

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Paper 9396/11  
Written Paper

## Key messages

- Candidates need to understand the role of the command word used for each question and should use the command word to direct their response.
- Questions often require examples to be used. Candidates should select an example carefully to fit the question context.

## General comments

Presentation of work was usually clear and time management was good. There was no evidence of candidates running out of time and not completing the paper.

## Comments on specific questions

### *Section A*

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Only stronger candidates gained full credit for this question. Many candidates were able to identify the three types of contraction. However, fewer candidates were able to explain how these different types of contraction were linked to whether the relevant agonist muscle shortened, lengthened, or stayed the same length. The strongest candidates could achieve this and also linked to the relevant movement phase of the squat exercise.
- (b) The shoulder joint and its actions were more well-known than those of the wrist. Many candidates were able to correctly identify the type of joint found at the shoulder and most were able to identify the articulating bones. Detailed wrist knowledge was generally only known by stronger candidates.
- (c) Most candidates were able to gain at least partial credit for this question and there were some detailed responses that gained full credit. Many weaker candidates simply listed a number of receptors without explaining how they worked. Stronger candidates noted that the question referred to a heart rate increase and answered accordingly.
- (d) The majority of candidates gained full credit for this question. Most candidates were able to include specifically named parts that carry oxygenated blood from the lungs to the muscles.
- (e) (i) While the majority of candidates appeared to know what the trachea was, fewer had secure knowledge on what it does. Simply identifying a structure was not credited, as there had to be explanation of how it helped the functioning of the respiratory system. There was some confusion in weaker responses concerning the role of mucus.
- (ii) A range of appropriate features were often described. Use of precise terminology was typical in stronger responses.
- (f) This question was generally only answered very well by stronger candidates. Weaker responses described long-term training benefits rather than the short-term effects on the respiratory system and its effects on performers. Some candidates gained partial credit by describing the reduced atmospheric pressure and lack of oxygen at altitude. The strongest candidates distinguished

between the short-term negative effects on endurance performers, as against the short-term positive effects on power performers.

## **Section B**

### **Question 2**

- (a) Candidates were generally able to suggest motor abilities, fundamental motor skills and sport-specific skills. For weaker candidates an examples was often from the wrong category. Stronger candidates went on to explain the progression in terms of motor abilities being the basis on which fundamental motor skills are learned, and that these fundamental motor skills are developed into sport-specific skills through things such as guidance, coaching or feedback.
- (b) (i) Many candidates gained full credit for this question with a range of valid suggestions made.
- (ii) Explanations of insight learning tended to be either correct and well-written from the stronger candidates or seemingly unknown from the weaker candidates.
- (iii) Only the strongest candidates could suggest how insight learning could benefit performance.
- (c) (i) Candidates generally answered this question well and many showed precise use of suitable vocabulary in their responses.
- (ii) Many candidates showed a solid understanding of closed-loop control. The idea that closed-loop control involved feedback and corrections was relatively common in responses. Use of key terms such as memory trace and perceptual trace needed to be used in the correct context given the question asked.
- (d) (i) Stronger candidates were able to describe the idea that the display is the environment or situation in terms of information processing. There were some good responses providing an example of what might be in the display.
- (ii) Many candidates were limited to suggesting that perception involves making sense of the information in the display. The idea that perception involves the DCR (detection, comparison, recognition) process and selective attention was included by stronger candidates. Responses for feedback were sometimes limited to stating the different types of feedback.
- (e) Most candidates were able to identify factors that affect reaction time. When describing how these factors could affect reaction time weaker candidates tended to make confused statements.

## **Section C**

### **Question 3**

- (a) (i) Explanations of leisure time were often restricted to free time for weaker candidates. Most stronger candidates could expand further.
- (ii) How choice of leisure may reflect privilege was usually described as being concerned with finance. Descriptions of how purposefulness is achieved through fulfilment or achievement were less frequently stated.
- (b) Most candidates achieved partial credit for this question, and full credit was relatively common. Clear comparisons were a feature of the stronger responses.
- (c) Many candidates had a clear understanding of the requirements of performers to achieve excellence and described various government or sport-specific initiatives along with the requirements of specialist schools, facilities, coaches, etc. The need for various types of medical and scientific support were also seen in many responses. Weaker candidates mainly referred to the need to increase participation or were restricted to describing the existence of various professional sports without showing any depth of knowledge about how they are organised to develop excellence.

