

Hints and Tips

Approaching Exam Questions

- *Adopt the 3 Rs approach*
 - Read – carefully the question that is being asked
 - Reflect – on exactly what they are asking for, and what the topic in hand is; consider the relevant formulae, diagrams, methods and known information you believe to be of relevance (e.g. we know a triangle is 180°)
 - Respond – answer the question asked, thoroughly, showing all workings
- *Present your answer in the form required*
 - Use the correct units
 - Be aware that area will be units squared
 - Only round your answer at the end, and note the number of decimal places (or significant figures) required per the wording in the question
 - Complete diagrams provided by filling in additional information where possible
 - Be sure to give the full set/range of answers provided – especially in trigonometry questions where reference angles are used
- *Always carefully scrutinise the question*
 - Note the use of action words such as solve, prove,
 - Observe the units which are included in the question
 - Note all link words or phrases such as 'hence' or 'using your answer from part.....'.
 - In order to maximise your marks in such questions you will need to make use of a previous answer
 - Note the number of values in questions where you are solving for unknowns – are you being asked for a single value, or are you being asked to find more than one?
 - What is the topic being covered, and what are the 'headline acts' in this topic from which I may need to recall some methods/formulae/information, e.g.
 - Algebra – functions (inputs, outputs, range of values), -b formula to solve quadratic equations, long division to solve polynomial equations
 - Trigonometry – unit circle, reference angles, log tables pg. 9, 14,, Pythagoras Theorem, calculator mode (degrees/radians), Sine Rule, Cosine Rule, drawing a diagram
 - Co-ordinate Geometry – formulae in the log tables pg., slope, diagram, units used in the question....

Be confident in your preparations

- *Know the topics you are best at, and begin with or choose these topics on exam day*
 - Be mindful of working through these questions quickly and avoid making 'silly' errors
 - Get through these questions promptly, to allow you additional time for more challenging questions
- *Make use of resource materials*
 - Attending these tutorials, you have a wealth of very informative material on hand to guide your preparations – make use of these in your revision
 - Get to know your log tables, and know which pages can be used for each topic

- Be aware of calculator functions, modes and how to switch between these – always check the mode is as required when starting into a new question, especially in trigonometry
- *Be confident with proofs, and be prompt at writing these out.*
- *Consider completing additional questions and asking your teacher for feedback on your approach – try to focus not only on getting the right answer, but also on using the correct method and showing all workings.*
- *Be sure to maximise your learnings from revision and review by asking yourself:*
 - What was the topic being covered?
 - What are the ‘headline acts’ in this topic? (That is, the most important concepts/formulae/methods/approaches)
 - Why did I use this method I chose for a particular question??
 - Could I do another similar question if it was to come up on the exam in June?
 - Do I feel comfortable with this topic, or should I revise it again very soon?
 - Are there any areas I am confused on within this topic? Note these to ask a teacher, tutor or peer.

Remember:

In Maths, you need to be aware of 1) The Syllabus (what could be asked) and 2) The Exam itself (what is being asked on the day). The exam tests your knowledge of the topics on the course, your level of understanding of these topics and your ability to apply this knowledge to the questions that are being asked.

Key Words/Phrases to keep in mind

