



*AWLED CONFERENCE*

## Strategies to Improve Exam Preparation & Performance

presented by

Dr Alan B Jones

member



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### The Day:

09.30 - 10.00: Registration  
10.00 - 11.00: Examinations - some thoughts on performance  
11.00 - 11.15: Break  
11.15 - 12.15: Emotions - Confidence - Achievement  
12.15 - 13.15: Lunch  
13.15 - 14.15: Active Revision - Approaches to Revision  
14.15 - 14.30: Break  
14.30 - 15.30: Thoughts on School Based Revision Programmes  
15.30 - 15.45: Evaluation and Next Steps

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# *Revision*

One of the real issues about revision is the myth perpetuated in many schools that revision is something that is attempted at the end of a course, prior to examinations.

REVISION needs to be seen as an on-going habit, a relevant and meaningful daily REVIEW of learning.

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**Your Notes:**

# *Examinations*

PERCEPTIONS of...

ATTITUDES towards...

BELIEFS about...

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**Your Notes:**

## *Attitudes to Examinations*

- Different Perspectives
  - School
  - Parents
  - Teachers
  - Friends/Peers
  - Society
  - Media

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**Your Notes:**

# *Targets*

**There is "no quantified evidence" about whether threatening to close schools affects their pupils' performance**

National Audit Office : Reported BBC News 26/09/2008

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**Your Notes:**

## *Inter-School Rivalry*

- Statistical evidence indicates that GCSE exam results have been raised by over four percentage points as a result of the increased competition between schools.
- This represents nearly one-quarter of the improvement in exam results since the mid-1990s.

Diversity, choice and the quasi-market: Bradley & Taylor 2007

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**Your Notes:**

## *A Fair Measure of Attainment?*

- Children suffering from hay fever while sitting GCSEs are 40 per cent more likely to drop a grade between their mocks and final exams.
- The failure rate rises to 70 per cent if they're taking an anti-histamine treatment which causes drowsiness.

The Mail On-Line: 17/09/07

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**Your Notes:**

## *Preparedness*

- Exam performance is not just down to IQ. Emotional Intelligence is also important according to a study that investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and educational achievement.
- This means that teaching children to understand and manage their emotions may help them academically.

British Psychological Society's Education Section Annual Conference 01/11/08

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**Your Notes:**

## *Performance Coaching*

- Motivating Revision
- Motivating Futures
- Motivating Performance

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## *Motivating “Revision”*

- Point
- Purpose
- Value
- What
- Where
- When
- How
- HAVING
  - goals
- CARING
  - Value and Purpose
- OWNING
  - WIIFM
- DOING
  - Skills
  - Support

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**Simple** statements of desired outcome



Knowing WHEN you've got there - **Measureable**



Being clear about HOW to get there - **Achievable**



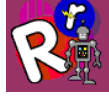
having some meaningful value or reason to achieve it - **Rewarding**



Knowing WHEN you want to get there – **Time(bound)**



Knowing HOW to get feedback on progress - **Evaluation**



Knowing what will be different when you've achieved it – **Review** – NEXT?

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**So, what do you want to achieve exactly**



**How will you know when you've achieved it**



**Do you know WHAT you need to do and WHO/WHAT can help you**



**What makes it so useful to achieve this, what will it allow you to do**



**What deadlines do you need to meet, how can the task be broken down**



**How are you going to check your progress, keep your self on target**



**When you achieve it what could you do next...**

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# APPLICATION...



If something is important to you you will spend time doing it, learning it, working for it....

How do you spend your time ?



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# SELF CONFIDENCE



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# SUCCESS...



**BY WHOSE CRITERIA.....**

**WHO SAYS WHAT SUCCESS IS....**

**WHO 'OWNS' THE SUCCESS....**

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**Your Notes:**

# S.H.F.T.

	Describe...	Imagine...	Experience...
<b>S</b> SEE	WHAT ...  HOW ...  IF...	Can You IMAGINE.....  Have you FELT....	See yourself achieving....
<b>H</b> HEAR			See
<b>F</b> FEEL			Hear
<b>T</b> THINK			Feel
			Think

**FUTURE SENSE...**

When you HAVE ACHIEVED this what will you SEE, HEAR, FEEL, THINK...

