INTRODUCTION

Key skills:
- understanding and good exam technique
- being organized
- grasping and communicating key ideas

1. THE DSE212 EXAM (for more on this, see DSE212 Specimen Examination Booklet!)

1.1. Format and structure of the exam

A three-hour unseen paper
Consisting of 3 parts:
- Part 1: short answers
  45 mins, worth 25% of total mark
  Concepts and terms drawn from Book 1. ⇒ YOU WILL HAVE TO CHOOSE 5 OUT OF 8
  A paragraph of 4-7 sentences to be written
  Appendix 1 at the back of the Specimen Examination Booklet contains ALL the concepts that can occur

- Part 2:
  45+45 mins, worth 50% of total mark
  2 short ESSAYS on chapters PREVIOUSLY NOT COVERED IN TMA ESSAYS (TMA01, 02, 04) in Book 1. So it can be from Chapters 3, 5, 6, 9.
  ⇒ YOU WILL HAVE TO CHOOSE 2 OUT OF 4

- Part 3:
  45 mins, worth 25% of total mark
1 ESSAY on a question related to one of the three chapters of Book 2 → YOU WILL HAVE TO CHOOSE 1 OUT OF 3

1.2. How your answers will be assessed

- Part 1
  MORE than a short definition will be required
  The essential part is: WHY IS THE CONCEPT IMPORTANT IN PSYCHOLOGY?

- Part 2 and Part 3 (essay questions)
  Five areas of interest:
  • focus on question as set (consult process words in Appendix 1 of the Workbook)
  • clarity and structure of answer: the quality of argument; the COHERENCE of argument; organization and logical development of argument
  • use of evidence/examples: references to course material
  • accuracy and level of understanding
  • CRITICAL ANALYSIS/EVALUATION: offering an original argument, finding significance within psychology

2. REVISING FOR THE EXAM

The general point is to revise actively

2.1. Planning the revision

2.1.2. Constructing a timetable
Around 3 weeks of revision time

2.1.3. Selecting what to revise
DON’T revise every thing
DO revise:
  • a spread of material (not just what you like)
  • material you have already read!
• the terms and concepts given in Appendix 1 of the Specimen Examination Booklet
• wider topics and not simply specific issues
• look for the summary points in the chapters + the commentaries following the chapters
• organize your material (for instance, think in terms of the 3 Cs; theory – method –theme; social or cognitive or evolutionary approach; insider or outsider perspective)

2.1.4. anticipating questions + thinking about OVERAL REVISION STRATEGY
For 3 revision strategies see page 13 of the Booklet

2.2. Revising to understanding

• Creating your revision notes
  - ACTIVE approach, work with your material
  - Condense your notes, first on an A4 paper, then perhaps on even smaller card (again learning outcomes and summary points are helpful here)
  - Clustering and linking ideas is essential (think of the findings of memory research!)

• Learning your notes
  - again, try to understand the ideas, rather than simply memorizing them
  - break your time into chunks – it will help staying fresh (i.e. 2x30mins rather than a whole hour)
  - try to LINK the material to existing knowledge + create new links (think of the “level of processing” model in memory research)
  - try use anything you are good at: colours, tables, mnemonics (Erikson, Marcia, Gergen and Tajfel = EMGT = Elephants Make Good Tusks)

• Rehearse the answers
  - set up a “mock exam” for yourself with the help of the Specimen Examination Booklet or the past exam papers available online
3. **PERFORMING WELL IN THE EXAM**

Seven golden rules:
- start by quickly glancing over the whole paper
- read the question carefully
- answer the question set (and not the question you WOULD like to answer)
- show that you STUDIED the course and are familiar with key ideas/debates
- speak like a psychologist (avoid references to or style of common sense)
- aim to allocate your time well (45 + 45 +45 +45 mins)
- plan your answers carefully
  - start with a brief brainstorm: jot down crucial ideas and names
  - select the essential points and organize them into a structure
  - planning your answer in advance will also help you keeping a focus on the question

Frequently Asked Questions:
Q1: What is the best way to cope with the night before and the morning of the exam?
Q2: Does handwriting matter? Mine is terrible…
Q3: How much depth and detail am I expected to go into?
Q4: Do I need to include lots of references and remember names and studies?
Q5: Do spelling and grammar matter?
Q6: What order should I do the questions in?
Q7: If I can only do two essay questions well, should I concentrate on these and ignore the third?
Q8: What if I run out of time?
Q9: Can I take breaks in the middle of an exam?
Q10: What if my mind goes blank in the middle of the exam or I can’t remember some details?
Q11: What should I do if something unforeseen and unfortunate happens just before or on the day of the exam?

4. **COPING WITH EXAM STRESS** (see page 23)

5. GOOD LUCK! 😊