

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Paper 9396/12
Written Paper

Key messages

- Candidates must read each question carefully to ensure that their answers are relevant.
- When a question asks for differences between two items, candidates should try to make direct comparisons. Stronger candidates sometimes create tables to assist with this.

General comments

Candidates generally used examples when required to do so. Presentation of work was clear and time-management was good. There was no evidence of candidates running out of time and not completing the paper.

Some general terms are not specific enough at AS level. Candidates should try to ensure they answer in sufficient detail and with specificity of language.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Applied anatomy and physiology

Question 1

- (a) Stronger candidates used a description of the function of a muscle as an antagonist or a synergist that was related to the role of the agonist or the action at a specific joint.
- (b) Many candidates gave the correct joint type and identified the talus as one of the articulating bones in the ankle. Weaker candidates could not state the type of joint at the ankle or name articulating bones.
- (c) Most candidates named the type of movement occurring at the knee and hip. Weaker candidates used terms imprecisely throughout the question.
- (d) (i) The strongest candidates gave detailed explanations showing that blood was deoxygenated, how it was pumped through the chambers and valves and why it was then pumped to the lungs. Some answers only described without any explanation.
- (ii) Some candidates gave detailed explanations of the different neural factors and the role of the cardiac control centre. Other candidates did not explain the changes that were detected by the different receptors.
- (e) Many candidates stated the changes in velocity of blood and explained why each change occurred.
- (f) This question was generally well answered. Most candidates showed an excellent knowledge of the features of the alveoli that assisted gaseous exchange.
- (g) Stronger candidates understood that this question was about the changes to the mechanics of breathing during exercise, rather than a simple description of the mechanics of breathing at rest. Their responses explained how more air was inspired and expired. Some answers simply gave the intercostal muscles. The stronger answers differentiated between the external intercostals and the internal intercostals.

Section B: Acquiring, developing and performing movement skills

Question 2

- (a) Classifications were generally justified accurately. A number of candidates showed a good ability to apply their knowledge across the range of continua.
- (b) (i) Many candidates gave excellent descriptions of this theory. Some weaker candidates confused relevant terms or gave responses that were too vague.
(ii) Most candidates showed good knowledge of how to make a demonstration more effective and applied this well.
- (c) Many candidates gave a correct example and explained the term well. Some candidates described other syllabus terms instead.
- (d) Stronger candidates described the use of feedback and the role of traces. Some very weak candidates appeared not to read the question carefully enough and explained other types of skill instead.
- (e) Some candidates simply gave a list of factors with no explanation. An increase in reaction time means a slower reaction and this was not understood in the weakest responses.
- (f) Most candidates identified the correct phase and described some characteristics of this phase.
- (g) The strongest candidates gave a detailed explanation of drive-reduction theory. Weaker candidates mistakenly described drive theory or the inverted-U theory of arousal.

Section C: Contemporary studies in physical education and sport

Question 3

- (a) (i) Many candidates were able to give at least some similarities between play and recreation.
(ii) This was very well answered by most candidates. Many weaker candidates were able to give at least two benefits of active leisure.
- (b) Some of the strongest candidates drew a table to show differences or made direct comparisons in clear prose.
- (c) (i) Most candidates showed a good understanding of the term.
(ii) The strongest candidates showed an excellent understanding of the provision required by an elite performer. Other candidates addressed one factor, such as funding, in detail and did not consider any other factors. In weaker responses some descriptions were too vague for credit.
- (d) The strongest candidates described provision by voluntary bodies well. Provision of facilities by public bodies was also well-answered by some. A number of very weak responses merely repeated the terms voluntary and public and other words in the question.
- (e) Many candidates were able to describe a range of ways to reduce spectator violence. Some candidates focused on player violence, suggesting that they had not read the question carefully before answering.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Paper 9396/02
AS Coursework

Key messages

- Candidate identification was an issue for some centres. Candidates should be identified by clear numbers (or letters) on the front and back of shirts. Some centres used other methods instead, such as a verbal introduction, which was often not sufficient. During the evidence the identifier should remain the same if at all possible. If the identifier changes this should be clearly indicated on the footage and/or forms.
- Centres should place candidates in an environment that provides sufficient demand. If candidates are asked to complete tasks where the demand is too low they are unlikely to access higher marks. In games, conditioned competitive situations are required for assessment and evidence. In other activities conditioned situations should be used so that effective repetition of skills can be evidenced and the ability to react to changing environments is demonstrated.
- Centres are reminded that it is rarely necessary to submit more than one DVD. There is no requirement for separate DVDs for each activity and/or for each candidate. Where candidates can be filmed together then this is the best practice unless there is a wide ability difference.

