

Physical Education

General Certificate of Secondary Education **GCSE J586**

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

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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B451 An Introduction to Physical Education

General

This was the fourth B451 examination to be sat and it was evident that candidates are being well prepared by centres for the requirements of the paper, with a range of attainment and many excellent responses seen.

Generally candidates used their knowledge and skills appropriately but some had difficulty with any questions that included technical vocabulary found in the specification, for example the word protocol in Q14, health screening (confused with fitness testing) and the key concept of creativity used in question 24. The word etiquette was, however, well understood with some excellent practical examples across a range of activities.

This examination paper includes multiple choice questions which were mostly answered very well by the majority of candidates. Candidates are advised to think carefully about each question rather than try to rush through these questions. Some candidates did not answer some of the multiple choice questions and may have planned to return to them after answering other questions but did not do so. Candidates are reminded that they must check near the end of the examination that they have answered all the questions set. There was little evidence to suggest that candidates struggled to complete the paper within the time allowed.

The multiple choice questions which were not as well answered were Q10, on an example of developing skills and techniques, Q12 which referred to the importance of muscular endurance, and Q14 related to test protocol.

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 of response mark scheme is used in the final question on the paper (Q25). 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. The levels of response scheme also includes indicative content that is expected in candidate responses and this content is also taken into consideration when awarding marks. Examiners use ticks to indicate the number of marks given for questions 1 – 24. The number of ticks given for responses to Q25 is used as an aide memoire by examiners and is an indication of indicative points being made by each candidate rather than the marks awarded. Therefore four ticks for example may appear on a response to Q25 and yet the candidate may only score three marks because the candidate has not fulfilled all of the criteria demanded for four marks. Similarly three ticks could be indicated on another response and yet the candidate scores four marks because the examiner has judged that the candidate has fulfilled the criteria adequately to attain the top of level 3 on the mark scheme.

Comments on individual questions (for comments on multi-choice questions see general comments section)

Question 16

Candidates who scored well on this question gave three relevant practical examples, at times from the same sport, which showed the different characteristics of skilful movement. Some candidates gave only a list of the characteristics with little or no practical application and others gave practical examples simply showing successful movement but none of the other characteristics associated with skilful movement such as fluency or co-ordination.

Question 17

Most candidates could identify appropriate health screening assessments but some did not give relevant descriptions. The two commands in the question were 'identify' and 'describe' and marks are awarded for both. Some candidates gave fitness testing examples not normally associated with health screening.

Question 18

In some cases candidates simply gave a list of the essential components of a balanced diet and did not describe them as the question demanded and consequently did not have access to the full range of marks. Some came away from the requirements of the question and gave lengthy descriptions of other components of health such as getting enough sleep and regular exercise. The best candidates showed a good level of understanding of the relative quantity of each nutrient as well as examples. Again those that attempted to describe rather than simply identify scored higher marks.

Question 19

This was a well-answered question with candidate showing a good awareness of how disability can affect participation with some also including positive aspects such as access to specialised facilities and training. The majority identified the more familiar negative consequences and gave four clear ways that disability might affect participation.

Question 20

Candidates showed a good level of knowledge related to over-eating and under-eating. Some had good physiological knowledge that linked obesity to poor performance and similarly the effects of diseases associated with under-eating. The candidates who scored less well rarely went beyond the points that over-eating makes it difficult to move effectively and under-eating resulted in weakness and lack of energy.

Question 21

Generally candidates showed a good understanding of how flexibility can help you lead a healthy lifestyle although some rarely described more than being able to reach further or to participate in gymnastics. Candidates should always look carefully at the number of marks allocated to indicate the number of separate points that need to be made.

Question 22

Many candidates described an appropriate warm-up well, with some drawing heavily on personal experience in their own activities. The best answers included pulse raising, stretching of relevant parts of the body, drills, mental preparation and an incremental work rate throughout the warm-up for effective preparation.

