

GCSE Examiners' Report

Physical Education
(Short Course)
Summer 2024

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Introduction

Our Principal Examiners' report provides valuable feedback on the recent assessment series. It has been written by our Principal Examiners and Principal Moderators after the completion of marking and moderation, and details how candidates have performed in each unit.

This report opens with a summary of candidates' performance, including the assessment objectives/skills/topics/themes being tested, and highlights the characteristics of successful performance and where performance could be improved. It then looks in detail at each unit, pinpointing aspects that proved challenging to some candidates and suggesting some reasons as to why that might be.[1]

The information found in this report provides valuable insight for practitioners to support their teaching and learning activity. We would also encourage practitioners to share this document – in its entirety or in part – with their learners to help with exam preparation, to understand how to avoid pitfalls and to add to their revision toolbox.

Further support

Document	Description	Link
Professional Learning / CPD	WJEC offers an extensive programme of online and face-to-face Professional Learning events. Access interactive feedback, review example candidate responses, gain practical ideas for the classroom and put questions to our dedicated team by registering for one of our events here.	https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/
Past papers	Access the bank of past papers for this qualification, including the most recent assessments. Please note that we do not make past papers available on the public website until 12 months after the examination.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page
Grade boundary information	Grade boundaries are the minimum number of marks needed to achieve each grade. For unitised specifications grade boundaries are expressed on a Uniform Mark Scale (UMS). UMS grade boundaries remain the same every year as the range of UMS mark percentages allocated to a particular grade does not change. UMS grade boundaries are published at overall subject and unit level. For linear specifications, a single grade is awarded for the subject, rather than for each unit that contributes towards the overall grade. Grade boundaries are published on results day.	For unitised specifications click here: Results, Grade Boundaries and PRS (wjec.co.uk)

[1] ***Please note that where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.***

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Exam Results Analysis	WJEC provides information to examination centres via the WJEC Portal. This is restricted to centre staff only. Access is granted to centre staff by the Examinations Officer at the centre.	Portal by WJEC
Classroom Resources	Access our extensive range of FREE classroom resources, including blended learning materials, exam walk-throughs and knowledge organisers to support teaching and learning.	https://resources.wjec.co.uk/
Bank of Professional Learning materials	Access our bank of Professional Learning materials from previous events from our secure website and additional pre-recorded materials available in the public domain.	Portal by WJEC or on the WJEC subject page.
Become an examiner with WJEC.	We are always looking to recruit new examiners or moderators. These opportunities can provide you with valuable insight into the assessment process, enhance your skill set, increase your understanding of your subject and inform your teaching.	Become an Examiner | WJEC

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Executive Summary

The overall qualification performed as expected, due to the low entries (399). The performance in Unit 1 (written exam) varies year on year.

The performance in Unit 2 Non-Examination Assessment (NEA) was stable. Entries were slightly higher than those in 2023.

Most candidates entered for the qualification are 16-year-old males while, just over 7% of entries are Welsh medium.

Unit 1

The paper follows a similar structure from series to series, However, the Principal Examiner (PE) felt that as all three extended answer questions were wholly AO3 (rather than a mix of AO's), this reduced the potential for more knowledge marks to be gained by candidates. This possibly resulted in the paper being less accessible than in previous years.

Many questions had a facility factor (ff) of between 20.0 and 40.0, which highlighted the challenging nature and decreased accessibility of questions. These included 2b(ii) (ff=17.9) and 2b(iii) (ff=15.9). This demonstrated similar accessibility to that of 2022 but the facility factors are considerably more difficult than 2023 and their spread is narrower. The facility factors were also more difficult than 2019 and their spread is wider. Notably, only three questions (1ai, 3a(ii) and 3b(i)) had a facility factor of above 50.0.

There was a higher attempt rate to questions where a framework was provided for the candidate response. These questions included multiple-choice, tick box options and table completion format. The highest facility factors were shown in questions 1a(i) (ff=71.0) and 3a(ii) (ff=71.0) and 3b(i) (ff=56.4). In addition to the attempt rate, the PE also reported that questions with a framework also scored higher than more open questions.

It is important for the specification content to be delivered in such a way that it can be related to specific sporting examples and applied across a range of sporting contexts to enable more candidates to continue to access AO2 and AO3 questions.

