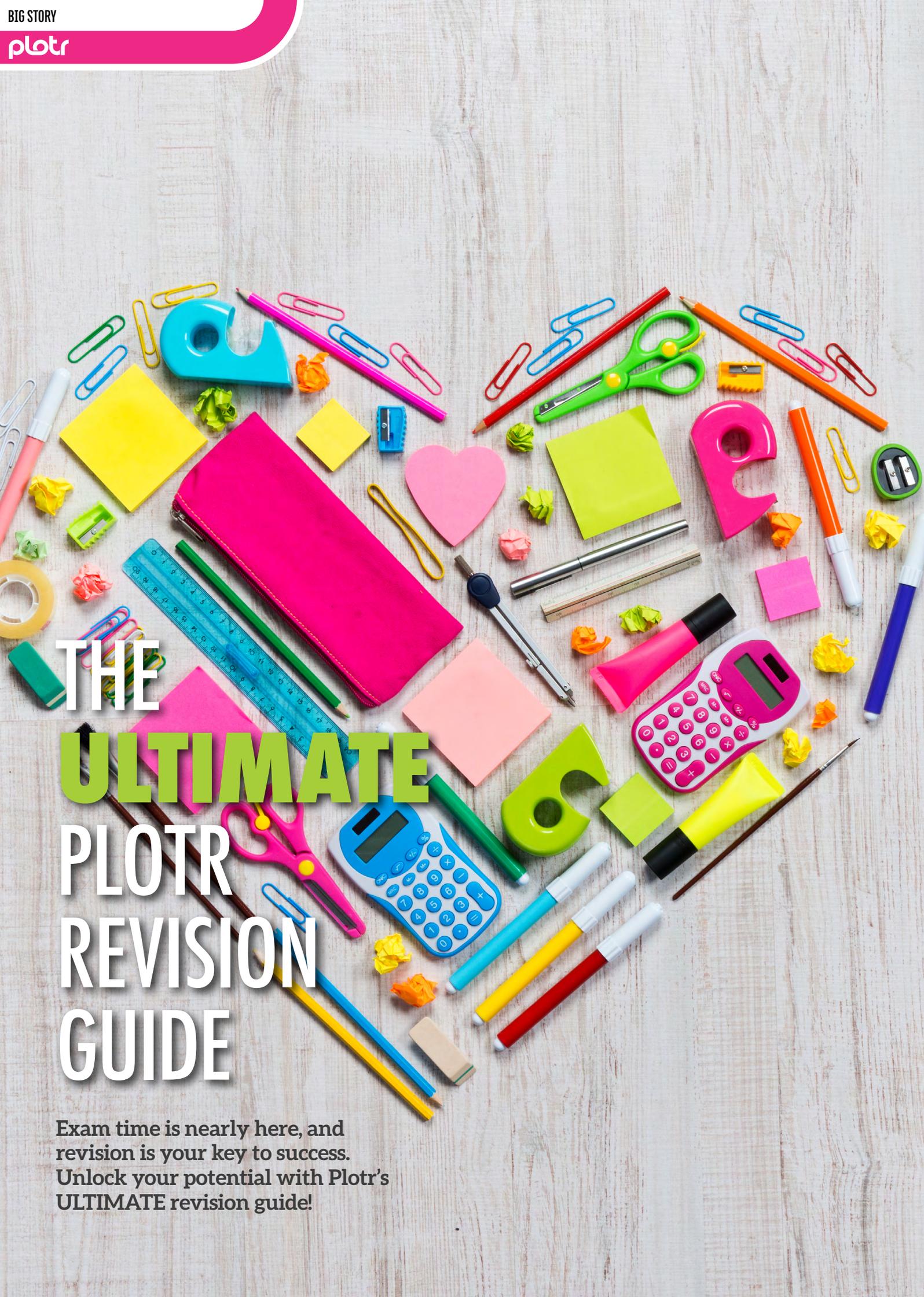
Need help with giving interview presentations? If you're at a job interview or assessment centre, present your best self with these top tips!

6 GOOD STUDY HABITS TO PICK UP ASAP - P.24

It's all too easy to pick up bad habits when revising for exams! Let's flip things around and think positive with these six good study habits to make exam revision that bit smoother.

WHAT EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS CAN YOU GET THROUGH VOLUNTEERING? - P.26

We asked Youth Ambassadors from YEUK what employability skills they've built up through volunteering. Prepare to be amazed!



THE ULTIMATE PLOT REVISION GUIDE

Exam time is nearly here, and revision is your key to success. Unlock your potential with Plotr's **ULTIMATE** revision guide!

REVAMP YOUR REVISION!

Tired of the same-old same-old? Need to perk up your revision technique? Take a look at Plotr's seven tips to [revamp your revision](#). You'll find a whole grab-bag of new ways to tackle your studies, from roping in friends and family to swap Monopoly for flash cards to taking a quick YouTube inspiration break. Yes, you heard it right - YouTube can actually help with your revision!

DISCOVER YOUR SECRET LEARNING STYLE!

How do you learn new things best? Do you soak up information faster if you see it, say it or do it? We all find it easier in one of three ways - through looking, listening or through touch, depending on our personality. Try our handy [learning styles checklist](#) to discover which learning technique works best for you and how you can use it in your revision from now on!

GET A MOBILE STUDY BUDDY!

If you have access to a mobile phone, Plotr shines a light on [five handy revision apps](#) that are like a study buddy in your pocket. Discover free gems like Remember the Milk (a genius app for to-do lists) and iMindMap (a great visual aid). You can't take a phone into exams, but you can still use one to revise for them!

GET RID OF BAD HABITS!

Bad habits can sneak into your revision technique when you least expect it. They're so sneaky you may not even know they're there. Plotr's [guide](#) on what to watch out for will help you spot any pesky habits and send them packing!

TAKE THE PLOTR REVISION PLEDGE!

Great results start with good intentions. Take the [Plotr revision pledge](#), and we'll throw in a cut-out-and-keep version for you to stick to your mirror for daily inspiration.

JOG YOUR MEMORY!

Looking for a memory boost in revision time to help you soak up facts and figures? From super spider diagrams to discovering the secrets of the roman room, Plotr has some [unforgettable tips to help boost your memory](#). Take a look!

GET REVISION TIPS FROM APPRENTICES WHO PASSED THEIR EXAMS!