Look back from the future to the present and advise yourself...

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**Your Notes:**

# Some Resources



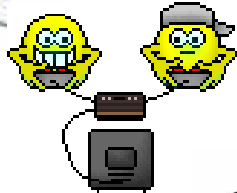
*The Revision “Game”*

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THERE'S PLENTY OF TIME



I'LL GET ROUND TO IT

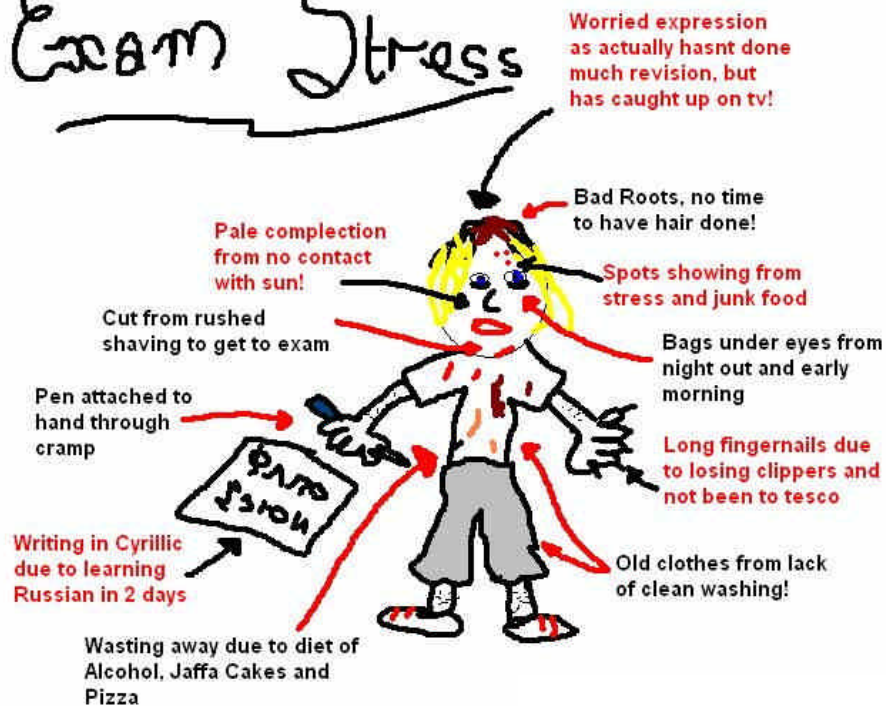


HOW DO THEY EXPECT ME TO DO ALL THIS WORK IN THE TIME THEY'VE GIVEN ME ?



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# Exam Stress





### Some Guidelines for Learners

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# RE - VISION : RE - VIEW

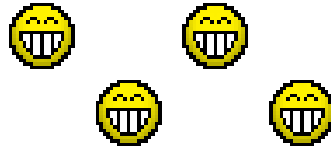
TO LOOK AGAIN

TO SEE AGAIN

TO LOOK WITH FRESH EYES

TO ACKNOWLEDGE PROGRESS & LEARNING

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REVIEWING REVISION ROUTINES RICHLY  
REWARDS RIGHTEOUS READERS,  
RATIONAL RACONTORS, and REASONABLY  
REASONABLE RESEARCHERS who RESTATE  
REMARKABLE RESULTS RECEIVED through  
RE-CONSIDERING REVISION RULES,  
ROLES and RATIONALE

# TOP TIPS

## IMAGINE SUCCESS...

What it looks, sounds and feels like



## GET ORGANISED...

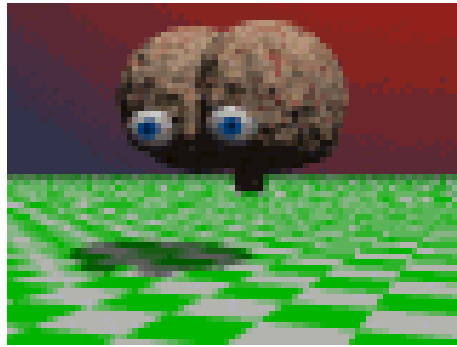
What do you need to learn ?

