



A-LEVEL

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

7582/1 Paper 1: Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport
Report on the Examination

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General Comments

This is the first normal summer exam series since 2019. While we reference this as a normal series there were clear and obvious differences in that candidates were provided with advance information regarding some of the topics which would be examined. The mean mark for this paper was broadly in line with that of the 2019 paper in the region of 47 marks.

There was a decrease in the mean mark per section through the paper with Section A the highest at nearly 17/35 and Section C the lowest at less than 15/35. This is primarily a reflection of the standard of the extend responses in each section with Section A having both the highest scoring 8-mark question (mean slightly over 4 marks) and highest scoring 15-mark question (mean slightly over 8 marks). Section B had the lowest scoring 8-mark question (mean of approx. 2.5) but this was made up for with a high scoring 15-mark question (mean slightly over 7 marks). In contrast section C had the second lowest scoring 8-mark question (mean of around 3.5) and the lowest scoring 15-mark question by some distance (mean of approx. 4.3).

Another reason for the decrease in marks as students worked through the paper could be students time management, with additional time spent on early sections at the expense of those later in the paper. There is a time pressure in the exams for this specification and, as stated in previous reports, students should be aware that time spent writing excessive amounts for any one question can result in them running out of time to complete the remainder of the paper to their full potential.

There was little evidence of students missing out questions on this paper except for question 5 where over 6% of candidates did not register a response.

The main area for improvement on short answer questions continues to be ensuring that students answer the question which has been set. This requires students to understand both the command word used and the assessment objective (AO) which is likely being assessed. Too often the level of detail candidates provide does not reflect the demand of the question, particularly when questions are assessing AO3. Where a sport/activity are referenced in a question the response must be specifically linked to this.

Section A Applied Anatomy and Physiology

Questions 1 and 2

Students found both question 1 (mean approx. 0.44) and question 2 (mean approx. 0.52) challenging to a degree. For question 1 both options B and C were common incorrect answers which shows lack of core knowledge of how muscle fibres are recruited. This has been a weakness in previous assessments. For question 2 both possible alternatives were commonly given as incorrect responses which shows an inability to apply knowledge of measuring energy expenditure to specific scenarios.

Question 3

Question 3 was a 3-mark AO1 question which had a mean mark around 1. Where students were successful, they were generally able to pick up marks for the first three marking points. Very few students, however, were able to correctly identify that breathing rate was increased due to faster contraction of the respiratory muscles. There appeared to be an element of rote learning to this topic as students frequently referenced the impact on the heart which had no relevance to the question set.

Question 4

Question 4 was a 4-mark question combining AO1 and AO2. The mean mark was approximately 2. The AO1 aspect of the question was poorly answered given its simplicity, with a high number of students unable to name the three articulating bones at the elbow. Knowledge of articulating bones is a clear requirement of the specification but may have less time spent on it given its relative ease.

Students' performance on the AO2 aspects were more in line with expectations. Where students failed to identify the main agonist the most common answer was biceps. This highlights a common failure to understand the changes which occur during eccentric contractions. Students commonly find planes and axis challenging but it was disappointing to see the number who couldn't identify a correct pair, given that these are constant. It was also a concern that a number of students simply put the same term down for both, hedging their bets, but clearly not having considered what the correct answer may be.

Question 5

Question 5 was a 3-mark AO3 question. The mean mark was around 0.5 which reflected the high number of candidates who failed to attempt the question (approximately 6%) or scored 0 (approximately 58%). While students were sometimes able to demonstrate knowledge of cardiovascular drift, they failed to go into the detail required from an AO3 question, signposted by the command word analyse. The question required students to show linking between cause and effect; breaking down the concept of cardiovascular drift to suggest the causes of the physiological changes which would occur, and ultimately the impact they would have on performance.

Question 6

Question 6 was the first of the 8-mark extended response questions. Student responses received the full range of available marks with a large percentage scoring between 3 and 6, resulting in a mean of around 4.2. Students generally had sound knowledge of what altitude training was; the physiological impact it would have on an athlete; and generic negatives associated with this training method. Many students were also able to identify why these physiological adaptations would be specifically beneficial for an endurance athlete.

