



Tackle your exam

Open questions

1. Orientate on the whole exam

- What topics will be covered?
- Will there be a mark indication?
- How many questions are there? If there are many open-ended questions, apply the rounds system. If there are not so many questions, it is wise to read through them first. Make short notes of what comes to mind.

2. Ponder and decide which question is the easiest.

Start with the easiest question to get going and to score some easy points.

3. Analyse the question

Ask yourself what exactly is being asked to know. Make short notes and underline key words such as:

- Verb (activity)
- Object (what about)
- Quality/quantity (comprehensive, concepts, numbers)

4. Make an answer sheet for yourself and check that it actually answers the question.

Please note the following points:

- Are you being asked for your opinion, or is it an objective account of theories?
- Are you supposed to write an essay, or is it meant to be short and to the point?
- If it is an essay question, make sure you formulate a firm statement, which you then back up with some facts/arguments.
- Choose your words carefully. If necessary, make use of relevant key concepts from the material.
- If you don't know something, strong conjectures and snippets of knowledge can still score points.



5. **Repeat parts of the question in your answer.**

This will ensure that you don't forget bits (key concepts, parts of the assignment). Moreover, it helps you stick to the guidelines (do not exceed word count, no unnecessary details).

6. **Treat the question from the most logical perspective.**

If a question is unclear, reason back to activate your prior knowledge of the context. What was said about this in the lecture? What aspects of this phenomenon were covered in the book? In what way was this phenomenon approached?

7. **Place redundant information at the end.**

Do you know more? Give the answers you are sure of. Add to them if you have time to spare, and clearly separate the additional information from your answer so that readers know you have read the question properly. That way, you won't lose points and avoid getting caught up with your time.

8. **Check your answer.**

Does it say everything? Is the argument comprehensible? Also note any spelling and stylistic errors.