To improve candidate performance in AO2 and AO3 questions it is advisable for centres to utilise Item Level Data information for their centre to refine teaching and learning strategies and reduce gaps in candidates' knowledge.

Unit 2

The mean mark is stable for matched 16's and has decreased for all candidates compared to 2023 series.

The Principal Moderator (PM) stated in the report that centres had been largely consistent with their marking and that there had been fewer adjustments to previous series.

A wide range of activities were demonstrated by candidates. as in previous years, with the PM reporting that there had been an increase in entries for activities such as hill walking, rounders, and weightlifting. However, many moderators felt that centres had slightly inflated marks at the top end when assessing these activities.

The PM agreed that the standards of practical work are largely in line with 2019 and the mean was also largely in line with 2019.

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In preparation for 2025, centres must consider the importance of recording all activities shown on moderation day. The evidence should demonstrate each activity in its full competitive context. When assessing candidates in a practical activity the quality of the video should allow for clear recognition of all candidates involved, with each clip being accompanied by a candidate identification sheet where necessary.

Areas for improvement	**Classroom resources**	**Brief description of resource**
AO1 knowledge to alleviate gaps in knowledge	Specification Knowledge organisers	GCSE SC specification, Unit 1 and Unit 2 breakdown Knowledge organisers (AO1)
AO2/ AO3 extended answers	Digital resources CPD resources on portal	Blended learning resources Tips and hints for accessing AO2/AO3 marks
Examination technique	Exam walk through Past papers/ mark schemes	Examination hints and tips and how to prepare for NEA Past papers/ mark schemes
Accurate completion of WJPE1SC and WJPE1SC forms	Key documents (non-examination assessment)	Relevant GCSE SC paperwork
Accurate assessment of practical activities, including hill walking, rounders, and weightlifting	Specification Assessment Criteria (appendix A) and Performance Skills (appendix C)	The assessment criteria and performance skills identify the skills and techniques for each activity along with examples of how they can be demonstrated and assessed within the full context of the activity.

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION (SHORT COURSE)

GCSE

Summer 2024

UNIT 1: INTRODUCTION TO PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overview of the Unit

The attempt rate was above 97% on every question, yet the accessibility varied widely throughout the paper (ff between 15 – 71).

Questions with the lowest facility factor, and therefore the most challenging for candidates included 2b(i) (ff=17.9), 2b(iii) (ff=15.9), 3b(i) (ff=21.9) and 3c (ff=21.0). Questions that were widely accessed by many candidates included 1a(i) (ff= 71.0), 3a(ii) (ff=71.0) and 3b(i) (ff=56.4).

It is evident that greater AO1 knowledge of the specification is required, as without this, many candidates were unable to identify key indicative content. This also negatively impacted candidates' ability to access marks at AO2 and AO3 where theory and sporting examples need to be applied. This was most notable when comparing characteristics of fast and slow twitch fibres, explaining antagonistic muscle action, and evaluating the long-term effects of endurance training on the body.

All centres would benefit from reinforcing the three assessment objectives and their weighting within the paper and the associated command words. Centres are also advised to utilise their own Item Level Data to refine teaching and learning strategies.

Comments on individual questions/sections

Q.1 Question 1a(i) (ff=71.0, mean = 0.7 out of 1) facilitated the best outcome for candidates.

(a) **(ii)** Many candidates identified a basic reason why it is important to measure fitness, but most did not offer enough explanation (mean = 1.2 out of 3) to support this. Awareness of the assessment objectives and relevant command words is vital here to ensure candidates provide enough depth in their responses to access top marks.

(b) **(i)** Less than 50% of candidates (ff=45.0) were able to outline the function of carbohydrates, fats and minerals. Carbohydrates facilitated the most correct responses but, on the whole, this was a poorly answered AO1 recall question.

(ii) This was the worst answered item in question 1. With a facility factor of just 30.8, it was clear that many candidates were unable to explain energy balance in relation to both weight loss and gain. The best responses explained the role of calories in versus calories out with respect to energy expenditure.

