
GCSE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

8582/2 Socio-cultural influences and well-being in physical activity and sport
Report on the Examination

8582/2
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General Comments

Overall students covered the full range of questions and generally responses were written with sound punctuation and grammar. The quality and size of the handwriting was the most difficult issue to deal with for examiners as some students handwriting was extremely poor.

Unlike previous years exams, very few students wrote outside of the lines allocated for a response. The extra space at the back of the exam booklet was used to continue responses which made marking of these significantly easier. However, students must ensure that any work in this extra space or on additional paper is clearly numbered so that examiners know which question the response relates to. If this does not happen, students could miss out on marks available to them.

Multiple Choice Questions (1-5)

On this unit, questions 1 to 5 were multiple choice questions in this series. Question 4 was the question which was best answered whilst question 1 was the least well answered. All questions had over a 70% success rate except for Question 1 which surprisingly only 55% of students got correct.

Question 6.1

The majority of students gave a correct definition of a closed skill with most referring to 'unaffected by the environment.' Fewer students gave the definition as 'done in the same way every time.'

Students who failed to gain a mark for this question mostly referred to learning this skill was easy, as it was a basic skill, or it was a self-paced skill. There were a small number of students that just gave examples of either a skill or in some cases a sport.

Question 6.2

Students mostly gained full marks on this question with the average for all students above 3 marks out of 4.

When outlining the skills, students mostly distinguished between the use of large muscle groups for gross skills and small muscle groups for fine skills. However, some students used the wrong terminology in suggesting that a fine skill involved 'a small number of muscles.' Some students did refer to fine skills being precise movement and for gross skills that the movement was powerful/large or strong. A common incorrect answer referred to the skills either being easy or hard to learn.

Examples of both types of skills were mostly correct, with commonly either a dart throw (fine), or the rugby tackle (gross) being given.

In the examples for fine skills where students did not achieve a mark, they failed to indicate the element/part that would classify the skill as fine. For example, when stating shooting in netball/basketball, the students did not identify that it was on the release of the ball, when using the fingers. However, there were correct responses that referred to the skill of bowling, identifying that the fingers were used to create spin.

Question 7.1

Most students attempted this question, with most students understanding the concept of arousal and the relationship to performance level. However, the majority of students failed to pick up marks as they did not relate the inverted-U theory to a sporting example which was asked for in the question.

The best answers clearly identified the impact on performance of arousal at the 3 stages of the inverted-U theory (under, optimum, over) for an identified sporting example. For example, a rugby tackle when under aroused may result in the opposition breaking through it; at optimum arousal they would take the opponent down with force; at over arousal the rugby player may commit a high or dangerous tackle.

Question 7.2

Most students attempted the question, with the average mark being just over 2.

For deep breathing, there were a high number of students that did not achieve the (AO1) mark for this as they did not include a simple description of what deep breathing looked/felt like in their response e.g. slow, deep breaths or focusing on breathing. In addition, some students just repeated the question, writing 'deep breathing' which gained no marks. Most students did achieve the (AO2) mark by describing this would help a player to settle their nerves/calm down/reduce heart rate in a sporting activity.

For mental rehearsal, most students gained the mark at (AO2) describing the use of this technique in a sporting situation, such as when taking penalty kicks/strokes in rugby, football or hockey. Many students in describing the example, included the fact that the performer would visualise/imagine the shot in their head, or other words that fitted the (AO1) mark criteria. Because of this, mental rehearsal more often than deep breathing gained 2 marks for students.

Question 8.1

Whilst most students attempted this question, many struggled to access more than 2 marks with overall better responses to 'gender', than 'age'.

For gender, many students offered descriptions of how societal views and opinions can be very stereotyped, viewing some sports as suitable for a specific gender and this would deter females or males from participation, giving examples of rugby/football or ballet. Some good responses referred to the idea that male sports are or have been broadcast more in the media and there is a lack of female role models to inspire girls/women to participate.

For age, those students that were successful in gaining marks, described that school could allow greater access to sport for school aged people, therefore participation levels were high. However conversely, it was also suggested that due to homework this age group had limited time to participate. This description was accepted as a creditworthy response. The most common way that students gained marks in this section was in mentioning that work or family commitments lowered participation for those that have left school or are young adults. There were some references to the fact that older people are more prone to injury or suffer ill health and this would either reduce or stop participation.

