

Physical Education

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE J586**

General Certificate of Secondary Education (Short Course) **GCSE J086**

Reports on the Units

June 2010

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This report on the Examination provides information on the performance of candidates which it is hoped will be useful to teachers in their preparation of candidates for future examinations. It is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding of the specification content, of the operation of the scheme of assessment and of the application of assessment criteria.

Reports should be read in conjunction with the published question papers and mark schemes for the Examination.

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GCSE Physical Education J586

GCSE Physical Education (Short Course) J086

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B451 An Introduction to Physical Education

General comments

This was the second sitting of this new specification unit.

Below are comments related to candidates' responses to the question paper following each question and mark scheme points.

Centres are reminded that marking schemes are used as a basis for judgements and each examiner's professional judgement is used in finally deciding the marks awarded based on a rigorous standardised procedure. A levels' mark scheme was introduced for the first time in January for GCSE PE and this again was used for this session and it relates to the final question – question 25. The mark scheme for this final question has a number of criteria separated into levels. Levels also include statements related to the quality of written communication. Centres should note that there is no longer separate quality of written communication marks; rather the quality of written communication is taken into account when awarding a level and finally the mark. The levels scheme also includes indicative content that is expected in the levels' question and this content is also taken into consideration when awarding marks.

For this session there was a wide range of candidate abilities represented. It was pleasing to note that there were many candidates who were very well prepared for this new specification examination and were at the appropriate level to be examined in this session.

Overall the specification content had been covered effectively by centres with candidates showing appropriate knowledge and understanding in many topic areas. The terminology in some of the questions, which has been directly lifted from the specification, confused some candidates. For example, the terms key process; body mass index; key concepts. Centres are advised to ensure that the appropriate Physical Education terminology is well known by candidates and they can give examples to show the meanings behind each term.

The 'command' words used in each question were at times misunderstood by some candidates. For example, some candidates merely listed points as a response to the command – describe. Candidates, who gave lists when asked to describe or explain, were still given some marks for their knowledge but the full range of marks was unlikely to be accessed because of the lack of description or explanation. When candidates are asked to give practical examples it is important that they give appropriate examples and do not merely list sports.

This unit includes multiple choice questions and for the vast majority of candidates this provided a good opportunity to show their knowledge across the range of specification topics. Candidates are reminded that it is the most appropriate answer from the set of answers given that will score the mark and are advised to think carefully about each question rather than try to rush through these questions. Candidates are reminded that if they do change their mind after circling an answer in the multi-choice section, to make it clear by crossing the answer out and circling their revised selection. There was little evidence to suggest that candidates struggled to complete the paper within the time.

The weaker answered multi-choice questions were questions 7 and 14.

Comments on individual questions

Question 16

Most candidates showed that they knew the characteristics of skilful movement but too many listed these instead of describing them. Candidates are reminded to take notice of the command word being used in the question – in this case 'describe', which requires candidates to give more than just name the characteristics. Some candidates described via a practical example and this was acceptable.

Question 17

Questions will often have the command to give practical examples and candidates should look out for this because those who do not will not have access to the full marks available. By giving practical examples candidates are showing that they can apply theory to practice and further demonstrates their knowledge and understanding of the topic. In this question too many ignored the requirement to give practical examples. Others did and showed a good understanding of performance and outcome goals. Others had a good idea of goal setting generally but did not know the difference between performance and outcome goals. It is important that centres cover all the requirements of the specification and use appropriate resource materials to underpin their teaching.

Question 18

Most candidates could describe a cool down exercise and had obviously been well prepared for such a question. Some just stated that it decreased heart rate instead of the gradual decrease that a cool down is used for to decrease risk of soreness/injury and blood pooling. The better candidates also noted that there are psychological benefits of a cool down related to lowering arousal.

Question 19

Most candidates had some idea of the effects of under-eating but only the best candidates could give enough explanation to gain the full four marks. Most identified effects such as lack of energy or tiredness and the better candidates recognised the psychological effects that could influence participation and performance.

Question 20

For those candidates who read the question carefully and understood the requirements of the question this was a high scoring question. For other candidates a misunderstanding of the requirements led to confused responses. Many recognised that swimming for example was a popular activity because of the many available facilities and the need to swim to keep safe. Others just mentioned generic aspects, such as an activity being enjoyable that affected participation.

All of the activities are enjoyed by at least some participants so this is not a valid reason for it being in the top bracket or indeed lack of enjoyment or 'boring' in the bottom level of participation. Those that scored well gave excellent reasons related to access, cost, age issues and climate. Centres should remind candidates to identify the exact requirements of each question. This question has some source material that had to be used to answer the question. In teaching and learning activities it is advised that candidates experience using different types of source material to underpin knowledge and understanding.

Question 21

It is not surprising that most candidates scored at least one mark on this question. The better candidates recognised that there are five marks allocated and therefore gave five well described and separate points related to the main benefits of a healthy lifestyle. Those who listed these benefits rather than described them were unlikely to score well on this question.