Question 23

This question was extremely well answered with many candidates showing a good level of knowledge and understanding with appropriate examples drawn from a number of activities. Some candidates came away from etiquette examples displayed in sport and gave valid answers related to etiquette in the gym or exercise class, for example wiping the exercise machine down after use. A number of candidates left out this question altogether, perhaps because they were unfamiliar with the term etiquette.

Question 24

This question was one which candidates found difficult and in many responses it seemed that the term creativity and its meaning were unfamiliar to candidates. Consequently, practical examples of creativity either as a performer, coach or leader were inappropriate and merely showed basic strategies or skills rather than different, alternative or unexpected strategies or tactics. The two command words which needed to be obeyed if the full four marks were to be scored were 'identify' and 'describe', so there needed to be a clear identification of an example of creativity – for example 'improvising movements in gymnastics' and then a description – for example 'these different moves would make up a dynamic floor routine'.

Question 25

A well answered question by many candidates who explained the reasons why some people do not participate in physical activities. Those who achieved level 3 gave many developed points such as perceived lack of ability, discrimination and cultural barriers. These candidates also gave practical examples and wrote fluently with few errors in spelling, punctuation and grammar. Those that scored less well often did not explain their points but simply identified them with little attempt at giving reasons for their choice of factors. There is evidence that a small amount of planning before a candidate responds to this six mark question can ensure a succinct but appropriately developed answer covering three or four relevant points.

B452 and B454: Practical Performance and Analysis 1 and 2

General comments

This was the second year in which these units were available but the first time that centres had the opportunity to enter the full course GCSE. It was pleasing to see many fine performances by candidates at moderations and to note the enthusiasm and commitment of many teachers to organising moderations and to ensuring that candidates had a worthwhile and enjoyable experience. The moderating team is very grateful to teachers for their contribution to the moderation process, in particular that of the host centres.

As with previous series, centres proved to be accurate in their assessments of practical activities in the main and there has been a smooth transition from the assessment of practical activities in the legacy specification. Where an adjustment to a centres' marks was deemed necessary, this was often as a result of the Analysing Lifestyle and Analysing Performance tasks. There were also a significant number of arithmetical and administrative errors in some centres' paperwork which were picked up and corrected by moderators.

A concern at moderations was the number of candidates who did not wear appropriate clothing and equipment for the activities in which they were performing, such as footballers who did not wear shin pads. The use of appropriate clothing and equipment is in the interests of candidates' safety and centres should be aware that the teacher accompanying candidates is responsible for their health and safety during moderation. It should also be noted that candidates not in possession of the correct clothing and equipment at moderation may be denied the opportunity to participate if it is unsafe for them to do so, and would therefore be deemed to be absent from the moderation.

There was a significant number of Centres who entered activity combinations in unit B452 which did not meet the requirements of the specification. Candidate assessments in unit B452 **must** contain two activities from **two different activity profiles**; in unit B454, any two activities may be assessed as long as there is no repetition from B452 and only one assessment is in a role other than performer (i.e. coach or official). Centres are asked to refer to the specification and Guide to Controlled Assessment before submitting their marks (this particular point is covered on Page 5 of the specification) and on the OCR website. Centres are reminded to ensure that they are familiar with the assessment criteria and assessment rubric for the activities in this new specification.

It is vital that centres regularly access the GCSE Physical Education section of the OCR website in order to keep up to date with developments in the materials provided to support the assessment of the qualification. Following the first full run through of the GCSE full course specification and in response to feedback from centres and moderators, there will be some minor amendments and clarifications to the Guide to Controlled Assessment ahead of the 2011-12 academic year. There is an onus on centres to keep up to date with any developments, as although a GCSE Physical Education Notice to Centres is planned for September 2011, such correspondence does not always reach the relevant department(s) within centres.

Practical activities

Candidates were assessed in a wide range of activities this year, and centres have welcomed the new activities added to the specification which did not feature in the legacy qualification, allowing greater flexibility and choice.

A number of centres applied for additional activities via the special activity submission process, details of which can be found at the GCSE Physical Education section of the OCR website. 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, and that the deadline for all submission is **15 October** of the academic year in which assessment of the activity will take place.