General comments

There were some very high-quality performances, which were often correctly awarded high marks. However, a few candidates submitted activities in which they were beginners. There was also some very low-quality work, which in some cases was accurately marked. Alternative activities may have benefitted some of these candidates.

Filmed evidence

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

For a few centres the video was filmed from too great a distance or focused on the wrong candidate. In particular this made identification more difficult. There was some filmed evidence with very large black backgrounds and only a small picture. This is usually a result of the wrong settings being used. Centres are asked to review their evidence before submission. In some cases inappropriate or low level of demand evidence was filmed. This was sometimes due to a candidate playing against much less able opposition.

Filming should be by activity and not presented by individual candidate, except when there is only one candidate for the activity, where the activity is an individual activity (e.g. Gymnastics) or where the candidates' abilities are very different. The film should show both the technique of the skill and the outcome. The use of a tripod would improve film quality for some centres.

Centres are asked to consider the following issues before the DVD 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 DVD before it is submitted. Some centres did not do this. Some centres send a shortcut file only and so the DVD may be better checked on a different computer.

Selected activities

Invasion games were the most frequently seen activities. The other activities that are available were offered less frequently. Outdoor and Adventurous activities included Hill Walking, Orienteering and Horse Riding.

Action Plans

Some Action Plans were of high quality and were superbly presented with well-considered work. Coursework Guidelines provide the framework for the way that the task is completed by the candidate and then assessed. Some centres may wish to more closely read this section. In some centres candidates submitted work that did not cover all the required aspects.

Work should be specific to an activity and should address all factors of the performance, not just fitness. The work should include: identification of strengths and weaknesses and the rationale for the judgement, which leads to clear (SMARTER) goals, which in turn leads to the analysis of technique and fitness elements. Detailed plans to bring about improvement must be provided that include detailed practices, the principles of training (particularly SPOR and FIT) and a week-by-week plan. Finally, the plan should be evaluated. The task instructions in the Coursework Guidelines provide a good outline of what is expected. Action Plans cannot be undertaken in Weight Training.

Some work identified strengths and weaknesses but then the improvement plan did not refer back to the identified issues. Not all aspects need to be included in the plan, especially if some are focused on in depth. Some training sessions were excellent, whereas others were only repeated a few times and contained content that lasted only a few minutes. Centres should note that Action Plans are not just a record of participation in an activity, either in club training session or lessons.

Assessment

In some centres marks differed from the expected standard of assessment. In these centres, typically some candidates did not demonstrate their ability in sufficiently demanding conditions. For example, a skier on an elementary run cannot be marked at a high level. Centres are asked to ensure that in their initial planning of an activity provides opportunities to film candidates at a demand that demonstrates their ability.

In Weight Training centres needed to present evidence that the candidate had followed a programme of weight training that had a specific purpose and included a range of weight-training stations. The Weight Training Individual Candidate Record Form should record a candidate's participation, and this should then be used as the basis of assessment. This is available in the coursework guidelines. This form must be submitted with coursework.

Comments on specific activities

Athletics

Several examples/attempts (particularly in field events) should be filmed. Filming for field events should include the performance and clear evidence of the result.

Cross-country Running

Candidates are not permitted to run on roads or prepared/surfaced paths except where they bisect a course. Filmed evidence should support both the course and times for all aspects of the assessment.

Weight training

Logs must be used and then marks submitted on a Centre Rank Order Assessment Form.

Orienteering

Evidence must include a candidate's maps and control cards. The distance of the course should be indicated. The course should be unfamiliar to the candidates. Filming should show how skills are applied.

Dance

Three solo dances are required. Candidates must choreograph the dances. Group dances or dances taken from a school production should not be used.

Outdoor and Adventurous activities

Prescribed minimum conditions apply. Conditions should be entered onto assessment sheets.

Hill Walking – Navigational skills should be filmed for each individual candidate.

Orienteering – Navigational skills must be filmed. Assessment must be on a graded course.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Paper 9396/32
Written Paper

Key messages

- Candidates should read each question carefully.
- Candidates are reminded of the requirement to use a sporting example to support points they make in an answer if this is a requirement of the question.

General comments

Many candidates showed a very good understanding of the requirements of the examination paper. These candidates had generally prepared well, interpreted the command words accurately and used correct technical language in their responses.

Practical and sporting examples were used appropriately when required by stronger candidates who also tended to pay attention to the number of marks available for each question.