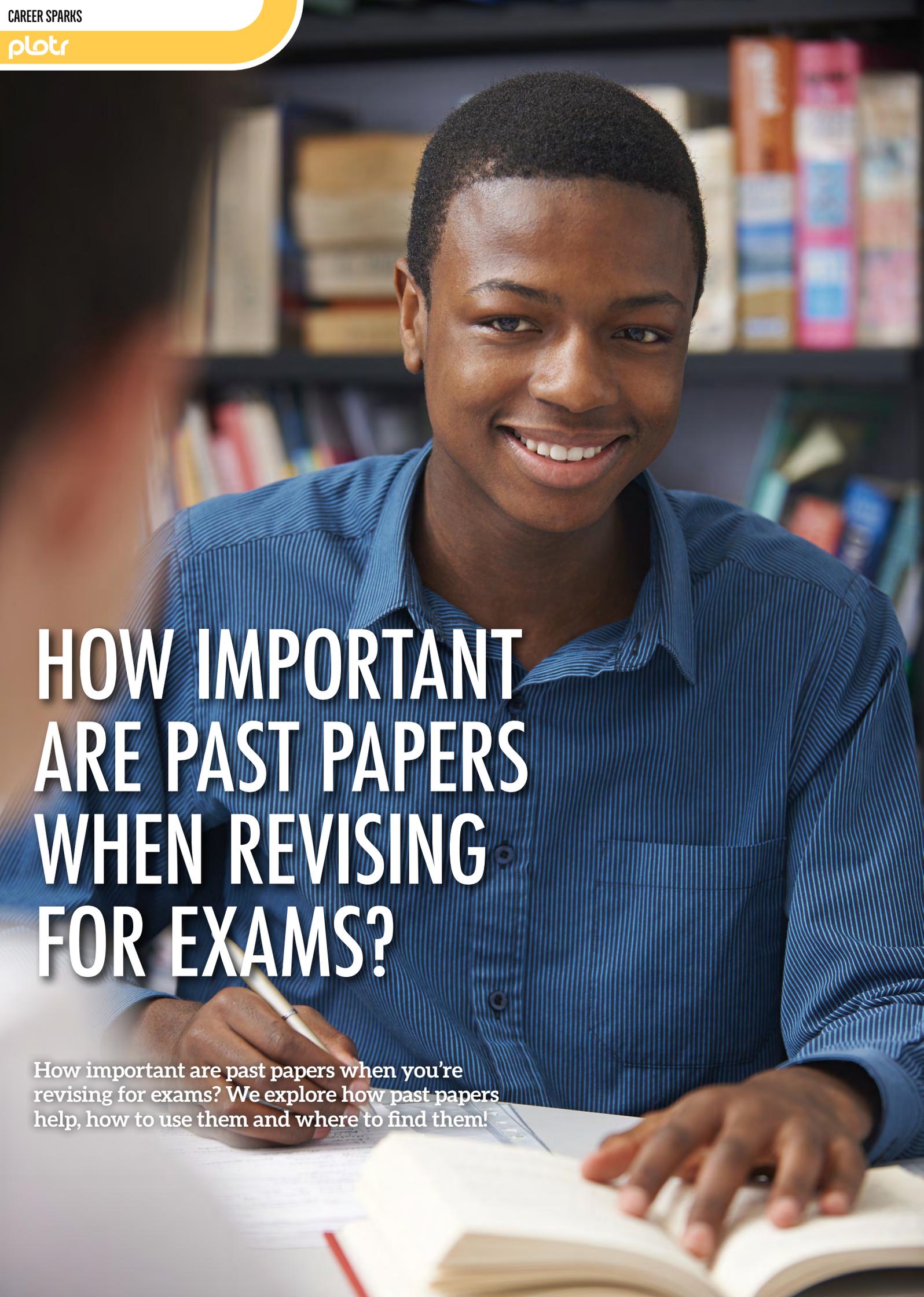
Revising for exams? Exam dates creeping up on you? To give you a helping hand we asked three apprentices at Interserve what they wish they'd known before the big day. Their [revision tips](#) and super-honest stories could help you on your way to exam domination!

GET A PEP TALK FROM CELEBRITIES!

Celebrities have had to take exams at some point in their lives too so they know what it feels like. Now they're here to wish you luck and give you their very best revision tips. Ready for a pep talk from Olly Murs, Dizzee Rascal and the gang? [Click here!](#)



What happens once you've taken all the exams you've revised for? Visit the [Choices Zone](#) on Plotr to explore your options and next steps!



HOW IMPORTANT ARE PAST PAPERS WHEN REVISING FOR EXAMS?

How important are past papers when you're revising for exams? We explore how past papers help, how to use them and where to find them!

WHAT ARE PAST PAPERS?

When you're studying for GCSEs, A-levels and other national exams, your teacher or tutor may give you practice papers. These papers are similar to what you'll be handed in an exam. They'll have example questions in an exam format for you to practise answering. Past papers are ones that have been used in actual exams in previous years. They've got questions that students before you actually had to answer in an exam setting! Qualifications you study for and the exams set for them can change over time, but doing past papers is still a great way to prepare for the real thing.

HOW IMPORTANT ARE PAST PAPERS?

How do past papers help you revise for exams so you can do as well as possible when it comes to the real thing? Let us count the ways...

Get familiar with the types of questions

Past papers help you to spot certain types of questions and recognise them. Understanding how questions are structured and what they're asking makes life easier in exams when you're faced with lots of questions to sort through!

Get familiar with the types of answers

Need help in understanding how papers are marked? Doing past papers helps you understand what they look for in an answer. In this way, you can see what points get awarded for. This can really help when you're doing exams for real and want to frame your answers well.

Discover useful areas of focus for revision

Which areas of the syllabus are you strong in? Which areas would you like to improve? Doing past papers can help you get a feel for your stronger and weaker areas. Knowing this can help you structure your revision to make the most of your study time.

Practise managing your time

Exams have to be completed in a set time period. Doing a past paper in the same time limit you'd be given for the actual exam can help you get a feel for how to give enough time for each section of the paper. You can also practise planning out your answers quickly for questions that require a longer answer, like essays.

Practise staying focused

When doing exams you'll aim to be completely focused on your exam paper, with no distractions. Doing past papers can give you a taste of that, which can help you to find it easier on the day!

HOW TO USE PAST PAPERS

The key step – use them!

First of all, if a teacher or tutor gives you past papers, use them! Do as many as you can, because doing multiple past papers can teach you even more than doing just one, and they can go a long way to help you improve your exam technique, revision knowledge and, ultimately, exam grades.

Teacher (or tutor) knows best

If you're given past papers by your teacher or tutor, aim to follow their instructions on how to do the past paper and learn from the experience. For example, you may be asked to do a past paper in a classroom environment or as part of home revision.

Do past papers early

Like revision, it can help to balance your exam stress levels if you do past papers fairly early on and try not to leave them until the last minute. You'll find it useful to get an early idea what to expect and improve on, and you'll leave yourself with enough time to do more than one past paper. They do say practice makes perfect! If you find yourself struggling with a particular past paper, you may feel the benefit of doing the same paper again to see how you're improving!

Use past papers to do mini mock exams at home

See if you can do a past paper at home that's as close to exam conditions as possible:

- Allocate the exam time limit to answer the questions.
- Answer the questions in a quiet environment where you won't be disturbed or distracted.
- Aim to answer every question, not just the questions you have a stronger knowledge in.
- Aim not to look at any reference materials or notes other than the ones the exam allows.
- Practise your exam technique – this can include checking you've spotted all the questions and haven't missed one, moving on from trickier questions and coming back to them, getting easier questions out of the way first, and going back to check everything through if you manage to finish early!

Use past papers as an indicator

If you're doing past papers and are worried about the results, don't worry – past papers can be used as an indicator to show you where you're strong in your knowledge and where you might aim to improve. You can think of them as a useful tool, not a crystal ball. Your past paper marks are just for learning and practice, so there is no need to worry.



WHERE TO FIND PAST PAPERS, ANSWERS AND MARKING SCHEMES

Exam board websites

Exam boards (e.g. AQA) tend to list past papers and additional exam revision resources for you to download. If you know your subject and exam board, go to the relevant exam board's website and take a look.

Teachers and tutors

Teachers and tutors may have a selection of past papers for you to use, potentially with answers and marking schemes. If you ask them, they may also be able to mark any essay-style questions you've answered as part of your past paper, just for practice. Your school or college website may also have past exam papers listed as a resource for their students.

Exam paper websites

If you're in need of extra past papers to practise on, you can try websites like Free Exam Papers to see if they have the resources you need. However, it's recommended that you seek resources from the exam board websites and your teachers and tutors where possible.



See more revision, study and exam tips in the [School Zone](#) on Plotr.



7 STEPS TO SUPREME EXAM GLORY

On your marks... get set... GO! Feeling pumped, prepped and ready? Put the finishing touches to your exam plan with Plotr's ultimate guide!

