

PHYSICS

PRAVIK SOLANKI RECEIVED A PERFECT VCE PHYSICS SCORE IN 2015.

My name is...

Pravik Solanki

I went to...

Balwyn High School

In n Physics, I received a score of...

50

The thing I liked best about doing this subject was...

Physics is unique in its great capacity to explain things. I found it enhanced my knowledge of both the basic interactions of nature, as well as the technologies we use on a daily basis. I loved that we learned about relatable things like motion and gravity, as well as more abstract phenomena like how light can be both a particle and a wave! Physics encourages us to keep questioning the workings of the world.

The best advice I can give VCE students about this exam is...

the physics exam is noticeably mark-heavy compared to the other sciences. There is only a minute for each mark, but the calculation questions tend to be mostly routine. Make sure you know your scientific calculator well. With enough practice, you'll intuitively know which equation/s you need for a question.

The exam is also unique in that you are permitted to bring a summary sheet to the exam. The trick here is to know your summary sheet intimately, so you know where to find anything in a hurry. I also put all the formulas on my summary sheet, despite most of them being given on the formula sheet provided with the exam. I found that since I had written each formula myself, I knew where to find them and knew exactly what they meant.

Use reading time wisely by skimming through the entire exam. A lot of the mental work you do during reading time is setting the scene. If you're thrown off by something during reading time, just

skip ahead and read through the rest of the exam, returning to the confusing section later with whatever time you have left. Always keep in mind that if you come across something unexpected and a little scary, chances are everyone will feel the same.

It's important to read each question twice before you answer; it's too often the case that people calculate something they aren't being asked to, or give an explanation for something other than what is stated. Pay a lot of attention to key words and phrases, but also look at how they're being used; it almost sounds trivial, but it's easy to slip up under pressure.

The best advice I got from my teacher about this exam was...

to create our summary sheet efficiently. For each SAC throughout the year, we had been allowed a small summary sheet for that topic. My teacher told us to use our SAC summary sheets as a guide to create our exam summary sheet. This was incredibly helpful; there's a lot of content to review and summarise right at the finish line, and it's useful if you've been doing it periodically throughout the year.

In the month before this VCE exam, I...

was doing five unit 3/4 subjects, and realised quite early on how difficult it would be to prepare well for all my exams. On top of that, I was also doing Mathematical Methods and Specialist Mathematics, which had two exams each (totalling seven exams), and all seven of my exams were in a row (with only a weekend break in between). Given all this, I had begun exam practice 3 or 4 months before the exam period. I was meticulous and ruthless in correcting each exam as per the VCAA marking scheme, and every exam I did was timed. This slow but effective process built my confidence.

In the week before this VCE exam I...

compiled all my exam errors. I had been writing my mistakes on the exam front covers in red pen clearly, so making a



list of my mistakes for each topic was straightforward. I made careful note of mistakes that I had repeated. As well as this, I did the previous year's exam, which I had saved up for the final stretch. I was glad I had left the previous year's paper so late, as I could recall the general feel of the exam fresh in my mind.

On exam day, I prepared myself by...

waking up promptly and preparing myself mentally for what was to come. While having breakfast I reviewed my summary sheet and list of common exam mistakes I had made on previous physics papers. I triple checked whether I had taken everything I needed, before leaving home earlier than usual to accommodate for any traffic. I had worked hard and was as prepared as I could be, so I wasn't afraid.

After the exam, I...

discussed everything I could remember from the exam, confirming answers with friends. I found this to be relieving, but was mindful that many others didn't want to analyse the exam. I got home and looked for more discussion of the exam on online forums. Again, I was more excited than worried. I tried remembering all my answers, made a list of possible mistakes and even gave myself a mark for the exam. I finished off with an evening jog so I felt refreshed and ready for the exam I had the next day.