Comments on specific questions

Section A: Exercise and sport physiology

Question 1

- (a) (i) Most candidates showed an excellent knowledge of the lactic acid system.
- (ii) The strongest responses understood that both the alactacid and lactacid components of EPOC begin as soon as exercise has ended. These responses also tended to link points, for example the replenishment of phosphocreatine to the timescale of recovery.
- (b) Stronger candidates explained the timescales for each period and their sporting examples showed an understanding that each cycle was a period of training with specific goals. Some responses made links to goal setting without showing that training was an element of each. A few responses did not use a sporting example as was required in the question.
- (c) (i) Only the strongest candidates were able to define balance, identify the two dimensions and give a practical example of each.
- (ii) Many candidates could name a recognised test for balance. Some candidates explained how a stop-watch was used to record the number of attempts in 60 seconds or to time how long a subject stayed in balance. Only the strongest candidates accurately described the protocol for their named test.
- (iii) The strongest answers were able to identify and describe suitable types of training. It seemed that many candidates had performed their own flexibility work as part of their training and some were able to apply this.
- (iv) The strongest answers described the physiological adaptations to flexibility training well and in detail. Weaker responses tended to be too vague for credit to be awarded.

- (d) Most responses stated that caffeine improves reaction time and aids concentration. Many responses showed a detailed knowledge of caffeine as an ergogenic aid. A few weaker candidates confused caffeine with creatine.

Section B: Psychology of sport performance

Question 2

- (a) Responses often described the three components successfully. Many responses were able to give a practical example of each.
- (b) (i) Most candidates showed excellent understanding of features of effective leadership.
- (ii) Many candidates gave effective methods of improving team cohesiveness and used sporting examples to support their answer. Common suggestions included the use of team bonding sessions, setting team goals, giving individual roles to each team member and selecting team players. Some weaker responses were limited to one or two of these examples.
- (c) The strongest answers gave clear examples of each type of goal. Many candidates were able to correctly describe one type of goal using a sporting example. Some weaker candidates confused performance goals with other terms.
- (d) Candidates who understood Nideffer's attentional styles were often able to apply their knowledge using sporting examples as required by the question. Some candidates could explain the internal and external dimensions only. Others were limited to the broad and narrow dimensions. In some responses practical examples were given without any explanation.
- (e) (i) Most candidates gave several possible causes of aggression. This was generally a well-answered question.
- (ii) Weaker candidates were able to describe some limited methods to eliminate aggressive tendencies. There were very few responses that did not gain at least partial credit for this question.
- (f) The strongest answers showed excellent understanding of attribution retraining showing a precise use of technical language. Some weaker candidates did not attempt this question.

Section C: Olympic Games: a global perspective

Question 3

- (a) Generally candidates answered this question well although some responses were left too vague.
- (b) The strongest candidates could list several shared characteristics between the Ancient and Modern Olympics. Some weaker answers were insufficiently qualified for credit.
- (c) There were many excellent responses to this question. Many candidates identified Hitler's use of propaganda, the black power salute and the events at Munich. The strongest responses also gave other good examples. Some weaker candidates appeared confused with dates and venues within their descriptions.
- (d) The strongest candidates showed a good knowledge of broken time payments and their impact on the amateur ideal of Olympism. Some candidates did not understand broken time payments but were still able to access partial credit for describing the meaning of amateurism and the change to professionalism at the Olympics. Some weak candidates did not attempt to answer this question.
- (e) Most responses gave at least some relevant benefits for an athlete. Some weaker responses focused on benefits for a country rather than an athlete.
- (f) The strongest candidates showed good knowledge of this topic. Most named the winner of the race and stated that several of the runners had allegedly used prohibited performance-enhancing drugs.
- (g) This question gave candidates the opportunity to suggest a range of reasons. Some balanced and thoughtful answers were seen. Many candidates gave a good range of arguments to support one or both sides of the argument. The logic in a few statements by weaker candidates was confused and in some cases too generalised but generally most candidates responded well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Paper 9396/04
A Level Coursework

Key messages

- If centres are entering candidates for AS and A Level in the same series, they must submit completely separate coursework for each component (AS 02 and A-Level 04). The type of evidence that is required is different.
- Centre staff are responsible for producing the filmed evidence. Candidates or other learners must not undertake the filming. Other adults may be used but will need direction from the centre, who retain responsibility.

General comments

At some centres the level of demand in Games activities was not at A-Level standard in some cases. Simple unopposed skills/drills are not suitable evidence at this level. Candidates must be assessed in a competitive situation. Centres should place candidates in an environment that provides sufficient demand to allow assessment at A Level. If candidates are asked to complete tasks in a situation of low demand then they cannot access higher marks. Therefore, simple isolated drills should not be demonstrated by candidates.

