

GCE Physical Education - Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Please note that resources and support materials specific to GCE Physical Education which are referred to in these FAQs can be found on the GCE PE section of the OCR website:

<http://www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/gce/blt/pe/documents/index.html>

Section A - Administration

1. What does my centre need to do to register for the A-level Physical Education course?

It is vital that you speak to your exams office and register **estimated entries** for the practical units for GCE Physical Education (AS unit G452 and A2 unit G454). OCR allocates a moderator to centres who will plan for the visiting moderations based upon estimated entries and so we need to know that you intend to deliver the course by **October 10** of the academic year in question. Estimated entries will also trigger the despatch of coursework documentation to your centre.

Details about administrative arrangements for all general qualifications can be found in the *OCR Admin Guide*. (<http://www.ocr.org.uk/administration/documents/general.html>)

There is also a *GCE Physical Education Coursework Administration Guide* on the GCE PE section of the OCR website.

2. What materials do I need to send to my practical moderator and what are the deadlines?

Centres are sent a visit arrangement form (VAF) in November of the academic year based upon their estimated entries. This needs to be returned to OCR by **January 14** and is then given to the assigned moderator for them to use in their planning of the moderation visits.

Deadlines for practical work are as follows:

AS Physical Education practical (unit G452):

- All practical performance assessments by **March 31** except seasonal activities which can be submitted by **May 15**; which activities are considered to be 'seasonal' is listed in the *G452 Coursework Guidance*;
- Every candidate must have at least one practical mark to submit by March 31, i.e. they cannot do two summer activities and offer no marks on March 31;
- EPIP marks for G452 must also be submitted by March 31 with the exception that if a centre has more than 50 candidates half of the marks can be sent to the moderator for March 31 and the remainder for May 15.

A2 Physical Education practical (unit G454):

- **All assessments** for all activities and also all evaluation assessments must be submitted for **March 31**.

For the mark submission deadlines, a number of standard forms are used (see glossary):

Physical Education-specific forms: Submit all of the following to moderator for March 31

- i. Practical Activity Form (PA) – one of these is produced by the centre for each activity that the centre is assessing. For each activity assessed, candidates who are entering practical marks for that activity are listed from highest mark to lowest to provide the moderator with a rank order for that activity.
- ii. EPIP Assessment Form – candidates for the EPIP assessment are listed from highest mark to lowest to provide the moderator with a rank order for the EIPs.
- iii. Final Practical Activity (FPA) – this is a form on which the practical activity mark(s) and the evaluation marks for each candidate are combined to give an overall mark for the practical unit in question. Candidates should be listed in candidate number order rather than based on a ranking of marks as this allows easier transposition of the marks to the MS1 form that is issued to centres by OCR in April.

Generic forms: Submit all of the following to moderator for May 15

- iv. CCS 160 Coursework Authentication Form – one must be provided for each practical unit to state that the work produced is the candidates own and has been produced according to OCR and regulatory (JCQ) guidelines.
- v. MS1 – a form sent by OCR to centres in April on which final total marks for each practical unit are sent in to OCR. A copy must be sent to **both** OCR **and** to the moderator on May 15.

Section B - Practical assessments

3. What if A2 candidates are doing seasonal activities?

These candidates need to be assessed in the summer between the AS and the A2 academic year for the seasonal activities. This is to avoid candidates being disadvantaged if they are injured during the A2 year but before assessment of a seasonal activity can occur.

4. What if I have AS candidates for unit G452 who want to do their EPIP on a seasonal activity?

This would still have to be submitted for March 31 (unless there are in excess of 50 candidates and the split deadline is used). They should either evaluate a performance in practice conditions, such as indoor nets for cricket, or evaluate their other activity which is not seasonal. Alternatively, if centres keep a sample of video evidence of practical performance from one year to the next as an archive for seasonal activities then candidates can evaluate a performance from video (as long as the performance is new to them).

5. What constitutes a seasonal activity?

A seasonal activity is one where weather and availability of facilities means that it cannot be assessed at all times of the year. Due to confusion about this, a specific list has been created and only the following will be allowed for May 15 marks submission at AS level (at A2 **all** marks must be submitted to the moderator by March 31):

Baseball; Cricket; Mountain Walking; Rock Climbing; Rounders; Skiing; Snowboarding; Tennis; Track and Field athletics.

6. Where can I find information about what activities are available and how to assess them?

You need to refer to the *Coursework Guidance* document, which is on our website under 'Support Materials' at the GCE PE section of the OCR website for the relevant unit which you are assessing.