Where students failed to move beyond the bottom of band 3 it was generally because their response lacked the required AO3 evaluation of using altitude training for a one off event. The phrase 'would allow the athlete to work harder for longer' was commonly cited but without the additional depth required to make it a creditworthy point. Additional points linked to negatives such as altitude sickness were often stated but without progressing beyond basic recall.

Question 7

Question 7 was the first of the 15-mark questions on the paper and was also synoptic. Student responses received the full range of available marks resulting in a mean of approx. 8.2. While students' performance in this question may have been boosted by the pre-release material with a clear link evident between the two topics, it does show that when students possess the knowledge required by the specification, they are able to construct well structured, high scoring responses.

Candidates' knowledge of dietary supplements/manipulation and energy systems was strong and, in many cases, went beyond answering the question. It should be noted that where students are asked to refer to a secondary topic in the question this should only be done so where appropriate. No standalone sections are required. Candidates were often able to match the correct supplement/manipulation and energy system to each athlete. Where marks were lost this was frequently because caffeine was linked to the 100m sprinter, which was not credited due to there being no link to energy systems, which were required to be referenced throughout.

The mean mark of 8 lies in band 3, and the reason for students not scoring higher marks again lies in the lack of depth in AO3. Generic comments were again often made such as 'would allow the athlete to work harder for longer' without a clear understanding of why this was possible. Candidates would also often only partially explain an impact such as creatine allowing the PC system to work for longer but with no link to the time frame of the 100m or depth of understanding as to why this was beneficial.

Section B Skill Acquisition

Questions 8 and 9

Question 8 had a mean of approx. 0.47 and question 9 had a mean of approx. 0.59. These questions discriminated between high and low achieving students more effectively than their section A counterparts, suggesting that high performing students were more able to access these marks. For question 8 all three distractors were used. Question 9 reinforced the suggestion from a previous series that students struggled to apply their knowledge of temporal and spatial anticipation.

Question 10

Question 10 was a 3-mark AO1 question which had a mean mark of around 1.8. Students were successful in identifying a range of factors which made demonstrations effective. Where marks were dropped students' responses were sometimes too closely linked to be awarded separate marks.

Question 11.1 and 11.2

Question 11.1 was a 2-mark question combining AO1 and AO2. The mean mark was approximately 1.5, showing students had sound knowledge of continuous skills and were able to give appropriate examples. Unusually nearly a quarter of student were able to access only 1 of the available marks, most commonly because they could define the term, but were unable to then give a sporting example.

Question 11.2 continued to examine the same specification area of skill classification but was a 2-mark question wholly focused on AO2 and linked to the gross – fine continuum. The mean mark for this question was around 0.9, with nearly all the students scoring either 0 or 2 marks. Where students failed to access any marks, it was often due to their failure to link the examples they gave to either the term gross or fine. There are no benefit of the doubt marks awarded in A Level PE and examiners cannot make links for the students. Therefore, they need to be as explicit as possible when constructing their responses, particularly when different parts are linked.

Question 12

Question 12 was a 3-mark AO3 question which also tested the quantitative skill of candidates. The mean mark was around 0.8. In many cases students were not awarded marks as they failed to support their answers with data from figure 2. In several cases data was included but was inaccurate which prevented marks from being awarded.

Question 13

Question 13 was the second of the 8 mark extended response questions and was also synoptic. This was the lowest scoring of the 8-mark questions and had the second lowest percentage of all extended response questions, despite both topics being highlighted on the pre-release material.

While some student responses received the full range of available marks, very few students made it out of band 2, with a mean of only just over 2.5. The limiting factor with this question was students' inability to apply their knowledge of process goals to high jump. Despite many correctly highlighting that process goals focused on technique, a high number of candidates then went on to talk about jumping a higher height as a suitable goal.

