

Celebrities Share Their Tips For Exam Success!

Revise now and reap the rewards in the future, says the Learning and Skills Council

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As students across the capital prepare for their exams, celebrities are sharing their very best tips for getting through the stressful revision period with the Learning and Skills Council (LSC).

Leading names from the worlds of entertainment and sport, including London supermodel and actress **Lily Cole**, T4 presenter **Rick Edwards**, and England rugby star **Jonny Wilkinson**, are encouraging teenagers to work hard for their exams in order to safeguard their future by achieving the minimum set of qualifications needed to get on in life – five GCSEs grades A*-C or a vocational qualification at Level 2. Although people might think that celebrities don't know what hard work is, these stars and others like them have all been through exams and studying, just like the rest of us. They recognise the importance of hard work in getting them where they are today, and are now exclusively sharing their secrets of exam success.

Despite her successful modelling and acting career, London-raised and -educated **Lily Cole** maintains a commitment to her education and plans to go King's College, Cambridge this year to study Social and Political Sciences. Often the star of the catwalk and the cover girl of the world's most exclusive magazines, Cole, still understands the importance of a good education. Her top revision tip is: "Basically I took ten minutes out to dance every few hours! Kept my spirits up!"

Rick Edwards, co-host of T4's *Freshly Squeezed*, is no stranger to revision; he studied natural sciences at the University of Cambridge, as well as tutoring A-level and GCSE

maths, physics, chemistry, biology and art. Rick says: “Planning my revision time really helped, but I wish I hadn’t spent so much time creating such an elaborate, colour-co-ordinated revision timetable. Not only did it take me about two days of valuable revision time to devise, it also freaked me out whenever I looked at it!” Instead Rick recommends visual prompts as a simpler and less scary way to help: “Post-it notes! Write facts on them; stick them all round your room. Somehow, the stuff seeps into your mind. Amazing!”

England’s Rugby World Cup hero **Jonny Wilkinson** says: “My way of getting down to revision was to run off all my energy, have a good meal and then relax and focus for three or so hours before bed with files, books and the essential background music. I also found making notes on the most salient points helped me to remember important facts.”

He continues: “I considered revision a great challenge on the basis that the correct preparation would reap the satisfaction of good results.”

These celebrities now boast successful careers in their chosen fields, but achieving the minimum set of qualifications is the groundwork needed for all young people to improve their future career opportunities and ensure they always have something to fall back on. This is all the more achievable for today’s teenagers with so many alternative routes to success and the possibility of financial support of up to £30 a week, thanks to the Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA).

Arthur Bolton, Arts Entertainment Manager at the BRIT School of performing arts in Croydon, which has nurtured home-grown talents such as Islington-born chart-topper Leona Lewis, and London singer-songwriter Kate Nash, says: “We are not a ‘Fame’ school; students need qualifications to succeed. Even if a student is successful in the entertainment business, it may not last for their whole life - Leona, Kate Nash, Adele, and Luke Pritchard all obtained their qualifications.”

Arthur adds: “We advise students to have an action plan. Time management is important, so that you feel in control. Plan ahead and draw up a list of what you need to revise, with the most important at the top. Then, work out a realistic timetable and when you have

achieved each one, cross it off your list. The night before an examination you should relax.”

Ruth Bullen, Director of Young People’s Learning at the Learning and Skills Council, comments: “Revision time can be tough and stressful, but it is essential to give it your best shot. Everyone has their own revision systems and methods, and it’s great that these celebrities have shared theirs. Find the way that works for you and stay positive – the important thing to remember is that channelling your efforts into revision now can reap huge rewards, better career prospects and will positively impact the rest of your life.”

Young people who are looking at what courses they can take to achieve a Level 2 qualification can visit <http://dcsf.gov.uk/prospectus> to find out more. EMA is also available to support young people from households with an income of up to £30,810. For more information on EMA visit www.direct.gov.uk/ema or call the helpline on 0800 121 8989.

- Ends -

Notes to editors:

This press release applies to England only.

Learning and Skills Council

The LSC exists to make England better skilled and more competitive. We are responsible for ensuring the availability of high-quality education and training for everyone. We have a single goal: to improve the skills of England’s young people and adults to world class standards. Our vision is that young people and adults in England have knowledge and skills matching the best in the world and are part of a truly competitive workforce. We work nationally, regionally and locally to deliver this ambition on behalf of learners and employers.

Media Enquiries

For further information please contact:

Lynn McSweeney
Learning and Skills Council
020 7904 0663
07810757172
Lynn.McSweeney@lsc.gov.uk

Visit www.lsc.gov.uk/inourhands.

