

Physical Education

Advanced GCE A2 H554

Advanced Subsidiary GCE AS H154

Examiners' Reports

June 2011

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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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Chief Examiner's Report

Principal Examiners indicate that examination technique continues to be a major factor in determining the success of candidates. Both Principal Examiners are of the opinion that candidates' time management was better this series and that time did not appear to be an issue. Candidates appear to be coping better with the questions that require an extended response; both Principal Examiners report an increased use of plans. Similarly, both comment on a perceived improvement in candidates' quality of written communication.

In the G451 examination candidates appeared to have a better understanding of the requirements of the different command words and this resulted in more appropriately focused responses. However, on the down side many candidates appeared to experience difficulties defining key terms and/or providing specific values for measurements required within the Anatomy and Physiology question. These simple items of recall can earn candidates marks.

The use of practical examples continues to be an important factor in discriminating between candidates, those who are able to apply examples access many more marks than those who are unable to do so. This relates to both the G451 and G453 examination.

In the coursework units, the discriminating factor often appears to be the oral response. This also continues to be the area where some centres have the most difficulty accurately assessing candidates.

G451 An introduction to Physical Education

General Comments

There continues to be an improvement in the way candidates approach the G451 examination. Examination technique was better; there were fewer 'nil responses' and questions were clearly numbered on additional sheets.

In addition, many candidates showed evidence of their breaking down questions in order to allow them to better focus on what was required of them. Many candidates 'highlighted' the following to good effect:

- the command word eg identify, describe, explain, evaluate, etc;
- the subject being examined eg blood pressure, expiration during exercise, transfer of learning, cognitive theory, the Olympic Games, the golden triangle;
- the subject focus (or specific aspect(s) of the subject being examined) eg definition of blood pressure, expiration during exercise, description of transfer of learning with a practical example for each, description of cognitive theory with two different practical examples, the background to the Olympic Games and the relationship between the different aspects of the Golden Triangle.

Part-questions (a) – (d) tend to have a maximum of six marks and increasingly, question sub-parts will be distinct ie (i) and (ii). On these part-questions candidates should continue to note the exact number of marks available and give sufficient distinct points which reflect the number of marks available. Where a question does have more than one element, eg 1(a)(i), candidates must be encouraged to address all aspects of the question.

It was pleasing to note continued improvement in the quality of responses to the 10 mark, (e) part-questions. In general, responses to 1(e), 2(e) and 3(e) were more thorough than in previous series with candidates displaying both more depth and a greater breadth of knowledge. The most successful candidates incorporated a plan within their responses and referenced relevant and interesting practical examples throughout their answers.

That said, many candidates are still finding the 10 mark, (e) part-questions challenging. Some answers showed very limited knowledge and understanding of the topic being examined whilst others were predominantly knowledge based. Candidates need to be clear about the five criteria on which the 10 mark, (e) part-questions are judged.

These criteria are:

- knowledge and understanding of key points;
- analysis/evaluation and/or discussion/explanation/development of key points;
- use of practical examples to illustrate those developed points;
- use of correct technical vocabulary;
- quality of written communication.

The standard of response across the three sections on the paper was equitable. Each section had parts where candidates scored well and parts that candidates found more challenging, the latter acting as important discriminators. With reference to 1(a)(i), 1(a)(ii) and 3(a), a disappointing feature was the high number of candidates who did not have working definitions of the key terms. Centres are advised to encourage candidates to build a glossary of terms, so they can define them with ease when required to do so, as well as use them to develop points made in the extended answers. The same is true of values needed for certain measurements in Anatomy and Physiology. Candidates need to know that any value must be accompanied by the

correct units for credit to be awarded. A disappointingly large number of candidates failed to do this.

There was no obvious evidence that candidates lacked time on this paper.

Section A: Anatomy and Physiology

- 1(a)(i)** The first part of this question was generally well answered with most candidates able to give an accurate definition of stroke volume. Some confused stroke volume with cardiac output and so wrote about the volume of blood leaving the heart per minute as opposed to per beat.