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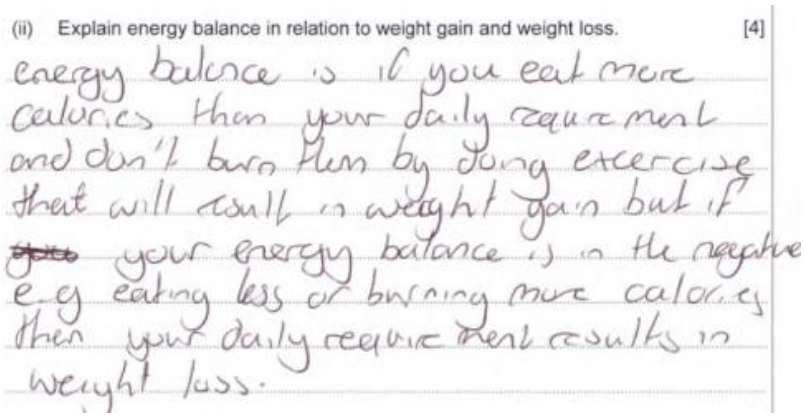
(ii) Explain energy balance in relation to weight gain and weight loss. [4]

energy balance is if you eat more calories than your daily requirement and don't burn them by doing exercise that will result in weight gain but if ~~they're~~ your energy balance is in the negative e.g eating less or burning more calories than your daily requirement results in weight loss.

(c) Some comprehensive answers were given, however, many candidates wrote about physical risks to young people who do not lead a healthy lifestyle, where the question asked for mental and social risks. Therefore, many could not access the top band marks and the mean and facility factor were low at 1.7 out of 7 and 32.8 respectively. It is vital that candidates read the question carefully to facilitate the correct response.

Q.2 Question 2 produced some of the lowest facility factors on the paper, indicating that candidates found this set of questions particularly challenging. Of the 7 items in question 2, only 3 items (2a(i), 2a(ii) and 2b(i)) achieved a facility factor above 30,

(b) **(ii)** This was one of the worst answered questions on the paper (ff=17.9, mean 0.4 out of 2). Most of the candidates did not have the AO1 theoretical knowledge on antagonistic muscle action and therefore any explanation was extremely limited. The best answers acknowledged that muscles worked in pairs and as one contracts the other needed to relax.

(iii) This was the poorest answered question on the whole paper with a (ff) of just 15.9 and a mean of 0.2 out of 1. Despite being a simple AO1 recall question, many candidates could not correctly identify that the heart muscle was cardiac muscle.

(c) This was another poorly answered question (ff=22.4, mean 0.7 out of 3). Candidates needed to identify all 3 energy systems rather than simply using aerobic and anaerobic systems when answering the question.

(d) Many candidates attempted the question (98.2 attempt rate) but with little reference to why variance should be included in their training programme. Therefore, this was not a well answered question and lacked theoretical knowledge (mean of 1.6 out of 7). It was also evident that most candidates struggled with the concept of analysing (AO3 command word).

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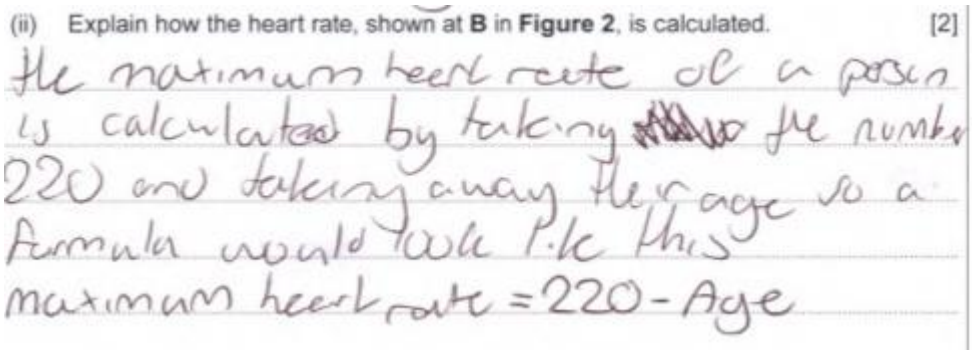
Q.3 Of the 5 items in question 5, only 2 produced a facility factor above 50, again indicating that candidates found these challenging to access. 3a(ii) (ff=71.0) and 3b(i) (ff=56.4) were well answered and many candidates were able to correctly identify a test that measures cardiovascular endurance and the aerobic training zone shown in the figure.