- (d) The benefits of participation were known by the majority of candidates, with improvements in health together with skill development being the most frequently seen responses.
- (e) For weaker candidates knowledge of different forms of provision seemed limited. These responses tended to be limited to repeating terms in the question without explanation.
- (f) The question focused on spectators. Positive and/or negative influences on performers were included by some candidates. The increased knowledge of an activity and the improvements in performances and facilities were commonly stated. Many candidates were able to describe some of the negative effects that the media may have on spectators, but only the strongest were awarded full credit.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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**Paper 9396/12**  
**Written Paper**

## Key messages

- Candidates should consider the mark allocation for each question which gives an indication of the number of different points in a response they should attempt to give.
- Candidates should read each question carefully and apply their examples if required.
- Weaker candidates should try to make clear direct comparisons when asked to compare.

## General comments

Most candidates presented their answers well, using appropriate technical language. Time management did not appear to be an issue.

## Comments on specific questions

### **Section A**

#### **Question 1**

- (a) The strongest responses described each type of movement and gave a clear example of this movement at the hip. Some candidates described the type of movements but did not apply their answers to the hip. Some descriptions did not clearly indicate the direction of the movement of the leg.
- (b) (i) Most candidates identified the main agonists and the type of contraction as the high jumper takes off. Stronger candidates correctly identified the type of movement at the right shoulder.
- (ii) This question gave two characteristics of fast glycolytic muscle fibres and asked candidates to describe four other characteristics. Candidates are reminded that if a certain number of responses is specified, they should only give that number of responses. Candidates could give structural or functional characteristics. Stronger candidates described four characteristics. Weaker candidates often repeated the examples given in the question.
- (c) The strongest responses showed excellent knowledge of hormonal and intrinsic factors that regulate heart rate. Some responses focused on detailed explanations of neural factors instead.
- (d) Most candidates understood the effects of leg muscles on the veins to aid venous return. An explanation of venous return itself was given by weaker candidates instead.
- (e) Most responses stated that blood pressure increases during sub-maximal exercise. The strongest candidates understood the different responses of systolic pressure and diastolic pressure and explained why these changes occurred during exercise.
- (f) Most candidates described how oxygen is transported in haemoglobin in the red blood cells.
- (g) Stronger candidates understood that the mechanics of breathing change during exercise to inhale and exhale larger volumes of air more quickly and their answers reflected this understanding.

Some responses showed an understanding of the mechanics of breathing but did not apply this knowledge to what happens while exercise is taking place.

### **Section B**

#### **Question 2**

- (a) Most responses identified some characteristics of skilful performance.
- (b) The strongest responses focused on the effects of time, money, access to equipment and the role of significant others. Weaker candidates identified that a wide range of early experiences is beneficial to the development of motor skills.
- (c) Many responses showed excellent knowledge of the operant conditioning theory of learning.
- (d) The strongest candidates paid attention to the mark allocation and suggested several ways a coach could improve a performer's selective attention. Weaker responses sometimes considered what a performer, rather than a coach, should do.
- (e) (i) The strongest responses explained the functions of recall schema well. Weaker candidates lacked knowledge of schema theory and instead explained what the term 'recall' means.  
(ii) Stronger candidates answered this question well. Weaker candidates did not have a secure knowledge of schema theory and so found this difficult.
- (f) Candidates who knew the psychological refractory period generally answered this question well. Some candidates did not use a practical example to support their answer and this prevented them from gaining full credit.
- (g) (i) This question asked for a description of an example of positive transfer in sport. Some weaker candidates could name two sports only. Named skills and a full description of positive transfer was generally restricted to stronger responses only.  
(ii) The strongest responses explained that a coach should make a performer aware of the potential for transfer and that they should make sure that the first skill has been learned well before trying to transfer elements of that skill to a second skill. Weaker candidates sometimes gave simple statements that supported skill learning but were not applied to this question.
- (h) Many candidates understood the negative effects of excessive extrinsic motivation on a performer, stronger candidates often explained well.