Knowledge of a resting value for stroke volume was disappointing. Many candidates seemed to guess the answer here; others omitted the units. Some identified the resting value for heart rate, cardiac output or tidal volume.

Therefore, relatively few candidates achieved maximum marks for this question.

- (a)(ii)** This question was poorly answered. While, nearly all candidates identified that there would be an increase in stroke volume, they failed to describe the other changes that take place from rest to maximal exercise. This was an example of a question where candidates failed to respond in line with the command word and/or take account of the requirement to make reference to more than one change to stroke volume.

Consequently, very few included the plateau or subsequent drop in stroke volume at high intensity exercise in their answer. A common mistake was to explain that the increase occurred using Starlings' Law, which was not required. Very few knew the value and units for maximal stroke volume.

- (b)(i)** This recall question clearly highlighted those candidates who had learnt this part of the specification and those who had not. Most candidates gave an acceptable definition of blood pressure though this was less well known than the definition of stroke volume asked for in Question 1(a)(i).

Some candidates failed to make reference to the fact that blood pressure is the force against *the walls* of the blood vessel, making their responses somewhat vague. The diastolic value for somebody suffering from hypertension was not well known. A very small number of candidates hit point 2 on the mark scheme and the number of candidates knowing the correct units for blood pressure was limited. Centres are encouraged to remind candidates marks are not usually awarded for a value without the correct units.

- (b)(ii)** This question was well answered; a significant number of candidates scored maximum marks.

The following points are worth highlighting.

Firstly, when a question asks for a specific number of points, three in this instance, examiners can only mark the first three responses. Candidates, therefore, should think very carefully before committing their thoughts to paper.

Secondly, the question asks for the effects of an active cool down on the vascular system, as such, only answers relevant to this body system are credit worthy. It was disappointing that many candidates offered irrelevant answers; a large number of responses referred, for instance, to DOMS and/or a decrease in body temperature.

Finally, this question required candidates to show understanding of the effects of an active cool down – not simply what happens when exercise stops. Hence, references to

gradually or steadily reduces heart rate were credit worthy whereas *reduces heart rate* was deemed too vague.

- (c) This question proved to be a good differentiator. Candidates generally made a good attempt at this question and answered in a systematic way. Most recognised that the question was about the vascular shunt mechanism and showed good understanding of vaso-constriction and vaso-dilation.

However, there were a couple of common errors. Some confused their knowledge of vascular shunt with that of venous return and so irrelevantly explained the mechanisms that aid venous return. Others confused the VCC with the CCC and continued down the wrong path by explaining how the conduction system increases heart rate during exercise.

- (d) This question differentiated well. There were many excellent answers with a pleasing number of candidates efficiently achieving maximum marks. However, a number confused the muscles that contract with those that relax and many were deemed too vague in as much as they referred to 'intercostal muscles' without specifying that external intercostals relax, while internal intercostals contract. Furthermore, a notable number of candidates answered outside of the scope of the question by including information on gaseous exchange. Centres are encouraged to ensure that candidates are clear about what is meant by the mechanics of breathing as opposed to the process of respiration.

- (e) Candidates made a pleasing attempt at this question. There was encouraging evidence of comprehensive answers that met the Level 3 criteria with the majority of answers meeting the requirements at Level 2.

Most answers were well structured with a brief introduction and conclusion. The increased use of practical examples was an encouraging feature, as was the regular use of specialist vocabulary and key terms.

Candidates showed a good depth of knowledge of both osteoporosis and osteoarthritis, thereby scoring well for development of key knowledge points. Understanding of bone and joint disorders as a whole was sound.

Weaker responses lacked development of the main conditions and tended to be repetitive. Responses worthy of fewer marks also lacked critical evaluation in as much as they tended to focus on either the positives or the negatives rather than giving a balanced response which incorporated both. A common misconception was that impact sports and repetitive action sports cause osteoporosis.

