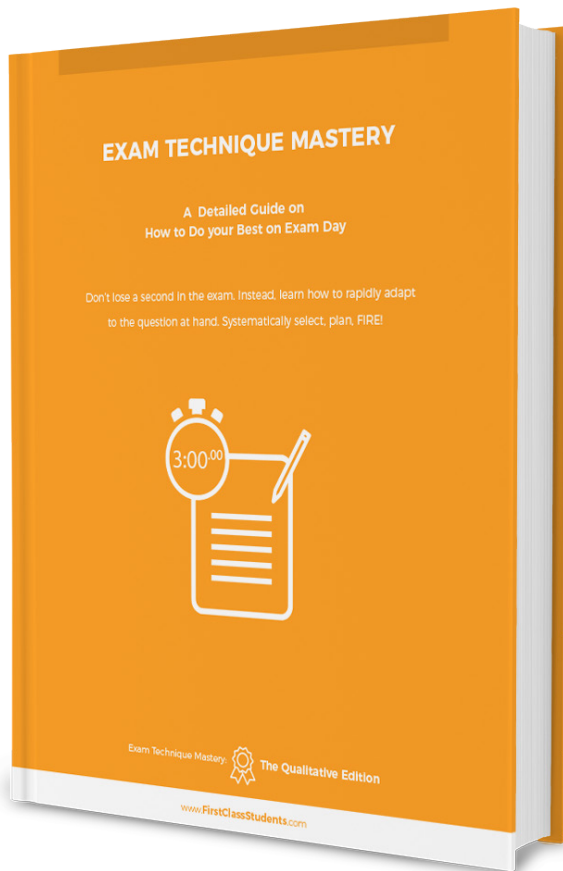


Exam Technique Mastery



These are the book's goals

Teach good exam technique

- Exam technique is about optimally handling the time constraint in exams.
- You may know a lot from studying your course but getting the timing wrong can negate all of that.
- First class students don't just have to deliver in terms of excellent content. **First class students have to be faster than everybody else!**
- TEACHING GUARANTEE
I will answer any further questions if the book did not answer them for you.
- Your MONEY BACK if that is not enough.

SEE FOR YOURSELF

Copy or click the link to see a preview right here:

www.firstclasstudents.com/the-1st-class-study-systems-book-trilogy

EXAM TECHNIQUE MASTERY

A Detailed Guide On How To Do Your Best On Exam Day

Don't lose a second in the exam. Instead, learn how to rapidly adapt to the question at hand. Systematically select, plan, FIRE!



Exam Technique Mastery:  **The Qualitative Edition**

This is a short preview of the book that only displays a couple of parts taken from the books various sections.

Every time you see this symbol [...], it means that several pages or at least parts of a page have been omitted.

You can get the full version by visiting:

<http://www.firstclassstudents.com/s/1st-Class-Study-Systems>

There you will find information on pricing and a link to the online store at the very end.

Just copy the link and paste it into your browser or click on it directly.

Please don't hesitate to contact me via the contact form at www.FirstClassStudents.com if you have any questions. I'll get back to you asap.

**Cheers,
Oliver :)**

**Your studying will not pay off if your
time management is poor!**

**Perfect your exam technique before
you go into the exam!**

Topic Overview

Speed Up Your Handwriting

Save Time And Write More

The Exam

Adapting Your Practice Essays In The Exam & Planning Your Essay

How To Annotate The Question

Referencing The Question

Absolutely Crucial For Avoiding 'Question-Spotting'

Topic Selection In The Exam

A Rapid Systematic Approach

Managing Your Time In The Exam

The Amount Of Time You Spend On Each Part

Exam Hacks

Distractions, Concentration, and Stimulants

Your Mental Game

Avoid Black-Outs. Cultivate The Right Mindset For High Performance

(You will find a detailed index at the back of the book)

Introduction

Mastering good exam technique is crucial. To see why, it is important to understand what the exam is testing.

Exams are NOT just about testing whether you have acquired certain information.

If that was all that they were for, universities could set exams without time constraints and allow you to simply hand in the answer booklet whenever you felt you had displayed all your knowledge in a neat and beautiful way. Well, unfortunately, that is what home-assignments and theses are for, but not exams.