Apprenticeships

- There are currently 250,000 apprentices working in over 130,000 organisations in England alone. They can choose from over 200 career paths in 80 different sectors of industry and commerce.

Learning and Skills Council London Region
Centre Point 103 New Oxford Street London WC1A 1DR
T 0845 019 4144 F 020 7896 8686 M 07810757172 www.lsc.gov.uk

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- Anyone aged 16 and above is eligible to complete an Apprenticeship.
- Apprenticeships provide individuals with a mixture of on and off-the-job training whilst being paid. For employers, Apprenticeships offer the opportunity to improve their businesses bottom line through the tailored, relevant training of highly motivated individuals.
- There are two levels of Apprenticeships:
 - 'Apprenticeships', equivalent to GCSE level, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 2; key skills and in some cases a technical certificate
 - 'Advanced Apprenticeships', equivalent to A-levels, incorporate a National Vocational Qualification to Level 3, key skills and a technical certificate

Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA)

Notes for editors – EMA Applications for 2008/9 Year

This press release applies to England only. Separate schemes are operated by the administrations for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

What are the key features of EMA?

- Weekly payment bands of £30, £20 and £10 per week, depending on household income.
- Intermittent Bonus payments depending on the programme of learning.
- Available for both academic and vocational study, up to level 3, which can include courses such as basic skills GCSE retakes, GNVQs, NVQs, as well as AS and A2s.
- No other household benefits are affected.
- Young people can still have a part-time job.

Who is eligible?

Young people are eligible to receive or to continue receiving EMA in the EMA year 2008/09 providing:

- They will already be 16, 17, 18 or 19 on the 1st September 2008;
- Household income criteria for 2008/9 applicants will be confirmed shortly;
- They are participating in full-time further education (as defined in EMA guidance) up to and including Level 3, or LSC funded e2e or a Programme led Apprenticeship
- They must be:
 - a person who is 'settled' in the UK, and been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least the three years prior to the start of his learning programme; or
 - a national of any European Union (EU) country or the spouse or civil partner or child of an EU national, and been ordinarily resident in the European Economic Area (EEA) for at least the three years prior to the start of his learning programme; or
 - an EEA migrant worker or the spouse or civil partner or child of an EEA migrant worker, who is ordinarily resident in the UK at the start of the learning programme and has been ordinarily resident in the EEA throughout the three year period prior to that; or
 - recognised as a refugee by the UK Government, or the spouse or civil partner or child of a refugee, have been granted Humanitarian Protection, or have EU Temporary Protection.

If a young person lives overseas as part of a family serving with HM Forces or the Ministry of Defence in Germany or Cyprus, they should call Service Children's Education on (0049) 2161 908 2525 for further advice.

Application

Evidence of an applicant's household income for the previous tax year 2006/2007 and proof of the individual's operational bank account are required.

Eligible applicants will receive a Notice of Entitlement explaining how much they will receive once they have enrolled and started attending their learning programme.

EMA Contract

Once enrolled, the student must attend all course sessions and sign an EMA Contract with their school or college. The contract sets out what is expected in terms of attendance, coursework and progress.

14-19 area prospectuses

- 14-19 area prospectuses are an online resource which provide information for young people on all learning courses and programmes available in an area
- The 14-19 area prospectus will be learners' first choice of information for accessing all 14-19 learning opportunities
- All areas have a prospectus to enable learners to look at prospectuses from other areas of the country there is a national portal at: <http://dcsf.gov.uk/prospectus>
- From 2008, learners will be able to access information on the Diplomas being delivered in their area, through the local 14-19 area prospectus
- The area prospectuses will empower learners by giving them access to information about all courses from all providers in an area, this is likely to increase participation and engagement

Diplomas

The Diploma is part of a national programme to widen the choice of courses for young people to motivate them and encourage them to continue learning for longer. It will help them to gain the qualifications they need for success – at work, at college or at university.

Five Diploma subjects will be available from 2008 in the following subjects:

- IT
- Construction and the Built Environment
- Engineering
- Society, Health and Development
- Creative and Media

There are three levels of the Diploma – Foundation, Higher and Advanced – that students can choose to study at different stages in their education.

Alongside compulsory modules, students will have the opportunity to choose from a range of other subject options, whilst continuing to develop core skills in English, maths and IT. This learning will be advanced by work experience, which will provide a chance for young people to learn from and be mentored by professionals working in their chosen field. For more information, go to: www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas

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**For more information please contact Simon Holder on 020 7261 8342
or email simon.holder@coi.gsi.gov.uk**