Section B: Acquiring movement skills

- 2(a) A well answered opening question! Most candidates scored at least two marks. Positive and negative transfer were best known and examples were reasonable, if often sport rather than skill related.

Descriptions, on the other hand, often included repetition of the terms *positive* and *negative* making it difficult for candidates to be awarded marks. There was frequent confusion between proactive and retroactive transfer and/or proactive and retroactive transfer was sometimes not addressed at all.

- (b) Most candidates scored at least two marks on this question with Pts 1 (series of movements/movement pattern), 2 (in long term memory) and 4 (made up of sub-routines) being the most frequently accessed. One mark was available for an example illustrating any of the theory points 1 – 6.
- (c) Candidates clearly knew and understood the cognitive, associative and autonomous phases of learning exceptionally well and could easily and accurately describe each phase. Nearly half of all candidates scored the full six marks here. The idea of fluency often ran throughout answers as the key description – which was acceptable.
- (d) Those who had revised thoroughly scored extremely well on this question – but disappointingly they were in the minority. A large proportion of candidates failed to score at all here. It was disappointing that candidates were not able to score for their theoretical knowledge even if they then struggled with the application of knowledge and practical examples (one required for learning a movement skill and one for application to a healthy lifestyle). Some candidates answered by inaccurately describing Bandura's model of observational learning while countless others thought that knowledge needed for Question 1(c) (cognitive phase of learning) was needed again in 1(d) (cognitive theory). To this end, they repeated themselves or simply carried on from where they had left off in the previous question.
- (e) It was encouraging that the majority of candidates were able to successfully give accurate theoretical information with developments and sound examples for part and whole practice. They then went on to evaluate the effectiveness of the practice methods for different types of skills and/or levels of performer. The question seemed to help elicit well structured responses. Many candidates included a plan which seemed to help them construct their points clearly – and they included information and development on progressive part and whole-part-whole which was credit worthy. The most common discussion was of stages of learning and kinaesthesia.

The most common misconception was with level of organisation. Some candidates were confused about massed and distributed practice and included irrelevant discussions about rest times, etc. In (e) part questions candidates should balance their knowledge points with development and examples as all are considered when placing candidate responses in a level and then determining a mark. Responses which met the criteria for Level 3 tended to include detailed explanations of whole and part practice methods with appropriate exemplification. Whole-part-whole and/or progressive part were also often explained well at this top level. Detailed knowledge of positive and negative effects of both types of practice was also usually given at this level and there was effective evaluation in relation to effectiveness of the different practice methods.

Section C: Socio-Cultural Studies relating to participation in physical activity

- 3(a) Many candidates were unable to define Physical Education accurately even though this is a clear requirement of the specification. The one mark available for the definition was awarded when (one of) teaching/learning/studying were identified with EITHER (one of) skills/sport OR (one of) benefits/values. For example '*PE is teaching sports*' or '*PE is learning skills*' would gain a mark. Many candidates repeated the key words *Physical* or *Education* in their attempt at a definition and so were unable to score.

Most candidates were then able to access three or more of the remaining five marks. There was much evidence of repetition, however, as well as labouring one or two points beyond their one mark potential. Candidates need reminding that with five marks available for benefits – five separate points should be succinctly given. Re Point 7 (social) – the potential benefit of PE of '*making friends*' or '*improving social life*' were

- frequently offered – and were not credit worthy.
- (b) Those candidates who focused clearly on background gained the four marks available efficiently. Others did less well as (instead of focusing on background) they responded from different areas of the specification – notably the commercialisation of the Olympic Games.
- (c) Candidates who successfully identified the economic system of the USA as *capitalism* then needed to get four more marks for a maximum. For these they had to link capitalism (or a free market economy where business is for profit) with sport. Pts 2 (win at all costs), 6 (American Dream), 7 (sports as 'big business') and 8 (teams as franchises) were the most commonly accessed. Weaker responses focused on the system in the USA rather than its influence on sport. Approximately 60% of candidates scored 3 or more here.
- (d) (d) part-questions can be expected to be demanding, but even so, this one elicited disappointingly poor responses. Candidates clearly find this area of the specification difficult. A limited number of organisations appear on the specification but in spite of this, and the mark scheme allowing up to three points for any named (relevant) organisation, attainment on this question was poor. The key issues were as follows.

