Non-mathematical Skills

Hand Writing:
1.1 Neat and clear
1.2 No possible alternative interpretations of writing
1.3 Proper spacing between lines, especially lines with complex fractions

Presentation:
2.1 Answer the question (Check what is being asked before writing the final answer.)
2.2 Declare symbols before using them (e.g. "Let $\alpha = \angle ABC$")
2.3 Use the same 3-point angle or 2-point line representation through out a question whenever possible
2.4 $\because$ and $\therefore$ must be followed by a statement (e.g. "$\because f(x)$ is an even function.", not "$\because$ even")
2.5 Degree indicators ($^\circ$) are compulsory (e.g. 30°, not 30)
2.6 Write $\frac{a}{b}$, not a/b
2.7 Write constant before symbols (e.g. $2ab$, not $ab2$)
2.8 Use proper terminology (e.g. "local minimum", not just "minimum")
2.9 State the answers at the end (instead of scattering them through out the question)
2.10 State LHS=RHS or QED at the end of a proof

Organisation:
3.1 Plan the plot (or at least several steps ahead) before writing
3.2 Consider alternative paths and take the shortest one
3.3 Arrange steps in a logical order
3.4 No missing links – Each step must be derivable from the previous step or some previous steps.
3.5 Cross out unnecessary, unwanted or wrong steps – No liquid paper

Speed:
4.1 Simplify first before calculating or answering
4.2 Always consider better or faster alternatives
4.3 Use $f''(x)$ in concavity testing only if it is asked or easier than using value testing
4.4 Geometric calculations can be brief (while proofs need to be detailed)
4.5 More focused towards the end of an exam (as you grow tired while questions become harder)

Accuracy:
5.1 Check missing brackets and multilevel nested brackets
5.2 Consider both + and − alternatives
5.3 Use radians unless the question is in degrees or asks to do it in degrees
5.4 Always test in case of maximum, minimum and point of inflection (table with + and − values)
5.5 Check precision (number of significant digits or decimal places)
5.6 Hand sketch a simple graph; this helps thinking *a lot*.
5.7 Solve absolute value inequalities on graph; use algebra only if required (still check on a graph)
5.8 Always check validity of answers for questions with square roots or absolute values

Graphing:
6.1 Label all critical points: intercepts, stationary points, intersections, axes, curves, etc
6.2 Plan the scale (domain and range) before sketching
6.3 Avoid non-existing relationships (e.g. No parallel, perpendicular, collinear, bisection, ... unless so)
6.4 Check derived points on the graph against the *original* equation (e.g. points derived from the shape).