This used to be my own misguided understanding of exams and I would often get upset when I ran out of time in an exam, feeling that the examiners had 'malevolently' denied me the opportunity to show off my hard-earned knowledge.

Yet besides asking 'Do you know the syllabus?' the examiners are asking a wider and tougher set of questions:

- Have you learnt how to annotate the exam sheet with such speed that you still have enough time to answer the questions completely? Yes or No?
- Do you know the syllabus to the point that you can whip out a sophisticated answer with little to no time for thought? Can you think fast enough? Can you write fast enough? Yes or No?
- When you don't have the time to display all your knowledge, are you able to show only that specific knowledge which is most relevant to the question? Yes or No?

Thus, you must understand this: On the one hand, the exam is about skilfully applying knowledge. On the other, it is about how you handle limited time. It doesn't matter how good you are in only one of these two dimensions, if you are deficient in the other, you will not do well. This also means that top-performers excel, amongst other things, because they gain minutes and seconds where others waste them. I will show you how to do this.

This book has a narrow focus in that it is strictly about 1) the time-related aspect of essay-based exams and 2) the techniques you need to properly answer the questions.

Please note: I assume throughout this book that you will be sitting a 3-hour exam, in which you have to write 3 essays. So that's 1 essay per 1 hour. Your essay will be approximately 800 to 1300 words long. If your exam follows a slightly different structure, say you have to write 4 essays in 3 hours, or you are writing other longer essays, this doesn't matter since the principles remain the same. If you fall into this category, please adjust my guidelines for how much to write or how much time to spend on questions accordingly.

My Goal

My goal is to help you improve your exam technique. I will show you how to save valuable time in the exam, as well as how to make sure you answer the questions in the proper manner, without throwing away marks. Because no matter whether you score 39, 48, 59, or 68 marks, you will be kicking yourself for not having scored those 1 or 2 extra marks. Some techniques outlined in this book will be very useful to others but perhaps less so to you. Skip what doesn't suit you and stick with everything that makes you feel better prepared and has the potential for giving you and your grades that crucial extra boost.

- My hope is that by teaching you how to master good exam technique, you will get those last couple of marks that, in the end, make all the difference.

Ready? :)

Let's jump right in and I'll show you how to prepare like a 1st Class student!

Speed Up Your Handwriting

Speed Up Your Handwriting

After a systematic analysis of my own handwriting, I was able to increase my maximum output per hour from 1000 to 1200 words while also improving legibility. In this section, I will explain how I did it.

[.....]



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The Exam

Adapting Your Practice Essays in the Exam & Planning Your Essay

I also discuss most (but not all) of the following section in my other book 'The Anatomy of a 1st Class Essay'.

This is because that book is about writing 1st Class Essays and this book is about sitting an exam in which you want to write a 1st Class Essay. Neither book would be complete without these sections.

How do you become good at flexibly adapting to new questions in the exam?

3 Scenarios

There are essentially three possible scenarios in the exam as far as adapting to the question goes.

1) Essentially no adaptation. The question is nearly identical to a past question that you have prepared for.

2) Some adaptation necessary. The question is similar to a past question that you have prepared for. However, you will have to make some structural changes.

3) New question. You have to plan and write an essay as fast as possible.

We will discuss different approaches as they apply to each scenario.

However first, it is important that we look at what you will be doing no matter which of the scenarios applies.

Building Blocks

[.....]

[.....]

How do you write the introduction if you still don't know exactly what you will be writing?

[.....]



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Referencing The Question



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Referencing The Question In Your Conclusion

Lastly, make sure that the very first sentence of your conclusion picks up the wording of the question.

Examples:

Critically discuss the assertion that violence is a development issue.

To conclude, this essay has argued that violence is most definitely a 'development issue' - perhaps the greatest of all.

'The distribution of development aid is always political.' Discuss.

To conclude, this essay has argued that the distribution of development aid is **indeed** frequently political, albeit not 'always'.

Note: Whenever you are agreeing with the statement in the question, the word '**indeed**' fits very nicely.

Why are some countries richer than others?

