

Last-minute HSC preparations and keeping your sanity intact

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R Ramisa Rubaba Rashed



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The anxiety has officially arrived. With barely two months left on the calendar, your mind is likely somewhere between curating impossibly ambitious study schedules (destined to be abandoned by day three) and hyperfixating on the indisputable fact that this syllabus is practically unending. Cast your mind back to February, after the test exams, when you drafted the masterful blueprint for an academic comeback. It was, in hindsight, a spectacular sandcastle. We shall speak no more of February.

Now, your colour-coded pages, mock exam scores that persistently make you question your life choices, and endless “what-ifs” for your forthcoming uncertain future let you do all but study at peace. Your all-nighters feel like they last mere minutes, and this distorted, caffeine-endorsed sense of time has trapped you in a loop of overthinking, losing your sanity, and laughing like a maniac at yourself in the mirror at 3 AM when the world is basically dead.



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But it's not the time to indulge the dramatic dilemma that you're doomed to. Let us take a deep breath and reset while you still have time left.

Mute the background noise

As Shakespeare wrote in Hamlet, “When sorrows come, they come not single spies but in battalions.” Apologies, but hold onto this idea now, and everything will feel overwhelming. Funny enough, in the hours you set aside for focus, you might find yourself spending a chunk of your time worrying about how that one friend has finished their second revision while you still have some chapters untouched. Even your own brain can sabotage you during peak stress.

To combat this, cut out the useless information that’ll lead you to be distracted from your own advancement, which includes ignoring social media rumours, muting group conversations where everyone pretends not to have studied, and not engaging in baseless self-loathing sessions. Protect your peace because your GPA depends on it.



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How to make an academic comeback

Set realistic daily goals

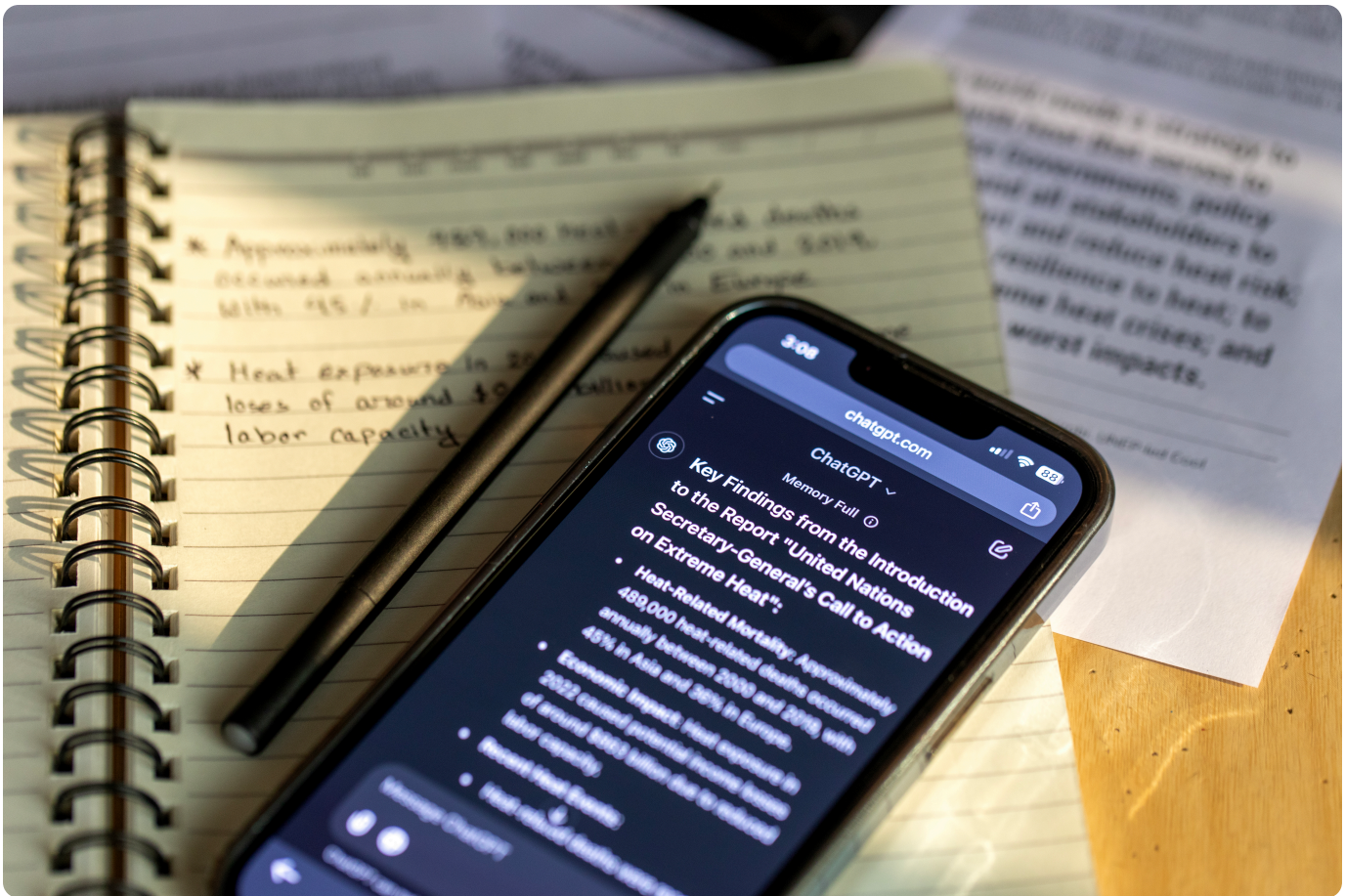
Master the art of completing daily targets instead of long-term goals. You don’t have to complete the entire syllabus in a day. Divide your time among non-negotiable obligations, essential survival necessities (such as eating and sleeping), and dedicated study blocks. An hour of deep studying is better than sitting under your table lamp the entire night without absorbing any information you studied into your core memory.