1. REVISE WISE

Plan your schedule, pick your learning style, cultivate good revision habits, master your memory and take the Plotr revision pledge! Revise like a pro with the **ultimate Plotr exam guide**.

2. PRE-EXAM STRESS?

Need a pep talk? Celebrities from Olly Mur to Dizzee Rascal have a personal message just for you to **wish you luck**.

3. BE PREPARED

Okay, you're about to head into an exam. Just to make sure you've got this covered, make yourself a checklist.

- Got an eye on the weather and travel plans so there are no awkward surprises? Check.
- Got your spare pens to hand? Check.
- Followed your teacher's instructions on how to treat equipment like mobile phones? Check.
- Got a game plan for who you're gonna call (not Ghostbusters)? Check.

You've got this.

4. EXAM ETIQUETTE

You may have practised already with past papers and mock exams, but once you've got those exam papers in front of you, you'll find things a whole lot easier if you...

- Listen to and read any instructions carefully
- Do rough workings in your answer book (and cross them out when you're done)
- Start with answering the question you feel most confident about
- Use all your time (finished early? Use that extra time to read through answers and check you've answered all the questions you need to cover).

See more exam tips in Plotr's **10 top tips for exam day** to make sure you've got your bases covered.

5. THE FIRST RULE OF EXAM CLUB IS...

Sometimes it can really help to have a chat with someone to get a sense of perspective. But make sure to get on with making your own schedule, planning your revision and sticking to it. On exam day itself, one way to keep a clear head is to steer clear of any pre-exam panic talk. After the exam is finished, you may find it helps to keep post-exam talk positive and looking to the future.

6. POST-EXAM STRESS?

Whatever happens when the exams are done and your results come in, remind yourself you did your best and remember you always have lots of options. There are so many different routes to your life's goals. Take **Laura** – she retook her A-level exams due to anxiety and still aced a Deloitte placement.

Visit the **Plotr Choices Zone** and talk to people who can help with next steps like careers advisers. There are lots of people who are there for you and can help you get informed about paths to a bright future.

7. CELEBRATE GOOD TIMES, COME ON

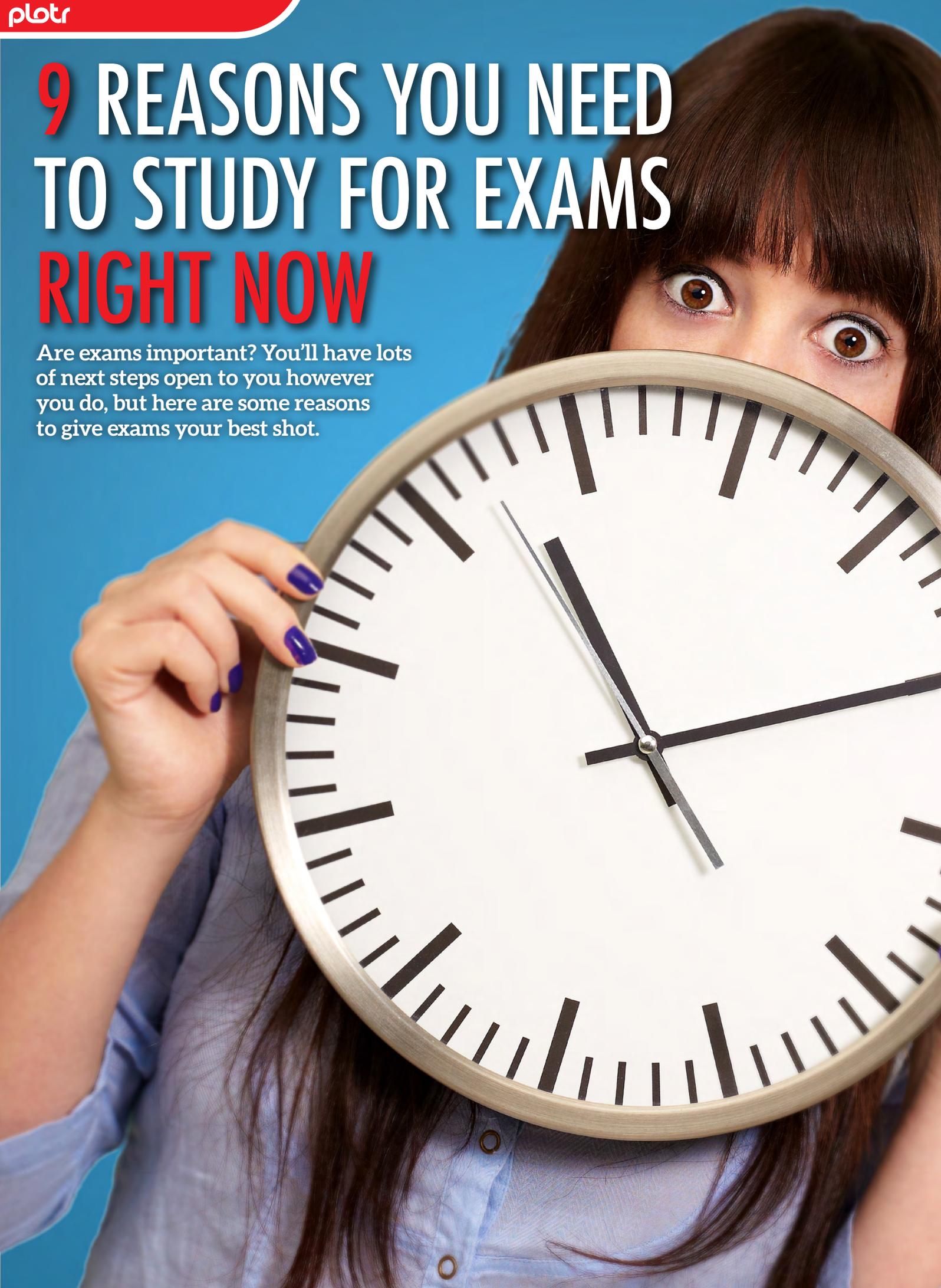
Why wait for results? Once exams are over you need to celebrate in style. Show the world what your victory dance looks like! See Plotr's list of **13 things to do once exams are over** to remind yourself there's great stuff to look forward to (apart from your results and a bright future, of course).



All done and dusted? Thinking about life after exams? Here are some **key questions to ask yourself** when thinking about careers. You can think about them when you're still a student, too!

9 REASONS YOU NEED TO STUDY FOR EXAMS RIGHT NOW

Are exams important? You'll have lots of next steps open to you however you do, but here are some reasons to give exams your best shot.



1

Exams aren't the only measure of how great you are. You have lots of great things going on! But it's always worth trying your best. You don't have to get the highest marks possible to feel the glowing satisfaction of "I really tried my best".

2

You won't get many exams in life (phew). It makes sense to give them all you've got when they crop up. Think of it as a sprint, not a marathon – lots of effort involved but it'll be over soon!

3

When you walk into exams you may discover you know so much more than you thought. Even if you're faced with an exam question you've never seen before, your revision can help you find a way to answer it in style!

4

Studying may feel like hard work, but the **celebrations** will be so much sweeter when all those exams are finally over.

5

Think of all the money you'll save by not going out as much during the revision and exam period! There are still plenty of money-saving ways to relax when you're studying, though. All that effort definitely needs to be balanced with breaks to treat yourself.

6

Thanks to revision and routine you're building up an incredibly valuable life skill: time management. Whatever career you do and wherever life takes you, knowing what's important on a long list of things-to-do and coming up with ways to fit it into your day will be one of the most important career skills you'll ever learn. Other life skills you'll have covered are patience and even creativity. Think of all those **amazing mind maps and colourful flash cards!** Who said revision notes couldn't be a work of art?