In conclusion, this essay has argued that differences in institutional quality, rather than in culture or geography, are the main reason for why some countries are richer and more developed than others.

NB: I find 'To conclude,...' to be more elegant than 'In conclusion,...' but that is a minor detail.

Topic Selection in The Exam

Topic Selection In The Exam

Which topics should you choose? In which order should you answer the questions?

You should have a system in place or else you will waste precious time.

Here Is What You Should **NOT** Do

You take a deep breath and start to read each question carefully. You know you have to answer 3 of the 8 questions before you. Therefore you want to narrow down your selection. You start to do this by making a neat circle around all the question numbers that you will now consider. You have decided that you might be able to answer questions 1,3,4,5, and 7. You got lucky and question 3 is about a topic you know well and, furthermore, strongly resembles a question you practiced for in the past.

So now questions 1,4,5, and 7 are still available and you have to answer two of them. Unfortunately, they are all kind of hairy. While yes, generally speaking, you do have plenty of knowledge relating to the topics these questions are based on, regrettably each question has some weird twist that means it doesn't quite match what you prepared at home. Or it's mostly about something you know well but one aspect of the question relates to something you know less well. Or it's about the topic you know the best but what the question asks is so new and unexpected that you'd really have to think about how you would answer it, and how you would structure your argument.

So perhaps you panic, pick a question at random and just start writing something, hoping that things will come together as you go along. Although it can be very surprising to see how much you can actually write when you absolutely have to (at home you probably would have had writer's block if you had attempted that same question then), let's hope you did not panic and that you did not just start writing something. Let's take a step back.

Okay, so you did not panic and now you are still deciding which two of the four hairy questions you should answer. So you stay calm and think about cool stuff you could mention in each case. You close your eyes and mentally plan an essay for each question. The problem is that each question has that hairy aspect that you are now trying to resolve mentally, simultaneously while you are brainstorming all the cool stuff you could mention. Somehow this mental exercise has worked better for question 7 and for question 4 than for the other two questions so you go with them.

Or in an alternative scenario, you were somehow trying to compare the quality of the 4 vague essay outlines that you are holding in your mind's eye. Ultimately, you realise that a human brain cannot perform such mental gymnastics so you end up going with whatever your gut tells you. 6 minutes have already past, the page is blank, and you instinctively make a decision because you are forced to. So it's going to be questions 1 and 4 then. **Now, after having thought about 4 totally unrelated topics from the syllabus, you yank your mind back to the first question** you were going to answer, namely your lucky question. You stall for a short moment and blink twice as your knowledge relating to the topic you know best is momentarily lost on you but then quickly returns.

6 minutes and 42 seconds have past and you finally start to write. You did not annotate the first question because it's obvious what it is asking so you just start to write. Yet in your haste, you forget to define a couple of key terms at the beginning of your essay, a sloppy mistake you will never notice, not even after the exam, or in August when you get your result. After completing the first essay, you start to think about the second question you were going to answer (**again!**), trying to **remember** how you were going to deal with that hairy aspect of it. You start to scribble a few things on the exam sheet that you want to include in your essay. Then you start writing. Towards the end of the main part of your essay, you get inspired or remember some key point, so you build that into your essay although you know that time is running out. 2 hours and 15 minutes have past. Luckily, you somehow manage to write the third essay in the remaining 45 minutes, with a good introduction and covering all the main points in the body of the essay. You didn't manage to write the conclusion for the last essay but that surely isn't too bad because by design the conclusion doesn't mention any new points and only repeats information you've already mentioned in your essay anyway. Surely the examiners will understand that it was the conclusion of the last essay so they will only deduct a mark or two.

All in all, it went better than you had expected. You really did come up with some good points during the exam. While you might not quite make a 1st, surely you'll score in the 60s. Maybe. Or you might end up scoring in the 50s (or worse), not knowing what happened and cursing the lack of transparency of the grading process.