Candidates did not know the names of '*relevant bodies or organisations*'; when the names were given their roles were not known; where the roles were known the name of the organisation was not – for example several wrote about sport science support as a measure, but did not link it to a relevant body or organisation; many discussed mass participation rather than sporting excellence; all-encompassing statements rather than specific points were offered.

- (e) This was arguably the most open ended of the three 10 mark (e) part-questions and certainly the most discursive. Many candidates demonstrated relevant knowledge and understanding of the 'golden triangle' and were able to develop their points with relevant examples. Many candidates used a distinct paragraph to deal with each side of the triangle (sport and media, sport and sponsorship, media and sponsorship) which gave helpful structure to their answers. While most were able to discuss the advantages of individual elements of the model (eg of the media) – only the best could successfully draw the three elements together to comprehensively discuss the relationship between them. That said, there were some encouraging Level 3 responses that met both the generic criteria and the question specific discriminators.

G452 Acquiring, Developing and Evaluating Practical Skills in Physical Education

G454 The Improvement of Effective Performance and the Critical Evaluation of Practical Activities in Physical Education

Coursework and its moderation in 2011 proved to be very challenging yet very successful. The lateness of Easter combined with an additional bank holiday meant that the organisation and timing of moderations was more challenging than normal. All concerned, moderators, teachers and candidates are to be congratulated on a successful series.

Once again moderators were privileged to view many outstanding performances, witness many talented coaches and officials and listen to well structured and informed oral responses. Centres are thanked for their willingness to host moderations as well as their excellence in working towards a positive moderation experience.

Both coursework units continue to perform well. Centres appear to be coming to terms with the assessment of coaching and officiating and as indicated earlier there are many excellent candidates opting for these routes. Oral responses, EIPs and E & As continue to be the aspects where centres are most likely to be inaccurate in their assessment of candidates and there is a real need for centres in this position to consult with the coursework guidance material in order to rectify this for future series.

The moderation of G454 continues to be a challenge particularly as candidates are now only assessed in one activity. Combine this with an increasingly diverse range of activities and it is no surprise that moderators are finding it increasingly hard to identify activities which are common within a cluster. The moderating team continues to work on finding approaches to combat this challenge. Increasingly moderators are having to rely on filmed evidence in order to view sufficient candidates and activities on which to form a considered opinion as to the accuracy of a centre's application of the assessment criteria.

Moderators have been encouraged to give more feedback to centres both at moderation itself and through the official report (Mod Rep) which centres receive with their results. It is, therefore, essential that the appropriate centre staff are present at moderation, not only to supervise and be responsible for their centre's candidates but to receive this feedback.

In order to improve the assessment of coursework in the future centres should consider the following points:

- 1 Assessment of activities with log books eg outdoor and adventurous activities, circuit training, coaching and officiating, etc.

Log books now have a defined weighting (1/3 of the marks) and have to be marked accordingly. For 2012, the mark for both the performance aspect of the activity and the log book mark will have to be entered on the *Practical Activity Assessment Form*.

- 2 Documentation

As in previous years moderators found both arithmetical and transcription errors in centres' documentation. It is essential that centres have thorough checking procedures in order to prevent these errors which can lead to candidates being disadvantaged.

In an attempt to aid centres and moderators, the board is further refining the interactive assessment forms which, hopefully, will help to eradicate arithmetical errors. Centres will be able to utilise these *new* forms in 2012.