Prioritise precision over perfection

It's high time you ditched the fantasy of "finishing the syllabus perfectly" without actual learning.

When you start focusing solely on finishing your large syllabus instead of gaining mastery over each topic, your prefrontal cortex shifts from a state of deep cognitive control to a stress-driven mode. It causally depletes mental energy and reduces the ability to think critically, leading to errors when you're decoding questions.

Thus, it's important to identify the gaps one topic at a time and tackle any questions regarding that topic through past paper analysis before moving on to the next. Try to recognise patterns instead of just sticking to notes. Practise questions that have repeatedly appeared in the past years.



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Train your hand for the exam

You cannot neglect the physical endurance required for the exam hall. It is vital to solve full-length papers every once in a while, especially for subjects like Bangla, where your hand will experience a slowdown if you do not practise writing at high speed from now on. You might have the most brilliant answer formulated in your brain, but it's entirely useless if your wrist cramps up and refuses to cooperate halfway through the paper.

Maintain consistency over the urge to study

Oftentimes, we decide to study after experiencing a spate of inspiration, for which we look for external motivation. Waiting for an impetus to study can increase dependence on inconsistent feelings. This rush of dopamine can make you study for 12 hours straight, which is commendable, but afterwards, you're probably engulfed in an emotional burnout that cannot be satiated.

For this, force yourself (quite literally) to study consistently despite how you're feeling internally.

Yes, the goal is to get the best result. But remember, you're supposed to be a little unhinged at this stage. You cannot become a hyper-productive legend overnight. So, study with your heart, keep your sanity intact, and maybe let yourself sleep.

Ramisa Rubaba Rashed is a poet, a singer, a blob of life floating somewhere in the meticulous matrix of infinity. Send her your poetry recs at: raemsi.ruby@gmail.com

