10 test-taking tips
Write the best exam possible

Tests are a major source of anxiety for most people. Here are 10 strategies from Kwantlen Polytechnic University's (KPU) Learning Centre to help ease some of the stress of taking exams.

1. On the day of the test, make sure you are well rested and that you have eaten some protein (settles your stomach).
2. Arrive early and take a moment to relax and reduce your anxiety.
3. Listen carefully to instructions given by the instructor; then read the directions very carefully. For example, you may only need to answer three out of the five essay questions.
4. As soon as the test begins, write down any relevant formulas, concepts, figures, or memory cues that will help you.
5. Scan the entire test to let yourself know what to expect before you start answering.
6. Do the easiest questions first. This will increase your confidence and may trigger memory for other answers. Don't waste time lingering over questions you don't know right away.
7. Go back to look at the harder questions. Choose the highest value questions next. If a question is worth three marks, there are usually three points that the teacher is looking for. 10 marks equals 10 points.
8. Focus on the questions and not the answers. Underline the key words in each question. Think about where you have seen or heard these key words before. Think about other questions that you have already answered for clues.
9. Take your time. Don't race through the exam and don't leave early.
10. Use any extra time at the end to check for careless errors. Make sure you answered all the questions! Do not change any answers unless you are absolutely sure that you have made a mistake. Your first response is more likely to be correct.

For more helpful strategies for going back to school, visit kpu.ca/learningcentres/learning-aids.

About Kwantlen Polytechnic University
Kwantlen Polytechnic University has served the Metro Vancouver region since 1981, and has opened doors to success for more than 200,000 learners. Four campuses—Richmond, Surrey, Cloverdale and Langley—offer a comprehensive range of sought-after programs in business, liberal arts, design, health, science and horticulture, trades and technology, and academic and career advancement. Over 19,000 students annually have a choice from over 120 programs, including bachelor's degrees, associate degrees, diplomas, certificates, citations and apprenticeships. Learn more at kpu.ca.

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