Question 22

Many candidates recognised this test as a measurement related to weight and height although few knew the exact relationship; nevertheless this detailed knowledge of BMI was not needed to score full marks. Those that linked the test to identifying possible obesity issues, related results to overall fitness and identified that the measurement could form the basis for an exercise programme scored well. The best also recognised that the test is only one measure of many that should be used and that a high BMI is often shown in elite sports people who are extremely fit and healthy!

Question 23

This question was well answered by many candidates who identified three separate reasons for following rules and codes of behaviour. This aspect of the specification seems to have been very well covered by centres with well-prepared candidates.

Question 24

Many candidates are unfamiliar with the phrases lifted directly from the specification and therefore struggled to give a relevant practical example and resorted to guessing or to simply repeating the phrase in the answer. Those that scored well gave very good examples and showed a good grasp of the concepts that form the basis of PE for all age groups.

Expressing ideas is related to opinions; solving problems is about making decisions having taken relevant information into consideration; exploring tactics is applying the right strategies; being effective is having an end result that is successful. The better candidates covered all of these points and gave a clear and simple practical example. For example, for expressing ideas a high scoring candidate may state – ‘this is about giving an opinion to a team-mate in hockey about the way in which the team should attack in the second half’.

Question 25

In this final question of the paper, candidates' quality of written communication is taken into consideration as well as the ability to answer the question set. Answers were marked using a levels mark scheme as shown in the mark scheme.

The indicative content is related to the knowledge and understanding that is likely but not exclusively to be shown. When assessing responses examiners are looking for depth of understanding in this discriminating question. Those candidates who clearly identified a role as either a referee or an umpire and described fully what is involved in performing one of these roles scored well. For example, high scoring candidates did not limit their answer to just ensuring that the rules of the game are followed. They also included aspects related to health and safety, the flow of the game and the need for good communication with other officials. Some candidates did not have access to the full marks because of poor expression or because their poor written communication made it difficult to work out what the candidate was trying to say. On the positive side many candidates had obviously taken up a role of a referee or umpire at some stage and showed a good understanding of the requirements of that role with some good practical examples to illustrate their points. Candidates have not got time to write much on this question (about 6-10 minutes is recommended), so clarity is needed with a range of points having to be made. These final 6 mark questions may have one or two strands to them and it is important that candidates should attempt all parts of these questions to access the full mark range.

Some candidates did not read the question carefully and gave examples of officials other than a referee or umpire and therefore did not have access to the full range of marks available.

B452 and B454

General comments

This was the first sitting of these units and it has been mostly successful. Only three Centres entered B454 and seventy four Centres entered B452. This is not unexpected as most Centres have elected to examine both practical units at the end of year 11. This year nearly all candidates were in year 10.

The standard of marking of the practical activities has been in general accurate and there has been a smooth transition from the legacy specification. There has been a large range of activities being submitted and Centres welcomed the new structure, which allows a greater ability to combine games and other activities under one specification. The introduction of the new activities has also been welcomed. A small number of Centres applied for a non-listed activity via the special activity submission process.

Centres are reminded that any special activity request only applies to the year of the assessment and must be re-applied for in any subsequent series.

Invasion games dominated the activities submitted by candidates. There was good evidence of effective internal standardisation.

There were a significant number of Centres who had not read the rubric restrictions in the specification. This resulted in moderators having to make a significant number of changes to candidate's marks. It is hoped that this is just because the specification is new and will not be repeated next year. Centres are asked to refer to the specification and Guide to Controlled Assessment before submitting their marks (this particular point is covered on Pages 20 & 21 of the specification).

The Analysing Lifestyle aspect of the controlled assessment was an area that has caused much discussion. Some Centres had clearly read the specification, been on training courses and had read the additional guidance on the website. Some Centres produced good work that had been accurately marked. Other Centres marked accurately but the standard of work was disappointing. A significant number of Centres had over marked this aspect of the unit.

The main issues that have occurred are;

1. Candidates focus too much (and sometimes solely) on fitness rather than other aspects of a healthy, active lifestyle.
2. There was not enough detail presented in the action plans
3. The analysis of collected data is not accurate.
4. There is no distinction between the data collection (which is awarded no marks) and the write up in level two (medium control).

Centres are reminded that candidates should devise their own collection sheets. Centres should not produce centre lead writing/collection of data frameworks.

The Analysing Performance written task has been completed more successfully. In this aspect of the assessment candidates should concentrate on skill improvement and not fitness. There has been more scaling this year than in the legacy specification. The written work has been scaled more than the practical.

Overall Centres who have taken either unit have prepared their candidates appropriately.

B453 Developing Knowledge in Physical Education

General comments

This was the first time candidates had sat this new specification unit despite it being available in January 2010. Not many sat this examination with most centres preferring to have their candidates take this paper in Year 11. Most Year 11 learners this session have taken the last legacy specification paper.

