

General Study Advice

1. **Make sure you are ready.** Do not hope to pass the examination this is a dangerous tactic to employ. Cover fully, the course material in advance of the examination and revise what you have covered regularly. Know the full syllabus before attempting the examination.

2. **Work hard.** Complete your course. Do not miss important parts of the course and use the website regularly. It might seem like hard work but that is the recipe for success. The website contains up-to-date information and materials which you will find invaluable.

3. **Do not work too hard, work smart.** If you fail to adopt the right approach, you might discover that you have put in many hours without achieving much because your approach and understanding of the topic was misunderstood from the start.

Too much hard work will lead to less absorption; your brain will not be able to absorb all you have done so you are better off structuring your approach and speaking with your tutor before plunging into the text. Use the website and email facilities to do this.

4. **Programme your study.** Select your examination date, count the number of days and hours left to the examination and spread the work carefully over this period to the date examination.

E.g. 2 modules requiring 200 hours each is a total of 400 hours, which is about (400hours/3hours per day study time = 134 days approximately). This is 4.5 months (at 30 days study/month)! This leaves you about one month before the examination to revise properly and practise past examination questions.

If you cannot meet the required time per day, you might consider taking less modules for that examination than failing the module because you had insufficient time to prepare. Cramming can and will lead to confusion and certain failure at these examinations so be warned!

5. **Revise regularly.** Leave enough time to revise the entire module or rather, revise each immediately you have completed it to refresh your understanding of the topic. Intensive revision just before the examination is beneficial only if it involves revision, not when you are still absorbing new knowledge as this will confuse you, remember, you will be under more stress and anxiety during these last days before the examination.

6. **Make your own notes.** This aids revision and confirms your understanding of the subject matter. Lecture notes provided to you are the lecturer's own understanding and does not necessarily convey the principles and concepts to all students in the easiest manner.

Some students can immediately assimilate the lecturer's notes but others tend to analyse it and rewrite it in their own words; the latter approach is recommended, as it is clearer to the student. These notes become very useful when revising for the exams, they become your *aide memoire*

7. **Understand the topic/concept.** Learn to think your way through the topic rather than learning by rote. You must learn to think intelligently and develop an analytical mind since the examinations require you to solve problems in most instances.

8. **Know the concepts that underpin the subject** or topic but leave room for your own ideas and opinion as examiners love to see your understanding of the subject matter from your viewpoint not repeating exactly what the text states.

9. **Make sure your knowledge is current.** Do not live in the past, regularly read professional journals, magazines and more importantly, visit our website regularly for updates on the paper/module you are undertaking. Ask us questions using the email facility and look out for our up-to-date responses. Read the technical section of your Institute's professional magazine, many students ignore this completely!

10. **Practice your Institute's Questions & Answers.** Regularly seeks to practice Q & A from your institute and other related Q & A's from other institutes BUT be warned, the focus of each institute could be slightly different and the competency required of your institute might NOT mirror that required of a similar institute!

When practising these Q & A's, time yourself. In the beginning, you want to consolidate your knowledge and understanding of major topical areas in the syllabus so ignore the time it takes to do this. Later though, as you get used to the institutes approach and requirements, you must endeavour to time yourself since time is always a problem for candidates at examinations.

11. **Plan to pass all modules.** Most examinations cover more than one subject/module and require that all modules be passed. Do not concentrate on one module that seems achievable alone, spread your effort across all the modules you wish to attempt. A 100% score in one module will NOT compensate for a 21% score in other modules!

Aim to pass all modules and if this means achieving 50% in each module even though you could have scored 90% in one, you are better off. After all, Moses only demanded '... let my people go!'

50% 'lets you go' so aim to pass all modules well but more importantly, aim to pass all of them at one sitting!