

Planning your time in the exam

1. When you are told to turn the paper over, don't start writing until you have read the exam paper from cover to cover.
2. Mark the topics you wish to answer and concentrate on them. You should have an idea of how much time you are going to spend on each question, with the ones carrying the most marks being allocated the most time.
3. Remember that the exams are not set to trip you up, but are designed to allow you to show your knowledge of the syllabus. Be positive and have confidence in your ability.
4. Take time to consider the question. Look at where the marks are to be gained and allocate time appropriately (and stick to it). Many candidates spend too much time earning and re-earning small numbers of marks, thereby losing time for the heavier-tariff tasks. Remember, answering three questions fairly well is better than answering one very well and leaving two badly done. Underlining key words in the question may help to focus your mind and jog your memory.
5. Structure your answers by making an answer plan; writing this down will help.
6. Don't forget to refer back to the question to help ensure that you answer the question asked. The examiner can't give you marks for your knowledge and understanding of a topic if you don't answer the specific question properly. Make sure you don't answer the question you wish you'd been asked rather than the question in front of you! Try to read your answer through before moving on to the next question.
7. Concentrate on your punctuation, spelling and grammar. Remember that, while you will not be marked down for bad handwriting, if the examiner cannot read what you have written, then they can't give you the marks you deserve.
8. Try to relax, and keep an eye on the clock without checking it every five minutes. You need to leave time to complete each question and to read through your answers before the end of the exam.
9. Once you have finished the exam, don't worry about it and try to avoid comparing your answers with other students.