### **Section C**

#### **Question 3**

- (a) (i) The strongest responses clearly knew the difference between real risk and perceived risk and gave a suitable example for each.  
(ii) This was a well-answered question. Most candidates knew several relevant benefits of participation in outdoor education activities.  
(iii) Most answers gave at least one characteristic of sport. Three different characteristics being included was generally restricted to the strongest responses.
- (b) This question was generally well answered. Weaker candidates sometimes described traits of an elite performer rather than the provision required.
- (c) The strongest answers included clear direct comparisons. When writing in continuous prose, each comparison should be clearly linked.
- (d) Most candidates were able to suggest at least one way to encourage more women to take part in physical activity. Stronger candidates took note of the mark allocation and gave at least four different ways to encourage this participation.

- (e) This was a well-answered question. Many candidates described different ways fair play is encouraged in elite sport.
- (f) Most answers described the fact that performers may be limited to using the sponsor's products, which may be inferior to other brands. Stronger candidates were able to include other disadvantages as well.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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Paper 9396/13  
Written Paper

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## General comments

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- (d) The majority of candidates gained full credit for this question. Most candidates were able to include specifically named parts that carry oxygenated blood from the lungs to the muscles.
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- (ii) Explanations of insight learning tended to be either correct and well-written from the stronger candidates or seemingly unknown from the weaker candidates.
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- (d) The benefits of participation were known by the majority of candidates, with improvements in health together with skill development being the most frequently seen responses.
- (e) For weaker candidates knowledge of different forms of provision seemed limited. These responses tended to be limited to repeating terms in the question without explanation.
- (f) The question focused on spectators. Positive and/or negative influences on performers were included by some candidates. The increased knowledge of an activity and the improvements in performances and facilities were commonly stated. Many candidates were able to describe some of the negative effects that the media may have on spectators, but only the strongest were awarded full credit.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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**Paper 9396/02**  
**AS Coursework**

## **Key messages**

- Centres need to ensure that candidates are clearly identified in the filmed evidence.
- All evidence and documentation should be reviewed and checked before being submitted.
- Centres should read and follow the Coursework Guidelines when presenting evidence.
- In series where it is relevant and applicable, centres should apply for permission to use the component adjustment (allowing reduced coursework requirements) before sending marks.

## **General comments**

There were some high-quality performances and some accurate marking in evidence in this series. However, some centres did not follow the Coursework Guidelines and submitted practical and/or written work where the required evidence was missing.

## **Administration**

The paperwork submitted by centres was not always well presented. At some centres the marks on the rank order forms did not match the corresponding marks on the summary form. Centres should note that a zero mark is usually used when a candidate has filmed evidence or written work, but that work or evidence is not creditworthy. Candidates with a mark of zero should be in the sample. The minimum syllabus requirement for this series when using the component adjustment was one practical activity and an Action Plan. Centres who were given permission to use the component adjustment were assessed using the minimum syllabus requirement. Some centres submitted the minimum syllabus requirement but did not apply for the component adjustment.

At some centres marking was too generous and at others it was inconsistent. Centres should apply the marking criteria found in the Coursework Guidelines consistently across the whole range of activities submitted by their candidates.

## **Filmed evidence**

The quality, quantity and type of evidence varied considerably. Some centres produced good-quality filmed evidence. Many centres had reviewed, selected, edited and then checked their files before despatch. A USB stick, with chapters for each activity and a menu is a good form of presentation used by many centres.

Centres are reminded that each candidate should be clearly identified throughout the filmed evidence. Some centres identified the candidate at the start of the filming but then the candidate became hard to identify, especially if the candidate was filmed from a distance. The use of coloured or numbered bibs that are worn throughout the filming is often essential. In activities where this is difficult, such as swimming, the camera should remain focused on the candidate from a verbal introduction until the completion of the task or another system should be used. In some cases, the candidate was named but not identified with a numbered bib or candidate number, again making identification and assessment more difficult.

