
AS

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

7581/C Practical performance in physical activity and sport
Report on the Examination

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General

In the second sitting of this specification, the number of schools and colleges is down compared to 2017. However, they have generally responded well to the issues that arose last year.

Again, there are still some schools/colleges where teachers have not familiarised themselves with the specification requirements and understood the new procedures. They need to ensure that they familiarise themselves with the new specification expectations and supporting materials that are on [secure key materials](#). This will reduce many of the questions that teachers need to ask the team of NEA advisors.

Administration

The revised centre mark sheet (spreadsheet) has been an improvement on previous procedures for both teachers and moderators. The mark grids, both for the practical assessment and the analysis and evaluation task, have been very well received and where schools/colleges included them with the students' work, they clearly showed how they'd marked the work. It is important for schools and colleges that wish to receive detailed feedback that they use these in order to help demonstrate how they have applied the marking criteria.

Schools and colleges continued good practice from last year by providing a programme for the moderation day that had sufficient time allocated to the activities selected in the sample. Larger schools/colleges managed the challenge of the increased sample size well.

There was a significant reduction in the number of live performances observed by moderators during this series, with many schools/colleges choosing to use audio-visual (AV) footage to evidence the mark awarded. Again it continued to be challenging to ensure that footage of live performances were available for the moderator to take away. However, careful planning of the activity order (ie live activities first) enabled footage to be downloaded on the day. Moderators were happy to receive footage within a short time span after the visit.

There were a significant number of schools and 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 will also enable 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. Where schools/colleges choose to do this they must make it clear on either the commentary timeline and/or the marking grids how the moderator will identify the student on the footage.

It has been pleasing to note that schools and colleges are investing in better quality cameras with tripods and giving greater consideration to the storage size required on devices.

Live performances

Where marking was accurate, teachers had ensured that the level of competitive challenge in these live events was appropriate for the ability of the student. One of the key causes of marking inaccuracy was the use of opponents who did not challenge the student sufficiently. When presenting live at moderation it should be emphasised that the students need to cover a range of the core skills repeatedly, and where possible teachers should do their best to ensure that students understand this prior to the practical performance.

The revised procedures for moderation for the new specifications include the limiting of feedback given to schools/colleges about the performance. One aspect that they must overcome for future examination series' is the key question to the moderator of 'have you seen enough?'. The member of staff leading the moderation session needs to make this decision themselves. If they feel the marks given are reflected in the performance(s) then it is up to them to stop either the practical activity (or the AV recording if evidencing this way).

Audio-visual performances

The gathering of AV evidence this year was improved upon the previous series.

Edited footage caused an issue for a small number of schools and colleges, and many of these could have been overcome if they had read both the specification and guidance for moderation. It is clear to all that merely showing the highlights of performance(s) is not appropriate and will have a significant impact on the mark awarded.

Edited footage cannot show the highlights of performance(s). There are occasions where footage can be 'built' to compile as much of the performance as possible, eg a cross country event. Games players may show multiple matches or halves of matches in order to show the range of core skills repeated, as often their involvement in play can be limited by their position or role.

Schools and colleges that adjusted to these requirements used the student commentary form to support the AV evidence. They ensured that time references matched the AV recording(s) and that all areas of assessment were covered. Unfortunately there were occasions where timelines didn't match the AV recording.

The use of students to talk through their AV recording is not essential. It can provide very little support to the awarding of marks for areas of assessment 1 and 2, 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 (not interviewed) 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.

Coaching

Few students were entered for this alternative role. Generally coaching has been marked generously. The biggest challenge for many coaches is not the running of a practice session but the clarity in which they display their ability to analyse and refine performance(s). Schools and colleges are reminded that the analysis aspect of the coaching role underpins all of the other elements in the marking criteria. Coaches are still choosing to work with too many performers, or choosing too many aspects (the specification states one) to see any change in their post-coaching performance. They should consider either working with an individual, or a group such as the back row in rugby union, or short corner defenders and the goalkeeper in hockey.

Overall practical

The evidence did vary, especially for larger invasion games where the identification of the students was often very difficult as coaches are not happy with their players wearing bibs. Teams within communities are buying in to the process and want to help students, especially as the schools/colleges are supplying the players for these clubs/teams/competitions. This still causes challenges in some sports where identification is difficult, or restrictions are in place by governing bodies, something again we are keen to support teachers and students with moving forwards.

Analysis and Evaluation

Schools and colleges on the whole have still struggled to make the shift from the legacy analysis in PHED2, or the section B and C in PHED4. They still seem unsure how to approach the challenge of breadth and/or depth when analysing the performance, and then providing subsequent depth of knowledge in the evaluation section. They should continue to use the example materials on TOLs.

The analysis and evaluation has been generally been marked leniently. The work that is very detailed and thorough is generally marked more accurately. There have been some examples of teachers designing their own assessment sheets that don't align with the criteria for this piece of work. There were more students who have taken the breadth route rather than the depth route, especially in the evaluation section, where depth of knowledge is a clear requirement of the grade descriptors.

Analysis

The analysis section has sometimes been too descriptive and not analytical. However, teachers have been much better at ensuring that area of assessment¹ is the focus.

There are still examples of strengths in performance being discussed, which is not creditworthy, as well as large stand-alone sections on the elite performer. Again this latter aspect is not a requirement of the new specification. However, in explaining their weakness(es) students should draw a direct comparison with successful performance(s) in some form.

Where the analysis sections have been completed well, students were able to explain the impact of their weakness(es) on their overall performance in a competitive context. Where this was not done well, they often talked about a general weakness they had but did not directly explain its occurrence in competitive context(s).

Evaluation

This section was done better than the analysis.

Schools and colleges have struggled to ensure that they have a full grasp of what is in the AS specification, and as a result there were significant differences in moderator marks compared to centre marks. The most significant of these continues to be the use of components of fitness.

Mark Ranges and Award of Grades

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