Question 8.2

The main issue with this question was that students tended to give a personality type and link it to an activity, e.g. introverts would play an individual sport or extroverts prefer a team game without providing any explanation to gain AO3 marks. Where students fared better, they discussed why the trait linked well to the activity suiting either the extrovert or introvert. This was seen in responses that suggested that extroverts enjoyed the social interaction that happens in a team sport such as Netball. Likewise describing the introvert's quiet disposition and preferring to be on their own, therefore they would be more likely to participate in solo sports such as archery. Unfortunately, some students produced answers that linked the correct sport to the traits of the personality type but did not state which personality they were referring to, so therefore the information was not creditworthy.

Question 9.1

This question was answered well by most students. It was clear from many responses that the students linked this question to football matches rather than any major sporting event.

The problems caused by crowds due to disruptive behaviour, hooliganism and violence was the most common response. Students often gained the second mark for this question by giving the costing implications, particularly linked to the impact of bad crowd behaviour either for safety or policing. Abuse of players and officials also was given as a negative effect, frequently as the third possible mark students achieved.

Some students missed out on marks when they gave more than one response linked to hooliganism and some of the actions linked to it such as pitch invasions, throwing objects at other fans, fighting etc. These were only credited once under the hooliganism bullet point in the mark scheme.

Question 9.2

The understanding shown by students was good, with many referring to the positive effect that a crowd generated on the players performance. Stating that the crowd cheering (AO1), explaining that this would encourage players to try their hardest (AO2), was far and above the most common correct response. The creation of a positive atmosphere (AO1) was sometimes repeated in referring to other things that supporters can do, such as singing or clapping good play and could not be awarded an additional mark, as this was a repeat (AO1).

The concept of the 'home team advantage' (AO1) was also explained as being a positive to players, who would want to play better (AO2) for their supporters. Students also stated that spectators by virtue of buying tickets created revenue/money (AO1) for a club. A lot of students indicated that this income could be spent on players wages which did not meet the (AO2) criteria in this questions as it did not explain the effect on performance. However, those students that suggested that the money could be spent on better training facilities helping to improve the players performance did gain the (AO2) mark for their explanation.

Question 10.1

Most students that attempted to answer this question correctly defined a sedentary lifestyle. Most students clearly stated that it was a lifestyle that included little or no physical activity/exercise. A typical response that lacked clarity was when students suggested that it was a lack of exercise over a certain period. For example: 'doing less than 30minutes exercise', the time varied greatly and did not indicate whether this was daily or weekly.

An incorrect but surprisingly common response, related to the daily intake of food exceeding amount of activity undertaken.

Question 10.2

Most students showed that they understood the concept of physical health and wellbeing, describing that it enables a person to undertake daily tasks, or cope with the demands of the environment as well as being free from illness. Slightly less clear was how students tried to describe that 'all body systems were working correctly,' particularly when they tried to put this into their own words, such as 'the state of your health,' which was an insufficient description.

Some students referred to 'having good moods and emotions' or 'whether you are fit or not' or 'eating the right foods and having good hygiene' which did not relate to physical health.

Question 10.3

The main issue with this question was the lack of explaining how performance would be better (AO2). Many students started their answer by repeating the question in saying 'performance would improve because...' then giving the link to good mental health. These responses did not give any indication how performance was improved. Where students were more successful, they first gave a feature of good mental health such as 'you are more relaxed/not stressed/more positive'...then explaining how this would encourage the player to train more/ be more focussed whilst playing making less mistakes/ prepared to try harder/ try more difficult skills... implying a better performance.' However, there were still a high number of students that still only wrote improved performance at the end of their response.

Question 11

The understanding of the need for a balanced diet was evident from the range of food types mentioned, the contribution each has on a person's health and the benefits each type gives to the performer. Although the food type could not be credited unless it linked to the effect on the body, many students were successful in achieving this.

The most mentioned food types were fats and carbohydrates, linked to causing obesity and providing a source of energy respectively. Both of these were always successfully explained by students, as either making the performer less quick/speed due to extra weight or allowing a performer to not suffer fatigue or slow down during a game/marathon.

Question 12.1

This question was attempted by most students and the majority appeared to understand the different characteristics used to classify an endomorph or mesomorph. There was a small percentage that confused endomorph and ectomorph with incorrect answers, identifying the characteristics of the ectomorph. There did not seem to be this confusion with the mesomorph body type.

For the endomorph, the most common characteristics correctly identified was Pear shaped body and large amounts of body fat. For the mesomorph it was identifying the muscular body or lack of body fat, being the most common. Few students referred to the wedge-shaped body characteristic. The two characteristics that students sometimes attributed to the wrong body type, were hips and shoulders.