Question 14

Question 14 was the second of the 15-mark questions on the paper; this was also the second question on the paper to assess candidates' quantitative skills. Student responses received the full range of available marks resulting in a mean of approximately 7. This mark was representative of most students' ability to analyse the information presented to identify Athlete A as an autonomous performer and Athlete B as a cognitive performer. Following on from this most students were able to link massed practice to Athlete A and distributed practice to Athlete B. After this, students' responses differed greatly. The most basic responses simply listed the advantages and disadvantages of massed and distributed practice with no links to either the sport or stage of learning. The very best answers presented balanced arguments as to why a specific type of practice may be more beneficial given both the activity, including the classification of the skills involved, and the differing qualities of each stage of learning.

Section C Sport and Society

Questions 15 and 16

Students found both question 15 (mean approximately 0.9) and question 16 (mean approximately 0.8) relatively straightforward. Where candidates were incorrect, their responses were spread over the distractors, suggesting an element of guess work. No clear misconceptions were evident.

Question 17

Question 17 was a 3-mark AO1 question which had a mean mark around 1.9. Students' knowledge of the professions responsible for the spread of sport across the British Empire was generally good. Where marks were dropped students had often not understood the reference to 'professions' in the question, instead stating organisations such as the church.

Question 18

Question 18 was a 3-mark AO2 question. The mean mark was approximately 1.8, showing students were able to apply their knowledge of mob football to the characteristics of pre-industrial British society with reasonable success. The most common mark awarded was when students linked the limited rules to illiteracy of the working class at the time. In a limited number of cases students missed out on marks as they simply listed characteristics of either mob football or preindustrial society failing to meet the demands of an AO2 explain question.

Question 19.1 and 19.2

Question 19.1 was a 1-mark AO1 question which required a definition of stereotyping. The mean mark was around 0.8 showing the high level of success students had when doing this. The key was the understanding that it was ideas about a group of people transferred to an individual. Those students who missed out on the mark generally only focused on the individual.

Question 19.2 was a 3-mark AO3 question and the final one to link to quantitative skills. It was the second lowest scoring question on the paper, after question 5, with regards the percentage of available marks awarded. Question 12 was in third place, highlighting a weakness in student ability to access marks on the AO3 short answer questions in general. In this case students were often aware that the data showed women played less sport than men. They were able to highlight one or more stereotypes women faced in sport but were then unable to achieve the depth required for the mark, which required them to identify the impact of the specific stereotype. An example of this was the number of students who outline that woman were stereotypically cast as homemakers, but then failed to identify that this limited the time they had available to participate in sport.

Question 20

Question 20 was the final 8 mark extended response question. It had a mean mark of approximately 3.5 with the highest number of candidates being awarded full marks (around 2.3%) and nearly 7% achieving the top band.

Knowledge of the period was generally good, and most students could make some links to the working class. The candidates who did best on the question were those who understood the negative effect early urbanisation had on the participation, but then followed this by outlining the big changes later in the period which increased participation. At times the depth of analysis was lacking, with

changes such as broken time payments highlighted but no clear links made to how this increased the participation of the working class.

Question 21

Question 21 was the final 15-mark question on the paper and the one with the lowest mean mark (approximately 4.3). While students recorded scores across the full range of marks the vast majority of these (nearly 80%) were in the first two bands. Students failed to progress past these bands due to a lack of breadth or depth of knowledge, as both were required to be successful. As stated previously, poor performance in this question may have been due to its position as the last question in the paper, when students had limited time to complete it.

Students who did perform well in the question had a broad knowledge of the work of Sport England's local partners and barriers those disadvantaged by their socio-economic status face when trying to access sport. They were then able to link strategies to specific barriers and analyse the impact. This required them to understand how they overcome a barrier and allow those disadvantaged by their socio-economic status to access sport.

Most students, however, were unable to do this. In the worst cases students include a range of information focused on other underrepresented groups eg women and those with disabilities. This meant the only creditworthy information was the AO1 on the work of local partners, where this was present. Others who progressed into band two commonly made very general statements about a limited numbers of strategies which focused only on the fact that those disadvantaged by their socio-economic status have less money. They failed to consider additional barriers such as time, transport etc.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.