

Learning to Revise

Objective: by the end of this lesson, learners will be able to use active revision techniques.

Revision is the act or the product of revising. **To revise (v)** is to study anew or to look at again. Revising means to go through what has been previously studied for the following **reasons**:

- ✓ Check understanding of the studied material.
- ✓ Reinforce learning.
- ✓ Identify and fill gaps in your knowledge.
- ✓ Remind oneself of material one has forgotten.
- ✓ Make links between different topics to see how the whole subject fits together.

Passive Revision

There are countless ways of revising. The least effective ways are those that involve just going through notes repeatedly. Passive Revision includes:

- ✗ Reading the notes- simply reading is passive- you are not doing anything to store what you are reading in your mind.
- ✗ Copying out material- this is a time-consuming activity but is not engaging with your mind enough to help you remember the content.
- ✗ Highlighting- it can be very easy to mindlessly over-highlight the majority of a document, combined with annotation this method can be effective, but on its own tends to be a passive strategy.

Active Revision

In higher education, your examinations should not just be testing your ability to remember information; instead, they test your **understanding** of information. It is therefore important to make sure your revision takes this into account and that you do things that actively involve your brain. Active revision refers to interacting with the target material and making it meaningful. Active revision includes:

- ✓ **Summarizing information:** write a short paragraph that describes the topic. Include key points and relevant information.
- ✓ **Organizing information:** make mind maps, concepts maps or spider diagrams by picking out key pieces of information. Use highlighters or colourful notes to colour code your notes. Physically organize your notes and make connections between them (comparison/ contrast, with/ against, pros/cons...) will facilitate revising them.
- ✓ **Preparing model answers:** Look for some past papers or guess some exam questions and draft their answers.
- ✓ **Researching real world examples:** doing some online research to find examples that demonstrate points about the topics you are revising. If you have found your own examples you are more likely to remember them. If you have been given some examples, do some more research around them to find out extra information.
- ✓ **Discussing materials with others:** Meet with classmates and have a debate, explain things for each other or ask questions about the topics you are revising.

Task1: Do you use any of the active revising techniques? How are they useful for you?

Task2: You have taken some tests in different modules; how do you evaluate your revision? What worked well? What didn't work? What technique from today's lesson would you like to try?