3 Filmed evidence

As mentioned already, filmed evidence is becoming increasingly important to the moderation process. It is essential, therefore, that centres are aware of their responsibilities in relation to this aspect of assessment/moderation. These responsibilities can be summarised as follows:

- The need to produce and submit filmed evidence for:
 - each and every activity assessed; evidence at the top, middle and bottom of the mark range;
 - EIPs and E & As; evidence at the top, middle and bottom of the mark range;
 - all candidates offering coaching or officiating; 40 minutes for each candidate.
- This evidence needs to be submitted according to the following deadlines:
 - EIPs and E & As by 31 March; along with assessments;
 - other practical activities – as requested by moderator;
 - coaching and/or officiating by 31 March;
 - seasonal activities by 15 May along with the assessments.
- This evidence needs to show:
 - candidates in the appropriate assessment situation for the unit and the activity. ie for AS invasion games competitive skill drills and small sided conditioned games (not the full game situation);
 - evidence should last long enough for the full range of skills to be viewed and a reliable decision to be made as to the accuracy of the centre's assessments;
 - candidates must be clearly identified and either introduced on the film or identified in accompanying documentation.

The DVD evidence needs to be in the appropriate format ie playable on Windows Media Player or on a DVD player, as per the guidance on the OCR Website (http://www.ocr.org.uk/download/sm/ocr_38092_sm_gce_guid_dvd.pdf).

4 Moderation

Moderation is part of the examination process and centres are reminded that candidates who are requested, by the moderator, to attend moderation are required to do so. Whilst it is recognised that there may be valid reasons why candidates cannot attend it is essential that moderators are informed and that the appropriate supporting documentation is forwarded to the moderator. Candidates and centres should be aware that failure to attend can, in certain circumstances, lead to a candidate being marked absent for that unit.

Centres should note that candidates who are injured or ill and, therefore, cannot perform in or attend moderation need to submit their medical evidence to the moderator. Centres should not submit to OCR for special consideration if a candidate has been assessed but cannot attend moderation.

Centres are also reminded that they are responsible for their candidates whilst at moderation. It is, therefore, a requirement that candidates are accompanied by a teacher at moderation. Centres should also ensure that their candidates are appropriately attired

and that they have the necessary safety equipment for the activities in which they are participating.

5 Oral responses

Centres are reminded that the rubric for oral responses states that 'candidates should observe the live performance of a fellow candidate.' This situation is replicated at moderation when candidates are expected to observe and comment on a live performance. Whilst it is acceptable for centres to create classroom situations for candidates to produce their oral responses for filmed assessment evidence, they should not lose sight of the fact that the skills which are being assessed are those of evaluating a live performance and creating an action plan to improve that performance. Candidates need to be better prepared in order to do this at moderation.

Candidates need to ensure that they describe both the strengths and weaknesses of the performance in the areas of skills, tactics and fitness and to justify their evaluations. Action plans, whatever aspect the prioritised weakness is from, need to include detailed coaching points, progressive practices and a timescale. If the prioritised weakness is a fitness element then it is realistic to expect the action plan to include factors such as exercises, repetitions, sets, weights, rest intervals, intensities etc as well as progressions.

Centres should ask the suggested opening question, which is identified in the coursework guidance material, as this reminds candidates of the structure and content of the response.

Whilst it is perhaps understandable that centres encourage candidates to apply relevant theory in their oral responses it should be made clear that at AS, within the EPIP, the only theory required is the participation and progression and health and fitness benefits of the activity observed. Other theoretical aspects applied within the EPIP, whilst not disadvantaging the candidate, will gain them no credit and can make the response more difficult for the candidate.

Centres should also be aware that in both the responses, EPIP and E & A, the assessment criteria indicate that candidates who require supplementary questioning will be placed in band 3 or band 4. This has particular implications for centres which structure their candidate responses as a question and answer session.

Centres are also reminded that when candidates are undertaking their oral responses, particularly when filmed evidence is being produced, it is essential that the environment the response is carried out in is free from interruptions eg phone calls, people knocking on doors, people walking in etc. When filmed evidence is being produced the quality of the sound is also essential.

