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PHYSICAL EDUCATION

GCE Advanced Subsidiary Level

Paper 8666/01

Theory

General comments

This was the first year of the examination and there was evidence of some very good teaching taking place in Centres.

However, candidates should be advised of the need to read questions carefully, and to take note of the number of marks available for each question: this will give some indication of the number of points expected in the answer. Candidates should also be aware that where a question asks specifically for practical examples, full marks cannot be awarded where these are left out.

Some candidates had difficulty in relating theoretical concepts to the practical situation, and some papers showed evidence of poor time management, and incomplete coverage of the syllabus. In general, Centres need to give their candidates opportunities to practise examination technique: often it is not subject knowledge which is lacking, but practice in reading both rubrics and questions carefully, analysing the precise demands of a question and allowing sufficient time to answer the number of questions required.

A broad range of topics from the syllabus will be covered, and particularly in contemporary studies candidates will be invited to talk about the sporting situations in their own countries, or a country of their choice.

Comments on specific questions

Question 1

- (a) There was a wide range in the quality of the diagrams presented. Diagrams should be drawn in pencil and be of a suitable size, lines should be drawn in pencil with a ruler and labelled.

The majority of candidates identified the correct articulating bones, but many failed to identify three structures.

- (b) This was not very well answered. Centres need to teach the topics of joint movement/muscle action through the continual reference to analysis of movement.

- (c) The key word in the question was *difference* and candidates failed to identify this. Where candidates are asked for differences, they must look at how many are asked for in the question. Common answers related to differences in the number of mitochondria and glycogen stores.

- (d) The majority of candidates were able to give the definitions asked for but when stating resting values, they failed to identify units, which had to be included for the mark to be awarded.

- (e) The process of gaseous exchange was explained in basic terms. 4 marks were awarded for this and the majority of candidates repeated the same points and failed to score full marks.

The efficiency of gaseous exchange was understood but again many only gave one reason. The question clearly asked for three reasons.

Question 2

- (a) The majority of candidates were not able to describe a cartilaginous joint, and those who could often failed to give an example.
- (b) The movement analysis was answered well, with candidates scoring 4/5 marks. Confusion was apparent when deciding the type of muscle contraction but marks were awarded for the use of the terms Bicep and Tricep. The preferred terms were Bicep Brachii and Tricep Brachii.
- (c) Candidates clearly understood the term *antagonistic muscle action* but failed to give sufficient points to gain full marks.
- (d) There seemed to be limited understanding of this term, with the majority of candidates failing to score marks here.
- (e) Double circulation was understood by the majority of candidates but the quality of diagrams produced was again very poor. Here, too, candidates failed to relate the number of marks awarded to the number of items of information required.
- (f) The mechanism of breathing was not fully understood, candidates needed to refer to:
- diaphragm and rib movement
 - intercostal muscle action
 - phrenic and intercostal nerves
 - pulmonary and atmospheric pressure
 - changes in size of thoracic cavity.

Centres must always teach breathing both at rest and during exercise.

Acquisition of skill

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates understood the characteristics of skill but failed to give three answers.
- (b) The term open skill was understood, but candidates could only classify it according to the environmental influences. Centres should note the additional factors: perceptual requirements, movements to be adapted, externally paced and movements seldom repeated.
- (c) Information processing should be taught using the models highlighted in the syllabus. Candidates should be taught this topic by applying practical examples to the models. Again, when asked the role of feedback, candidates did not relate the number of marks available for the question to the number of different points required.
- (d) Many candidates were confused over the terminology used and explained *reaction time* and *response time* in reverse.
- (e) The majority of candidates could define the term *motivation* but again failed to read the rest of the question and did not use practical examples to explain *extrinsic motivation*. Common answers included: money, and praise, but examples should always be given to clarify the answer. Candidates were awarded a mark for the use of practical examples.

Question 2

- (a) Many candidates did not understand the term *gross skill* and failed to score marks here. A gross skill is one involving the use of large muscle groups.
- (b) This is specifically stated in the syllabus and most of the candidates failed to explain the development of fundamental skills in sufficient detail. The process of watching others and playing with brothers and sisters is fundamental in this process.

- (c) The majority of candidates defined reinforcement but failed to explain how it strengthens the S/R bond. Common responses are: developing confidence, repetition, and shaping response.
- (d) Schema theory is a key concept in the learning of a skill and should be taught through the use of practical examples. Candidates failed to identify recall and recognition schema and the components that make them up.
- (e) This is an excellent topic to teach in a practical context - candidates did not understand that this is the theoretical version of the “dummy” pass in rugby. The diagram found in most text books is the easiest way to explain *psychological refractory period*.
- (f) A very factual question where most candidates could explain positive transfer but failed to give a suitable example. When teaching such terms, Centres should always give candidates a practical example.
- (g) This question asked candidates to identify the three stages of learning identified by Fitts and Posner. This was not answered very well: the majority of candidates did not understand that what was required was an explanation, together with examples.