7

Getting the best results you can opens you up to even more options to choose from after your exams. If you didn't get the results you wanted there are still lots of next steps available to you, including exam resits or earn-while-you-learn opportunities. Getting the results you hoped for just makes next steps like university **UCAS applications** that bit easier.

8

Life is a learning process, and the (learning) fun never stops. If you're planning to stay in education after you've finished your exams, how you did will help you discover new areas to improve in future, and may also help you with making choices for further study.

9

You never know what the future holds. It could be that your trickiest subject to study for could actually come in really useful for a future career you'll love but never really thought about as an option. Studying for all your subjects opens you up to all kinds of dream careers.

Exams are important, but even so you'll have lots of options to explore whatever happens (like Laura from Deloitte, who retook her exams and still **aced her internship**). Take a look at "Dollar" Bill Gates. He once famously said "I failed my exams in some subjects and my friend passed. Now he's an engineer at Microsoft and I'm its owner." We think they're both pretty happy with how life turned out!



Doing A-levels or their equivalent? Wondering **what comes next after A-levels?** Plotr can help you think about all your options.

MEET NADIA, THALES SOFTWARE ENGINEERING APPRENTICE AND SQUISH EXPERT!

The Thales logo consists of the word "THALES" in a bold, white, sans-serif font, centered within a dark blue rectangular box.

We're inventing the future, right here, right now, at Thales. By combining the curiosity to explore, the intelligence to question and the vision to create, we're transforming the world around us.

Thales is an engineering and technology company that impacts the everyday lives of billions of people around the world - including you. Together, we make it our business to develop and deliver technologies that make society safer, smarter and more secure.

Thales Career World -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/careers/worlds/thales/>



Nadia Johnson is a software engineering apprentice at Thales and studying towards a degree in digital and technology solutions! See what it's really like to be in her shoes...

Wondering what your working day would be like if you became a software engineer at Thales? You'd support Thales with the development, analysis and testing of software systems, and work on some very exciting projects. If you enjoy working with computers and want to be the person that puts programmes together for people to use, it could be a fantastic role for you.

Want to hear more from someone who's been there, done that? **Thales software engineering** apprentice Nadia Johnson is earning while she studies towards a degree in digital and technology solutions. Here's her story:

UP UNTIL NOW

I'm fairly new to Thales, so there's been a lot to learn; but it's all been made much easier by the people I'm surrounded by. Their knowledge and support makes you feel like part of a valued team. I've already reached a big milestone too, after I was asked to get to grips with the automated test application we use, Squish, and became the office 'expert' on it. It made me feel really important. Mind you, right from day one, I was given responsibility when I was asked to travel and represent the company at the Arduino challenge and WISE Conference and Awards. It was a huge privilege considering I'm such a recent recruit to the organisation.

A REAL SENSE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Right now, I'm looking at trying to run Squish on the build we have at our site. There have been some issues that have arisen, but that just adds to the challenge of trying to find new ways of doing things. The feeling of achievement is wonderful when you overcome minor setbacks. When I'm not working on Squish, I have a day release at university to attend lectures and labs. I've also been on internal courses to help me learn more about what I'm working on. This ongoing training focuses on a question of the week and lessons once a month in the rigs, which all goes towards making what I do even more enjoyable.

YOUR EFFORT GETS NOTICED

My greatest achievement to date is actually something relatively small and subtle - learning the systems in the office well enough to start working on actual projects. It's been a really big thing for me. And, it didn't take long for my work to get noticed as being of a good enough standard. Being part of a caring but challenging team has really pushed me to achieve my potential too, and instantly made me comfortable in asking for help when I need it. What's more, the opportunities I've had so far have totally exceeded my expectations. I would definitely recommend working here.

RELAX AND HAVE FUN

My top tip for someone thinking of joining Thales? Bring your ambition, determination, problem solving skills and outgoing and goal driven approach. But at the same time, relax, have fun and enjoy the challenges life at work throws up, because that's when you really fire on all cylinders. Also, never be afraid to ask for help, as everyone here is unbelievably friendly. I got a particularly warm welcome from the graduates in the office - we go out for lunch together most days. I've also started to organise 'Payday Outings' where we meet as a group outside work and do anything from bowling to laser quest. It's simple really - Thales has been one of the best decisions I've ever made.



Discover **six ways an apprenticeship plays to your strengths** on Plotr - maybe you could become a Squish expert, too!

THE EXAM PLEDGE

I will find a quiet
place where I
can focus

It's exam time and you want to do your best. Make our pledge for extra super exam motivation.

I WILL
TURN OFF
SOCIAL MEDI@

I will make a
REVISION GUIDE
and
STICK TO IT LIKE GLUE

I will make
sure I take
bre : aks
every hour

I WILL PRACTISE
ON EXAM PAPERS

I WILL THINK
POSITIVE

WILL NOT LEAVE MY REVISION
TO THE LAST MINUTE

I WILL CHECK I HAVE
EVERYTHING I NEED FOR
EXAMS THE NIGHT BEFORE

I WILL REVISE IN THE
WAY THAT WORKS
BEST FOR ME

I will revise **ALL**
MY SUBJECTS,
not just the
ones I like

I WILL GIVE MYSELF
GOALS AND STICK TO
THEM



6 WAYS TO BECOME A MEMORY MASTER

In the next few weeks, how much you can remember will play a big part in how well you do in your exams. Want to tip the scales in your favour? Make your way to these magical memory maximisers.

During your revision you'll come across lots of information that wants to stay in your mind but, like a popular hotel, it's pretty crowded in there. So how do you make room? Here are six ways to improve your study skills.

1. DITCH DISTRACTIONS

The best way to remember something is to make sure you learn it well in the first place. That means finding a space with no distractions, turning off your phone and not going on Facebook. Ditch every distraction going. The more focused you are on the stuff you're learning, the better you'll be able to recall the information when you need it.

2. MAKE IT MEANINGFUL

The more you know about a subject, the easier it is to learn even more about it. Understanding is different from knowing. Try not to just read what's in front of you - figure out what it means and how it's connected to the other parts of the subject. If you get a good grasp of what you're learning and add to it, rather than just trying to remember the words, the things you've learned will stick around for much longer.

3. READ AND RECITE

You obviously have to read what you're trying to remember but just looking at the words on the page isn't always the best way to get it stuck in your mind. Your time can be well spent reading the material and reciting it (saying it to yourself), and only looking at your book or screen when you can't remember something. This style forces your brain to remember the information instead of just looking at it.

They say you don't know something unless you can explain it to an eight year old. Maybe you don't know one of those, but try explaining what you've just learnt to a family member. Saying it out loud and organising your thoughts will help you see how well you've got this covered.

4. PLAY THE LONG GAME

Cramming isn't always an effective memory style. If you are spending five hours revising a subject, you can try spreading five hour-long sessions over five separate days (called distributed learning if you're curious) rather than trying to squeeze those five hours of knowledge in at once.

5. ONE AT A TIME, PLEASE.

If you're learning more than one topic, which is probably the case, it's best to study each subject in a separate session. If you mix them, it's easier for your mind to get confused later when you're trying to remember. If you can spread your revision into different days, that's great. If you can't, make sure you take a break between different subjects so your brain has time to reset, even if it's something small like going to the kitchen to get a drink.

6. TRY SOMETHING MNEMONIC

Heard of mnemonics? They are clever techniques for improving your memory. Did you know *My Very Earthly Mother Jumps Stupidly Under New Pianos*? She doesn't really. If you need to learn the solar system this odd sentence will help, though. The first letters represent each of the planets i.e. Mercury, Venus, Earth, Mars, Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus, Neptune, Pluto (we need a new one now Pluto isn't included anymore). There are lots of these mnemonics that are very good at helping you remember information for a long, long time. Explore them all and find the right one for you like word associations, patterns or rhymes. Rhymes in particular work well - If you're trying to remember amoebas, try linking it to a rhyme such as fever, or god-forbid, belieber.