Games activities from the 'invasion', 'striking' and 'net/wall' categories were predominant among the activities submitted by candidates, and in general these were accurately assessed by most centres, with good evidence of effective internal standardisation within these activities.

With off-site activities, some centres were less accurate in their assessments. It is vital when assessing candidates in these activities that the activity specification is carefully checked; that if specialists in the activity are used, that there is liaison between them and the staff at the centre, and that internal standardisation processes encompass these off-site activities as well as coaching and officiating. Effective internal standardisation ensures comparability and fairness for all candidates across all activities and assessments within the cohort at the centre.

Centres must note that in off-site activities **all candidates being assessed** need to be filmed and that in order to produce evidence which supports the marks awarded, this occurs in the appropriate environment. For example, evidence for a candidate assessed in skiing in levels 1 or 2 would have to show them performing on natural snow, rather than an artificial slope. Coaching and Officiating must also be filmed and log books completed. If this evidence cannot be provided, this could result in the marks not being allowed to be submitted. For all other activities which are assessed, while it is not necessary for all candidates to be filmed, a sample of footage showing the range of marks assessed (i.e. top, middle and bottom mark) should be retained.

Filmed evidence must be long enough to show all the skills that would justify the marks awarded. It should relate to the assessment requirements of the activity and show the skills individually and in an appropriate environment or game situation. It is also vital that the candidate(s) depicted in the evidence are clearly identifiable so that performances can be linked to the marks awarded.

Filmed evidence sampled for Coaching/Leading showed progression within a session but often did not include progression over a period of time. Additional evidence such as coaching or officiating logs, resistance training programmes and hill walking route cards was variable in quality and in many cases did not relate well to the mark the candidate had been given. Some centres have provided above and beyond the required evidence for these activities, while others provided very little evidence. Centres need to be aware of the full criteria for assessment in these activities and ensure they can provide evidence which justifies the candidate's mark.

Centres are reminded that they should declare all activities being assessed on their Visit Arrangement Form (VAF) when it is submitted. If assessments in an activity not declared on the VAF are subsequently submitted, evidence such as filmed and log books (if appropriate) will be called to be moderated. Any activity declared must be made available to be moderated if requested by the moderator.

While the challenge presented by the requirement for centres to produce filmed evidence of practical performances is recognised, its importance cannot be over-stated. An ever-increasing range of activities is being assessed in GCSE Physical Education, with more and more assessments taking place off-site, away from centres. Filmed evidence is therefore not only needed to allow moderators access to further assessments by the centre in addition to those they are likely to see at moderation, but also to facilitate internal standardisation by the Physical Education department at the centre. Filmed evidence is also relied upon should a centre wish to instigate a review of their moderation outcomes following the publication of results.

Controlled Assessment analysis tasks

The controlled assessment analysis tasks in both units, and controlled assessment as a principle, have been the biggest change from the legacy specifications to these new specifications. It is clear from some of the issues encountered this year that further guidance and support is required in this aspect of the assessments and **OCR will be providing additional resources for centres in the autumn in order to address this.**

Some of the most significant issues which moderators found with the approach taken to delivering and presenting the analysis tasks were as follows:

- The use of templates for the data collection, task production, or both. Templates are **not** allowed, and in many cases the approach taken showed why, as the templates were very prescriptive and meant that candidates were teacher-led in their approach to the task. It was therefore difficult on some occasions to know what the candidate understood about the task which they were undertaking, as much of the method and information had been provided for them;
- Not distinguishing between the 'task research/data collection' work and the 'task production' write-up. This made it difficult to see if time controls and resource controls had been adhered to. It is important that these two sections of the task are kept separate and clearly identified when submitted to the moderator;
- Adherence to resource controls. Linked to the point above, candidates should not have access to resources which can be cut and pasted into their task production write-up. Any word processed research notes or data collection should be printed off and the hard copies used in the 'task production' stage, as per the *Guide to Controlled Assessment*. Candidates should either re-produce charts, tables, diagrams, etc... in their final write-up within the 2 hours allowed if they wish to include them, or cross reference to those included in their research notes/data collection. Where no distinction was made between the two stages of the work it was impossible to know at what stage some of these resources had been used;
- Candidates need to be aware of the need to fully reference any material which they use within their tasks which has been taken from an external source; in some instances candidates used no referencing system and included no bibliography. Guidance on referencing is available on the Joint Council for Qualifications website as part of their support for the delivery of controlled assessments.