Centres are reminded that marking schemes are used as a basis for judgements and each examiner's professional judgement is used in finally deciding the marks awarded based on a rigorous standardised procedure. A levels mark scheme was introduced for the first time in January for GCSE PE and this again was used for this session and it relates to the final question – question 25. The mark scheme for this final question has a number of criteria separated into levels. Levels also include statements related to the quality of written communication. Centres should note that there is no longer separate quality of written communication marks; rather the quality of written communication is taken into account when awarding a level and finally the mark. The levels scheme also includes indicative content that is expected in the levels' question and this content is also taken into consideration when awarding marks.

Overall the specification content had been covered effectively by centres with many candidates showing appropriate knowledge and understanding in many topic areas. There was some evidence that candidates had been entered having only covered the unit work and were therefore ill prepared for this examination. The terminology in some of the questions which has been directly lifted from the specification confused some candidates as those taking the B451 unit examination. For example, stroke volume, vascular shunt, the British Olympic association, control of emotions, and lactic acid, Centres are advised to ensure that the appropriate Physical Education terminology is well known by candidates and they can give examples to show the meanings behind each term.

The 'command' words used in each question were at times misunderstood by some candidates. For example, some candidates merely listed points as a response to the command – describe. Candidates, who gave lists when asked to describe or explain, were still given some marks for their knowledge but the full range of marks was unlikely to be accessed because of the lack of description or explanation. When candidates are asked to give practical examples it is important that they give appropriate examples and do not merely list sports.

This unit includes multiple choice questions and for the vast majority of candidates this provided a good opportunity to show their knowledge across the range of specification topics. Candidates are reminded that it is the best answer from the set of answers given that will score the mark and are advised to think carefully about each question rather than try to rush through these questions. Candidates are reminded that if they do change their mind after circling an answer in the multi-choice section, to make it clear by crossing the answer out and circling their revised selection. Questions 2, 11 and 15 proved the most difficult in the multi-choice section. There was little evidence to suggest that candidates struggled to complete the paper within the time.

Comments on individual questions

Question 16

Many candidates were unaware of the functions are of the BOA. Some guessed and gained marks by accident and a few know about their role in selection and the setting up of the preparation camp for the Olympic Games.

Question 17

Candidates responded well to this question and many scored at least two marks with the best candidates gaining all four marks and including the links often made with outside agencies to promote activities as well as gaining qualifications related to physical activities.

Question 18

The vast majority of candidates scored the full three marks for this question.

Question 19

Some candidates misread this question and wrote about how physical activities can help to alleviate stress from the outside world, which although true does not address the requirements of the question. Others had prepared well for such a question reflecting some good teaching in centres. Some candidates had real insight into attentional control and visualisation.

Question 20

Most candidates could identify two major muscle groups of the upper body that are used when performing a standing throw of a ball. Most identified the biceps and triceps muscles. Many could explain how an active lifestyle can keep muscles healthy but most lacked the detail to score the three marks available. Bigger and stronger were favourites but the marks allocated indicated that three marks were going to be awarded and therefore three points need to be made. Those that went on to mention an increased or good supply of oxygen were awarded further marks.

Question 21

Some candidates were unaware of what is meant by lactic acid and what its effects might be. Others were well prepared and gave a good account of why it is produced and the effects caused by its presence.

Question 22

This question differentiated well between those that had just learned some stock phrases related to motivation, contrasting with those who related motivational methods to the role of an official. Some very good candidates explained well that being an official encourages fitness and health as well as being involved in an activity even though their physical performance skills within that activity may not be very good. Candidates are reminded that for a six mark question that is not question 25, six separate points need to be made to make it possible to access the full marks.

Question 23

The main stumbling block with this question was not the knowledge and understanding of the skeletal system it was the candidates' tendency to ignore the full requirements of the question. A description is needed and therefore a simple list of functions will not attract full marks. Candidates often gave practical examples as part of their description and this was acceptable as a way of describing the functions of the skeletal system.

Question 24

Many candidates recognised that goal setting could be a key to provide the material for their answer and this was valid as long as each aspect of goal setting was linked to motivation. For example, just writing 'goals that are specific' is unlikely to achieve marks unless phrases are added such as 'this can improve motivation because what needs to be achieved is clear to the participant'.

Question 25

In this final question of the paper, candidates' quality of written communication is taken into consideration as well as the ability to answer the question set. Answers were marked using a levels mark scheme shown above. The indicative content is related to the knowledge and understanding that is likely but not exclusively to be shown. When assessing responses examiners are looking for depth of understanding in this discriminating question. Those that gave an in-depth explanation of how the media influences those who participate in physical activities scored well. Excellent answers covered positive and negative effects and did not just limit their answer to funding but also to the wider perception of certain minority activities due to lack of media coverage or that some groups/sports are represented and therefore promoted more than others. There is little time to write much and those candidates who could give a wide ranging answer within succinct but flowing sentences scored better.

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