



**ACE**

SOLUTION BOOKS

[www.acesolutionbooks.com](http://www.acesolutionbooks.com)

# The ACE Guide to Exam Preparation from Home

**Author:**

**Joe McCormack (Maths Teacher, Career Coach and Author)**

## Introduction

Getting used to the new norm of being at home all the time is proving challenging for both students and parents. This booklet contains recommendations and practical advice for both, in order to get that revision routine going and exact the maximum from this unusual period. You as students, with your teachers help, are attempting now to home-school yourselves without any previous experience of this. Always remember that you haven't been taught or asked to structure and balance your day like this before, given that your usual weekly routine consists of school, homework, sleep, repeat. The goal of this booklet is to provide you with tools and ideas to help you get organised, advise you on motivation and explore the role your parents may have at this time.

From an exam student's point of view, the first thing you need to look at each night is your plan for the next day. If your plan is to 'do a bit of study', a large part of the day could well pass you by. At this stage you need to develop your own workable home routine. To do this, I would recommend getting up at the same time, showering and having a structured plan for revision, meals and breaks to facilitate that pattern you need. Organising yourself the night before is key. Knowing what to expect the next day will make the process so much easier.

Revising at home for a longer period than your used to presents its own set of challenges. You will need to investigate new ways of finding and using material online. You will probably need to become familiar with new technology, as teachers strive to communicate with you. You will definitely need to be more self-disciplined and more efficient at managing your time than ever before. There will be no school timetable to follow, so you will need to set, pace and organise your own learning. If you can manage to embrace and overcome some of these initial hurdles, you are already halfway there. Change is challenging but can often

turn out to be a worthwhile; now you are being asked to completely change. Hopefully you will look back later and view this change as a positive period in your life. Without knowing it and as we speak, you are effectively turning yourself into independent thinkers and learners, and these skills will stand to you at third level and in the world of work to come.



## **Your Study Area**

Being at home all the time has placed more emphasis on where you study. Ask yourself the following questions; Is my revision area free from distractions, comfortable, warm and spacious? Is there natural light in the room and is the desk and chair I am using the right height for me? Is my study desk full of 'non educational material' or is it clutter free? Is this a place I can prepare notes and learn? Your answers to these questions will indicate if you need to make changes to this area or not. Up to now, your study area was only used for three to four hours each evening, but now it will be required a lot more and you need to ensure you are happy with its setup. Ideally, I would set up my revision area outside the bedroom, in order to disassociate sleep with study. Depending on your circumstances, all of the above may not be possible. Link in with your parents to try and get as many of these elements in place as you can.



## **The Routine of a Daily Lifestyle (Study) Timetable**

Routine and structure to me should be based around what I call a 'Lifestyle (Study) Timetable'. Through this, you plan exactly what you are going to do during each part of your day. The best starting point is to make a list of sub-topics to be revised for each subject; do this on a A3/A2 sheet of paper so that you

can see a full picture of all the content you need to cover (for each subject) between now and the exams. Each sub-topic on this sheet is ticked off as it gets completed. The next step is to rank your subjects (one to seven) in the order that you enjoy/excel at them. The first four subjects being the ones you are good at/enjoy, with subjects numbered five to seven being the ones you are not so fond of/not the best at. Numbers five to seven are the subjects you need to allocate more time to on your daily timetable each week. Each daily timetable should be written down to help you be more accountable to it i.e. More likely to complete it. It will also allow you to monitor progress at the end of each day and you can check back, as required, on exactly what you got finished.

Write out (then photocopy) or type your Lifestyle (Study) Timetable template, so that you can print copies and fill it in each day. If you are a disorganised person, you should set Identical start, finish, break and meal times day after day, thereby establishing a clear routine. Call me boring, but it works! I would be up and running by ten thirty a.m. each morning at the latest. Try and get up at the same time to crystallise your routine. Be super organised from the night before, so that you can start straight into it the next morning, without having to de-clutter or prepare/find materials. If you are feeling super energetic, you also have the option of following your subject timetable from school.

