



School Counselling

It is normal for you to feel a bit worried about exams, especially if you feel under pressure to do well. But too much stress can lead to low mood, feeling anxious or unusual sleeping or eating patterns.

If you recognise any of these feelings or behaviours in yourself, or are worried that exam pressure is getting a bit too much for you, please speak with their pastoral teacher or the school counsellor, who can help you cope better with how you are feeling.

Drop-in times for a chat with the counsellor are Tuesday and Wednesday lunchtimes.

Group counselling has been very beneficial for pupils during exam times. If you think this may help you then please speak to your pastoral teacher who can arrange this for you.

Counselling is confidential.



Language & Literacy corridor
behind library
ground floor • Room s005
Tel: 01505 682685



www.samaritans.org
email: jo@samaritans.org
text: 07725 909090 tel: 116 123



www.TheMix.org.uk
tel: 0808 808 4994 text 85258



www.YoungMinds.org.uk
text YM to 85258



www.studentminds.org.uk
Email: info@studentminds.org.uk



Exam Results Helpline

www.ucas.com
Specialist careers advice for helping young people and their families decide on options following GCSE, A Level and Nationals exam results.
Helpline: 0808 100 8000
text 85258



BBC Bitesize: The Mind Set
www.bbc.org.uk/bitesize
Results - how to cope on the day

Exam Stress Support & Advice FOR PUPILS



we are always listening

Exam stress

Working towards exams can create feelings of worry and being under pressure, especially when thinking of going to university where you're aiming for a degree. However there are a range of things that you can do to help deal with the stress that you might be feeling...

1. Get that organised feeling

Work out the basics: which exams you have, how the marks are allocated, and how much you have to learn for each one. Don't expect to learn everything; but having in mind where you'll get the marks can help you prioritise.

Break your revision down into small chunks, and form a plan. Once you've got a plan, you won't have any more dilemmas at the start of the day about what to work on.

Schedule in plenty of free time to unwind, and protect this time. Nobody can work all day every day. If you give yourself plenty of rest you can do the same amount of work in half the time or less.

Equally, don't panic if you go slightly off schedule - tomorrow is another day.

2. Avoid bad habits

Don't set yourself ridiculous goals. Nobody can revise 10 topics in a day! Avoid setting the day up to be a disappointment.

Don't cut out all the enjoyment from your life. It's tempting to decide you'll just knuckle down to work and 'focus', but this is counterproductive - it's impossible to focus without giving your brain rest by doing other activities.

Avoid stimulants. Caffeine, alcohol and drugs impede your energy and concentration in the long term. It'll also make it more difficult to get that much-needed sleep.

3. Get into some good habits

These habits will help you concentrate as well as reducing stress:

Take frequent breaks. Psychologists say we can only concentrate properly for 30-45 minutes. When you do take a break make sure you don't stay at your desk, you could go for a walk or even just make a cup of tea!

Eat well. Keep a good blood sugars level to avoid highs and lows of energy, by eating slow-release foods like bread, rice, pasta, fruit and veg.

Drink lots of water. People often underestimate how much hydration helps you concentrate!

Think about when and where you work best. Not everyone is a morning person, and some people don't find the library a productive place to work. There's no one best place or time to work - it's about what works for you.

Keep active. Even a short walk will do. Exercising is one of the quickest and most effective ways to de-stress. Fresh air will clear your head and perk you up.

Try to get about 8 hour's sleep a night. If you're stressed about not being able to sleep, there are lots of ways to aid a good night's sleep. Find out what works best for you.

Find activities that help you relax. Maybe it's a hot bath, watching a TV show, or a creative activity. Schedule this down-time into your timetable.



4. Get support from friends and family

Don't be put off by friends saying that they are doing huge amounts of revision. As already mentioned, that's probably not actually a productive or efficient way of working long term. One of the key reasons people feel exam stress is due to comparing themselves to other people.

If you can, discuss with your parents what they are expecting you to achieve. Parents with steep or unrealistic expectations will just add unnecessary pressure. It's helpful to let them know what you think you have the capacity to achieve, and to insist that the best way to get there is to have support from your parents, not pressure.

If you're feeling really worried or anxious, chat to a good friend, family member, or teacher. It helps to get it out of your system, and they may well be able to help think about practical strategies to deal with exam stress.

5. Keep it in perspective

Lots of people will tell you this, because it's true - exams aren't everything. Whatever happens in your exams, you can still be successful in life afterwards. So if you don't do as well as you'd hoped, try to keep things in perspective.

Employers don't just look at your exam scores. They're just as interested in your attitude, your transferable skills and how well you'll get on with other people.

Exam success doesn't define you as a person. Everyone copes differently in different situations and there's so much more to your personality than how well you can respond to an exam.

Think about how far you've come already. You've already done incredibly well to be at this stage and stopping or failing exams at this point isn't 'throwing away' your past success.

Once you've done an exam, try to forget about it. There's nothing you can do about it, and worrying won't change your mark.