What are the main topics ?



## UNDERSTAND...

Make sure you understand key points  
You can't learn what you don't 'get' ...



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## TIME TABLE

Draw up a revision plan  
STICK TO IT...



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## SPACE...

Create a 'learning space'

Keep it organised...

Restrict distractions

TV/DVD/Radio

Magazines

Playstation/X-Box

Computer Games



## SHORT BURSTS

Revise in short bursts

Follow a plan



## BE ACTIVE IN YOUR LEARNING...

MIND MAPS

PICTURES

RHYMES

RAPS

FLASH CARDS

STUDY BUDDIES



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• Listening to a lecture	5%
• Reading	10%
• Audio-Visual	20%
• Demonstration	30%
• Discussion Group	50%
• Practise by doing	75%
• Teaching-Application	90%

### REMEMBER

**It's not WHAT you do but HOW you do it**

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# GRAPHIC ORGANISERS

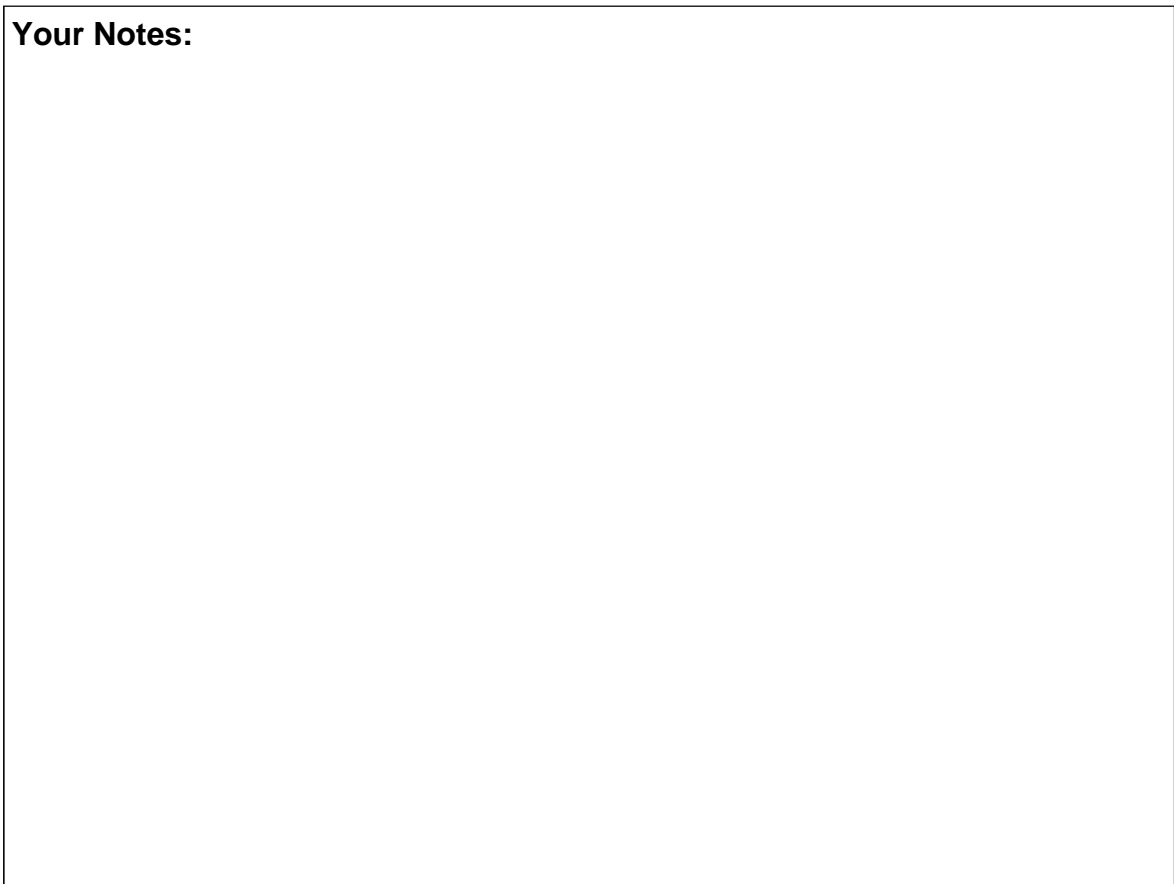
*Mind Maps*

*Topic Webs*

*Flow Charts*

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**Your Notes:**



### Internal/Thermal Energy Transfers

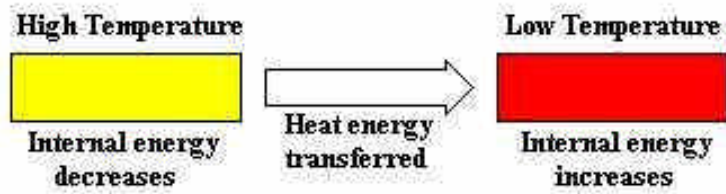
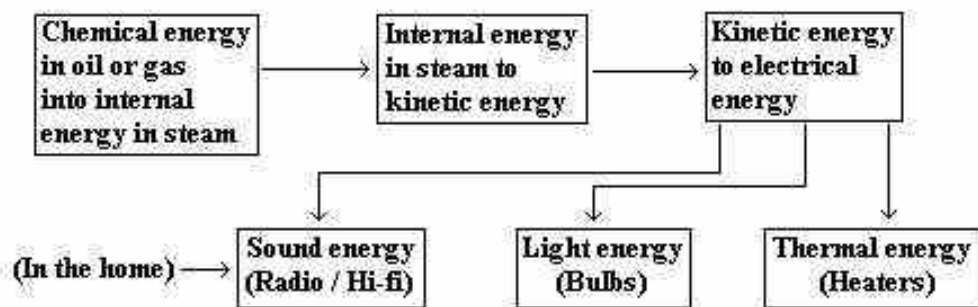


Fig 9.2 An energy conversion (In a power station)



Your Notes:

# Time Management

- IN THE FLOW
- GOOD TIME - goes fast
- BAD TIME – drags

## IDEA

Time is a personal illusion

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## Time is...

- Time is the most precious thing we have
- Time is ultimately the most valuable resource
- Time and how we spend it within the organization must be managed effectively
- Time is totally perishable
- Time cannot be stored up for use later

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# What is Time Management

Planning & Goal setting

Managing yourself

Dealing with other people

Your time

Getting results

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## Time Management