I recommend you write out a new timetable each evening for the following day. On this timetable, inbuild your breaks, exercise, time out chatting to friends, tv time, family time etc. Below is a partial sample of what a Lifestyle (Study) Timetable might look like (Increase the Zoom level to get a closer look if viewing on a device). As you can see, each revision 'block' is thirty minutes long and there is a five-minute break at the end of each block. Use short breaks to check your phone or get some air. Exercise of any form far out ways time spent on your phone or

console; Fact. I would never have the phone in your study area. Putting it in a different room will allow you to focus on what you should be doing. Take a good thirty-minute break after every two to three hours work. Reward your efforts.

*A Sample ACE Lifestyle (Study) Timetable\**

Lifestyle Study Timetable (Sample)														
KEY														
CM -Caithlín Maude														
	4-5pm	5-5.30	5.35-6.05	6.10-6.40	6.45-7.15	7.20-7.50	8-8.30	8.30-9	TOTALS	1	2	3	4	
										French (F)	English (E)	Irish (I)	Maths (M)	
Monday	Dinner									Comprehension (C)	King Lear (K)	Poetry (P-CM)	Algebra (A)	
Tuesday	Dinner	MAA	HW	HW	FOOTBALL		IP-CMA	HW	2.5	A - Vocab	A - Love	A - Treall	A - Simul Eqns	
Wednesday	Dinner									B - Forming Sentences	B - Tragedy	B - Impí	B - b Formula	
Thursday	Dinner									C - Reading Practice	C - Betrayal	C - Lá amháin	C - Eqns (Fraction)	
Friday	Dinner													
Weekly Revision Time:		30	30	30				30	30	2.5				
										5	6	7		
1. French (F)										Home Ec (H)	Tech Graphics (T)	Biology (B)		
2. English (E)										Recipes (R)	Conicals (C)	CELLS (C)		
3. Irish (I)										A - Curries	A - Tangents	A - Structure		
4. Maths (M)										B - Soups	B - Draw Hyperbola	B - Diversity of		
5. Home Ec (H)										C - Roasts	C - Draw Parabola	C - Enzymes		
6. Technical Graphics (T)													CU- Catch up	
7. Biology (B)														
	9-9.30	9.35-10.05	10.10-10.40	10.45-11.15	11.20-11.55	12-12.30	12.40-1.10	1.15-1.45	1.50-2.20	2.25-2.55	3-3.30	3.35-4.05	4.10-4.40	Total
Saturday	Breakfast	EKA	MAB	FCA	Break	HRA	Lunch			MATCH	CU	FCB	CU	
Sunday														
Weekend Revision Time:		30	30	30		30					30	30	30	3.5

\*Based on the Standard School Week.

It isn't a great idea to start the day with TV or a blast of your games console; leave that to the evening as required. Eat a good breakfast. This should be made much easier by the fact you won't have to eat at seven or seven-thirty a.m., like when you are attending school. From listening to my own students, I know that many of you avoid breakfast and this is a bad practice. Breakfast gives you the brain fuel to sustain energy levels until lunch time and improve concentration/memory for all your tasks. Just eat something no matter how small (and I'm not talking about a bowl of coco-pops here either).

In my opinion, Leaving Cert students would need to be doing between five and eight hours revision a day at home. This is broadly in line with what you would do between school and homework during normal class times anyway. Revise subjects and topics early in the day that may not be your favourite. Leaving subjects you enjoy until the evening makes so much sense, as you won't need as much energy and enthusiasm for them then. Tackle what you don't enjoy first and the day's work will become easier. I would question how beneficial music in your study area is. For the last subject of the evening, it may be useful to get you through it, but may ultimately just end up being a distraction. You will know yourself if the tones from your headphones are helpful or not? Is the information still sticking? Be honest and sensible with yourself here.

If you have a timetable/list of tasks set out for a day and things go wrong, just try to finish the day well and start again with a new timetable/list the following day. Try to be kind to yourself, remembering that anything in the past is not something you can do change anymore; you need to move on, start again tomorrow and try your best. Target specific topics in each subject instead of revising very generally. At the end of each day, review how your day went and start winding down at least an hour before bedtime. According to a recent survey, it is recommended that teenagers get between eight and ten hours sleep a night (apparently just over half of you are actually getting this). If you are at home studying, there is no excuse for not getting enough sleep (but not too much either).