6 Banded assessment criteria

When applying the assessment criteria in both performance and the oral response centres should bear in mind OCR's target thresholds. These indicate that for both G452 and G454 the target threshold for grade A is 80% of the raw marks available.

For G452 this equates 24/30 marks for performance and 16/20 marks for the EPIP. For G454 it equates 32/40 marks for performance and to 16/20 marks for the E & A.

At the grade award, summer 2011, coursework grade boundaries have been set as follows:

G452 – grade 'a' 64/80. This, indeed, equates to 24/30 for performance and 16/20 for the EPIP.

G454 – grade 'a' 48/60. Again, this equates to 32/40 for performance and 16/20 for E & A.

This effectively means that G452 and G454 candidates (with the coursework boundaries as they currently are) placed at the top of band 2 for performance are grade 'a' candidates. Likewise, for the oral responses candidates placed at the bottom of band 1 are grade 'a' candidates.

For unit G454, centres need to focus on using band 1 (33 – 40) to differentiate between grade A; candidates awarded 40/40 are genuinely exceptional candidates.

Centres also need to take more account of the band 1 criteria which specify that candidates within this band are likely to be performing at regional or national level depending on their placement within the band. Centres should take account of this criterion particularly as an aid to placing candidates in minority activities.

7 Application of assessment criteria

Centres need to be aware that in all activities they need to assess the quality of the skills performed by candidates. It was apparent to moderators that some centres awarded marks simply on the basis of candidates performing the skills rather than on how well the skills had been performed. This was particularly apparent in Life Saving.

The moderating team would like to thank centres, teachers and candidates for all their help in making the moderation of coursework so enjoyable and successful in 2011 and we look forward to making the process even better in 2012.

G453 Principles and concepts across different areas of Physical Education

General Comments

Most of the candidates who sat this examination appeared well-prepared. Similarly, most fulfilled the requirements of the rubric and there was little evidence that candidates had run out of time, as has been apparent in previous series. Some candidates responded to the 20 mark (d) part-questions first, but the majority answered the paper sequentially.

Fewer candidates than in previous series produced unnecessarily lengthy responses; this was particularly true in respect of the 20 mark (d) part-questions. This perhaps suggests that centres have been more effective this series in terms of issuing examination technique guidance as part of their preparing candidates for the examination. Only material that is relevant and serves to answer the question set should be included in a response to the (d) part-questions. Centres are reminded that it is good practice to allocate time in their schemes of work to preparing candidates for these extended answer questions. This should ensure that they are better able to manage their time in the external examination.

This examination is designed to assess the knowledge and understanding related to Physical Education theory and also its application; this includes testing candidates' ability to analyse and evaluate critically Physical Education material from the optional areas. The majority of candidates chose the questions on Historical Studies, Sports Psychology and Exercise and Sport Physiology. Fewer candidates attempted the Comparative Studies question and even fewer the Biomechanics question.

The quality of written communication was good overall with many candidates planning for the (d) part-questions. The use of technical vocabulary was also generally good, suggesting effective preparation.

Centres are reminded that candidates should be fully prepared to give practical examples not just from sport and physical education, but also for regular exercise, a balanced diet and the avoidance of an unhealthy lifestyle.

When the (d) part-questions contain two or more strands, it is important that candidates visit all of the strands in their response otherwise they are unlikely to score in the higher levels. This series, candidates seemed much better prepared in respect of this requirement and there were fewer instances of candidates who did not respond to all aspects of these questions. Some candidates scored exceptionally well on the (d) part-questions; demonstrating excellent preparation and effective learning of the specification. These better candidates often made a valid point and then developed it using appropriate technical terminology and, if required, relevant practical examples. These candidates often wrote a short plan prior to starting their response and, importantly, they visited all aspects of the question.

