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# A-LEVEL

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

7582/C Practical performance in physical activity and sport  
Report on the Examination

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## Overall

As the requirements for the new specification differ in many ways from the legacy specification, it is vital that schools and colleges prepare their students correctly for the submission of non-exam assessment (NEA) work. Where this has not occurred it has led to marks being significantly adjusted. Teachers need to ensure that their students are given the correct instructions about the requirements for the NEA.

Schools and colleges can access a range of teacher support meetings through the [professional development](#) page of the AQA website. There are also a number of NEA exemplars (performance and analysis and evaluation) with accompanying commentaries available on the Teacher Online Standardisation (TOLS) system, which can be accessed via the secure key materials part of [e-AQA](#).

## Administration

The Centre Mark spreadsheet has significantly reduced the number of administrative errors compared to the legacy specification. However, there have been some instances where the 'centre' tab has not been completed correctly. The timing of mark submission to moderators is of equal importance to both the school/college (to prepare for the visit) and the moderator (to return the identified sample information back to the teacher). Adhering to the two week period is vital, and of particular importance should this fall over the duration of a holiday period.

One pleasing aspect was the use of the level of response grids for both the practical performance and the analysis and evaluation work. Where schools/colleges choose postal moderation, it is vitally important that the level of response grids are included with the audio-visual (AV) material. This enables the moderator to see how the marking criteria has been applied, and is helpful when constructing feedback if there are discrepancies in the centre mark and mark of the moderator.

Candidate Record Forms and Centre Declaration Sheets were provided by the vast majority of centres.

There were a significant number of schools/colleges who chose not to have a visit from a moderator this year and sent all materials via post. Whilst this is their prerogative, it is beneficial in the early years of a new specification to have the opportunity to discuss procedures at a face to face visit. It also enables teachers to clearly explain how they have allocated marks to a student, even though they are in receipt of no feedback on the accuracy of these marks at the visit. Where schools/colleges choose to do this they must make it clear, on either the commentary timeline, the AV device and/or the marking grids, how the moderator will identify the student(s) in the sample on the footage as this can lead to significant delays in completing the moderation process. For example, an athletics race where the student's lane is not identified leading to a moderator having to chase this up with the teacher could easily be avoided.

Another issue was where footage did not meet the requirements of the specification, despite this being evidenced in TOLS. TOLS is a vital resource for teachers to ensure that they are familiar with the standards expected, but also what footage requirements are and therefore what is deemed acceptable.

## Practical performance

The majority of schools/colleges opted to provide AV evidence at the level the student performed at, allowing them to be shown in their best light. Where schools/colleges opted for live performance, this did not always happen, for example students not being provided with sufficient challenge to evidence the marks awarded. There have been some challenges across a range of sports in terms of gaining permission to gather AV footage. It is clear in the specification about how schools and colleges should respond to this issue. However, the general quality of AV evidence was acceptable, but instances where students were not clearly identifiable were still evident.

There were also instances where the range of skills/tactics repeated within footage were not demonstrated frequently enough. This is more of a problematic issue for games players. Teachers who familiarised themselves with TOLS materials for this series were less impacted upon as they had seen appropriate examples of this. Invasion and striking/fielding games players often needed to gather more than one performance to demonstrate this, as position and role in the game has a significant impact on this. Moving forwards, it is acceptable for invasion games players to use multiple halves (no less than this time frame) of different matches to ensure that the evidenced gathered is appropriate and evidences the student(s) accordingly.

The biggest issue that arose this year when marking the practical performance was the lack of advanced skills/tactics evident. Teachers and students are reminded that, at A-level, evidence must demonstrate both core and advanced skills/tactics in performance(s). This was one of the key limiting factors to the awarding of practical performance marks, and could easily have been avoided as it is clear in the specification, level of response grids and grade descriptors.

Schools/colleges need to be mindful of how they approach the gathering of AV evidence. There have been numerous examples this year of teachers 'awarding' students a mark and then instructing them to gather footage to support this mark, often with limited success. They should gather the footage of the students' performance(s) first before awarding a mark based on the evidence obtained. The students are generally performing at high levels but the evidence does not always reflect the highest competitive context they play, which is disappointing. It is much better to see the performers produce their skills under pressure against good opposition than to be seen in a competition against weaker opposition where they are not forced to cope with the challenge provided by the context. Schools and colleges must also ensure that they can manage the gathering of footage for seasonal sports.

A recommendation is that teachers allocate some time at the start of the course to show what video evidence is required and show examples of what constitutes good AV evidence, as seen on TOLS.