### **Dealing with Motivation Issues – ‘I Don't Know Where to Start’**

Students, if you are struggling for motivation right now, put a half day's timetable in place tonight and try it tomorrow. Time will fly, with each block

being only thirty minutes. As you begin to see progress, your motivation will grow. An alternative approach to developing a timetable would be to create a task list. Each night you could write down a list of ten to twelve challenges you would like to achieve the next day. Tick them off then as you get them completed. If you currently feel you are swamped with work and worry, this is your 'get out of jail' card. It is so important to set targets, otherwise timetables and lists are just 'drive by' and 'hopeful' preparations that you will never be answerable to. We all need targets to help us achieve things and it is also a fact that we are more likely to reach them if they are written down.

Once you set a measurable target (example: eight pages from my textbook to be summarised into my own words), assess how much progress you have made. On completion, tick it off the sub-topic list on your A3/A2 summary sheet mentioned above. A short term target could be as simple as 'understanding emotions' from two English poems or practicing writing letters to an imaginary pen pal in whatever modern foreign language you study. Remember if you don't know where to start, commence with the basics of a topic. i.e. view the first few chapters of your textbook or the first set of notes your teacher gave you on it. Start small and then when you get up and running and notice progress, you will be encouraged by your own efforts. Just get a routine going somehow, and then rinse and repeat.

Another tip to improve motivation is to write out a list of targets in your Journal and then write ten reasons underneath explaining your motivation to ACE them. On lazy days, open that page and read your 'motivational list', thinking about how you felt when you wrote them. This will inspire you to get started or keep going. Revising and preparing may seem like it is solely for your upcoming exam, but you will discover that learning is a lifelong process. Try to enjoy the

challenge of getting that timetable completed or ticking off those tasks; you have nothing to lose and all to gain. It doesn't have to be perfect, just give it your all.

For those of you who continue to avoid doing any revision, start by writing down the activities or tasks you gravitate towards in order to dodge doing study. Put this task list on your wall and be fully aware of the times you drift towards them. Being aware of this list will remind of what you really should be putting your mind to at that given moment. Any effort or movement towards starting a short study block should motivate you to commence a second one i.e. The hardest part of being successful with any task is often just getting it started. Imagine yourself, on your side, rolling down a steep hill. You will gain momentum as you go.



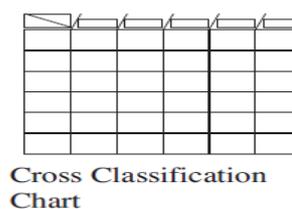
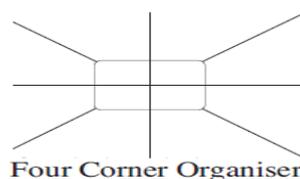
## **The Many and Best Ways to Learn**

The key to any successful Lifestyle (Study) Timetable is keeping your brain fresh by completing different tasks every thirty minutes. Rotate your learning between different subjects but also within subjects. What I mean by this is: Learn in all the different ways possible. You only need five or six working methods, but won't know which suit you until you actually road test them yourself. The below is a sample list of the many ways we learn. I am sure you could add even more creative and interesting methods to this list that match your personality. Pick out three or four of these approaches and give them a try:

1. Write a bulleted list to explain and summarise a short book extract.
2. Summarise a chapter of your textbook into your own words.
3. Create flash cards with a list of facts. Limit each card to seven key points.
4. Record a summary using the voice memo function on your phone. Replay back.