Question 12.2

Students' responses suggested that many understood what characterised an ectomorph body type, stating the characteristics but this (AO1) response did not allow the student to gain a mark. The students needed to discuss why these characteristics would be beneficial or detrimental to the performer in a suitable athletics event to achieve marks at (AO3).

A high number of students produced answers that were at the (AO2) level, by suggesting what events would suit or not suit the ectomorph, because they were thin/tall but not analysing (AO3) why this would help or hinder them perform in relevant events. Those students that were successful in achieving an (AO3) response discussed how in high jump, the ectomorph would carry less weight and therefore achieve a good height when jumping. Some students also discussed how the longer limbs were an advantage in being able to create better leverage or to reach higher in high jump. The other events that produced good discursive (AO3) answers were when ectomorphs competed in endurance events, such as 10,000m, that carrying less weight or being more streamlined would help the athlete to run faster or with less effort.

Students, in discussing the suitability of sprinting as an event, produced opposing opinions. Some considered it was suitable, as their long stride length would be advantageous, whilst others equally thought they were unsuitable as they would not be able to generate enough speed, as they lacked muscle.

Most students in looking at events that would be unsuitable for the ectomorph, mostly stated that any of the throwing events would be unsuitable, due to lack of power or strength due to lack of muscle.

Question 13.1

Most students attempted this question, and many gave (AO1) the correct term for each of the letters 'S, M and A'. The only major issue and unaccepted response was for 'A,' where achievable was not credited. A high number of students used this response. The AQA specification, does not use/state this terminology. It is highly recommended that Centres ensure that this terminology is taught correctly for future series.

Question 13.2

This question was attempted by most students, however full marks were often not achieved.

One of the main failings was when students did not actually state which target letter they were referring to, or just wrote that they did agree or did not agree that it was smart, providing no analysis (AO3) that linked to the five letters of SMART.

When offering an analysis for each letter of SMART, the best were for 'S' where the students understood that the target set was for 800m, which was the event that Ben participated in, therefore 'specific' to Ben.

For 'measurable' most students considered that this would be easily achieved by the timing of a race or run over the distance, therefore again meeting the criteria for this aspect of SMART.

'Accepted' was the least well analysed, many students did not give accepted but referred to achievable, which could not be credited. However, those who did, were not always correct, as they referred to Ben's coach accepting the target, which was not credited, because the stem given for the question stated that it was the coach who had set the target. There were a few that indicated it was Ben that needed to accept the target.

'Realistic,' again the students that understood and provided a good analysis, used the information provided on Ben's progress over the last five years, in decreasing/improving his personal best, being an indication that the target set was a realistic one.

'Time bound' was frequently mentioned and those that did realised that the time of one year or in year 6, was what made the target time bound and therefore considered to be SMART.

Question 14.1

This question was answered well with just over 84% of students gaining a mark for clearly identifying feedback. Common incorrect responses implied feedback but did not use the word or talked about carrying out an action.

Question 14.2

This question was not answered well with the average mark being under 2 marks.

Where students showed some understanding of the basic information processing model, they referred to long-term and short-term memory in the decision making section which was used to choose what to do. One of the most common incorrect explanations of decision making, was that many students referred to the input stage and explained selective attention.

The output stage was explained slightly better, without students explaining this was when the action is carried out and providing a suitable example. Some better-informed students also explained that the muscles receive messages from the brain, after the performer has made their decision, and this allows the decided shot/pass to be played.

In both the decision making and output stages parts of the question, when students gave examples, the most common and correct answers appeared to relate to tennis.

In some cases, students showed knowledge of the basic information processing model but failed to apply their response to a sporting example.

Question 15

The students that attempted this question and were able to demonstrate that they had some knowledge of PED's, even at the very lowest level, in being able to state (AO1) an example.

Where students answered well achieving level 3, the PED's they selected were both applied (AO2) and evaluated (AO3) thoroughly. Some students achieved this level covering only two PED's, but each PED was accurately applied to why a marathon runner would choose to take the drug and then evaluated giving both the positive and negative effects of each PED on the immediate performance and the possible long-term effects on the runner. The two PED's most often selected by these students were peptide hormones (EPO) and diuretics. Other students that also achieved level three tended to cover a wider range of PED's, not all were as detailed, however there was sufficient coherent and valid detail, particularly in evaluating (AO3) the effect on a marathon runners' performance to place these also in level 3. Again, the PED that was answered well was peptide hormones (EPO).

