

MANAGING EXAM STRESS

Exam time can bring feelings of worry, stress and increased pressure to meet your own or your family's expectations. While it's common to experience greater levels of stress during exam time, it's important to be able to manage these feelings in order to perform at your best. Learn more about managing exam stress below.

BEFORE THE EXAM



SET A STUDY SCHEDULE

Prepare a study schedule as early as you can and stick to it. Regular review over several weeks is often more effective and less stressful than cramming for a week. Once you have your exam timetable, adjust your study schedule to suit.



Remember to include time for breaks. A 10 minute break every hour can help you stay focussed.



PREPARATION

Know your exam time and location, and how you'll get there. Make sure you have the right materials to take the exam.

If your exam is online, know how to access any important links, set your work station up, fully charge your laptop and ensure any other devices such as webcams are in working order.



Preparing the night before by packing your bag can prevent you from forgetting anything important.

DAY OF THE EXAM



ARRIVE EARLY

When preparing for the exam, plan to arrive early to avoid any unnecessary stress of running late. If the exam is online, be ready to start 10 minutes prior to avoid any last minute rushing.



CONTROLLED BREATHING

If you find yourself feeling anxious before going into the exam, use deep breathing exercises to lower your stress response. Focus on long, slow, deep breaths.



Try box breathing. Inhale slowly while you count to four, hold for four and exhale slowly as you count to four.



TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Make sure you look after your wellbeing during exam time. Ensure you're getting adequate sleep, eating well and making time for exercise.



Check out the Monash College counselling <https://www.monashcollege.edu.au/current-students/support-services/counselling> for more helpful hints on sleep and exercise.



REFRAME UNHELPFUL THOUGHTS

Our thoughts or perceptions about a situation can lead to feelings of stress and anxiety, not the events themselves. Notice when your thinking about your exams is unhelpful and reframe it to something more helpful like, "I need to revise these parts for accounting but I already have a good understanding of the topics"

AFTER THE EXAM



AVOID DEBRIEFING

Try to avoid talking with other students after the exam about the exam as this can heighten anxiety. Debriefing can draw your attention to answers you did not feel confident about, or make you doubt answers you did feel confident about with no power to go back in time and change them.

Instead, think about what you did well. When talking with others focus the conversation on and celebrate the fact you completed another exam.