5. Put keywords and their definition for each subject (per topic) into a hardback.
6. View a YouTube video of an expert or listen to audio/podcasts on topics.
7. Teach or discuss what you have learned with a member of your family.
8. Get your parents/siblings to ask you questions on a topic you have just revised.
9. Read a summary out loud to yourself.
10. Rotate your place of study to retain freshness. e.g. the garden or kitchen table.
11. Create Bubble diagrams with Microsoft PowerPoint to illustrate topic linkages.
12. Create a visual Mind Map for a sub-topic you are struggling with.
13. Stick nine postits onto an A4 sheet. Write a summary with keywords onto them.
14. Use different coloured pens (red and green) to draw attention to key points.
15. Use different coloured highlighters to mark relevant details of note.
16. Chat to friends to find out how they are approaching certain subjects/topics.
17. Stick stickies/sheets on your wall for memory. Rotate content every five days.
18. Research topics on the Internet to give yourself that extra piece of information.
19. Continually test yourself with sample tests, online quizzes & past exam papers.
20. Use Graphic Organisers to create a more visual set of notes (samples below).

### *Sample Graphic Organisers\**



\*Source: Using Graphic Organisers in Teaching and Learning (SLSS)



## **Working Against the Clock**

In order to give yourself the edge over your fellow students, you should work where possible against the clock. There is no substitute for creating a little exam environment at home. Firstly, read and understand a piece of work (e.g. a chapter in Physics) and without looking at your book, take a sheet of paper and over five minutes, write down all the key headings and important information from what you just revised. Go back then and re-read the chapter and update or re-do your summary page. You will notice that your summary page the second time is of much better quality and detail. In recording and updating your summary page and unknown to yourself, you are actually learning and understanding the information better. Once you believe you have a decent grasp of a topic, you should seek out and try a past exam question based on it. Set your stopwatch to ensure you get the question attempted within the allocated time. It is important to get used to how timing works on exam papers, remembering that each paper in each subject differs.



## **Ask your Teacher**

Your subject teacher can offer expert guidance on using past papers, marking schemes and being efficient with time. In all cases, reach out to your class teacher if you are struggling to get revision started. They will be only delighted to try help you overcome barriers; always wanting you to do well. One of the ACE questions I would ask them is: ‘What are the best ways to prepare and then learn the material in your subject?’ This open question will allow them to give you a range of options. Through your practice and their guidance, you will then find which strategies suit your learning style. This of course is on a trial and improve basis, where you won’t know a methods suitability until you attempt to implement it first. Of course, you can ring up a friend in your class for advice or encouragement to see

what their opinion is or what viewpoint they are adopting. The more views and advice you obtain, the better decisions you can make that fit your needs.



## **Practice by Doing**

I am a huge fan of ‘summarising your summaries’ in order to have notes written simply in your own language and manageable to learn and understand later. Scientists have found an intrinsic link between one’s hand and brain, emphasising this point. If you source good notes from a friend or online, reading and understanding their relevance isn’t enough. You will need to transcribe their content onto a new page in your own words. When doing this, use simple language, lists and graphics to make the content memorable for yourself later.

According to the learning pyramid constructed by the National Training Laboratories at Maine (United States), we retain up to seventy five percent of work ‘practiced by doing’. ‘Practice doing’ involves active learning by writing notes on textbooks, attempting potential questions and being willing to make mistakes and learn from them. The retention figure from the pyramid for ‘reading’ reduces to just ten percent. This indicates that we only remember a small amount of what we read. If your revision sessions thus far have consisted of reading texts (In a recent survey, fifty five percent of students claim that this is their number one study technique), you are wasting time and need to change tact now. You constantly should be reducing the amount of notes you have by re-writing/summarising them. For example, summarise ten lines of written or typed notes into four written. By consistently doing this you are actively thinking about the content instead of just scanning through it.



## **Managing Difficult Subjects (Maths for Example)**

Some subjects cause more anxiety in students than others. Unfortunately, my own subject, Maths, is one of those for many of you. This is a subject that everyone completes an exam in, and one that needs to be prepared diligently due to there being no choice on the papers. With subjects you find difficult, apply the 'Practice doing' principle to it, as discussed above. My main advice around Maths (or indeed any subject you struggle with) would be to practice completing as many past questions from recent previous exams as possible. Start with the more straightforward part (a)'s and check your solution against a detailed solution book each time. Then commence the part (b)'s and so on. This will build your confidence levels step by step.