For a few centres the evidence was filmed from too far away or focused on the wrong candidate. This made identification particularly difficult. Centres are asked to review their evidence before submission. In some cases, low level of demand evidence was used. This was due to a candidate playing against much less able opposition or taking part in drills and skill activities that were passive and static rather than competitive and

challenging. The film should show both the technique of the skill and the outcome. The use of a tripod would improve the film quality for some centres.

Centres are asked to consider the following issues before their work is despatched: Are the candidates clearly identified? Have the candidate identifiers been written onto the assessment sheets? Is candidate participation very frequent or is there a lot of time when they do not have contact with the ball or are inactive?

Centres are reminded that they must review the final footage before it is submitted and that they should keep a copy of everything sent.

### **Action Plans**

Some Action Plans were detailed and structured in accordance with the Coursework Guidelines. The best Action Plans contained work that demonstrated detailed analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of a performance using technical language and a clear knowledge of the activity. This analysis was then linked to the goals set to improve the performance. The best plans were based on those goals and contained detailed explanations of weekly training practices and fitness sessions incorporating training principles. Action Plans that were awarded higher marks tended to contain evaluations that were personal and linked back to the technical detail involved in the performance weaknesses, perhaps using specific examples. Fitness or performance testing was sometimes used to show a recorded improvement.

In this series, some centres overmarked Action Plans. Sometimes there was a lack of detail in these plans. For example, they may have been a simple diary of weekly training schedules without a link to the improvement of identified weaknesses and with evaluations that were too general. The Coursework Guidelines clearly outline how to structure the Action Plans, but this guidance was not always followed.

### **Comments on specific activities**

#### **Invasion games**

Invasion games were the most popular of the activities. Candidates were sometimes filmed in conditioned drills and whilst performing conditioned games in a competitive environment. However, sometimes the level of demand of the filmed environment did not allow candidates to show their full ability. In some cases, the level and quality of the opposition was too low, or opponents taking part in conditioned games were too passive. If the demand of the environment does not match a high level of performance, then it is difficult for candidates to access the highest marks. In some cases, the full range of acquired and developed skills indicated in the Coursework Guidelines was not evidenced, with centres submitting video clips of one or two skills repeated in different practice situations rather than the full range of skills in highly competitive practice drills and situations.

#### **Track and field athletics**

Filmed evidence of track and field was sometimes very brief and did not always show a prescribed competitive situation. Some centres concentrated too much on warming-up activities. In sprinting events for example, the filmed performance of various starts, mid-race actions and race finishes, filmed from different angles showed the technique and ability of a candidate clearly.

#### **Hill-walking**

Most centres presented evidence of candidates performing skills in an appropriate environment. Whilst evidence of the actual expedition walk was submitted by many centres, the acquired skills of the use of map and compass, navigation, route planning and knowledge and application of safety were not always shown well. According to the Coursework Guidelines, candidates should be assessed as individuals. They should be assessed whilst performing the acquired and developed skills in a challenging environment from different parts of the expedition. A log is required as evidence of the content, planning and execution of the expedition, but some centres did not provide this evidence.

### **Cross-country Running**

The coursework guidelines state that assessment is based on conditioned situations, e.g. where the candidate is seen running a number of set distances so that posture, leg action, arm action, head carriage and overall efficiency can be judged. Filmed evidence should support the mark awarded during various sections of a competitive race including inclines, the middle section and the last 400 m. Minimum distances should be applied. There was limited evidence of the outlined coursework requirements in some submissions for cross-country running. In some of these there was no evidence of a race finish or of running inclines and evidence of the distance run was sometimes not included.

### **Dance**

Candidates are required to perform three solo dances from two genres lasting around a minute each and to produce a written programme, as outlined in the Coursework Guidelines. Sometimes candidates performed just one dance or did not include a written programme with their submission.

### **Gymnastics**

Centres are reminded that candidates should perform two vaults from a selection of those named in the Coursework Guidelines and three short floor sequences in a minimum area of 10 m × 10 m. In some evidence there was footage of only one vault, or no floor sequence.

### **Weight training**

Centres are reminded that in addition to filmed evidence of this activity, each candidate is required to submit a programme that clearly demonstrates the intended goal and the intention related to a specific activity. Sometimes recorded training programmes were generic and occasionally unrealistic and did not always relate to the specific improvement goals. In weaker evidence the training programme log was not submitted and, in such cases, the highest-level marks could not be supported.

