



ACHIEVE EXCELLENCE PROGRAMME · PRACTICE MAKES PERMANENT

Deliberate Practice

Working on what's hardest, until it gets easier

Deliberate practice means focusing on the **specific parts you find difficult** and practising them **carefully, with feedback**, until you improve.

It is different from just:

- Doing lots of easy questions
- Re-reading notes
- Repeating work you already know

Deliberate practice is about **improving weaknesses**, not staying comfortable.

Why deliberate practice works

You improve fastest when you:

- Work on **challenging but achievable tasks**
- Get **clear feedback**
- **Correct mistakes** and try again
- Repeat until the skill becomes **secure**

This is how musicians, athletes, and top students improve.

When should you use deliberate practice?

Use it when:

- You **keep getting something wrong**
- A topic feels **confusing or slow**
- Teacher feedback shows a **clear target**
- Preparing for **tests or exams**

The 5-step deliberate practice method

Step 1 — Find the exact weakness

Be specific:

- Not: *"I'm bad at maths."*
- But: *"I struggle with solving quadratic equations."*

Clear targets = faster improvement.

Step 2 — Practise one small skill at a time

Break learning into tiny parts:

- One type of question
- One paragraph skill
- One scientific process

Small focus → bigger progress.

Step 3 — Get feedback quickly

Use:

- Mark schemes
- Teacher comments
- Model answers
- Self-checking

Feedback tells you what to fix next.

Step 4 — Fix mistakes and try again

This is the most important step.

- Correct the answer
- Understand **why** it was wrong
- Do a **similar question again**

Improvement happens in the retry, not the first attempt.

Step 5 — Repeat over time (spaced practice)

Come back to the same skill:

- Next day
- Next week
- Before exams

This makes the improvement stick in long-term memory.

What deliberate practice looks like in subjects

Maths

- Redo difficult question types step-by-step
- Practise the same method with different numbers
- Focus on **errors**, not easy marks

English

- Rewrite one paragraph using feedback
- Practise **one skill** (e.g., analysing language)
- Compare your work to a **model answer**

Science

- Practise **6-mark explanations**
- Learn **definitions and equations exactly**
- Redo questions you previously got wrong

Common mistakes to avoid

- ✗ Only doing easy work

- ✗ Ignoring feedback
- ✗ Moving on too quickly
- ✗ Practising once and stopping

The key idea to remember: deliberate practice means working on what is hardest, using feedback, and trying again until you improve. That is where real progress happens.