

Moderators' report

A LEVEL

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**OCR Level 3 Advanced GCE in
Physical Education**

H555

For first teaching in 2016

H555/06 Summer 2025 series

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Introduction

Our Moderators' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on centres' assessment of moderated work, based on what has been observed by the moderation team. These reports include a general commentary of accuracy of internal assessment judgements, identify good practice in relation to evidence collation and presentation, and comment on the quality of centre assessment decisions against individual Learning Objectives. The report also highlights areas where requirements have been misinterpreted and provides guidance to centre assessors on requirements for accessing higher mark bands. Where appropriate, the report will also signpost other sources of information that centre assessors will find helpful.

OCR completes moderation of centre-assessed work in order to quality assure the internal assessment judgements made by assessors within a centre. Where OCR cannot confirm the centre's marks, we may adjust them in order to align them to the national standard. Any adjustments to centre marks are detailed on the Moderation Adjustments report, which can be downloaded from Interchange when results are issued. Centres should also refer to their individual centre report provided after moderation has been completed. In combination, these centre-specific documents and this overall report should help to support centres' internal assessment and moderation practice for future series.

Online courses

We have created online courses to build your confidence in delivering, marking and administering internal assessment for our qualifications. Courses are available for Cambridge Nationals, GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016).

Cambridge Nationals

All teachers delivering our Cambridge Nationals suite are asked to complete the Essentials for the NEA course, which describes how to guide and support your students. You'll receive a certificate which you should retain.

Following this you can also complete a subject-specific Focus on Internal Assessment course for your individual Cambridge Nationals qualification, covering marking and delivery.

GCSE, A Level and Cambridge Technicals (2016)

We recommend all teachers complete the module on Online courses – NEA for their subject. These courses provide subject-specific information about course content; how to prepare for planning, marking and submitting; and support with understanding the marking criteria.

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These free online courses currently cover the end-to-end NEA process for teachers. You'll find the link to the **Online courses** under the **Assessment** or **Training** tab – hover over **Assessment** or **Training** on the horizontal menu and select **Online courses** from the dropdown.

These self-paced online courses are intended for any teachers. During the course, you will engage with interactive content on subjects such as guidance on unit content, structure and administrative processes.

If you have any queries, please contact our Customer Support Centre on 01223 553998 or email support@ocr.org.uk.

General overview

Overall, it was encouraging to see that most centres had clearly structured and well-filmed the EAPI submissions. The full mark range across all six levels of the EAPI component was generally being used effectively. It was also positive to note that many more centres made use of the candidate note sheets introduced in the 2022 series. Additionally, a greater number of centres uploaded their EAPI recordings and candidate note sheets via Submit for Assessment. There was also an increase in the inclusion of centre mark sheets, which proved to be a valuable addition to the assessment process.

Candidates who did well generally:	Candidates who did less well generally:
- in the Evaluative Comments candidates identified a wide range of strengths and weaknesses, justified why and linked these to how they impacted the overall success of the performer - in the Development Plans candidates justified why they chose the weakness and produced a plan for this weakness with realistic practices for the level of the performer being observed and duration of sessions for the practices stated - offered detailed coaching points throughout the Development Plan - Development Plans were completed on either a Skill or Fitness component - applied a range of Physiological and Psychological concepts within both the Evaluative Comments and Development Plan - applied theory from an area within Socio Cultural that was from the prescribed list and linked to participation.	- in the Evaluative Comments candidates only identified the strengths or weakness, did not justify why, or how they impacted the overall success of performance, but instead tried to justify by using theory - in the Developments Plans candidates did not justify why they had chosen the weakness to improve, practices were too basic for the level of performer being observe and lacking in any competitive element and practices stated were not realistic to the duration set for the sessions - within the Development Plans candidates included warm ups, cool downs, testing and adaptations to the plan depending on progress. These have all been removed and so are not credited for the response - Development Plans were completed on both a Skill and a Fitness component which limited the depth and detail of the practices - the range of theory applied was limited or repeated for Physiological and Psychological concepts or not from the prescribed list, so could not be credited - candidates did not apply theory from an area within Socio Cultural that was from the prescribed list or linked to participation - an imbalance in time between the Evaluative Comments and Development Plans.

It is clear that the assessment of the EAPI is still causing many centres the greatest difficulty. As mentioned, many centres are well versed with the structure of the 'oral response' element, however, it is felt that many centres still need to look more closely at the specification to identity the changes, especially with those that were updated for June 2022 Series, to ensure their candidates are only including what can be credited.

Positives

Candidates were well prepared for the task and general structure of the response. It was very pleasing to see the majority of candidates with the 'notes sheets' and pen ready to take notes throughout the observation.