Filming of a variety of exercises from different angles with a clear explanation of the intended improvement to be gained from such exercises was seen in the strong samples. The highest marks can only be obtained when the exercises, including advanced techniques, are performed with control, accuracy and fluency. At some centres, high marks were awarded to candidates who did not display advanced techniques and lacked control in their performance.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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**Paper 9396/32**  
**Written Paper**

## Key messages

- Candidates should consider benefits and limitations when evaluating.
- Candidates are reminded to read each question carefully to ensure that all answers are relevant to the question.

## General comments

Most candidates showed careful consideration of the demands of each question, including the command word and the mark allocation. There was good performance across many subject areas. Many candidates are demonstrating developed knowledge and understanding.

## Comments on specific questions

### *Section A*

#### **Question 1**

- (a) (i) Many candidates offered acceptable definitions for energy and power. Some candidates described types of energy instead.
- (ii) Stronger candidates showed an understanding of the units for energy and power. Some candidates gave units for force rather than energy.
- (b) This question was well answered by candidates who understood the recovery process after exercise. Weaker candidates confused this with other syllabus terms.
- (c) The strongest responses explained how each factor affects strength. Weaker responses gave a vague description that did not explain how the factor affected strength. Some candidates identified several factors rather than selecting two to explain.
- (d) (i) Stronger candidates stated that ballistic stretching uses momentum and outlined suitable exercises. They also stated that repetitions of each exercise were needed. Weaker candidates often did not focus their answer on ballistic stretching or did not understand what it was.
- (ii) Only the strongest candidates were able to evaluate the use of ballistic exercises fully. Candidates should understand that an evaluation needs comments as to explain why the exercises may or may not be good for different performers.
- (iii) This was a well-answered question for most candidates.
- (e) Most responses correctly identified tests for each component of fitness. Some candidates chose to describe each test.
- (f) This question asked candidates to evaluate food intake and fluid intake during exercise. The strongest candidates understood that answers should give benefits of each for a performer, and, if relevant, any limitations or disadvantages. Some answers described benefits of food and fluid

intake before exercise. Some weaker candidates gave descriptions of the process of carbohydrate loading.

### **Section B**

#### **Question 2**

- (a) This was generally answered well. Some candidates confused social learning with other learning theories. Stronger candidates often included detailed and precise descriptions.
- (b) The strongest responses highlighted the four components of persuasive communication and explained them clearly. Weaker responses gave vague descriptions of how to change a negative attitude, often without the detail required to gain credit. Some answers explained the use of other methods not relevant to the question.
- (c) Stronger candidates included many causes of a loss of coordination in a team within their response and used sporting examples to support their answers. Some candidates gave responses that described causes of lack of motivation.
- (d) Many candidates made the link between different levels of arousal, the number of cues that were taken in and the effects on performance. Some candidates described drive theory or the inverted-U theory.
- (e) This was generally well answered. Many candidates explained that an increase in arousal can cause social facilitation or social inhibition. Weaker responses did not always make the link to the effect on performance.
- (f) Only the strongest responses gave correct definitions for both aggression and assertion. Many candidates did not make it clear that aggression was outside the rules and assertion was within the rules. Some sporting examples were left too vague for credit.
- (g) Weaker candidates found this question challenging. The strongest responses described Weiner's model and then explained how a coach should attribute success or failure to certain named factors to maintain motivation and confidence.

### **Section C**

#### **Question 3**

- (a) Many candidates were able to give a limited explanation of the supreme mental and physical challenge that is the Olympic Games. Only the strongest candidates were able to obtain full credit through full explanation.
- (b) This was a very well-answered question.
- (c) Stronger candidates described the structure of the IOC in detail. Weaker responses tended to outline the roles of the IOC.
- (d)(i) Many responses explained well how Hitler promoted his political ideology at the Berlin Olympics in 1936. Weaker responses often included inaccurate overstatements and candidates should try to show precise knowledge and use language carefully.
- (ii) Stronger candidates described the significance of Jesse Owens at the 1936 Olympic Games. Weaker responses often confused Jesse Owens with the Black Power Salute.
- (e) This was a very well-answered question with many good suggestions made by most candidates.
- (f) Weaker responses often included limited elements of the Big Drug Bust. Stronger candidates could explain several reasons fully.
- (g) Many candidates were able to outline one or two spectacular aspects of the Olympic Games. Only stronger candidates gained full credit.