Want even more exam enlightenment? Try these [eleven excellent nuggets of exam education](#) from your favourite celebrities.



HOW TO STUDY WHEN YOU WORK FULL-TIME

Many students work to fund their studies and boost their CV. This mini-guide could help you pick up good habits!

Picking up a qualification while you're working can help you grow your skills and knowledge, giving you an extra boost for that next career step. There are a number of different options to combine earning with learning – for example, you could be studying for an NVQ, apprenticeship, workplace training scheme or sponsored degree. These terrific tips can help you balance work and study in style...

DESTROY DEADLINES WITH A STUDY PLAN

Make a study plan on which to mark useful dates like exams and assignment deadlines. If you make your study plan on an app, or on free software like Google Calendar, you'll have your study plan to hand wherever you go. Nasty deadline surprises will be a thing of the past!

Make sure you're putting in important work deadlines, too. It's harder to forget about big dates like exams, but what about the work your boss wants to see by Friday?

SET ASIDE SOME STUDY TIME

You need breaks to relax and recharge your batteries when you're working. However, scheduling some study time for yourself every week can help you build learning confidence and stay on top of deadlines. Aim to schedule in as much time as your tutor has recommended. Scheduling your study life in advance means you'll find it that much easier getting a balance between work, study and time off.

FIND YOUR OWN FLOW

When do you find it easiest to slot in study time? In the evening after work? A few study power hours at the weekend? A weekend rule where one day is for studying and one is for whatever you like? Or maybe you like to break it up and study in the morning or on lunch breaks to free up your evenings while staying on top of things? Whatever your study style, it can help smooth your way if you build a routine and stick to it. Make sure the periods you set yourself are long enough for you to get into the flow of things.

HIT THE WORK-LIFE BALANCE SWEET SPOT

On the one hand, you deserve breaks so you can see friends and unwind. On the other hand, if you're finding work-life balance a struggle it may help to rein in the social life just a bit, especially if you're getting close to any exams or assignment deadlines. You don't have to say 'yes' to every fun offer that comes your way. You may sometimes find it more beneficial to enjoy the sweet glow of satisfaction that comes with getting on top of your studies. It feels good to have fun with a guilt-free conscience!

IT'S GOOD TO TALK

Speak to your boss at the start of each term and discuss together what the objectives are and when things are likely to be busy. If you're on an earn-while-you-learn scheme you might find mentors you can reach out to who will have been in your position in the last couple of years. Talk to them about how they handled work and studied and still managed to see their friends at the weekend. Use the network of people in the organisation. Is your next module on marketing, for instance? Well, guess what - there just might be someone you can talk through the theory with and see how it happens where you work.

HONESTY IS THE BEST POLICY

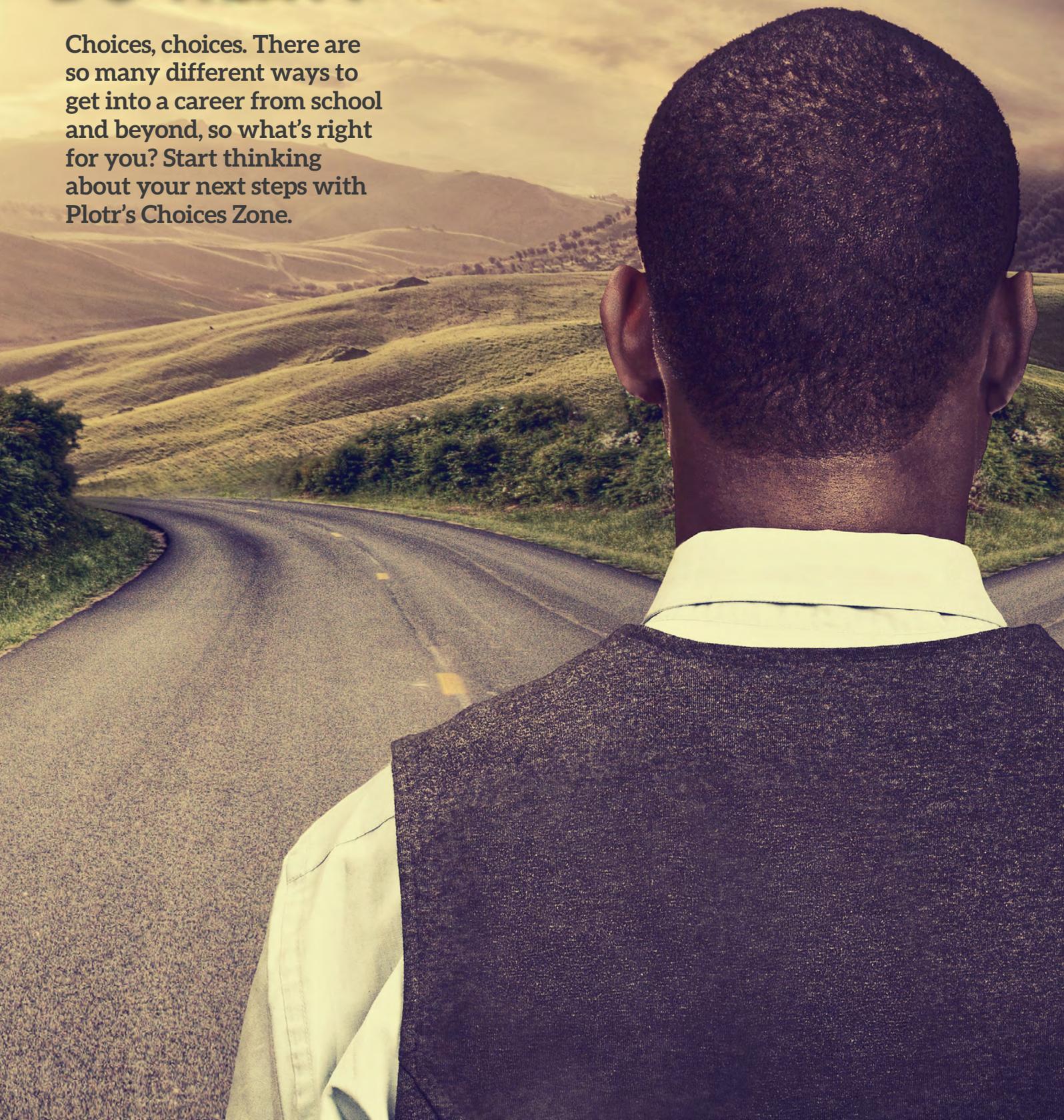
If you have any reason for not meeting a deadline, keep your course tutor in the loop early on and they may be able to find a solution that works for you. If you have personal events in your life to consider they will totally understand. Tackling challenges early on and asking for support and guidance if you need it is always a good idea.



There are lots of routes to building your knowledge and employability skills. Visit the [Choices Zone](#) on Plotr and see what your own path could look like!

"WHAT SHOULD I DO NEXT?"

Choices, choices. There are so many different ways to get into a career from school and beyond, so what's right for you? Start thinking about your next steps with Plotr's Choices Zone.



When you're still at school, there are quite a few choices you can make about the kind of learning you want to do. Of course there are plenty of routes into a career once you're a school-leaver, too! It's worth getting informed nice and early on so you can take each new step with confidence.

SCHOOL

Have you got some big decisions to make at school, e.g. about GCSEs or A-levels or their equivalents? Need help with studying or exams? Plotr is here to help.