For Leaving Certificate Maths students, the shorter twenty-five mark questions are a good place to start with this strategy. When you feel more confident, start combining questions together and measure your performance against the clock. For example, attempt to do two short questions inside the allocated twenty-five minutes. This strategy links to having the 'home exam centre' mentioned earlier. I cannot over emphasise enough the importance of testing yourself at home in difficult subjects. Set a quiz or write a test for yourself the night before and complete it the next morning inside a specified time limit. Use test questions from each chapter's end and check if your teacher can send you some mini-tests. The current lack of class testing time means you must cover this base now yourself.

Homework given at any time of the year in Maths should be taken seriously. View it as a challenge to get your method and answers as close to one hundred percent correct as you can. In my experience, the students who do well are the ones who research methods online or Investigate simple examples from

their textbook in order to get started on that difficult question. I still go online to verify Maths concepts that I am not one hundred percent sure of. While doing this, I often go on to discover alternative ways to solve problems and gather new pieces of information on my travels. The more pathways you can find to solve a given problem, the more options you will have to reapply these methods to questions presented on exam day.

Recording new formulas and keynotes into a hardback is also a useful exercise, given you can refer to them in one central place from then on. This hardback will become (in time) your 'go to fix' if you get stuck on a problem. Ensure to keep all your notes and hardbacks in Maths (no sum copy bonfires), as you may end up studying a module in it at third level. Life can be strange sometimes. Algebra is the language of Maths, so knowing it is certainly a big help in this subject. The examiners place a big emphasis on this topic at all levels of Maths. If you are struggling in the subject, start by revising basic Algebra now. This will give you the foundations for a palatial residence later i.e. success.

In summary, If there is a subject you find difficult, build up your vocab of words that regularly appear in it, check in with your teacher to find out what core topics you need to focus on, allocate more time to the subject on your Lifestyle (Study) Timetable and ultimately attempt as many past exam questions on it as you can, starting initially with really basic questions from past papers.



### **Keep a Check on Your Mental Health**

Being successful in any new routine will be determined by how positive your current outlook is. Positivity also fosters better mental health. In order to maintain that positivity, keep in touch with friends via WhatsApp and the

usual social media platforms. Maintaining contact with friends is vital, as you will understandably miss the lack of face-to-face interaction with them. A conversation with friends will help you forget about current issues and give you renewed energy. Try and be positive in these conversations in order to lift and motivate each other as best you can. For once, I am going to advocate using all social channels available to communicate with your friends (if they are safe obviously). You will spend most of your time studying alone, so social time on facetime or calls during the day with your peers and friends from school is important.

For exam students, you need to trust the fact that we have one of the most robust and fairest exam systems in the world. The exam papers are always marked fairly for all each year, no matter what the circumstances. It is currently a very transparent system, so please trust it. Focus on your own work and what you can control. The State Exams Commission (SEC) are hyper aware of the importance of student's mental health at this time.

Maintain some form of exercise. I find that a short walk can allow ideas to sink into your brain. I'm not sure why?, but it works for me. Alternatively, bring your favourite playlist along. Try not to stay in bed past ten a.m. in the morning and eat plenty of fruit and vegetables in order to build the key vitamins.

Notice each day how you are feeling. In relation to emotions, its often the case that when you 'name them', you 'tame them'. This awareness will help you be more in tune with your body and deal with any 'down time' should it arrive. Apparently, doing a quick five minute tidy of your space or bedroom is a useful way to increase positive feelings and emotions. Try it and see! If you do find yourself down in the dumps, be sure to talk to someone; anyone.



## **Advice Around Managing Anxiety**

It is important to try and focus on one task at a time and not look too far ahead during times of stress. It is perfectly ok to be worried or anxious about uncertain situations and you should acknowledge the existence of these feelings. Try to find someone to talk to about any stress or worry you may have. It can be a friend, boyfriend/girlfriend, sibling, one of your mates or a parent. Somehow when you talk through what's worrying you, it often becomes more manageable. Listening to rumours on social media or from friends can do more damage than good. Sticking to the exact facts will help you greatly face up to the reality of the situation you must deal with.