Control your time = Control your life

Lowers your stress level

Use what works for you

Face up to reality!

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It's up to you...

You control how well you do

You made the choice to be here

The FUTURE is chosen NOW

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## Time Management

The syllabus is your “big picture”

Read each syllabus carefully.

Get calendar/diary – USE IT

Pick out all important dates

**Mark all dates on the calendar**

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# Time Management

Break the “big picture” into smaller chunks

Weekly schedule.

Do this on Sunday evening

Set priorities for your week

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## Essential Habits

Know where the hours are going

Keep focused on the end result

Work to defined priorities

Schedule time for important issues

Deal with **creative avoidance**

Take the stress out of work

Keep applying the essential habits!

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“We all have time to either spend or waste and it is our decision what to do with it. But once passed, it is gone forever.”

-- Bruce Lee

from “Zen in the Martial Arts” by Joe Hyams

## Key Actions

- Evaluate how you are using your time
- Determine your priorities
- Create a weekly schedule
- Maintain a to-do list
- Eliminate barriers to effective time management

# Barriers..

- Distractions
- Disorganization
- Perfectionism
- Procrastination
- Rigidity

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**Your Notes:**

# Distractions

Distractions come in many forms, but we must learn to avoid distractions if we are to get work done. Here are a few ideas:

- Tell people when you are busy and cannot be disturbed.
- Work in areas where you are less likely to be disturbed.
- Do your work at times when you are most alert. It is easier to get distracted when you are tired.