DID YOU KNOW? There are alternatives to most qualifications and learning structures out there if you want to explore what's right for you. For example, instead of GCSEs you could study for a vocational (work) based BTEC or NVQ.

Visit the School Zone -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/career-choices/school/>

WORK EXPERIENCE AND VOLUNTEERING

Want to broaden your horizons, build life skills and boost your CV? Explore the world of work experience and volunteering with tips, resources and opportunities you can apply for right now!

DID YOU KNOW? National Citizen Service (NCS) is open to all young people in England aged 15 to 17. It's one of many great organisations out there with the aim of helping you to build your skills and confidence.

Visit the Work Experience and Volunteering Zone -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/career-choices/work-experience-volunteering/>

APPRENTICESHIPS AND TRAINING

Could apprenticeships be right for you? They're a way to earn a salary and build experience and skills while you're studying for qualifications in a structured course of study. Visit the Plotr Apprenticeships and Training Zone to learn more and find tips, insights and live vacancies or roles you can apply for now.

DID YOU KNOW? You can get different types of apprenticeships resulting in qualifications equal to GCSEs, A-levels and their equivalents. Taking the apprenticeship route can sometimes also be a way to study for a recognised degree without paying degree fees. Look up sponsored degrees!

Visit the Apprenticeships and Training Zone -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/career-choices/apprenticeships/>

COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY

If you're thinking of doing a degree at university, Plotr can support you in getting informed about choosing courses, weighing up your options and making your UCAS applications shine. You can even explore **Open University courses with Plotr's Course Finder**. Take a look.

DID YOU KNOW? Many employers offer graduate schemes, internships and placements to help graduate students who have focused on further education to gain valuable work experience.

Visit the College and University Zone -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/career-choices/college-and-university/>

GETTING A JOB

Taking a big bold step into the world of work? Get support on all stages of the job searching and application process. Plus you can discover and apply for great opportunities happening right now!

DID YOU KNOW? You'll find thousands of apprenticeships and job opportunities available on the Plotr Jobs Finder at any one time!

Visit the Getting a Job Zone -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/career-choices/getting-a-job/>

STARTING YOUR OWN BUSINESS

Dream of setting up your very own start-up? Learn more about planning and starting your own business over at Plotr. Plus you can explore people who can support you with mentoring and funding, too.

DID YOU KNOW? Organisations like the Prince's Trust recognise you can have a great business idea even if you're still at school. They can help you in all kinds of ways, including offering support with making business plans.

Visit the Starting Your Own Business Zone -

<https://www.plotr.co.uk/career-choices/start-your-own-business/>



Feel like you're still not sure? Visit the **Plotr Careers Help Zone** for support with all-important questions like "I can't decide what to do in life". We're here to help!

11 TOP TIPS FOR INTERVIEW PRESENTATIONS

Need help with giving interview presentations? If you're at a job interview or assessment centre, present your best self with these top tips!



Sometimes you might be asked to give a presentation at a job interview. It only lasts for a few minutes and it's a great chance to show off your skills to employers! Interview presentations used to be requested mainly for more experienced jobs. These days, it's becoming more common for all kinds of roles. For example, you might be asked to give a presentation at a [graduate assessment centre](#).

What are employers looking for in interview presentations?

Sometimes you'll be asked to prepare a presentation in advance before an interview. Sometimes you'll be asked to create it on the day! Either way, employers usually want to see:

- Your personal confidence – speaking naturally and making eye contact can go a long way to engage your audience. A bit of practice beforehand to build confidence in speaking about your subject can also help.
- Your ability to organise your thoughts – is there a flow to your presentation? Is there an introduction and a summary? Does your main theme hold everything together logically?
- Your organisational skills – have you prepared in advance? Do you have any props or slideshows you need?

When giving interview presentations it helps to know what employers are looking for – and you'll give yourself a top chance to shine with these ten tips!

1. BRAINSTORM IN ADVANCE

Allow yourself some thinking time before you dive straight into preparing your presentation. You'll often be given a set topic to talk about. Let any given instructions soak in before you start. Do you feel clear on what the topic is about? Allow yourself time to do your research before you take the next step.

2. PREPARE FOR THE UNEXPECTED

Part of being prepared is knowing what you'll have available to make your presentation on the day. For example, if you arrive expecting to play a video, you'll need to make sure the equipment available can handle sound. You need to prepare for the unexpected, too – for example, you might expect there to be Wi-Fi but there's none on the day. Some ways to prepare for the unexpected include making backups and having them to hand (for example, you can email the presentation to yourself and the person running the assessment centre, and also bring it with you on a USB). If you are planning on having handouts, make sure you've got them with you. You can make a few more copies than you need, store them in something that will keep them safe and undamaged like a big envelope, and make sure they're clear.

Be as prepared as you can for what you know lies ahead, and prepare for the unexpected. That way you'll feel much more confident on the day because you've got this covered!

3. CREATE A SHORT 'ELEVATOR PITCH' INTRODUCTION

An elevator pitch is a handy way to make sure you have a clear message. Simply imagine how you'd explain your presentation to someone in two or three sentences if you talked to them very briefly in a lift. Creating an elevator pitch can help you keep your main theme in mind as you structure your presentation. You can also use it to form the base of your short introduction.

4. STRUCTURE YOUR PRESENTATION

Employers love to see how well you can organise your thoughts, so structuring your interview presentation is your chance to go for gold!

Have you got...

- An 'elevator pitch' introduction to say what your presentation is about?
- Sections which logically flow into each other?
- A summary and conclusion which clearly relate to your main theme?

As a general guide, you can allow about 80% of your time for the main presentation and 10% each for the introduction and conclusion (unless you're instructed otherwise). If you're given ten minutes, that means just eight minutes for the main presentation! Aim to make your presentation last the amount of time you've been given – not too short and not too long. This shows how organised you are to employers.

5. LESS IS MORE

Are you trying to pack too much information into the presentation? When you're doing your research, think about what's really important to include. Perhaps you could aim to give your audience two or three key things to think about when the presentation ends. Nothing you research is wasted, even if it doesn't make it into the final presentation. It could still come up in your question and answers at the end, and you'll feel great about having the knowledge at your fingertips like a pro!

TOP TIP: If you're doing a slideshow you could try doing one slide per section.

6. PRACTICE MAKES PERFECT

If you've been given advance warning about doing a presentation, doing practice runs is a must! Doing practice runs helps you learn your presentation by heart so you can talk straight to the audience without looking down at your notes. They can also help you check your presentation lasts the right amount of time. If you're using a slideshow, practice runs will help you feel get familiar with any technical elements of the presentation. Finally, a practice run can help you check you've explained your ideas clearly. Is there any important information you've left out?

7. STICK TO SIMPLE VISUALS

Are you doing a slideshow as part of your presentation? PowerPoint is a useful slide creation tool, though you can also explore free software like Google Slides or Prezi.

Keep your slideshow simple – it'll be less for you to think about on the day. Remember, a slideshow is just a visual aid to help your audience, but you're the real star of the show! You don't need eye-catching animations; simple static slides will get your point across just as well. You can try just having a slide per section or theme, with clear text that's not too wordy. For example, three or four short bullet points per slide can present information clearly to your audience.

8. LOOK AT YOUR AUDIENCE, NOT YOUR NOTES

Make eye contact with your audience to help them feel like you're really connecting with them and sharing ideas. If you're talking to a panel of employers, try to make eye contact with all of them at least once, not just one person. Learning your presentation by heart and doing practice runs can help reduce your need to look at your notes. It will also show how professional you are!