I always found keeping a diary useful in managing my anxieties and would encourage you to write your own thoughts onto paper; even a list of uncertainties that may be playing on your mind currently. Check in with yourself to see how you feel after each little 'thought writing' session. Try to remember that too much worry can prevent you from doing your best. Seek help or advice from a professional if you feel this may be the case for you.

Varying what we do during the day keeps our brain active and will allow less time for anxiety to creep in. As human beings, our minds often bring us to worst-case scenarios, but we learn from experience that these rarely come to pass. Fear can often be a false emotion. Cast your mind back to good times you had recently; things weren't really that amazing then, were they? Now remember a point in your life when you struggled; things changed quickly some days later and it didn't seem as horrible as you expected in the end, did it? Nothing lasts forever.

Always focus on what you can control and all the good people in your life. Stay positive, connected with friends and deal with the exact reality of

situations. You will discover you are more resilient and stronger than you think. Everything will pass. Doing a little bit of revision each day and ticking off that task list you create (the night before) will reduce anxiety levels. Try my 'ACE stability measures' to help maintain confidence and manage anxiety:

1. Tick off your sub-topic list as it gets completed.
2. Focus in on work you have completed at the end of each day.
3. Think positively about yourself.
4. Plan something nice or enjoyable for each day.
5. Take things day by day.
6. Set yourself little targets and challenges each day.
7. Remember always that 'You are enough'.



### **Parental Support for Students at Home**

Parents, your new role is one of increasing influence, given that your child is now at home all the time. Strangely enough, they actually like the structure of school and seeing their friends there every day. Being at home is not something they are used to and may require some time to bed down into a pattern of revision and rest. You are not a teacher, so it's important to remember that if you are doing your best, you are doing enough. Here are my twenty recommendations to help you be the best you can for your child currently revising in the home environment:

1. Help them establish a revision routine in a quiet, clean and comfortable area.
2. Plan your day a little around them, so you can be there to support their efforts.
3. Provide the quiet support: school materials , healthy dinners & encouragement.
4. Be realistic about the amount of revision they may do each day.
5. Encourage family time including walks & drives to keep communication open.

6. Show interest by requesting that they discuss or come and teach topics to you.
7. Be calm, tolerant and patient with their moods as best you can.
8. Try praise their efforts (no matter how small) even if you feel they don't deserve.
9. Remind them to communicate with their teachers/friends if they have queries.
10. If they are disorganised or scatty, sit down & brainstorm to help them organise.
11. Empower them to help around the house, i.e. Cooking/Cleaning/Gardening.
12. Trust them to take responsibility for their own learning.
13. Encourage them to talk to you if they feel anxious about anything.
14. Endeavour to maintain balance. Nothing is ever as bad or as good as it seems.
15. Don't be afraid to get stuck in academically. Impart your knowledge to them.
16. Examine them on subjects, questions and texts they may need help with.
17. Try not to pass any anxiety you have on to them; Just let them breathe.
18. Try to cook substantial nutritious meals so that they aren't constantly 'grazing'.
19. Intervene in all cases if you feel they are overwhelmed or struggling mentally.
20. Parent.



## **ACE'ing Your Prep at Home – Final Thoughts**

Students,

Your best bet now is to make the most of this challenge set down for you. You now have more freedom than ever to create your own study blocks and breaks; effectively you can control the pace of your learning. If your revision blocks are short (i.e. thirty minutes), you are less likely to daydream and waste time in them. You can now allocate time to various subjects and tasks unlike before; embrace it. It is an opportunity to take responsibility for your own learning and with this you are preparing yourself for third level education or whatever route you choose after school.

Create a good solid routine, especially to start the day. Having a good morning can often be the key to a productive day. Keep your social media stint to a limited time in the morning, otherwise it may become an endless scroll, with well laid out plans being scuppered. Every morning, commence your Lifestyle (Study) Timetable or the list of ten to twelve tasks you have written down from the night before. Be sure to make everyone in the house aware of your study times, so that it is as quiet as possible during these periods.