There is separate AS and A2 coursework guidance for units G452 and G454 respectively.

It is possible to apply for 'Special Activities', for assessment in that academic year and only at your centre. An initial submission must be made to OCR by **October 15** of the academic year in question and there are further details in the introductory section of the *Coursework Guidance*.

7. How will my centre be moderated and when will I hear?

Centres are normally grouped together (clusters) with an established host centre for a visiting moderation and a sample of candidates and activities from each centre are selected by the moderator to be observed. Moderators normally contact their centres during March in the weeks leading up to the March 31 marks deadline and after the moderators' standardisation meeting which usually takes place in late February. Refer to section 3 of this document for more detail.

...so how are my marks moderated?

The process of moderation is one whereby performances by a sample of candidates are viewed and a decision on the accuracy of your assessments is made based upon this sample. The moderator will observe performances on the day of moderation by the candidates requested from your centre and will consider whether the marks which you have assessed are supported by the performances which they have seen. The moderator may then need to consider other evidence such as log books and DVD evidence.

Having done this and looked at their record of marks across the range of performances viewed, the moderator will make a recommendation as to whether the practical marks you have awarded need to be adjusted or not to bring them in to line with the National standard set at the OCR moderators' standardisation meeting. Further quality assurance checks are completed on any proposed adjustments and any adjustment made to centres' internally assessed marks will be communicated to them at the issue of results.

8. Do I need to keep recorded evidence of practical performance?

Yes! In summary:

- The evidence must be in DVD or CD Rom format, and guidance on the production of suitable evidence can be found in a separate document on the GCE PE section of the OCR website and in the *Coursework Guidance*.
- there must be **a sample of evidence for every activity being assessed by the centre**. This should cover the range of marks awarded, i.e. the top, middle and bottom mark for that activity as a minimum;
- where **AS candidates** are offering a mark for a **summer activity** that is being submitted after March 31, this must be accompanied by **DVD or CD Rom evidence for every candidate** and activity in question;

- where activities are being assessed **off-site and/or by a specialist coach or instructor** from outside of the centre's Physical Education department staff, there must be DVD or CD Rom evidence to accompany these assessments for **every candidate**;
- a sample of DVD or CD Rom evidence for the AS EPIP and the A2 Evaluation and Appreciation must be available covering the range of marks awarded, i.e. the top, middle and bottom mark for that activity as a minimum. This evidence should include both the performance being evaluated and the evaluation itself.

9. What happens if a candidate gets injured during the academic year?

There is a minimum coursework requirement for AS GCE Physical Education, which means that candidates must have at least one practical assessment mark.

Candidates should be assessed continuously, so if someone gets injured in December or January, unless the activity is summer-only the centre should have been conducting some assessments and therefore be in a position to offer a mark.

The centre can also apply for special consideration of this mark based upon the improvement that a candidate may have made in the time injured where this is considerable. Full details of the special considerations procedures can be found on the Joint Council for Qualifications website at <http://www.jcq.org.uk/>

If a candidate has been assessed in their practical activities and then gets injured and cannot be present at moderation as a result, the moderator should be informed and a suitable candidate should be found to attend moderation instead, in consultation with the moderator.

10. What if a candidate cannot attend moderation after being requested by the moderator?

Moderation is part of the examination process and as such if a candidate is called to attend moderation then they should be present on the day. If a candidate cannot attend for a legitimate reason, such as injury or a clash with another examination, the moderator must be made aware of this prior to the moderation visit and a suitable alternative candidate must attend the moderation instead. Failure to attend moderation without a justifiable reason or without the moderator receiving prior notice may result in the candidate being awarded no marks for the unit in question.

Centres should also note that candidates must attend with appropriate attire and equipment necessary to take part in their activity, such as shin pads and suitable footwear.

11. If I am using a particular type of award in my delivery of an activity, such as Duke of Edinburgh for mountain walking or MPLQ for lifesaving, does achievement of the award lead to a certain mark being awarded?

No. We don't award marks automatically in return for the completion of any particular award, so they won't necessarily get 30/30 (or 40/40 in G454) on the basis that they complete them. Most of these types of awards are 'pass' or 'fail', which doesn't discriminate as much as we want to - the centre needs to assess candidates using the OCR criteria; if they meet all of the requirements of the criteria (both generic activity area criteria and the specific requirements for the activity) during their assessment for one of these awards then they should be given an appropriate mark. The PE staff at the centre will need to liaise with the instructor/assessor delivering the award as appropriate.