9. THINK OF IT AS A NATURAL CONVERSATION

Aim to talk naturally when giving your presentation. Talking to your audience instead of reading off your notes helps it sound more like a natural conversation! Avoid being too casual, but you can think of it as a relaxed and informative conversation where you happen to be the one doing the talking. Again, practice runs can help you find your natural flow!

10. TIPS FOR PRE-PRESENTATION NERVES

Employers will totally understand if you're feeling nervous before your presentation, especially if you've never done one before. If they offer you a glass of water before you start, feel free to say yes! You can take a sip if you get dry-mouth, or if you need to find your chain of thought again. Aim to feel focused but relaxed, and you're likely to find those nerves vanish away into thin air once you start.

11. PREPARE FOR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS AT THE END

When you've finished your presentation, you can invite your audience to ask any questions. This is your chance to show how well you know your topic if you couldn't fit everything into the presentation. It's also a chance for employers to get to know you better. Take a moment before answering to make sure you've understood the question. If you don't, it's fine to ask the employer to explain a little more about what they mean. Be honest – if you don't know an answer, it's absolutely fine to say so and offer to provide a researched answer at a later date. This can help you look cool, calm and professional – you rose to the challenge!

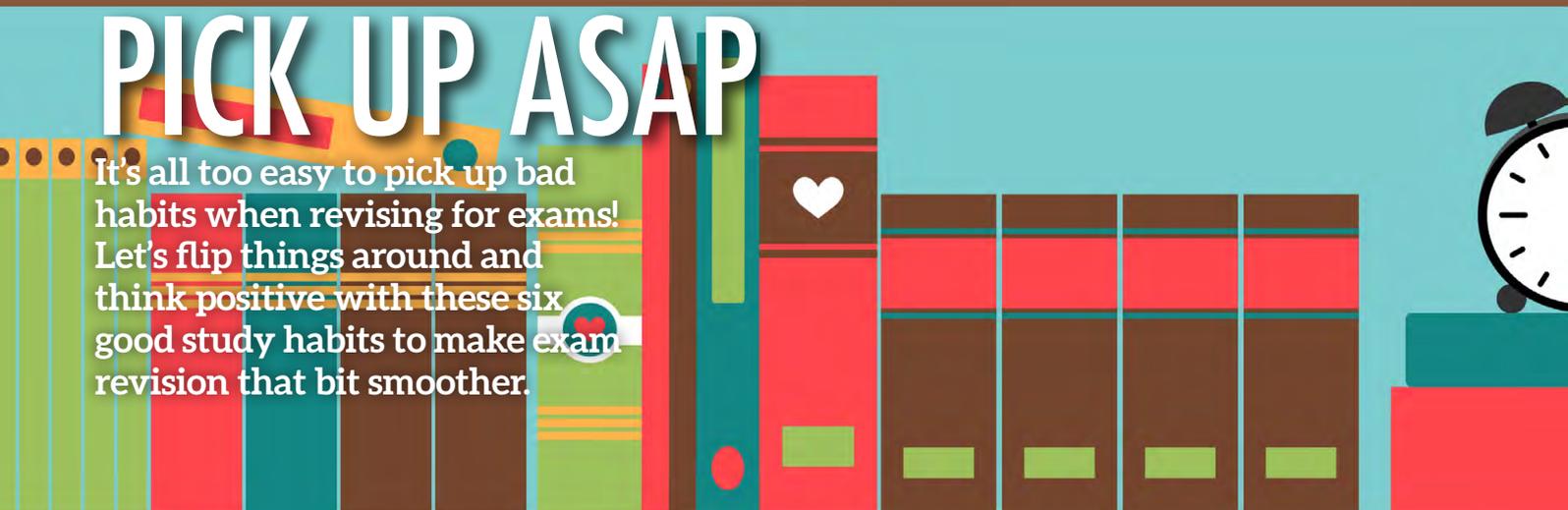


See more job hunting and application tips in the [Getting a Job Zone](#) on Plotr.



6 GOOD STUDY HABITS TO PICK UP ASAP

It's all too easy to pick up bad habits when revising for exams! Let's flip things around and think positive with these six good study habits to make exam revision that bit smoother.



FORGET CRAMMING - SPREAD IT OUT

Spreading your revision out is a great way to avoid late nights and get your beauty sleep. Instead of last-minute cramming, study regularly, a little bit at a time. This approach can ease exam stress and also give you a glowing feeling of satisfaction from Getting Stuff Done. Short and regular periods of exam revision help to engage your long-term memory and make all that information really sink in for when you need it most.

REVISE THE HARDEST SUBJECTS FIRST

We all know how tempting it is to start revising the subjects you find easiest to give yourself an ego boost. Truth is, the subjects you find hardest are the ones that need the most effort. Start revising for those terribly tricky topics early on and give yourself lots of time to climb the mountain of knowledge. It gives you a much better chance of looking at your papers on exam day and saying "hey - I KNOW this stuff." Plus the great thing about climbing mountains is that when you get to the top the view is great!

ORGANISATION IS A GOOD LOOK

It may be tempting to go with the flow and revise when you feel like it, but planning is a really good study habit to pick up as early as possible. Like, at the very beginning. Create a revision timetable with study slots through the week. It will help you get into a groove and stay on top of your studies. Exam revision is one of those times when routine doesn't mean you'll get stuck in a rut. It's just the opposite.

GET ZEN - CLEAR THE CLUTTER

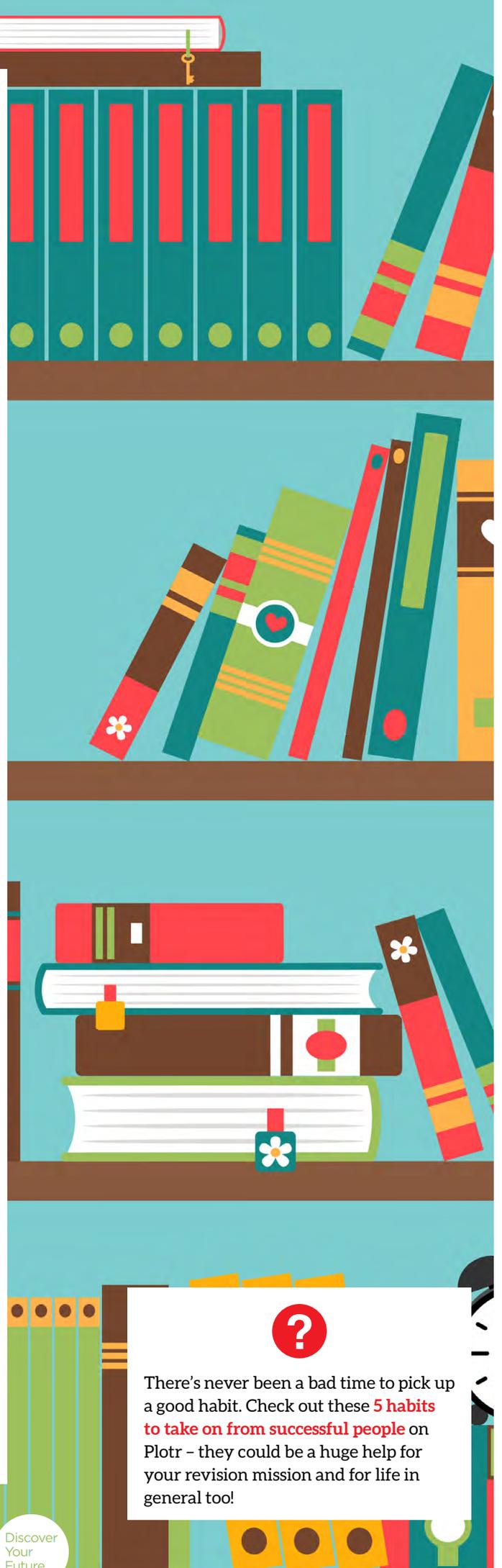
Dispel all distractions! Try to study in quiet places with no distractions that might put you off your game. If you're not one of the world's tidiest people, try sorting your study environment so you've got everything you need to hand (and not buried under a tonne of stuff). If you find it easier to listen to music while you work, try choosing something with no distracting lyrics. You may find it helps to have some soft soothing noise in the background.

