Tips for a calm and steady approach to exams

The exam period can be a really stressful time for students; help them prepare and take their exams in their stride with these useful tips...
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Before they start, encourage them to...

1. **Read the paper carefully** as a starting point.

2. **Make sure they understand the instructions** on the front of the exam paper, including which questions to answer.

3. **Check how many questions are in the paper, and how many marks the whole paper is worth.** They can use this information to plan their time effectively. Looking at the marks for each question will also help them to decide how much time to spend on each.

4. **Identify any questions that look more difficult or have more marks allocated to them.** That way they can make sure they leave enough time to answer them.

For more support on the topic of wellbeing around exams, and to learn more about our #healthyhappyschools campaign, visit: [go.pearson.com/healthyhappyschools](go.pearson.com/healthyhappyschools)
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Once they’re ready to start, **remind** them...

1. **Not to rush.** Encourage them to read each question carefully and make sure they understand what it’s asking them to do.

2. **Highlighting, underlining or circling the main points of the question** will help keep key points in mind as they write their answer.

3. For longer answers, encourage them to **plan how they’re going to answer** and what points they want to cover. This will keep their answer focused and make sure they don’t forget anything.

4. **Re-read their answers to check for errors** once they’ve finished.

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If they get stuck on a question...

1. **Remind them not to panic.** Spending a minute or two breathing deeply will help them get back in control if they do.

2. **Encourage them to move on and come back to it at the end** – that way they won’t miss out on marks elsewhere. Many people also find that the answer to a question will come back to them later in an exam.

3. **If they’re still stuck** when they come back to it, encourage them to try the following tips:
   - **Re-read the question.**
   - **Note down anything that they know about** the subject. Can they use any of this in their answer?
   - **Do their best with what they can remember.** It’s better to have a go than to leave the paper blank.
   - **Try breaking down the question.** Is there a part of it they are able to answer?

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