Unit B452 – Analysing Lifestyle task

In many cases, centres produced good work that had been accurately marked. Good pieces of Analysing Lifestyle work were ones which selected subjects to analyse who had weaknesses to improve, such as parents who had poor lifestyles in terms of diet, smoking, work/exercise balance and did not participate in much physical activity. Choosing young, relatively fit and active fellow PE students did not always allow scope for many weaknesses to be found and thus improved. In choosing an appropriate subject, candidates were able to look at improving a range of aspects of a healthy balance lifestyle and not just fitness aspects, which limited the amount of analysis that could be done in some of the work seen for this task.

Where candidates chose to analyse themselves, this was accomplished with varying degrees of success. While some pieces of self-analysis were very good, there is still a tendency for candidates to ignore data/evidence collected and allow their own perceptions to dominate their approach to the task, whereas when observing and analysing a third party they tend to be more objective in their work. This should be kept in mind for the 'task induction' and options in terms of subject choice should be discussed ahead of the task being conducted.

In cases where centres had over-marked this aspect of the unit, some of the main issues were:

1. Candidates focusing 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. No methods of measuring success/progress of action plan suggested;
5. There was no distinction between the task research/data collection (which is not awarded marks directly) and the task production.
6. Candidates not referencing work which they have quoted.
7. Some Centres produced centre-led writing/collection of data frameworks or templates.

Centres should note that the task research/data collection should **not** be a pre-written attempt at the task production, and that the guidance refers to:

- observations (including data collected)
- headings
- analysing lifestyle or analysing performance action plan/ideas
- brief quotes and reference details
- reference details for sources/ideas to use in task production

In some instances, candidates had produced either an entire 1st draft of the final piece of work, or substantial paragraphs or pieces of written prose which were then simply copied into the task production piece of work. This does not reflect the guidance or the purpose of the task research/data collection stage of the analysis tasks and it is important that all concerned are aware that this is not allowed. **OCR will seek to provide more guidance on this in the revised support material planned for the autumn.**

Unit B454 – Analysing Performance task

The Analysing Performance written task was completed more successfully on the whole than the Analysing Lifestyle task. The best pieces of Analysing Performance work were again ones where candidates had chosen weaker performers and thus had many skills to analyse and produce action plans on. In the main candidates who actually completed the action plan accessed marks more readily because they had tangible results, rather than subjective comments about what they might expect to see, which were quite often vague and lacked detail. Completing the action plan also meant that they had first hand experiences of what the issues were with them and could make more informed comments as to how it could be improved.

Some common issues encountered this year were:

1. Some candidates still concentrate on fitness improvements and not skills required by the assessment criteria. This caused issues as work on fitness could often not be given credit and thus caused a reduction in marks. In some activities such as dance or gymnastics credit was given for action plans based on fitness, if when completed it would improve a skill that was a weakness and the link between the fitness component and the performance of the specific skill was made explicit. For example, if the skill weakness was that the subject did not have enough extension in their handstand and thus an action plan to improve flexibility was designed, and once completed it meant that the quality of the handstand was improved, then the relevance of the action plan to performance was clearly shown;
2. Centres awarded marks for work that was not required by the criteria such as an introductory paragraph and descriptive theory work not specific to the task. The key aspects which are being assessed are:
 - Key Skills evident in the chosen activity
 - Skill strengths and weaknesses of the performance and their impact
 - Targeting/prioritising weakness(es) for improvement
 - Action plan with progressive practices and a timeframe
 - Criteria to measure improvements
 - Results from implementing the action plan (see comment 3, below)
 - Evaluate how to improve the action plan
3. It is not a requirement of the criteria for the proposed action plans to be carried out. However, it is clear in the majority of cases that those candidates who implement the action plan are better placed to provide (i) evaluations about how effective it is likely to be, and (ii) explanation about how it may be improved if it was to be undertaken again in the future. It would be of benefit to candidates where the action plan is not undertaken, that the expected results are considered. By thinking in this way candidates are well placed to suggest ways to improve the action plan; firsthand knowledge gained by putting their plan into action is highly recommended.