12. I have a candidate who is re-taking the AS practical unit, but they only want to improve their EPIP mark. Can I just re-enter their AS practical marks the same as the year before?

Yes you can, but there are a couple of things which you may like to consider. Firstly, there is a good chance that the candidate could improve their mark, so you may wish to re-assess with that in mind. The other consideration is that they could be called to moderation for AS if they have been re-entered for it, so if they are not regularly participating in one of their AS activities from before and are then moderated on that activity, their performance at moderation may not be as practised and fluent as it was when you awarded the initial marks, which could lead to a difference between your marks and the moderators.

13. I have students who are being assessed in officiating and wanted to clarify what they would need to do regarding Evaluation and Planning for Improvement in Performance (EPIP). If they choose to complete this in the sport that they are being assessed in as an official, what do they need to evaluate and plan for improvement? Do they need to watch another official or can it be another player/performer?

They need to evaluate someone performing in the activity, not as an official (even if they themselves are officials in that sport). The same is true where coaching is concerned; the evaluation should be of a performer rather than a coach.

14. For the A2 Evaluation, appreciation & the improvement of performance (E&A), the guidance from the board talks about the compositional ideas – “comment onthe strengths of the performance observed in relation to skills, tactics/compositional ideas and fitness”.

Could you please explain to me exactly what is meant by ‘compositional ideas’?

'Compositional ideas' may only be appropriate in certain activities - so in dance, we wouldn't really refer to 'tactics' in the way that one would in some sports, but if you like an equivalent aspect to be considered it may be compositional ideas. This could be the music which accompanies the dance (why it has been chosen, works for the style of dance, contributes to the theme etc.) or how the candidate expresses the themes or emotions which their dance is intended to. Similarly this could be applied to gymnastics, figure skating and so on.

So, where the focus of an activity is artistic impression, compositional ideas would be like the employment of tactics in a way, because it is through the successful use of compositional ideas that a quality outcome/performance is partly achieved.

15. At A2 candidates only perform 1 activity - how can I assess my students for the E&A in an activity like lifesaving? This activity is either right (and a rescue is made) or wrong (in which case no rescue).

For A2 life saving there are 2 broad elements - CPR and water rescue. Within both of these there are different tasks – i.e. there are 5 water rescue tasks. So unless the candidate performs all of these flawlessly, they could evaluate the weakness of one of the types of rescue. There are also aspects of performance within the rescue tasks, such as stamina/fitness, swimming technique, towing technique etc. which could be evaluated. Alternatively they could evaluate the CPR techniques.

The principle here is similar to that in question 11, which is that even in activities where they are commonly perceived as being simply 'pass' or 'fail', in most cases any two individuals will not be of identical standard in all of the elements of which the activity or assessment comprise – there should always be strengths and weaknesses which allow differentiation, improvement or analysis.

16. For 'safe and effective exercise', how many sessions per week are appropriate for an exercise programme? Also, can the goals be related to a set sport already being undertaken in the practical element or a fitness component in general?

The number of sessions per week can't really be stipulated, as it very much depends upon the goals of the candidate in designing and completing the programme. Therefore this needs to be part of their consideration and justification in their log book as to what they have done over the 12 week period, why they chose to do the volume and frequency which they did and whether it was enough to achieve what they set out to.

The goals could be related to either a specific sport, general fitness, rehabilitation from injury - what we are looking for is that candidates can apply knowledge to justify the use of the programmes.

17. Do all practical activities require a log book?

No, where a log book is required there is reference to this in the specific criteria for the activity.

18. I am wondering if a student can change their physical assessments from AS to A2.

The intention is for candidates to take one of their AS activities forward into A2 - the subject criteria for GCE PE require progression in performance to be demonstrated. In cases where an injury or access issues meant that a change was necessary we would consider this favourably, but the aims of the specification do not really allow scope to change simply because they wish to.

19. I have a candidate who wishes to be assessed in an activity which is not on the specification. Is this possible and what do I need to do next?

It is possible for centres to submit Special Activity Submissions in instances such as these. These submissions require the centre to produce AS and A2 criteria for the activity in question and submit it to OCR for review. The 1st draft needs to be submitted by **15 October of the academic year in question.**

A submission form for these proposals, which contains guidance on proposals within the form itself, can be found on the GCE PE section of the OCR website under the 'Forms' heading.