Comments on Individual Questions

Historical Studies (Option A1)

- 1 (a) Many candidates were seemingly unaware of the impact of the teachers' industrial action. Some misread the question and commented on aspects of education in the late 19th Century. Most candidates described the National Curriculum for Physical Education well but did not explain its impact. For example, many described the variety of activities and the element of compulsion but failed to address the impacts

of this for young people. Better candidates explained the impact of both the industrial action and the National Curriculum well. They tended to highlight the lack of opportunity for extra-curricular activities and the impact of the National Curriculum on the variety of skills that were developed by pupils and the establishing of set national standards.

- (b) Many candidates were able to demonstrate their knowledge of the characteristics of popular recreation but did not respond to the question set. The question required candidates to contrast social and cultural factors relating to popular recreation with those relating to rational recreation. Many relied on rote learned lists of characteristics and did not then use this knowledge in recognising the related socio-cultural factors. The question demanded a contrast and the better candidates directly contrasted factors such as the harsh lifestyle of pre-industrial society with post-industrial factors such as a more civilised society with a newly formed police system or the influence of bodies such as the RSPCA which impacted on many activities. Most candidates recognised the influence of the initially limited, and later improved, transport availability on activities.

Candidates are reminded that if asked for a contrast then both sides should be referred to in their responses, in this case pre-industrial factors and post-industrial factors.

- (c) Most candidates responded well to this question. The comparatively low status of lawn tennis in public schools at the end of the 19th Century was well explained with some candidates recognising not only physical aspects such as lack of space but also aspects related to the perceived nature of the game with many commenting on the perception that it is an activity associated with girls and did not have the attributes associated with the development of courage and leadership often linked to athleticism at that time. Most candidates also explained the possible barriers to participation in tennis by young people today well with responses recognising the perceived elitist nature of the game.
- (d) In this 20 mark (d) part-question, candidates often confidently discussed the influence of public schools on the development of bathing and swimming. The evaluation of how nineteenth century social and cultural factors continue to impact on these activities was less well done with many candidates simply explaining the historical factors but not relating these to bathing and swimming today. The best candidates wrote fluently and in clear paragraphs, examining the public school influences from stage 1 through to stage 3 and showing an insightful understanding of how these might impact today; for example, linking the availability of facilities and the need for activities to promote healthy living.

Higher marks were awarded to those candidates who both planned their responses and answered all aspects of the question.

Comparative Studies (Option A2)

- 2 (a) This part-question was the most effectively answered on this topic area with candidates demonstrating good knowledge and understanding. Most candidates referred to environmental factors. However, many also drew on their knowledge of cultural aspects eg the pioneering spirit and national pride. Unfortunately, some candidates did not answer both aspects of the question. Candidates are reminded that all parts of a question should be answered to access all the marks available.

- (b) Those who understood what is meant by the term *values* scored well on this part-question. Some described physical activities in Australia but did not relate these to values such as equality, fair-play and competitiveness. Many recognised the possible influence of the UK on the formation of these values stemming largely from the historic English public school system.
- (c) Some candidates showed a good grasp of the technical vocabulary associated with discrimination in the USA. For example references to stacking, centrality and the cultural dominance of white Anglo Saxon protestant males (WASPs) were made successfully. However, at times, confusion was apparent amongst other candidates as regards the meaning of these phrases and how these factors might affect high level sport in the USA. Some candidates gave excellent answers showing the extent of discrimination evident in the UK with some valid, well expressed independent opinion.
- (d) In this 20 mark part-question, candidates performed less well than in the shorter-response (a) – (c) part-questions. Better candidates planned their answers well and covered all aspects of the question. Unfortunately, not all candidates attempted the second part of this question limiting access to the higher marks. Better candidates wrote fluently and succinctly and focused on the requirements of the question. These candidates developed direct comparisons between the USA and the UK and evaluated the impact of commercialism well often citing good practical examples of commercial backing such as the European Cup in Rugby Union and the Super Bowl in the USA.