Contemporary studies

Question 1

- (a) The majority of candidates understood the term play but failed to give five characteristics. Some struggled to explain the characteristics in a practical context. Common answers included: time, enjoyment, choice, and space.
- (b)(i) A well answered question, with candidates clearly understanding the term physical education. Common responses included: health, and development of skills.
- (ii) Candidates struggled with this concept and most only managed to score one or two points. Possible answers could include: desirable feelings, confidence, esteem, personal control, moral values, decision making, communication.
- (c) Discrimination is a key topic and needs to be studied in relation to a number of user groups. Candidates understood what was asked of them but often failed to develop their answers and tended to repeat the same point. Common responses included: cost, transport, lack of role models, and age restrictions.
- (d) It is important that Centres concentrate on the role of sporting agencies either in their own countries, or in countries that they know well. The question was worth 8 marks and gave candidates the opportunity to show their own detailed knowledge: the mark scheme identified 12 possible separate roles and it was expected that candidates would make at least 8 points, though some answers were repetitive. Candidates needed to identify clearly which country they were discussing but many failed to do this.

Question 2

- (a) The function of leisure was not clearly understood and candidates scored poorly on this question. Key answers should have been: relaxation, recreation, and enjoyment.
- (b) Candidates were confident in their knowledge of the characteristics of sport but the majority failed to use practical examples to illustrate their answers. Common answers included: rules, organised, competitive, and fitness.
- (c) Candidates clearly understood the question but failed to identify a suitable number of points. Common causes of violence were given as: religion, media, and cheating.
- (d) Again, good knowledge was shown but candidates frequently failed to give the number of points indicated by the marks available. Candidates tended to repeat themselves and common answers were: banning, and removal of medals.

- (e) Participation in sport by women (or any other such group) needs to be discussed during the course. This question again allowed the candidates to develop a more personal answer and include a variety of reasons for non participation. The mark scheme identified 13 factors and common answers included: lack of crèche and changing facilities, and lack of media interest.

<p>Paper 8666/02 Coursework</p>

General comments

As this is a new examination, Centres were working from the coursework guidelines alone, and there was no past experience to contribute to the accuracy of assessment.

Although there were few candidates in this inaugural year, Centres had clearly spent a great deal of time and energy attempting to provide the information required. Video evidence was a key to assessment and moderation and it was a pleasure to be transported to Canada, Kenya, Zambia and New Zealand. However, the videos themselves were not always of the highest quality, and were often too long, too short, or in some cases non-existent!

It is obvious that the criteria as given in the coursework guidelines are more than adequate, and if followed, will result in an accurate assessment for candidates. Taking into account that this was the first year of the moderation, it was decided that few adjustments should be made. Centres will be given a very full report so that they can adjust their internal moderation, if necessary, in the future.

Some adjustments have been made, however, in order to ensure a sound, overall standard.

Paperwork

Paperwork in general was accurate, and mathematical calculations were sound. Centres should ensure that they give accurate codes for the activities.

Video evidence

Candidates must be clearly identified. The guidelines clearly state that the candidate is assessed in a conditioned competitive situation, but it is not necessary to video a whole race e.g. in swimming, or a whole game, e.g. table tennis. The candidate should be videoed at the start of the course and after improvement in both activities; it was useful when a programme giving the order of events accompanied the video.

The analysis and comment should also be videoed, but not the Action Plan, as it becomes difficult to differentiate between the analysis and comment on video and a candidate's individual Action Plan.

Action plan

Action plans varied from being very lengthy, to being a snippet on a video and non-existent on paper.

The plan for only one activity should be sent for moderation, and this should consist of no more than 10 sides of A4 paper: the plan need only be in place for eight weeks. There is now a template available on the web site for recording the actual action plan. Those candidates who chose a skill, a tactical goal and a fitness goal were the most successful. It is not recommended that more than three weaknesses be identified for improvement and it is important that it should be the candidate who evaluates his or her own improvement, rather than a member of staff.

Analysis and comment

Some candidates merely conducted a commentary on a performance. Some were asked to comment on “some of the weaknesses in some of the players”, but more precision is needed here. The comment needs to be on a particular skill from an activity, which can be performed as a demonstration. Analytical/movement phases are outlined in the coursework guideline for that activity, and it is important that candidates know these or the ones which are relevant for their activity.

Individual activities

A good range was offered, and this section was well done. Candidates were generally placed in the correct band, but Centres then found some difficulty in placing the candidate correctly within the band. This will come with experience. If the candidate is worth 30/30, then this is the mark which should be awarded. There will be very few, but there was evidence in judo, swimming and ski-ing. Centres are advised to keep records of their own results so that a standardisation process can be carried out within the Centre.

Please refer to the section on video evidence for guidance on the format of the assessment, which should be in a conditioned competitive situation but not necessarily a full game or a race.