OCR will seek to provide more guidance on this in the revised support material planned for the autumn.

Administration

The majority of centres produce documentation which is accurately completed and submitted according to OCR submission dates. This makes the moderating team's work much easier. However, as in previous years it is of great concern that there are still often a number of errors in the documentation. These errors can seriously disadvantage candidates if they are not spotted and corrected prior to the issuing of results. Centres should note that the errors fall into the following categories:

1. B452 rubric infringements – two activities in this unit **must** be from different categories;
2. Arithmetical errors adding up the figures on the CASF;
3. Transcription errors when transferring marks from the Order of Merit sheets to the CASF sheet but more often when transferring marks from CASF sheet to the MS1 form;
4. MS1 form – shading in the lozenges incorrectly;
5. MS1 form – not filling in the mark column.

One of the biggest problems experienced was centres changing marks after the moderation and prior to sending the final paperwork to the moderator, potentially resulting in penalising or rewarding the individuals who had attended moderation and disrupting the work of the moderator. This is not a practice that is allowed and does not recognise the purpose of moderation, which is to gauge the accuracy of centres' assessments by looking at a sample of their marks and comparing them to the moderators. Altering marks after the moderation visit has taken place seriously undermines the moderation process and as a result a change to the procedure for submitting and moderating marks will be considered ahead of next year.

Centres are requested and reminded to ensure that all documentation is thoroughly checked and that Order of Merit sheets are required for both Analysis of Lifestyle and Performance.

B453 Developing Knowledge in Physical Education

General

A wide range of candidate abilities was again represented. Most candidates were very well prepared for this examination and most were at the appropriate level to be examined in this session. The specification content had been covered effectively by many centres with candidates showing appropriate knowledge and understanding in many topic areas.

Generally candidates used their knowledge and skills appropriately to respond to the questions on the short term effects of exercise on the heart, components of the FITT principle of training and methods of learning physical activity skills. Candidates did not seem to have the knowledge required to respond on questions about local authority provision, national governing bodies and the effects of the media on following an active, healthy lifestyle. Candidates at times did not show the appropriate standard of written communication and for some this impacted on their marks for their Q25 responses.

The terminology used in some of the questions that had been directly lifted from the specification again confused some candidates, for example the terms national governing bodies and hazards. Centres are advised to ensure that the appropriate Physical Education terminology is well known by candidates and are prepared to give suitable practical examples from physical activities and a healthy lifestyle.

Once again 'describe' was often used in questions but many candidates gave lists which did not give the depth of information required. Candidates who gave lists were awarded marks for their knowledge but the full range of marks was unlikely to be accessed because of the lack of detail. The command 'explain' demands more detail than describe with candidates expected to give reasons rather than merely characteristics in their responses.

This examination paper includes multiple choice questions which were mostly answered very well by the majority of candidates. Candidates are advised to think carefully about each question rather than try to rush through these questions. Some candidates did not answer some of the multiple choice questions and may have planned to return to them after answering other questions but did not do so. Candidates are reminded that they must check near the end of the examination that they have answered all the questions set. There was little evidence to suggest that candidates struggled to complete the paper within the time allowed. The less well-answered multiple choice questions were Q5 on the long term effect on the respiratory system with some candidates confused about the meaning of the respiratory system, Q11 which referred to the vascular shunt mechanism and Q14 related to plyometrics.