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# Disorganization

People often waste much time because of disorganization. Here are some tips for staying organized:

- Keep things that you need in a specific place.
- Eliminate clutter.
- Before starting on a task, make sure that you have all of the materials or information that you need.
- Follow your schedule.

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# Perfectionism

It is a virtue to want to do a good job, but some people become so anxious about getting a job done perfectly that they never complete it.

- Examine whether your efforts to get the job done perfectly are really improving things or preventing you from getting the job done
- Remember perfection is a journey

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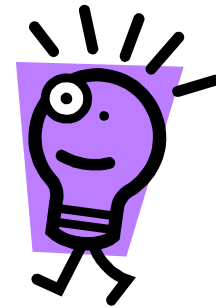
# Procrastination

It is easy to put off tasks if they are not due right away. The trouble is, tasks pile up and you can run into a time crunch later.

Remember to work ahead whenever possible.  
If you can do it today, do it!

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# K.W.L.



Here's a useful tool for helping you to organise your revision sessions... especially if the Revision Planning Grid looks a bit too awkward....

You can start the revision session by completing the K and W columns.

At the end of the session you can fill in the L column...

Here's an example from a Year 11 pupil...

Subject: SCIENCE/BIOLOGY

Topic: Respiration/Humans

K	W	L
What I KNOW	What I WANT to know	What I've LEARNED
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Breathe in O<sub>2</sub></li> <li>• Breathe out CO<sub>2</sub></li> <li>• Oxygen diffused in blood</li> <li>• Lungs - Brachia</li> <li>• Alveolus</li> <li>• Cillia—hairs ?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Diffusion—more info</li> <li>• Role of Blood</li> <li>• Importance of cillia</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Haemoglobin</li> <li>• Sickle Cell</li> <li>• Diffusion</li> <li>• Semi-Permeable Membranes</li> </ul>

Notice how the notes are kept to key words and phrases. Their active revision was in the form a diagrams and hi-lighted notes, but this grid helped them summarise their learning. It also helped them see what things they still needed to know.

# Revision Plan



Here's how a planned revision session might look...

Subject: GEOGRAPHY

Topic: RIVERS: Erosion

TIME	Activity	Notes
5 min	Plan Session	<i>Make sure I've got textbook; my notes and case study on floods</i>
10 min	KEY IDEAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Attrition &amp; Corrasion</i></li> <li>• <i>"V" Shaped Valleys &amp; Interlocking Spurs</i></li> <li>• <i>Meanders &amp; Ox-Bow Lakes</i></li> <li>• <i>Land-Use on a flood plain</i></li> <li>• <i>Problems of flooding</i></li> <li>• <i>River Valleys and Transport</i></li> </ul>
10 min	Set Questions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Write definitions of Key Words?</i></li> <li>• <i>Say how rivers make valleys?</i></li> <li>• <i>What factors affecting flooding</i></li> </ul>
30 min	REVISE	Which ACTIVE REVISION techniques will you use? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Mind Map</i></li> <li>• <i>Diagrams</i></li> </ul>
10 min	BREAK	<i>I can sort out my Physics notes over a cup of tea</i>
10 min	SELF-TEST	How did you do? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I checked my answers with text book &amp; notes</i></li> <li>• <i>I still need to look at how meanders are formed</i></li> </ul>
5 min	Conclusions	Make a note to review new learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>I'm going to put my mind map on my wall</i></li> <li>• <i>I now understand...</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The words Corrasion &amp; Attrition</i></li> <li>• <i>I know what a levee is</i></li> <li>• <i>I found out about 'Infiltration' and 'lag time'</i></li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Revision Plan



You can use this sheet to help you plan a revision session

Subject:

Topic:

TIME	Activity	Notes
5 min	Plan Session	
10 min	KEY IDEAS	
10 min	Set Questions	
30 min	REVISE	Which ACTIVE REVISION techniques will you use?
10 min	BREAK	
10 min	SELF-TEST	How did you do?
	BREAK	Make a note to review new learning

**British Psychological Society's Education Section Annual Conference  
01/11/08**

Exam performance is not just down to IQ. Emotional Intelligence is also important according to a new study that investigated the relationship between emotional intelligence and educational achievement. This means that teaching children to understand and manage their emotions may help them academically. The findings were presented at The British Psychological Society's Education Section Annual Conference on the 1st of November 2008.