Well, if you have followed the structure I outline in my book 'Anatomy of a 1st Class Essay', you will probably score at least in the 60s (especially because you will have prioritised writing appropriately structured conclusions for all of your essays amongst many other things). But leaving the discussion of the hallmarks of a good essay aside for the moment, **the purpose of the above scenario was to show you that the process of topic selection can be handled in a less-than-ideal/ horrible way and that it can therefore compromise your performance at every single stage that comes after that.**

I view it as my job to ensure that you do not find yourself in a situation similar to the one described above. Although it is quite likely that you'll have to deal with some hairy questions, I will show you a more systematic approach to topic selection that will set you off towards a better start in the exam.

Follow me! :)

A Systematic Approach To Topic Selection

[.....]

ACTIVITY: Print out several past papers, say 6-10 or more. You can even print them out multiple times. You should use them to only practice topic selection. Time yourself using a stopwatch and practice until you have increased your speed significantly.



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Managing Your Time in The Exam

How much time should you spend planning your essay?

[.....]

How much time should you spend on your introduction in the exam?

[.....]

How much time should you spend on your conclusion in the exam?

[.....]

What should you do if time is running out and you will not be able to finish your last essay?

YOU ABSOLUTELY NEED TO WRITE A CONCLUSION FOR ALL THREE ESSAYS

It is better to leave some pages blank and to write the conclusion, hoping you can fill in those blank pages* with more of the main body before time runs out, as opposed to finishing the main body without a conclusion.

I think it's quite unlikely that you will score 70+ in the exam if one of your essays does not have a conclusion.

* Blank pages: If you have 30 seconds left and cannot fit in the rest of the main body, draw arrows on the blank pages so the examiner reads your conclusion and doesn't think your essay stops where there are some blank pages!

Exam Hacks

Exam Hacks

In this section we will briefly discuss two things that could hurt your exam performance, namely 1) distractions and 2) your ability to concentrate beginning to fade.

Prevent Distractions

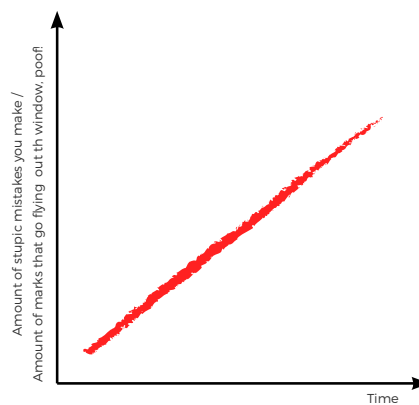
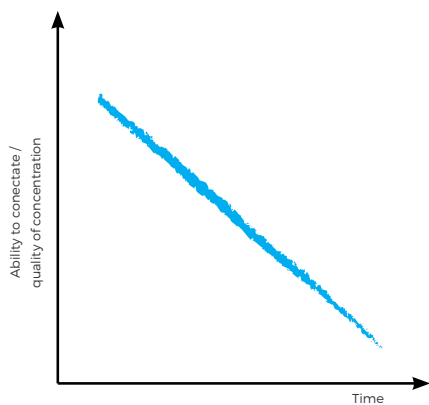
[.....]

[...]

Concentration

Now we will discuss the problem of your concentration declining towards the end of the exam.

That last 30-60 minutes is when you will not only make the most spelling mistakes but also other dumb mistakes that can cost you marks.





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Stimulants

Disclaimer: Consult a physician or other qualified professional before doing anything described below.

We've all heard of coffee as the standard stimulant. However, as with sugar, some people experience an energy boost which is immediately followed by a crash.

[.....]

The number one stimulant

[.....]

It's not pleasant but it works. Notice the mental clarity and alertness that you feel afterwards. Typically the effect lasts several hours (well past your exam).

[.....]

A note on study drugs

My hope is that this book will help thousands of students do well at uni. Therefore, statistically speaking, it is very likely that a small percentage of students reading this is currently taking drugs that are more potent than drugs like caffeine.

My goal in this book is not to advocate drug use. However, if I can convince one drug-taking student to stop taking a certain drug or at least to take a safer drug, I will have succeeded in doing a good deed.

Prescription medicines:

[.....]

Over-the-counter supplements:

[.....]



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Your Mental Game

Your Mental Game

Cultivating The Right Mindset for High Performance

Top athletes have sports psychologists because what happens in the mind affects what muscles can do on the playing field or on the running track.

In the arena that is the exam hall, how you handle stress can be decisive.

[.....]

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