(a) (i) Despite many candidates correctly identifying a test to measure cardiovascular endurance in question a(ii), many candidates struggled to actual define this component. (ff=33.9, mean 0.3 out of 1). This again highlights gaps in AO1 knowledge. The better answers referred to working aerobically/ with oxygen for a long period of time without getting tired.

(b) (ii) Many incorrect equations were given as answers (ff=21.0, mean 0.4 out of 2). Candidates need to learn the equation for Maximum Heart Rate to be able to correctly explain how it is calculated. The best answers correctly explained that MHR is 220-age.


(ii) Explain how the heart rate, shown at **B** in **Figure 2**, is calculated. [2]

the maximum heart rate of a person is calculated by taking the number 220 and taking away their age so a formula would look like this

maximum heart rate = 220 - Age

(c) This was another poorly answered question with a facility factor of just 21.0 and a mean of 1.5 out of 7. Despite a high attempt rate (98.5%) candidates offered little evaluation of the long-term effects of endurance training on the body. Other effects were given that were not related to endurance training. Again, this demonstrated a lack of theoretical knowledge and poor examination technique as many candidates did not read the question carefully and were unable to evaluate (AO3).

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PHYSICAL EDUCATION (SHORT COURSE)

GCSE

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UNIT 2: THE ACTIVE PARTICIPANT IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overview of the Unit

AO4: Demonstrating and applying relevant skills and techniques in physical activity and sport.

Learners will be assessed in:
- two different activities in the role of performer
- one individual and one team sport from the approved lists of activities in the specification.

A wide range of activities were demonstrated by candidates and there had been an increase in entries for activities such as hill walking, rounders, and weightlifting. Many moderators felt that centres had slightly inflated marks at the top end when assessing these activities. However, overall, centres had been largely consistent with their marking across all practical activities and there had been fewer adjustments made in comparison to previous series.

Centres are reminded of the requirement to film the live moderation day in its entirety and then submit this film within a week of the moderation taking place.

Tasks
Comments on tasks/questions relating to candidate performance/meeting assessment criteria

Practical performance

Continuing from the 2023 series, we have seen further developments in the quality of the performance tasks demonstrated in 2024. The development of these performance skills has facilitated a smooth moderation process, which has enabled candidates to access the assessment criteria within their performance.

In 2023 we saw an increase in the number of candidates choosing rounders and personal survival. Throughout the 2024 series this trend continues, along with mountain walking and weightlifting which have also been popular.

Rounders

This was highlighted as a recommended in 2023 and it must continue to be a focus as there has been limited development in 2024. The performance skills state that candidates offering rounders must perform as a fielder or backstop **and** as a batter or bowler. The performance task must allow for candidates to demonstrate their ability within these roles and the assessment should be based on the fulfilment of each role and not just the strongest aspect. It is suggested that the candidate's choices of performance are clearly identified on the WJPE2 forms.

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Video recording of rounders also still requires attention, as in most instances, the capture is not showing the full perspective of the game. The camera should be positioned to allow for clear identification of candidates, as well as evidence of the full game. Most of the evidence viewed highlights the batting and bowling squares but does not always follow the ball into the open field. Therefore, limiting the opportunity to make a judgment on those candidates in the field.

Personal Survival

Moderators have reported that they are still seeing isolated skills (timed/ distance swims, treading water etc.) during the performance task. Although this evidences the candidate's skills and techniques, the level of challenge is limited and therefore does not provide candidates the opportunity to show physical characteristics or use skills in a pressurised/ competitive situation. It is recommended for 2025 that centres consider developing scenarios that adequately challenge candidates and clearly show their ability to demonstrate appropriate skills, techniques and strategies whilst under pressure.

Weightlifting

This activity has been a popular addition to candidate practical profile during the 2024 series. Most centres that are offering this activity show the performance task in a safe and competitive context. Centres should be reminded that candidates should perform two lifts, a 'snatch' and 'clean and jerk' and both should be shown in the context of a competition. This will provide candidates with the opportunity to show physical characteristic and the skills and techniques used in each lift. The competition should allow candidates to demonstrate their strategical and tactical awareness. There have been reports during this series of candidates only offering one lift and some concerns have been raised with regards to the safety of lifts and incorrect techniques used. Weightlifting is a specialist activity, and centres should consider this when offering as a practical activity.