At level 2, students did more readily relate to the marathon runner, giving more detailed reasons why they took a certain PED, but not always having clarity in evaluating the effect on the performance. One typical example at level 2 was when narcotic analgesics were highlighted, students referred to the masking of pain effect (AO2), some mentioning this would help to speed up recovery (AO2), but in evaluating (AO3) lacked detail on how, in allowing them still to train if carrying an injury, could lead to further injury and then have a negative effect on their performance. Similarly, with using examples of Peptide Hormones (EPO), students at this level gave good detail on the increase in red blood cells, to improve oxygen carrying capacity (AO2). However, the evaluation (AO3) was less coherent and sometimes lacked using the correct terminology, such as 'increased cardiovascular endurance', but saying the runner could keep going for longer or would do better in the race.

At the lower end of the mark range (level 1), students did have some basic knowledge of PED's, and what they were taken for. However, students did not always relate specially to a marathon runner. Responses at this level tended to name types of PED's and briefly explain why a sports person would take them. For example, steroids to build muscle/strength, or diuretics to lose weight by removing excess fluid from the body. Steroids were the most common PED identified at this level. Often students' evaluations of any PED focused on the fact that if athletes were caught they could be disqualified or banned.

Question 16

Most students attempted this question.

It was a general trend at all levels that the students referred to their understanding of the relationship between media, sponsorship and sport as the golden triangle, but in using this concept students did not always use this in the correct way to answer the question. These responses were about the benefits to sponsors/media which was not asked for in the question.

The analysis was far more effective when students split media and sponsorship and considered the impact of each on sport as separate concepts.

A point to note for this question was that responses that related to the performer were credited as they are part of the sport.

Level 1

The students' responses at this level were often focused on the impact of media on individual players, particularly how media can turn them into role models for younger children. Students also linked to how this can have a negative impact on the individual performer because their behaviour is scrutinised both on and off the pitch, resulting in lack of privacy.

When considering the impact of the media on sports clubs/teams, students at this level understood that due to the increase in television coverage of matches/games, allowing fans to watch from home, could result in less people attending matches, therefore clubs received less revenue from ticket sales.

At this level, the impact of sponsorship, was less well covered. The most common impact highlighted was that a sport/club would receive money from a sponsor that could be used to benefit players in providing higher standard training facilities.

Level 2

Most responses tended to focus more on the professional sporting clubs, with slightly less mention of the impact on individual performers. The most common response was how the large professional clubs would be sponsored by a company, that in turn had free advertising around the ground for their company's products. Students analysis explained that the clubs would benefit from this income to spend on players wages and provide better training and facilities. Students at this level suggested some disadvantages for clubs in receiving sponsorship, such as if the sponsor was linked with an unhealthy product, it could make the sport/club look bad.

Where Level 2 students gave a more detailed attempt at analysing the problems posed by sponsorship, it was then more often linked to the individual performer. The sponsor would require them to make appearances, which would impinge on the individual's training time, which could adversely affect their performance.

Students at this level analysed the role of media, in that it can bring sport to a larger audience, which could positively mean more people would take up sport, or want to watch live sport, therefore the sports themselves benefit from more players or a greater income.

Some negative points were raised in suggesting that the pressures from sponsors could result in players or teams resorting to a 'win at all costs' attitude and not showing good sportsmanship whilst playing, or even resorting to illegal practices, such as drug taking to ensure a win and pleasing their sponsors. The examples given for this were often related to cycling or athletics.

The role of social media was also particularly mentioned as being very instrumental in lowering the confidence levels of individual athletes, relating to comments on poor performances or when off pitch incidents were highlighted or commented upon by other users of social media.

Level 3

These students in their analysis also covered most of the same areas as level 2 students, but there was a more detail and explanations were more effective. When analysing the way in which media coverage has helped some sports to become more popular and develop, there was a lot of reference to recent television and press coverage of the England women's football team, resulting in more girls wanting to play football, therefore having a positive long-term effect on women's football.

Students analysis of media was however, balanced by showing the negative effects in decreasing participation in the sports that are seen less on television, particularly with younger children. Students also explained that one of the detrimental effects that media can have on sports, is requiring them to fit matches into television viewing schedules, as this is a big source of income to clubs, it can put undue pressure on players, giving them very tight schedules for recovery and training.

With sponsorship, the positives were similar to those suggested by students at level 2, but the students at this level also explained how the smaller local /amateur clubs lose out as they do not get the same level of financial support. This is also a problem for sports that do not get much media coverage, consequently they receive less sponsorship.

The other area that level 3 students touched upon in their analysis was how media, particularly the television coverage of sport and the technology involved when used to analysis foul play, is slowing the game down and this is detrimental to the players and viewers alike, however conversely, good for the referees and making the game fair.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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