

WHAT ARE YOUR STRENGTHS?

(INTERNAL ORIGIN – THINGS YOU HAVE CONTROL OVER)

Please note that these suggested answers are not exhaustive and that the details depend on each individual student. Use these suggested answers as examples to help formulate your own responses.

- What am I really good at?

I apply things I learn
Research
Writing
Maths
Organising and planning
Easily absorb information in class
- What do I do better than anyone else?

I'm a quick learner
Better application/analytical skills
Critical thinking ability
Public speaking
Maths
- What advantages do I have that others don't?

A parent who teaches one of my subjects
An excellent tutor
Minimal extra-curricular activities
Financial resources
Highly supportive family
Excellent notes
Teachers who really like me
I have specific goals
- What do others see as my strengths?

Resilience
Commitment
Quality
Determination
Compassion

- What resources/tools do I have or can draw from?

Text books and study guides
Exam papers
Excellent summary notes
Lecture programs
Study skills programs
Weekly tuition classes
Online lectures/classes
Private tutors
Study groups
Teachers
Parents
Older sibling who's been through the VCE
ATAR Central – A+ Resources database

- What skills do I have that will help me achieve my ATAR goal?

Strong leadership skills
Excellent time management skills
Excellent communicator
Problem solver
Fast reader and typist
Passion and determination

- What personal qualities do I have that will assist with my studies?

Completely committed
Hard worker
Don't give up that easily
Am very thorough
Optimistic
Generous
Positive attitude
Focus
Intelligence
Good listener
Like working with people

WHAT ARE YOUR WEAKNESSES?

(INTERNAL ORIGIN – THINGS YOU CAN WORK ON)

- What don't I do well? What limits me?

Chemistry

Spread tasks over a longer period

Rush through my work and make stupid mistakes

Organisation

Not great at writing

Don't plan

Easily get bored with routine work

I give up when tasks are too difficult

I don't like working long hours

Always running short on time

Can become obsessed over certain things and neglect other work/tasks

Reading takes me a long time as I have to reread materials, so it sinks into my brain

I often jump to the final answer without showing development

Easily distracted

I procrastinate a lot

Don't read through questions properly so I sometimes miss crucial parts

In order to get things right in my head I have to talk it through out loud

Once the momentum for study is lost, it is so hard to get back into the rhythm
(especially across school holidays)

Noisy/distracting environment

Don't have goals and objectives

Health problems

Non-supportive environment

I have a strong, compulsive need to do things quickly and remove them from my "to do" list, and sometimes the quality of my work suffers as a result.

- What should I avoid?

Long study sessions – so start earlier

Technology during study hours

- What personal traits do I have that may hinder my success?

I criticize myself

I need instant gratification

Arrogant

Pessimistic

I stress easily

Lazy

Inconsistent

Not always confident

Struggle to make fast decisions

Impulsive

- What personal qualities might I wish I had – but don't?

Stronger communication skills
Ability to stick to a routine
Patience
Ability to remain calm
Determination
Passion
- What areas can I improve on? What should I hone and practice?

Concentrating for longer periods of time.
Following a routine.
Listening skills
- What do others see as my weaknesses?

Easily influenced
Can't say no
Inconsistent
Easily distracted
- What tasks do I usually avoid doing?

Large tasks
Tasks that involve a lot of research upfront
Maths
Essay writing
Homework
Things that don't contribute directly to my marks
Writing up notes along the way
Revising throughout the year
Working ahead
- What are the reasons behind my failures?

Leave things to the last minute
Don't always fully understand the requirements of the task
- What are my negative study habits?

Procrastination
Poor time management
No routine
Leave things to the last minute
- What fears do I have that may be holding me back?

Fear of not reaching my goal
Fear that people will think I'm stupid if I don't get an ATAR above 90
Fear that my parents will lose it

- What resources/tools am I lacking?

Text books and study guides
Exam papers
Excellent summary notes
Lecture programs
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- What skills do I lack that will help me achieve my ATAR goal?

Time management skills
Analytical skills
Listening skills
Shorthand

WHAT OPPORTUNITIES EXIST FOR YOU?

(EXTERNAL ORIGIN – THINGS OUT OF YOUR CONTROL)

- What opportunities are open to me?
Text books and study guides
Exam papers
A+ summary notes
Lecture programs
Study skills programs
Weekly tuition classes
Online lectures/classes
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- What trends could I take advantage of?
Refer to the next bullet point
- Are any of my competitors failing to do something important?
Not studying during the school holidays
Not studying consistently
Leaving SAC and exam preparations to the last minute
Leaving exam papers to the last minute
Not revising along the way
Writing notes just before SACs
Not taking advantage of all the resources available to them
- If so, can I take advantage of their mistakes?
Start SAC and exam preparations earlier
Study during the school holidays
Invest in 16-24 hours of personal study each week
Work through Checkpoints as each topic is covered at school
Use the school holidays to revise what was covered in the previous term
Purchase a good set of notes eg. Exam Essentials by TSFX
Attend lectures and tuition classes
Form study groups and share the workload
- What support is available to me? What/who can help me?
Study groups
Teachers
Parents
Older sibling who's been through the VCE
Work with students from other schools – gain further perspectives

- What resources could I benefit from?

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- How can I turn my strengths into opportunities?

As an example, if your strength is “I apply things I learn” you could use that skill to work through exam questions throughout the year rather than leaving this crucial task to the weeks before the exams. You will develop strong application skills that can be used in other assessments and cut down on the amount of time needed to prepare for the final exams.

- How can I turn my weaknesses into opportunities?

As an example, if your weakness is Chemistry, then an opportunity could be that you're going to use the subject to make a point to teachers and prove them wrong by working hard and greatly improve marks.

- How can I use my opportunities to improve my weaknesses?

For example, you could attend weekly tuition classes to improve Chemistry marks.

- What could I do today that isn't being done?

Study
 Write up course notes
 Work through exam questions
 Revise previously learned topics
 Work through exam questions
 Get ahead

WHAT ARE THE THREATS TO YOUR SUCCESS?

(EXTERNAL ORIGIN – THINGS OUT OF YOUR CONTROL)

- What threats could harm me?

Competition from stronger students
Lack of time
Illness
Procrastination
Family and relationship difficulties
Fear of failure
Work/study imbalance
Bad environment
Disruptive, uncommitted friends
Getting disheartened if marks fall below expectations
- What obstacles do I currently face where my studies are concerned?

Motivation
Procrastination
Limited financial resources
Health problems
Oral and/or written language difficulties
Excessive travel times to/from school
Family pressure or problems
- Could any of my weaknesses prevent me from reaching my goals?

Becoming too complacent/overconfident
Losing motivation
Not using other resources will limit my exposure to different perspectives
Not using other resources will limit my exposure to VCAA assessors
- Do any of my strengths hold me back?

I tend to spend more time on the subjects I am good at or enjoy
I am a perfectionist
I find it hard to stop studying once I'm on a roll
I am a candidate for burnout
My quest for excellence means that I avoid tasks/subjects I'm not good at
- What restrictions are there on me?

Time
Money
- What's changing in my life that could close options for me?

I have a new boyfriend/girlfriend
I'm moving to a new school/house

- What threats can my weaknesses expose me to?

Competitors getting an advantage over me
 Not studying enough
 Not studying consistently
 Leaving things to the last minute
 Burnout

- Do I have any obligations that may limit my chances of success?

Personal relationships
 Extracurricular activities

- Who are my competitors and what are they doing?

Student X

- Where are there gaps in my resources or sources of help?

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