- (h) Stronger candidates included a range of aspects in their response, including that the early Olympic Games were only for amateurs and that amateurism excluded athletes who received payment for loss of earnings. Weaker responses were often limited to associating 'amateur' with lower quality performance.



# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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**Paper 9396/33**  
**Written Paper**

## **Key messages**

- Candidates should understand that where sporting examples are required these examples must be selected carefully to support the answer.
- Candidates should gain practical experience of each type of training where possible, to enhance their understanding.

## **General comments**

The majority of candidates were well prepared for this examination. Weaker candidates sometimes struggled to use technical terms correctly, but often still gained partial credit.

## **Comments on specific questions**

### ***Section A***

#### **Question 1**

- (a) Most candidates identified the energy system that releases most of the energy during a javelin throw. The strongest responses described this energy system in detail.
- (b) Most responses stated that the lactacid debt component involves the removal of lactic acid. Stronger candidates outlined in detail how this removal happened and covered the replenishment of glycogen stores.
- (c) The strongest candidates showed a detailed knowledge of fartlek training, which suggested some practical experience of this type of training in many cases. Weaker candidates sometimes focused on other types of training.
- (d) This was a very well-answered question.
- (e) This was generally well answered. Some weaker responses did not describe sufficiently.
- (f) (i) Most candidates gave an acceptable definition of speed.
- (ii) Most responses named a suitable test of speed and many described the test in enough detail to score full credit. Some responses did not contain specific information to describe the named test accurately enough.
- (g) (i) Many candidates identified the two dimensions of balance. Some candidates described each component in detail and gave sporting examples of each. This extra information was not required.
- (ii) Only the strongest candidates were able to fully describe a suitable training programme to improve balance. Some candidates outlined the duration of a mesocycle but could not name any exercises or equipment used to improve balance. A test of balance is appropriate to measure progress if repeated at regular intervals, but candidates should be aware that tests will not improve a fitness component without regular training.



## Section B

### Question 2

- (a) (i) Weaker candidates tended to be limited to stating some of the components of attitude. Stronger candidates could describe all three.
- (ii) Stronger candidates produced excellent explanations of the use of cognitive dissonance to change a negative attitude. Some weaker candidates described other methods instead.
- (b) The strongest answers showed excellent knowledge, but weaker candidates generally only made a limited number of points to support their answer.
- (c) Some candidates found this question challenging and stated only that specific goals had to be specific and exciting goals had to excite the performer. Stronger candidates started with a SMARTER goal and used appropriate explanation for each element. A few weak candidates stated a SMARTER goal without any explanation of the three principles in the question.
- (d) The best responses tended to make direct comparisons, for example 'trait sports confidence is stable but state sports confidence can change'. Some candidates made isolated separate points about one aspect only.
- (e) Most candidates gave a valid description and example of performance accomplishments. Stronger candidates also included valid descriptions of vicarious experiences with an example. Some weaker responses were missing examples altogether.
- (f) The strongest responses used sporting examples to describe each different attentional style accurately. Weaker candidates did not link the attentional style to the number of cues and where they came from. In some weaker responses the sporting example did not support the description of the attentional style.
- (g) Most candidates generally understood that somatic anxiety was measured by considering bodily responses. Some weaker candidates stated that biofeedback measured heart rate and other responses but could not explain how this was used.
- (h) This was a very well-answered question.

