

HOW TO DO YOUR BEST IN THE EXAMINATION

THE WEEKS BEFORE

Having planned your **revision**, you should plan for the exam itself.

The **test specification** lets you know how many questions are going to be drawn from each part of the syllabus. There is no choice of questions in our examinations, so you cannot rely on your work on one part of the syllabus to get you through; you will need to answer questions on subject matter drawn from the whole textbook.

Examination questions are different from the course questions. Whilst the latter are designed to help you to study and the tutor to assist your progress through the course, examination questions are designed to provide an objective test of your retained knowledge and understanding of the syllabus.

You can help yourself a great deal by understanding what it is that the examiner is looking for in each question. **Common instruction words** are:

List/name	Give list or name facts rather than sentences.
State	Give the relevant facts briefly.
Define	Give the exact meaning of.
Outline	Briefly give all the essential points.
Describe	Give a full account with examples of the procedure, term, etc, specified in the question.
Explain	Give reason(s) for.
Compare / Contrast	Point out similarities and differences, advantages and disadvantages, of the items mentioned in the question.
Sketch	Do a rough but neat drawing.
Tabulate	Present your answer as a table or chart.

A good method of teaching yourself the right discipline for the exam is to try a **'mock' examination**. Past examination papers can be downloaded from www.atma.asn.au. Put yourself in strict exam conditions, with the proper time limit, and tackle a past paper. You may want to enlist the help of your mentor in this.

The 'mock' exam will show how well you can answer questions in the time available and will help you to plan how to allocate your time within the exam. It will also reveal any weaknesses in your revision or in your exam techniques. Discuss them with your mentor.

THE DAY BEFORE

Check, and tick off when you have done so: the place of the exam and how to get there; the starting time; your student number; your equipment (eg: Pens; Pencils; Eraser; Watch; Ruler; Calculator*)

* The exam invigilator should tell you before the start of the examination whether or not a calculator is permitted.

You will NOT be permitted to take food or drink (except bottled water) into the exam; nor will you be allowed to smoke.

You will NOT be permitted to have any notes, books, dictionaries during the examination.

You WILL be provided with a book in which you will write your answers.

EXAMINATION DAY

Try to arrive at least 15 minutes before the start of the exam, to give yourself time to relax (as best you can). If you have a chance, choose an area in the examination room where there is plenty of light and you can see the clock clearly. Check your watch with the clock.

When instructed to do so by the invigilator, write your personal details on the front page of the answer book. Make sure that you put down all the information requested, such as name, candidate and centre numbers, the name of the paper, the date and your signature.

When you receive the examination paper:

- a) Check that it is the correct one - there may be other exams taking place.
- b) Read the instructions carefully and then read quickly through all the questions. Put a tick at the side of those you can definitely answer.
- c) Begin answering the questions. Start with the ones you feel most confident about, i.e. those you have ticked.
- d) For each question, read it and note the key words. Look for the instruction words such as 'describe' and 'explain'. These tell you the type of answer sought.
- e) **Read each question carefully**, and give the answers that the examiner has asked for, not all the things that you can possibly tell the examiner on the subject.

For example, if you are asked to list **three** items, list **three** - only your first three answers will count and you cannot increase your score by listing more. If asked to 'sketch', do just that; remember you are not being examined on your artistic ability.

- f) Help the examiner by clearly indicating the **number of the question** you are answering; you don't have to write out the full question. Start a **new page for each new question (number)**. If you are unsure of your answer to part of a question and hope to come back to it later, **leave yourself room** to add to your answer.
- g) The questions have **equal marks** so try to give them **equal time**. If you run short of time, remember that you cannot get more than full marks on a question. A good pass requires answers to as many questions as is stated in the instructions. It is quite easy to pick up one or two marks on a question, often far easier than it is to raise your mark from 10 to 12 out of 12 on your favourite question.
- i) When doing a calculation, **show all your workings**. You will almost certainly get marks if some of your working is correct, even if your answer isn't. Put down nothing but the wrong answer and you will get no marks.
- j) If you find yourself **running out of time**, write **short notes** rather than full sentences; you will get marks for key facts.
- k) If you find you have time to spare when you have completed all your answers, **read through** them again to check them; check any calculations.

AFTER THE EXAM

Do not waste time in a 'post-mortem'. You have done all you can. Go out and relax. Pass lists should be posted on www.atma.asn.au in the first week of July; candidates will also be sent their individual results, usually via their mentor.

Finally, your tutor, nabim and ATMA wish you the very best of luck in your examination.