


# COPING WITH EXAMS




**PAPYRUS**  
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE



For most people, exams are stressful. Whether you are worrying about your workload, anxious about performing or fearful about the future, it's not unusual to feel this way.

When under pressure our bodies respond by producing adrenaline – the 'fight, flight or freeze' hormone. While this reaction is perfectly natural, and often necessary, too much adrenaline can cause unwanted symptoms such as sickness, dizziness and headaches. Stress can lead to trouble sleeping, a loss of appetite and can also affect our mood causing us to feel irritable, unhappy and even hopeless.

You may hear people say 'it's not the end of the world' but for some young people it can certainly feel like it is.





# BEFORE EXAMS

## 'What can I do to reduce stress before exams begin?'


- **Organise** your workload. Prepare for your exams by setting yourself realistic targets to work towards and finding a revision style that suits you.
- **Pace** yourself. Give yourself plenty of time and revise in short bursts. Remember to take regular breaks between study sessions.
- **Talk** with family, friends, tutors or teachers – share your worries with anyone that you find supportive.
- **Recharge** by drinking water and fuelling your body with healthy food. Exercise can also help to release some of that extra exam tension.
- **Rest**. Make sure you are getting enough sleep and spending time relaxing. Try breathing techniques and practice mindfulness to keep calm and refreshed.
- **Socialise** with friends. Remember that you have a life outside of studying. Allow yourself some time out with others to have some fun!





# AFTER EXAMS

## ‘What will I do if I don’t get the results I was hoping for?’

- **Reflect.** ‘Failing’ exams does not make you a failure. You may have to take a different route to achieve your goals but setbacks can increase resilience and lead to unexpected and exciting opportunities. Take time to experience your emotions instead of making a snap decision.
  - **Explore** other options. Resitting an exam, repeating a year, appealing a grade, entering clearing, taking a gap year or considering different courses, careers, apprenticeships and internships are just some of the options available to you.
  - **Ask** for some support. Discuss your disappointment with those around you. Consider who you can contact for more advice; a teacher or tutor, a careers advisor or service.
  - **Care** for yourself. Regardless of your results, you’ve worked really hard and this achievement should be rewarded. Practice self-care by planning something positive for results day.
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# SUICIDE

For some students, the pressure surrounding exams can feel overwhelming and can sometimes include thoughts of suicide.

We urge anyone with thoughts of suicide to reach out for help. We also urge parents, teachers and others to reach in and give students space to share how they are feeling, especially if they are considering suicide.

# HOPELINE247

If you are thinking about suicide or are concerned about a young person who may be, you can contact HOPELINE247 for confidential support and practical advice.



Call: **0800 068 4141**

Text: **88247**

Email: **pat@papyrus-uk.org**

**[www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)**

Our Suicide Prevention Advisers  
are ready to support you.



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Registered Charity Number: 1070896

OSCR Registered Charity Number: SCO52556