## Section C

### Question 3

- (a) There were many good answers to this question. However, only the strongest candidates tended to make four valid points.
- (b) This was a well-answered question. Some weaker candidates tended not to state where the Ancient Olympic Games took place.
- (c) The strongest responses recognised that different ways that the Olympic Games were used for political motives were needed. Some candidates resorted to repetition and achieved only partial credit.
- (d) This was generally a well-answered question. Some answers to this question focused on one specific country. This was one acceptable way of addressing this question. Answers could also refer to strategies used by a range of countries.
- (e) The strongest answers explained the transition clearly and in detail. Some candidates limited their answers to saying that the Olympic Games needed to attract the best athletes to match their aim to be the pinnacle of competition.
- (f) Most answers included that after the Second World War there were a lot of seriously injured people but only the strongest candidates developed links from these veterans to Ludwig Guttman and the Stoke Mandeville Games.

- (g) This was a well-answered question. Many candidates developed a range of appropriate other reasons why performers may use prohibited performance-enhancing drugs.

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

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**Paper 9396/04**  
**A Level Coursework**

## **Key messages**

- Centres should check the quality of filming and that all paperwork is correct before making their submissions.
- The criteria found in the Coursework Guidelines should be used consistently across the whole range of activities and all candidates.
- When submitting evidence of the Evaluation and Appreciation task, centres are reminded that the use of prompts and stimuli should be limited and marks adjusted as needed.
- Centres should ensure that all candidates meet the minimum syllabus requirements in accordance with the Coursework Guidelines or the guidance listed when given permission to use the component adjustment.

## **General comments**

### **Administration**

Centres who applied for, and were given permission to use, the component adjustment did not always fulfil the minimum requirement since evidence of the oral Evaluation and Appreciation task was sometimes missing, or in other cases filmed evidence of at least one activity was missing.

Centres who did not apply for the component adjustment should have submitted filmed evidence of two activities and an Evaluation and Appreciation task.

In relation to paperwork, some centres did not include a summary form with their evidence and others did not record candidate marks on the correct forms. Swimming and track and field athletics, for example, require the recording of marks on specialist forms that show the breakdown of performance marks, critical assessment marks and the calculation of the final mark. In some cases, generic activity forms were used to record these activities.

### **Filmed evidence**

The quality, quantity and type of evidence varied considerably. Some centres produced good-quality filmed evidence. Many centres had reviewed, selected, edited and then checked the evidence before despatch. A USB, with chapters for each activity and a menu is a good form of presentation used by some centres.

For a few centres the evidence was filmed from too far away or focused on the wrong candidate. This made candidate identification particularly difficult. Centres are asked to review their evidence before submission. In some cases, inappropriate evidence was filmed. Some centres did not identify the candidates at the start of the filmed evidence, or they introduced the candidate in a different setting from where the evidence was filmed, and then did not identify the candidate in the actual performance. Candidates were typically best identified by numbered or coloured bib, by numbered shirt, by coloured swimming cap, by specialist clothing or by a printed number attached to clothing.

Filming should generally be by activity and not presented by individual candidates, except when there is only one candidate for the activity, where the activity is individual (such as gymnastics) or where the candidates' abilities are very different. The film should show the performance in a competitive context. Sometimes candidates were filmed in games or situations of low demand, where the quality of opposition or the

demands of the situation were not high enough to show if and how the candidate used tactics and strategies in challenging situations.

Centres are asked to consider the following issues before the evidence is despatched: Are the candidates clearly identified? Have the candidate identifiers been written onto the assessment sheets? Is candidate participation very frequent or is there a lot of time when they do not have contact with the ball or are inactive?

Centres are reminded that they must review the final evidence before it is submitted. Some centres did not do this and there were evidence issues as a result.

It is important that candidates are filmed in the best possible way and in the most appropriate situations so that they are able to fully demonstrate their skills and abilities in their chosen activity. Some footage was taken from such a distance that it was hard to see the candidate performing. In team games some evidence was filmed while following the ball and not the candidate and therefore it was hard to focus on the candidate taking up positions or supporting the play. Some footage was brief and taken from one perspective. The filming of a performance from different angles allows the action to be seen more clearly. In some circumstances it was hard to identify the candidate, evidence was presented, for example, with more than one player wearing the same number in a game or the candidate changed their number during filming without any record of this.

### **Evaluation and Appreciation**

The filmed evidence for this task was generally well presented. Footage of the observed performance was often included with the evidence either in a separate named file, or better still, immediately before the filming of the task. Some centres are reminded that this is a spoken task rather than a written task.