At the start of the five year study, 628 Year 7 students were tested on an objective measure of emotional intelligence - the ability to identify, assess, and manage your own and others' emotions. These measures were then compared to each student's English and Science results at Year 9 SAT and again two years later at GCSE.

A significant relationship was found between boys' emotional intelligence and their SAT and GCSE English scores, with boys with higher emotional intelligence scores doing better in these exams. While for girls, a relationship between emotional intelligence and their SAT Science scores was discovered; girls with higher emotional intelligence scores did better in this exam.

Dr Pamela Qualter, from the University of Central Lancashire, said on 1st November: "IQ does result in better academic test results, but our results suggest that emotional intelligence is another key predictor of academic success.

"Further detailed analysis of the results suggests that emotional intelligence may moderate the effects of IQ on academic achievement. Faced with failure, a student low on IQ but who is emotionally intelligent will be able to manage their emotions surrounding failure, reconcile poor performance and work to improve; a student low on IQ and low emotional intelligence may find failure more difficult to deal with, which undermines their academic motivation."

One implication of this research is that opportunities to develop students' emotional intelligence could be a way to improve their educational achievement. Thus, engagement in current UK educational strategies (SEAL) are likely to be important for children's future academic progress.

**BBC 26/09/08**

**No evidence' exam targets work**

**There is "no quantified evidence" about whether threatening to close schools affects their pupils' performance, the National Audit Office says.**

Its report on the use of rewards and sanctions in the public sector said people believed there was an effect but those judgements were subjective.

It said value added measures of school performance were good practice.

But "threshold" measures, such as the proportion getting good GCSEs, could distort schools' behaviour.

**Motivation**

The audit office (NAO) report concludes: "We found no quantified evidence of the effect of sanctions and rewards on levels of performance for the programmes in the survey."

It noted that people needed to be able to affect the outcome if they were to be motivated by some sanction or reward.

"Unless the agent can expect their behaviour to affect the outcome, the mechanism provides little motivation to strive for the desired levels of performance."

It said an example of a good measure was the "contextualised value added" assessment of how much progress pupils have made in schools.

This takes into account factors outside schools' control but which are known to affect how well children do, such as poverty and ethnicity.

This "is generally seen as a better performance measure than the previous 'gross output' measure which did not make any kind of adjustment", said the report.

**Distortion**

However, Prime Minister Gordon Brown's determination to drive out failure - as he put it - in England's schools uses a "floor target" for GCSE performance that does not work in this way.

The target is 30% of pupils getting five good GCSEs including English and maths.

The NAO report says that such "threshold" schemes may not reward those who improve the most as result of starting from a lower base.

Some of the schools identified by the Department for Children, Schools and Families as falling below the floor target were regarded by Ofsted inspectors as "outstanding".

The audit office also noted that simplistic targets could distort what went on in the education system.

"The literature also contains examples of cases where the choice of outcome measure has led to 'gaming' or strategic behaviour by agents, such as anecdotal evidence of 'cream-skimming' by schools to select the best students."

It added: "Threshold measures - measures concerned with achieving an absolute level of performance, such as the number of pupils achieving GCSE grade C or higher - are seen as particularly vulnerable to gaming."

**Social segregation**

The government had recognised this risk and introduced additional targets about the outcomes to be achieved for less well-performing groups, the NAO said.

The report also considered the impact of competition - and said children from poorer homes could lose out.

"In the case of schools, the costs to the consumer of switching are significantly higher than in the case of, for example, utility providers.

"Children from families that are less well-informed, or less mobile, are at risk of becoming 'stuck' in less well-performing schools, furthering the inequity.

"It also gives schools the incentive to pick the best pupils."

So secondary schools had become more efficient - in terms of better results - but the trade-off had been greater social segregation, it said.

**Your Notes:**



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