One aspect that was seen on numerous occasions this series was the use of students to talk through their AV recording. This is not an expectation, nor should it form a discussion or question and answer session. It can provide very little support to the awarding of area of assessment 1 and area of assessment 2 marks, and if done poorly can put the student under undue stress. Teachers may wish to consider how they support the mark award for area of assessment 3. Students may wish to talk through AV recordings for area of assessment 3 as a lot of the activities require decision making, or use the commentary timelines to explain their actions.

Often, the biggest variance in marking has occurred in area of assessment 3. Sometimes this can be 'out of synch' with the marks for the other two areas. Schools and colleges should ensure that they look carefully at the level of response grids and the accompanying prompts to ensure that

they mark this section accurately and undertake standardisation internally, using materials on TOLS.

Student commentary forms were provided by most centres and very helpful to support the moderation.

### **Coaching role**

The coaching role was marked very generously. Rarely were examples seen where students followed the coaching process, with many not including the competitive context that the coach had observed to carry out their analysis. Students led sessions but failed to analyse, modify and refine techniques/tactics for an individual in the fully competitive situation and in subsequent planned practices. It was clear that they could lead sessions but they often lacked the skill to see how the performers' techniques/tactics were developing throughout the session, failing to respond to changes that were evident, ie progress being made at a quicker rate, or the reshaping of an activity to enable improved rates of success. Students often stuck to a predetermined plan for the session regardless of the progress of the performer being coached. This had a limiting effect across the modification and refinement aspects to the coaching. Students following the coaching role are reminded of the rubric outlined in the specification requiring the coaching of one core and advanced skill/tactic per area of assessment.

### **Analysis and evaluation**

It was pleasing to see that the majority of schools and colleges understand the requirements and there were very few instances of not meeting the rubric for A-level. Sadly, there were a few that did not follow the rubric and produced work from area of assessment 1 instead of areas of assessment 2 and 3. Where discrepancies were evident, more often it was the use of theoretical aspects within the analysis section, or causes and corrective practices suggested with limited links back to impact upon performance.

Schools/colleges should ensure that the analysis focuses on technical or tactical weakness(es) only, not strengths, and that they come from a competitive performance context and not a generalised discussion of a weakness in their game. All too often students outlined what they 'should do' rather than actually what was taking place in their performance context. Some students had identified theory aspects as a weakness, eg fatigue or lack of strength, which again needs to be refined to reflect the impact on the technique. For example fatigue in swimming will lead to a 'shortening' of the arm action, which would be considered an appropriate technical weakness.

One of the aspects that many schools/colleges carried forward from the legacy PHED4 B and C work was the elite performer section. As a stand-alone section this is not creditworthy. Teachers should ensure their students discuss the successful technical/tactical execution in a direct comparison to their weakness(es). This may be in the form of what an elite performer would do, or in the form of the correct technical model, or in the form of when the performer being analysed completed the skill/tactic correctly. There were some good examples of this where students had used annotated images of performances to highlight the weakness(es) and then provided more detail through discussion.

The biggest variance in marking the evaluation section came as a result of students providing insufficient depth of knowledge. There is no expected number of causes or corrective practices that will lead to gaining a certain mark. However, students that fail to provide sufficient depth of coverage in this discussion will not be able to access the higher mark bands. The depth should

match that of the specification requirement. Some students still chose theory that is not on the specification, mainly fitness components such as power. This could easily be adapted to suit specification content, such as poor motor unit recruitment for example.

Within the evaluation section students often chose drills and practices with no reference to theory from the specification. The linking of the sections provided students with the biggest challenge. It is not the responsibility of the moderator to deduce if weaknesses, causes and corrective practices are linked but that of the student to demonstrate their understanding by providing this through their explanation. Schools and colleges should be able to develop this aspect of the course as it mirrors the expectations of writing extended responses in the examination papers.

### **Key learnings**

Here are a few key learnings that teachers should consider during the next academic year.

1. Adhere to the timelines for mark submission.
2. Ensure that students are easily identifiable in AV footage, and that this information accompanies the footage when sent to the moderator.
3. Ensure that the level of response grids accompany both the practical performance and the analysis and evaluation pieces of work.
4. Ensure that there is sufficient coverage of the range of both core and advanced skills/tactics, repeated throughout the performance(s).
5. Ensure that the mark awarded is of the evidence as shown on AV footage, rather than match footage to a mark you know they are capable of.
6. Ensure that you are clear about how to apply the marking criteria, using the level of response grids, particularly for area of assessment 3.
7. When undertaking the coaching role, ensure that the process of analysis in competition, refinement and subsequent modification and then a return to the competitive context is followed.
8. In the analysis section, ensure that students focus on technical or tactical weakness(es) only and not strengths, and that they come from a competitive performance context, not a generalised discussion of a weakness in their game.
9. Ensure that students link evaluation of weakness(es), cause(s) and corrective practice(s) throughout their explanation, using strategies that are similar to those in extended examination responses.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

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