My exam-paper time budget

Fill this in before a practice paper. Check the permitted time, required questions and rules first. Budget the time you actually have, then use practice to adjust the plan.

Paper / date / required questions

Total permitted time: _____ min

Reading / planning: _____ min

Checking: _____ min

Time left for answers: _____ min

Subtract reading/planning and checking only when they are inside the total. Separate reading time is not extra answering time unless the provider says so.

My answering plan

Question / section	Marks, if useful	Planned minutes	Elapsed / clock checkpoint

Invented example, not an exam rule

90 minutes total - 5 reading/planning - 10 checking = 75 answering. Three sections worth 20 marks each get 25 minutes each: A ends at 30 minutes, B at 55, C at 80; checking ends at 90. Change this to fit the paper's format and requirements.

After practice: where did time go, and what will I change?

If behind, re-budget the remaining required work. Move on and return only where the paper permits it. Marks are one guide to time, not a universal formula.

Educational planning aid, not clinical advice, a tested protocol or a guarantee of finishing. Prepare and rehearse beforehand; keep written material outside the exam room unless permitted.

Newcastle: exam technique Cambridge: practice for exams