Keeping your timetable/task list simple and realistic will allow you to get through the day's work and make it easier to get started also. Maybe setup four tasks in the morning, three after lunch and three in the evening if you find creating a timetable for the full day too daunting. Sample tasks may include, revising a short chapter in your Maths book and completing ten test questions, note taking on a certain period in History or summarising one aspect of your Biology or Home Economics course. How do you eat an elephant? Answer: Break it up into small pieces and eat it bit by bit. Treat your task list the same.

Be honest with yourself (as best you can) about how you are going to use the Internet, social media and phone during revision times. The best way to control this is to set out the exact times you will use devices and where they will be located during revision blocks. If you struggle to separate yourself from your phone, request the help of your parents to find a solution. If you find your eyes are getting sore from 'screen time', whether that be on a PC or phone, this is your body telling you to give it a break and it is wise to listen to the voice within in these cases. Along with reasonable tech time, ensure you enjoy and inbuild fun, phone calls to friends, exercise, music and relaxation into each day's revision timetable. These types of breaks are essential for productivity; but ensure to keep an eye on time away, as short breaks can easily turn into longer wasteful ones.

As above, vary the different ways you study and indeed your revision location also. Keep your study area clean and organised in order to be more productive. Find out which ways of learning work for you and repeat them. If you are finding a specific revision method worthless, try something else from my listing above. Manage your revision effectively by using the best methods suitable to you and appropriate to that subject.

Winston Churchill once said that 'Perfection is the enemy of progress'. In subjects we find difficult, we often learn more by making mistakes as opposed to getting everything perfectly right at the beginning. If you always think your notes and revision blocks aren't of a high enough standard, you will soon loose heart by your perceived lack of excellence. Failure and Imperfection should be viewed as a positive, as it encourages us to try harder and continually better ourselves. This was one of my keys to success. I always wanted to improve and ultimately be the best at whatever I did. You may never reach perfection, so be content with progress and don't be too hard on yourself.

Finally, write down both short and long term goals and re-read and update them every so often to remind yourself why you are putting in such an effort right now. Goals should be used to motivate and drive you to achieve great things. Focus always on the work you have completed, not what you haven't done. With times now still uncertain, the quicker you settle down into a routine and discover study techniques that work for you, the better you will feel. Adjusting to a new school year structure and timetable can take time. Right now, you are effectively trying to discover a home routine to allow yourself to continue learning and give yourself the best possible chance come exam time. I wish you luck and good health going forward and feel free to contact me through the channels below if I can help you in any way. Joe



**More details about Joe's ACE Career Coaching, ACE Tuition (Maths, English and Irish) and his ever popular ACE Maths Solution Books for the Junior and Leaving Certificate can be found via the links below. Be sure to pick up your copy today!**

**W:** [acesolutionbooks.com](http://acesolutionbooks.com)

**FB:** [facebook.com/JoeMcCormackEducationalExpert/](https://facebook.com/JoeMcCormackEducationalExpert/)



# Author Profile



Joe McCormack, an Irish educational expert, has taught Mathematics, Geography, ICT, ECDL, Web Design, Technical Graphics, C.S.P.E, Woodwork, and Science in various Secondary schools for the last seventeen years. Joe has corrected Maths Exam papers for the Department of Education and Skills and has tutored both Maths and Geography in Ireland's top school for tuition, the Dublin Academy of Education. Joe is a qualified Personal, Business and Career Coach, graduating from the Irish Lifecoach Institute (ILI). He is the founder of 'ACE Maths Tuition' in Navan and Ratoath and recently received an All-Star Accreditation for Thought Leadership in 'Education and Career Development' from the All-Ireland Business Foundation (AIBF).

Through his experience and research, Joe has gained a unique understanding of the struggles and obstacles students' face when it comes to the Junior and Leaving Certificate, having retailed over four thousand ACE Maths Solution Books. With more than five thousand followers on Facebook, Joe answers queries and posts informative material to provide ongoing support to students and their parents. ACE Solution Books are an unrivalled suite of books that will ensure Secondary school students achieve their maximum potential in both class and state exams.



*Recommendations and more details about Joe's business can be viewed on:*

**[www.acesolutionbooks.com](http://www.acesolutionbooks.com)**



*Sail on the Seas of Ambition and Land on the Shores of Success*