Mountain walking

Good examples of mountain walking have evidenced candidates demonstrating their ability to apply a wide range of skills, techniques, strategies and tactics in challenging/ competitive situations. Candidates must perform in events of at least 10km in distance and demonstrate effective planning, pacing, recognising risks and decision making. Video evidence must be provided which demonstrates the characteristics outlined in the performance skills. Duke of Edinburgh evidence is not enough to access the Rich Task. Accurate assessment must be based on the video evidence available, and centres should operate robust internal standardisation procedures to ensure fairness and consistency for all candidates.

Task marking
Comments on approaches to internal marking

Administration

WJPE1 and WJPE2 forms

All WJPE1SC and WJPE2SC forms need to be completed and sent to the moderator by the 1st March. For moderations that take place before this date, all paperwork should be sent to the moderator 2 weeks prior to the moderation. These forms need to be clearly annotated with the appropriate activities identified.

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There has been an improvement during this series where most centres are meeting the deadline, though some are still missing annotations on both WJPE1SC and WJPE2SC forms. These errors include:

- administrative errors e.g. Candidate order on WJPE1SC and rank order on WJPE2SC
- annotations with regards to activity specific events within activities e.g. Athletics 100m.

Candidate Authentication Sheet (CAS)

Candidate Authentication Sheets (CAS) should be made available for the moderator. A CAS form must be completed for each candidate with a breakdown of their practical profile including individual marks and total. The declaration must be dated and signed by both candidate and teacher to certify that all work has been carried out under the conditions set by the WJEC. Centres must bring to the attention of each candidate the GDPR section of the CAS which provides candidates with information regarding the use of their audio-visual/written coursework by the WJEC for training and CPD purposes.

Moderators have reported an improvement in CAS completion, with completed practical profiles and signatures, along with the GDPR section. This was a recommendation in 2023 and most moderators reported that these were completed in full and available on the day of the moderation.

IAMIS

Centres must enter candidates' marks onto the IAMIS system before the 5th May. It is recommended that this is completed as close to the moderation date as possible, and consideration is taken on the transfer of data from WJPE1SC to IAMIS to reduce administration errors.

There has been an improvement during the 2024 series in the efficiency of centres uploading their marks before or very close to their moderation day. Few centres are still leaving their data entry late, and, in some cases, moderators have had to chase on the day leading up to the deadline. There have been fewer errors reported in data transfer, but we are still seeing some errors when checks are made with WJPE1SC and within the IAMIS system.

Surpass

This series saw the introduction of the Surpass system. Centres who have a live moderation need to record **all** practical activities that take place on moderation day and upload this evidence to Surpass within 1 week of the moderation taking place. This audio-visual recording must contain all activities seen on the day. For centres involved in remote moderations, all information requested by the moderator must be uploaded prior to the pre-agreed moderation day to form part of the sample.

Feedback throughout the series is that the quality of some recordings was low in standard, and this should be a key priority for 2025. In preparation for 2025, centres should consider the importance of recording all activities shown on moderation day. The evidence should demonstrate each activity in its full competitive context (Netball 7 v 7). The quality of the video should allow for clear recognition of all candidates involved in the activity (each clip should be accompanied with a candidate identification sheet). Positioning of the camera should also be considered especially for stationary cameras in activities such as badminton. Moderators have reported difficulties identifying candidates on courts furthest away from the camera, hence making it increasingly difficult to make judgments on performance. Although some high-quality video evidence was noted during this series, this is an increasing expectation for all centres moving into the 2025 series.

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Supporting you

Useful contacts and links

Our friendly subject team is on hand to support you between 8.30am and 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.
Tel: 02922 404271
Email: physicaleducation@wjec.co.uk
Qualification webpage: GCSE Physical Education (wjec.co.uk)

See other useful contacts here: Useful Contacts | WJEC

CPD Training / Professional Learning

Access our popular, free online CPD/PL courses to receive exam feedback and put questions to our subject team, and attend one of our face-to-face events, focused on enhancing teaching and learning, providing practical classroom ideas and developing understanding of marking and assessment.

Please find details for all our courses here: https://www.wjec.co.uk/home/professional-learning/

WJEC Qualifications

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