Centres are also reminded that candidates are not allowed to use pre-prepared notes but can use notes that have been made during the observation of the live performance. The oral task should be filmed as soon as possible after that live observation. In some responses the whole Evaluation and Appreciation task was filmed by a third person. In one scenario, the observed performance was recorded and then the camera immediately, without pause, switched to the teacher asking the questions and filmed the candidate response. The continuation from observation to analysis clearly demonstrated candidate knowledge and allowed access to the highest marks.

At some centres different candidates from the same centre used the same theoretical content to evaluate the observed performance, even when the activity and observed performer were very different. The Evaluation and Appreciation should be individual and applied to a specific performance, with candidates responding to what they have seen rather than what they expect to see. Actions within different observed performances require different appropriate and justified theoretical explanations. Sometimes candidates appeared to repeat a pre-learned response generically rather than responding to the specific performance under analysis.

Any prompting should be open ended and transparent. Questions, stimuli or prompts that are directive should affect the marks awarded and may be limiting. A pause in the response should be included in the continuous filming and does not necessarily indicate a low-level response. It might mean that the candidate simply needs to gather their thoughts. There is a list in the Coursework Guidelines suggesting questions that could be used by teachers if needed.

There were a number of very high-level evaluations which included detailed knowledge of the chosen activity with the use of technical language to explain weaknesses in the performance and which also contained relevant theoretical concepts to explain and improve those weaknesses. Weaker evaluations lacked detail and contained repetitive theoretical content that had little relevance to the observed performance.

### **Comments on specific activities**

Invasion games were the most popular activities chosen by the candidates for assessment and in most cases the choice was supported by good-quality filmed evidence. There was also a variety of other activities from across the syllabus presented by centres.

#### **Invasion games**

The quality of evidence was generally good with candidates filmed in fully competitive situations such as school, college or club fixtures. However, some candidates were filmed in less competitive situations where the quality of the opposition or the level of intensity of the activity did not contain enough demand to allow access to the highest marks.

#### **Swimming activities**

The quality of evidence in this activity was varied. Some high-quality evidence showed candidates up close, from various angles and some centres even used underwater cameras to film the swimmers performing starts and turns, supplemented by footage of the candidate in competition. Other less helpful filming was taken at one end of the pool and then followed the candidate from the same position as they swam to the opposite end of the pool, thus the image of the swimmer gradually decreased in size. In such circumstances it was often difficult to see the techniques and actions of the swimmer. Some centres are reminded that there are performance assessment tables to be used in swimming activities.

#### **Cross-country running**

Candidates should be assessed on a marked course in a pressured competitive situation over 10 km (males) and 8 km (females). It was sometimes hard to confirm the length and variety of the course from the evidence presented. The best evidence showed a variety of terrain, including inclines, filmed the candidates at various stages of the race and included more than one other runner as competition. At some centres the evidence presented was of just the start and finish of the race with just one other competitor present or the candidate was filmed as an individual.

#### **Track and field athletics**

Performance tables are used to determine the performance assessment mark of the candidates. The distances and times used in these tables, whilst recorded by the centre, were sometimes hard to verify on the evidence and it was best when the filming of an athletics event also contained clear footage of the timing or measurement of that event. Some centres provided evidence of a number of candidates competing in the same athletics event. Centres did not always use the correct form on which to record the marks in this activity and some did not calculate the marks correctly. As a result some centre marks needed to be adjusted.

#### **Dance**

The Coursework Guidelines state that a solo dance lasting between three and four minutes should be recorded. The candidate should also produce a written programme as per the guidelines. Sometimes evidence was very short and weaker candidates tended not to submit a written programme. In such cases there was a significant marking adjustment at some centres.

#### **Hill walking**

Most centres presented evidence of candidates performing skills in an appropriate environment. Whilst evidence of the actual expedition walk was submitted by many centres, the acquired skills of the use of map and compass, navigation, route planning and knowledge and application of safety were not always shown well. As stated in the Coursework Guidelines, candidates should be assessed as individuals. A log is required as evidence of the content, planning and execution of the expedition, but some centres did not provide this evidence. The level of demand and the expedition details should usually vary if this activity is used at AS and AL within a centre.