Some activities which have previously been submitted as Special Activity Submissions have now been made available to all centres from September 2010 and can be found on the OCR GCE PE section of the website under 'Support Materials' – the document title is *Units G452 and G454 - Additional practical activity criteria for use from September 2010.*

Section C - Examined units G451 and G453

20. I have received back scripts for AS Unit G451 but am not sure what the annotations mean; can you please clarify?

The annotations are usually identified in the mark scheme for the appropriate paper. For G451, there is no reason at the moment why they will vary from one examination series to the next. The annotations are:

- ✓ = correct response
- ✗ = incorrect response
- BOD** = Benefit of the doubt

REP	= Repeat (not available Summer 2010 - 'SEEN' used instead)
?	= Unclear
L1	= Level 1
L2	= Level 2
L3	= Level 3
KU	= Knowledge and Understanding
EG	= Example/Reference
TV	= Too Vague
DEV	= Development
SEEN	= REP of key point in question or point already awarded/Noted but no credit given
IRRL	= Significant amount of material which does not answer the question

21. I have received back scripts for AS unit G451 and on one of them a candidate has been given a mark of 5 for question 3e, however there are 7 ticks on the answer. Is there a chance that this a clerical error?

The part 'e' ten mark questions on G451 are marked using a 'levels of response' mark scheme; while examiners tick a correct point which has been made, it is not one tick = one mark; the answer is judged for its overall quality against the levels mark scheme descriptors and discriminators.

The examiner will indicate on the response using the annotations from FAQ 19 to show which level they have placed the answer in, so in this instance a mark of 5 would be at the start of level 2, and the script should have an 'L2' annotation at the end of the candidates' response to this question.

Please also note that if a tick has the annotation REP next to it, then this would indicate that the point made is correct but has already been given credit as it is a repeat or the equivalent of a previously made point from the mark scheme.

22. Can I get a break-down of the marks my candidates have received for the separate topic areas and questions within each of the examination papers?

Unfortunately this is not a service which is available at the moment, however OCR is trialling a service called *Active Results*. It is hoped that this service will be made more widely available in the future.

23. Is there a separate synoptic mark on G453 as there used to be on legacy unit 2566?

No, the G453 20-mark questions do not have a separate synoptic mark which is awarded distinctly from the knowledge marks, as is the case with legacy unit 2566. The marks for both the knowledge and understanding demonstrated and higher order skills such as evaluation and bringing in information from other areas will all be assessed using the one levels mark scheme. So it is not that there is no synoptic element, it is that what synoptic means has changed and it won't be assessed the way it was on the legacy equivalent paper.

If candidates bring detail into their answers from any area of the specification which is relevant then it will be credited appropriately, however there is not a requirement for them to necessarily make a specific number of links from AS-A2 or topic-topic in order to achieve a particular mark.

24. I have been preparing my students for the G453 examination using some exam-style questions in lessons and for homework, but I am finding it difficult to advise them how to access the Assessment Objective (AO) 3 marks in the part d questions. Are some of the points in the indicative content AO1 and others AO3? Can you offer any guidance please?

AO3 states that: 'candidates should demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate critically physical activity'.

Using question 1d from the specimen paper for G453 as an example:

Discuss the impact of increased free time and transport links on participation in rationalised sport and pastimes from 1850 to today.

If a candidate looked at improvements in transport links, and simply said that "*improved transport meant that players and spectators could move around for fixtures more easily and this increased participation*", then that would be a fairly straightforward, AO1 knowledge and understanding point.

If they looked at improvements in transport links, but specifically the railways, and linked this to the emergence of football as a particular sport, then they would be doing more with the same information (albeit also being more specific and giving examples):

"Improved transport through the railway network allowed football teams and their spectators to travel further for games. This created a need for standardised rules and so football developed and became more organised. As both participation and spectatorism grew, the sport gained structure through regular league and cup competitions. This allowed football to establish itself as the national sport in the UK which it continues to be today."

In the second example, the candidate is achieving AO3 by applying knowledge rather than just stating it - it is specific, it gives examples (railways, football), it explains the impact of improved transport by going into detail about the influence it had on the creation of rules, structure and regular competition in the sport, and how that has led to the popularity the sport still enjoys today.

In the indicative content in the G453 mark schemes which have accompanied the first live papers for the unit, bullet-points have been used within each numbered indicative content point on the mark scheme to identify potential 'development' points. These are where the basic information for that piece of indicative content may be developed and elaborated upon/taken further and often linked to other elements of the question, such as their continuing influence today, and these are in many cases meeting the AO3 requirements.