

Exam Techniques: A Checklist

1. Scan the exam paper and check for the questions/topics you've prepared.
2. Don't delay starting to write, it can help you to loosen up and stop your mind going blank.
3. Choose the order in which you're going to tackle the questions.
4. Take your best question first - or second.
5. Plan your answer to each question
6. Analyse the wording of the question closely. What do the examiners want?
Underline key words
7. List some relevant points/issues from the course. Use these to plan your answer in outline
8. Constantly check during writing that you're answering the question
9. Consider writing your best two questions first then planning the last questions later
10. Draw up a time plan for the exam showing how you will allocate your time between preparation, writing and checking.
11. Stick to your own plan. Don't over run your time allocation.
12. Try to write legibly. Always show a distinction between your plans and jottings and the actual answer.
13. and when it's all over, ask yourself :
 - What went right?
 - What went wrong?
 - What would you do differently in the future?

What the Examiners Don't Like...

1. Failing to answer the question by:
 - Not recognising the key terms and concepts within the discipline/topic area. -
 - Not using the course materials as evidence in your answer.
2. Failing to discriminate in the use of course material.
3. Failing to use argument and critical/sceptical analysis in your answers.
4. Not being sufficiently objective and not reaching any conclusions.
5. Writing responses which are a random collection of facts and names.
6. Failing to use your time properly
7. Failing to follow the exam Instructions
8. Poor presentation
 - illegible handwriting
 - poor structure
 - Notes rather than sentences
 - No paragraphs
 - Writing long, complex, turgid sentences.
 - Failing to check for obvious errors e.g. In mathematical calculations

And finally ... Remember

Exams are a "game". Play by the rules and you will win!