Sports Psychology (Option B1)

- 3 (a) Most candidates scored well on this part-question demonstrating a good understanding of attribution by applying Weiner's attributional model to practical examples of reasons given for behaviours in sport.
- Those candidates who were less successful often just gave the examples with no link to the model or quoted the model without giving any practical examples.
- (b) Many candidates demonstrated good knowledge of how goal setting impacts on participation and performance in sport. Those that scored less well merely gave an account of the SMART concept of goal setting as opposed to describing the impact(s).
 - (c) This question was the least-well answered question on this topic area. Some candidates clearly misunderstood the term *evaluation apprehension*. In some instances this was restricted to individual candidates within a cohort whilst in other instances the evidence suggested a gap in the teaching and learning of this topic across the entire centre cohort. Some candidates, however, did show an impressive grasp of this concept.
 - (d) Most candidates explained the theories named in the specification and related these to aggression in sport. Some candidates included other theories and these were credited as long as the theories explained were valid and relevant. For example, some described 'interactionist' theories such as the frustration-aggression hypothesis and cue hypothesis. This was acceptable as long as candidates related these to the occurrence of aggression in sport. Candidates, who made a point, developed it and then gave a relevant practical example scored well. Too many candidates merely described the theories as opposed to evaluating them. Consequently, they were often unable to gain access to the top two levels of the mark scheme. Better candidates evaluated nature versus nurture and explained the effects of the environment as well as the underlying traits that might influence aggressive behaviour.

Biomechanics (Option B2)

- 4
- (a) There were many vague answers to the first part of this question although the practical examples used were often relevant. Better candidates were more specific and accurate in their use of technical terminology.
 - (b) This part-question was well answered by most candidates although many only commented upon the effect of topspin. Better candidates recognised that five marks were available and therefore gave fuller explanations covering both aspects of the question.
 - (c) Most candidates scored well on the first aspect of this part-question. Many found the application of the *moment of inertia* difficult for the second part of the question. Better candidates effectively described the use of the moment of inertia to improve the efficiency of the recovery phase, for example, by reducing the moment of inertia of the leg by keeping the knee bent which brings the mass of the leg closer to the hip joint and enables the leg to come through with less effort expended.
 - (d) This part-question was generally well answered by candidates. Candidates who achieved higher marks tended to respond using two separate paragraphs for the two activities; the ski jumper and the Formula 1 car. Candidates were also able to explain a number of ways of reducing friction and air resistance. The less successful candidates were unable to apply the Bernoulli Effect and made few, if any, direct comparisons between the activities.

Exercise and Sport Physiology (Option B3)

- 5
- (a) Few candidates responded as required to this part-question. For those that did, muscle hypertrophy was the most common correct response. Many wrote about general adaptations, rather than skeletal muscle specific adaptations. Weaker candidates wrote about the effects of the adaptations instead of describing the actual adaptations themselves. Some wrote about irrelevant adaptations, for example blood and oxygen levels that are more relevant to aerobic adaptations.
 - (b) This part-question was mostly well answered, although some candidates confused the lactacid part of EPOC with the lactic acid energy system. The best candidates traced the process well and in some detail which enabled them to score the full five marks. Some got side-tracked and referred to other aspects of recovery related to heart rate and respiratory rate.
 - (c) The requirements of this part-question were not understood by some candidates. Many discussed carbo-loading and, therefore, missed the point of the question. Many recognised the need to decrease the amount of fibre and fats and to avoid digestive discomfort but many gave vague answers with little understanding of the idea of a pre-competition meal.

- (d) The most common weaknesses exhibited by candidates were in relation to the interpretation of the table and poor use of scientific terminology. Health benefits were often interpreted as physiological benefits and so many did not answer all parts of the question with equal success. Some just listed the principles of training and did not show how they would put them into action. The best candidates addressed all aspects of the question equally well. These candidates analysed the data effectively and then devised excellent training programmes that applied the principles of training and took into consideration periodisation, re-testing and target setting for progression. Better candidates also gave detailed information on the health benefits of their well-planned programme. Once again those candidates who produced a short plan and then structured their answer so that all aspects of the question were covered did well. These candidates gave clear practical examples and tended to write fluently yet succinctly.

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