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' is used in the final question on the paper (Q25). 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. The levels scheme also includes indicative content that is expected in candidate responses and this content is also taken into consideration when awarding marks. Examiners use ticks to indicate the number of marks given for questions 1 – 24. The number of ticks given for responses to Q25 is used as an aide memoire by examiners and is an indication of indicative points being made by each candidate rather than the marks awarded. Therefore four ticks for example may appear on a response to Q25 and yet the candidate may only score three marks because the candidate has not fulfilled all of the criteria demanded for four marks. Similarly three ticks could

be indicated on another response and yet the candidate scores four marks because the examiner has judged that the candidate has fulfilled the criteria adequately to attain the top of level 3 on the mark scheme.

Comments on individual questions (for comments on multi-choice questions see general comments section)

Question 16

Most candidates scored at least one mark with 'raising the heart rate' the most popular. Examiners recognised that 'an increase in blood pumped out' was an indication of stroke volume and allowed this as an answer without the 'per beat'. A few candidates gave the long term effects of exercise and wrote about changes in the resting heart rate which is not relevant to this question on short term effects. Some candidates gave responses related to the effects on the lungs instead of the heart.

Question 17

Most candidates scored the full four marks with this recall question showing good recognition of the FITT principle.

Question 18

Candidates often found it difficult to apply examples of local authority provision to the promotion of participation in physical activities and many got bogged down in school provision or private enterprise. The better candidates gave clear examples and then described how they might affect participation. Candidates who scored less well gave short phrases that often served them well when identifying examples but did not give enough detail for the description demanded by the question.

Question 19

Candidates often confused hazard with outcome of a hazard for example an injury. Many did give hazards which were appropriate with a few giving hazards unrelated to a fitness centre. Some candidates gave hazards related to swimming pools which were accepted by examiners because many fitness centres do have swimming pools. Some candidates gave examples that were too similar in nature and therefore did not show the depth of knowledge to gain more than a few marks.

Question 20

Candidates showed a good level of knowledge related to goal setting, with many knowing what the acronym SMART stands for but others guessed incorrectly. The better candidates gave an explanation of what each aspect of the SMART principle meant and then gave one or two reasons why goal setting is important for an active, healthy lifestyle. Others only answered part of the question. Candidates are reminded to ensure that they must answer all parts of each question to be able to score full marks.

Question 21

Generally candidates showed a good understanding of the effects of lactic acid, with the majority recognising its onset when there is a lack of oxygen and that it decreases performance levels. The less able candidates did not obey both of the question variables, 'when' and 'how'.

Question 22

Many candidates gave too much information about the detail of the methods of mental preparation rather than to answer the question asked on the effects of mental preparation. Better candidates gave a full description with weaker candidates only writing a list.

Question 23

In this case a list would suffice as long as each national governing body is accompanied by the activity they represent. The favourites were the LTA, the FA and the RFU. Some were not aware of what is meant by a national governing body and either declined to answer this question or chose to describe sponsors or the names of competitions / leagues e.g. the Premiership for football. Some candidates gave non-UK Governing bodies or international organising bodies which are not relevant for this question.

Question 24

Those candidates who linked the effects of the media on an active, healthy lifestyle as required by the question scored well. Too many got side-tracked into describing the effects of the media on elite performers or on sports activities. Some excellent answers recognised that the media promotes a healthy lifestyle via role models and the negative effects on under-represented groups such as those with disabilities. Some candidates were caught up with explanations of the media delving into the private lives of sports celebrities without making any link to how this might affect healthy lifestyles.

Question 25

Generally this question was well answered with candidates being well prepared to link learning methods to relevant practical examples. Those candidates who gave many points that were well developed, along with practical examples, scored well in their descriptions of methods of learning physical activity skills. Some candidates wrote less fluently with errors in grammar, punctuation and spelling. Some were unable to write succinctly and provided too much repetition about one point rather than moving on and developing another point. There was little evidence of candidates running out of time when responding to this question.

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