YOU DON'T NEED TO FLY SOLO

When it comes to revising alone or with others, you can mix it up to get a balance. You may find it easier to get stuck in and revise on your own, because dispelling all those distractions might sometimes need to involve rain-checking your friends! But arranging to meet friends in quiet places like libraries for shared study time also has its plus points. You can encourage each other to keep going and get into a routine. You can discuss topics with each other to get a better understanding. You can also test each other with DIY quizzes on key topics or revision flash cards. Try revising both on your own and in a group, and focus on whichever method works best for you.

TAKE THE PLOTR REVISION PLEDGE

Hand on your heart, have you taken the **Plotr revision pledge** yet? If not, now's the time. Stick it somewhere where you can see its wise words and be inspired by it every day, like your bedroom mirror. Good study habits take practice and repetition - but where there's a will there's a way!



There's never been a bad time to pick up a good habit. Check out these **5 habits to take on from successful people** on Plotr - they could be a huge help for your revision mission and for life in general too!

WHAT EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS CAN YOU GET THROUGH VOLUNTEERING?

We asked Youth Ambassadors from YEUK what employability skills they've built up through volunteering. Prepare to be amazed!

YEUK (Youth Employment UK) is the leading campaigning and membership organisation dedicated to tackling youth unemployment in the UK.

The YEUK Ambassadors are young volunteers working together all around the country to secure a better careers future for UK youth. They network together, support each other and do it for the sheer love of it. They're working with MPs and local businesses to improve employment prospects for young people in the UK.

YOU CAN JOIN THEM.

Find out how to become a YEUK Youth Ambassador



CARL SAYS: "VOLUNTEERING ALLOWED ME TO GAIN CONFIDENCE IN MY OWN ABILITY AND PROVIDE DIRECTION TO OTHERS"

Employability skills built up through volunteering:

- Interpersonal skills
- Communication
- Negotiation
- Leadership

ONE OF MY FIRST VOLUNTARY EXPERIENCES was with Northamptonshire Children and Young People's Partnership as a children's rights representative. This allowed me to develop my interpersonal skills to make sure the views of young people in my area were heard. I also helped to liaise with a range of professionals on various issues that affect young people living in the county using effective communication and negotiation skills. For instance, I encouraged and supported other members of the group to achieve their goals when attending outdoor activity-based team building days.

As a coaching assistant with Northamptonshire Sport, my roles and responsibilities were different. Under the guidance of an accredited coach, I planned and delivered structured lessons under the guidance of an accredited coach for teenagers with behavioural and learning difficulties. I also coached small groups of students, offering advice on tactical and technical improvement. Volunteering allowed me to gain confidence in my own ability and provide direction to others so that they might achieve a high level of skill as well as an appreciation for discipline, sportsmanship and teamwork in football.

As an undergraduate student I had the opportunity of shadowing the local sports development officer. I assisted Adam Smith on projects like Sport Unlimited, was involved in planning for Easter holiday programme, and supported the Reach Out programme. This hands-on experience expanded my knowledge, helping me to develop employability skills and personal qualities including interpersonal skills.

Carl Page, YEUK Youth Ambassador

RHIANNON SAYS: "VOLUNTEERING INCREASED MY INITIATIVE AND SELF-MOTIVATION"

Employability skills built up through volunteering:

- Initiative
- Self-motivation
- Time management
- Leadership
- Social media skills

VOLUNTEERING INCREASED MY INITIATIVE and self-motivation. It encouraged me to go out when my social anxiety was bad to actually use my fears to help others. You meet new people and see new opportunities. Volunteering also helped me to develop an understanding of social media, time management and leading a team at times.

Rhiannon Wilson, YEUK Youth Ambassador

BEN SAYS: "WITH VOLUNTEERING... YOU ARE GAINING THE NECESSARY SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE NEEDED FOR WORK"

Employability skills built up through volunteering:

- Customer service skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Teamwork

HAVING VOLUNTEERED FOR OVER TWO years, I've gained and developed a lot of employability skills including confidence, customer service and working with others (teamwork). As well as that, I've gained general experience which is useful for paid employment. With volunteering you can improve yourself as you are gaining the necessary skills and experience needed for work. You are also showing employers you are ready for work.

Ben Fisher, YEUK Youth Ambassador

PATRICK SAYS: "IT'S CHANGED MY WHOLE CAREER PLAN... AND HAS ALLOWED ME TO START MY OWN NON-PROFIT"

Employability skills built up through volunteering:

- Interpersonal skills
- Time management
- Organisational skills

I STARTED VOLUNTEERING WITH THE NSPCC in the summer of 2014 and since then it's changed my whole career plan because of the skills, confidence and knowledge I have built up with them and other organisations such as YEUK and the Children's Commissioner. So much so, that it has allowed me to start my own non-profit to improve the employability of local people in my area. People are sometimes surprised by the fact that I'm 16, but if you have the dedication and are passionate, anyone can do it!

Patrick Cantellow, YEUK Youth Ambassador

DALE SAYS: "I WAS ABLE TO DEVELOP MY PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS"

Employability skills built up through volunteering:

- Communication
- Planning and organisational skills
- Problem-solving
- Time management

I STARTED VOLUNTEERING WITH AN organisation called NVYA (Northamptonshire Voluntary Youth Action). This helped me develop my social and communication skills to interact with people and become less shy as a person, stepping out of my comfort zone. Then I became a part of the YAG (Youth Advisory Group), representing Corby. I was involved in planning and organising for fundraising events as well as awards ceremonies around Northamptonshire.

For personal development, I started volunteering at a local play scheme called Corby Sport Dimensions. It helped me learn how to work with children. I was able to develop my problem-solving skills in dealing with behaviour issues. Importantly, my time management was essential when running the different scheduled activities on offer to the children.

Dale Page, YEUK Youth Ambassador



Find out more about some of the **skills you can develop** through volunteering on Plotr!

LifeSkills taught me
how my social media
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YOUTH EMPLOYMENT UK

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Youth Employment UK is the leading campaigning and membership organisation dedicated to tackling youth unemployment in the UK. Youth Employment UK was set up to support all of those working in the youth employment space, including young people who we feel should be at the heart of the work taking place in this sector. Our key objectives are:

- To provide a platform for young people to have a voice on youth employment issues that affect them.
- To empower young people to use the information and inspiration available to them and to develop their skills and networks to help them progress.
- To support organisations working in the youth employment space by providing an impartial platform for them to communicate, share best practice and network.
- To campaign and influence policy on the issues and barriers that affect our members.

Community Membership

Open to any organisation invested in youth employment.

- Youth Friendly Employment support, guidance & best practice
- Ability to use the Youth Friendly Badge & be listed on the Youth Friendly Employers Database
- Input into government consultations & policy work incl APPG for Youth Employment
- Webinars, Training & Events
- Networking
- Regular updates

Youth Membership

Open to any 16-24 year olds

- Get involved in our work with government, ensuring there is a strong Youth Voice on key youth employment issues
- Careers & Employment support
- Access to the Youth Friendly Employers Database
- Webinars, Training & Events
- Learn from experiences of other young people
- Opportunity to become an Ambassador
- Regular updates