



# Studying for Maths Exams

## General Exam Study

The following techniques are useful for any exam study:

- ✓ Form a study group with class colleagues and meet regularly to discuss, help and do exercises.
- ✓ Manage your time carefully. Set time aside regularly for study and tell everyone, so they won't disturb. Study regularly for short periods.
- ✓ Keep fit. Do whatever exercise you usually do and eat and drink well. Drink water not coffee while studying. There is not any coffee in the exam room!
- ✓ Know yourself. Be aware of when, where, and how you study well. Some people work best in a quiet library, others study best first thing in the morning. Find the best time, place and method for you.
- ✓ Prepare for the marathon. If you haven't done a 3 hour exam recently you may be in for a shock; it's a hard slog. Before the exam do a few one hour or two hour study sessions for stamina practice. Also don't rely on coffee or music that won't be available during the exam.
- ✓ Know the exam format. How long, how many questions, how long you will spend on each question.

## Math Exams

- ✓ Spend most of your study time doing exercises from assignments, tutorial exercises, old exam papers and lecture notes (and the course book if your course has one). And use model answers or a study group to check your answers.
- ✓ Spend less than half your time on studying your notes. Mind map them, write in your own words, memorise key formulae by writing them down many times and using mnemonics.

## Maximise Your Marks

To get full marks you have to write down all the information pertinent to the question. Make your answer a model answer. Include all the following information:

- ✓ A statement of what you are trying to do.
- ✓ All relevant formulae, facts, numbers, etc.
- ✓ A reasoned argument. Include all steps on paper (not in your head).
- ✓ Highlight your answer/conclusion, e.g. red pen or in a box.
- ✓ Leave lots of white space on the paper, for readability and to fill in more information later.
- ✓ If you can't finish the question, write down as much as you know, including how you would conclude the question if you could. You will be surprised how many marks you can pick up this way.
- ✓ Include all units, (e.g. 2cm), qualifying information e.g.  $x \neq 3$  and anything else you can think of.