Overall, centres generally provided good filmed evidence. The overall quality of teaching and candidate performance was clear and some performances were very strong.

Filmed evidence

The quality, quantity and type of evidence varied across centres and the range of activities. The majority of centres produced good filmed evidence. There were cases where the evidence was limited in demand and effectiveness. Film angles must enable the skill and the outcome (e.g. where the ball lands) to be seen. A few centres filmed the skill from either a distance that was too close or from an incorrect angle.

Where candidates are participating in the same activity they should be filmed together where possible. Evidence should be presented by activity rather than by candidate. So, for example, two badminton players can be filmed together unless they are of very different abilities.

Some problems associated with filmed evidence were that the settings used created footage with a small image surrounded by a large black background or a lack of sound. Other issues were a lack of tripod use resulting in camera shake, the camera angle not allowing the skill and the outcome to be viewed, having too many participants in the shot (e.g. candidates unidentified in a rugby match) or the distance of the camera from the action. The camera was sometimes either far too far for individual candidates to be identified or far too close for the context of the game to be appreciated.

Centres are asked to consider the following issues before the DVD is despatched: Are the candidates clearly identified? Have the identifiers been written onto the assessment sheets? Is candidate participation very frequent or is there a lot of time when they do not have involvement? Does the film show the best ability of the candidate(s)?

Filming of representative games is appropriate. Identification of candidates is more difficult in formal game situations and it is essential that centres are able to give clear indicators. Some centres omitted the shirt colour.

The responsibility for producing the evidence lies with centre staff and this should not be delegated to candidates. Many centres had clearly reviewed, selected, edited and then checked the DVD before

despatch. DVD content should be presented by activity rather than by candidate where possible and appropriate to the activity. Candidates of similar ability should be filmed together. DVD evidence should not contain very short clips. A single DVD with chapters for each activity and a menu is the good form of presentation. Where chapters or sectioning are used, the film can be continuous and not sub-divided for each candidate.

Candidate identification

While candidates are often very well known to centre staff, the moderator requires very clear identification from all angles in order to identify candidates. Candidates must be identified by large numbered or lettered bibs/shirts that can easily be seen at a distance. These must be on the front and back. In formal team games the team/colour must also be included. The identifier must be written onto the first column on the Rank Order Assessment forms. Please do not write vague descriptions of what the candidate is wearing, e.g. blue socks/yellow boots. Please do not try to instead introduce candidates on the film or list their names.

Selected activities

A range of invasion games, Badminton, Competitive Swimming and Track and Field Athletics were seen regularly. The other activities that are available were used to a lesser extent.

Evaluating and Appreciation Task

Many centres produced work of suitable length this year. The filming of the talks in a formal environment was generally good. Most centres used the opening statement in the guidelines. However, there were a few centres which did not follow this guidance. It should be noted that the performance must be live and the talk must take place immediately after the observation. Only notes of the observation are permitted and this should be made obvious on the film.

The presentation should follow the format laid out and should start with the opening statement in the guidelines being read by the staff. The observations must be of another person taking part in one of the two activities that the candidate has submitted as a practical activity. It is useful when the observed performance is included and in team games the performer must be clearly identified. Prompts or questions by staff should be kept to a minimum and where their use is necessary, marks should be adjusted accordingly. The analysis, improvement methods, anatomical/physiological/psychological/learning/skill type knowledge should be applied to the observed performance. Candidates should state their observations and should also say why they believe that the stated weaknesses and strengths are observed, how improvement plans will work and how, when and why they will be progressed.

Standard of practical assessment

Some centres marked to within a few marks of the criteria and were generally accurate. In some cases centres were overly generous to work that was limited.

Level of demand

The level of demand was an issue in some centres. Centres are asked to ensure that in their initial planning of an activity, opportunities to film candidates at a demand that demonstrates their ability are available and are planned and used. A much weaker opponent, staged opposition, light winds/calm water and easy contact situations are all examples of insufficient demand at A-level standard.

Comments on specific activities

Some activities need specific data to be recorded on the assessment forms and filmed evidence for the critical assessment aspect.

Outdoor and Adventurous activities

Prescribed minimum conditions apply. Conditions need to be entered onto assessment sheets.

Hill Walking

Navigational skills must be filmed for each individual candidate in the sample. A log alone is insufficient. Logs should give information/evidence that allows differentiation between candidates.