

Exam day

The night before, the morning of, the first five minutes

Most exam-day losses are logistical rather than academic: the wrong calculator, a room change nobody read, twenty minutes spent on the first hard question. None of that is about how well you know the material. Tick these off and that whole category of damage goes away.

The night before

- ☐ Confirm the start time, the room, and how long the journey takes at that hour.
- ☐ Check what identification is required and put it with your things now.
- ☐ Check what you are allowed to bring, including which calculator model.
- ☐ Pack: pens that work, a spare, water, identification, admission ticket.
- ☐ Review only what you already know. New material this late rarely earns much.
- ☐ Set two alarms. Sleep is worth more than the last hour of revision.

The morning of

- ☐ Eat something. A long timed paper is an endurance task.
- ☐ Leave earlier than the journey needs. Arriving early costs nothing.
- ☐ Do not start a new topic. Skim one page of your own summary at most.
- ☐ Put your phone away before you enter, not after someone asks.

The first five minutes in the room

- ☐ Read the instructions. Check how many questions must be answered.
- ☐ Check the mark allocation and work out roughly how long each section deserves.
- ☐ Start with a question you can definitely do, to get moving.
- ☐ If you blank, move on and come back. Note the question number first.

When time is running short

- ☐ Answer every question that carries marks, even partially. Blank scores nothing.
 - ☐ Show the working. Method marks survive an arithmetic slip.
 - ☐ Spend the last two minutes checking you answered what was asked.
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