Centres found the process of completing the assessment grid with a line of best fit accessible and familiar.

Filming of the responses for most centres followed the required guidelines; ensuring the whole response, including the candidates' observation of the performance was one continuous video from start to end.

The vast majority of candidates kept their responses within the approved limit of 30 minutes.

The 'Evaluative Comments' section continues to be the strongest aspect of most responses with a good range of identification, description and linking to overall success of performance shown, as well as applied theory.

Many centres are using a clock to ensure candidates do not exceed the 30 minute time limit.

Areas for Improvement

Too many candidates used the observation time to include pre-prepared notes rather than observe the performance in front of them. This over reliance on pre-prepared notes leads them not only to focus too narrowly on one aspect of the observation but often to provide inaccurate observations.

Centres are reminded that the time provided to a candidate should be appropriate; essentially enough time for them observe a performance and make outline notes; not complete a script to read from. There was some disparity between the amount of time that candidates were given to observe performances before beginning their response. It is suggested in the Guide to NEA that 10-20 minutes is ample. Candidates should also begin their response following the observation and not be given a substantial amount of time to add to their notes.

For many candidates, their response time across all the sections also limited their ability to access higher levels, due to many spending two thirds of their response time on the Evaluative Comments section and only one third of the time on the Development Plans. With the Application of Theory spent defining it rather than applying it throughout the other two sections.

Although this was generally the stronger section, some candidates placed too much emphasis on incorporating theoretical concepts in their Evaluative Comments, rather than focusing on justifying why aspects were strengths or weaknesses and how they impacted overall performance. To access the higher mark bands, candidates are expected to accurately identify most or all major strengths and weaknesses. However, some centres adopted a rigid '3/3/3' pattern (three strengths, three weaknesses, three impacts), which limited the depth and breadth of analysis and ultimately restricted access to the higher levels.

The development plans continue to be the weakest section of the EAPI responses. Many centres overlooked the importance of aligning progressive practices with the frequency and duration outlined by the candidate. In several cases, plans included only one basic practice per week, which did not match with the stated frequency, duration, or the needs of the observed performer – making meaningful progress over the course of the plan unlikely. Centres are encouraged to guide students to reflect on the structure of a typical training session. Rarely does this consist of a single drill for an extended period of time; instead, it should be related to the final performance situation.

While there was an improvement in terms of the Application of Theory, there were still some issues including:

- Prescribed theory List: many candidates included areas of theory that are not on the prescribed list, most notably from the 03 component. Any theory not on the prescribed list cannot be credited. Pages 131-142 in the Guide to NEA provide full details of the prescribed list.
- Wide range of relevant theory: most candidates identified one or two areas of theory repetitively which although applied differently can only be credited once. The main ones were muscle/movement terms and guidance. Candidates should make sure that they access a wide range of theoretical topics from Components 01, 02 and 03 in their response; however, it is now possible to access Level 4 with no 03 Theory applied in their response.
- Lack of Application of Theory: far too much theory was simply a repeat of fact rather than applying the concept to the observations or the development plan.

Many candidates did not cover all of the required areas; it is felt that to help candidates, the way in which the question is posed to them should take two parts, with the candidate responding to each one in turn:

- Part 1: comment on the observation by analysing and evaluating the performance
- Part 2: creating a viable development plan.

Pages 26 and 27 in the Guide to NEA provide exact wording which we would suggest all centres follow.

Centres may find it helpful to view the EAPI in the following manner:

- **Evaluative Comments**
 - Identify strengths for Skills, tactics/compositional ideas and Fitness
 - Justify why and how they impact overall success of performance
 - Apply theory
 - Identify weaknesses for Skills, tactics/compositional ideas and Fitness
 - Justify why and how they impact overall success of performance
 - Apply theory
- **Development Plans**
 - State and justify why chosen weakness
 - Give duration and frequency of plan and sessions
 - Detailed practices realistic to duration of sessions/whole plan and performer
 - Coaching points
 - Apply theory

Paperwork and Filmed Evidence Submissions – Guidance

Most centres used the digital platform Submit for Assessment to upload their EAPI's, although centres are still able to send evidence via Postal submission on USBs.

Centres are reminded that all assessed marks are to be submitted directly through their Exams Officer on Interchange by the 15th March.

It was greatly appreciated by moderators that most centres were well prepared for the submission of their EAPI filmed evidence by the deadline. Centres are reminded that all the evidence they pass on to the moderator should be a copy, in case of any issues in accessing it during the moderation process.

Many centres are rightly concerned about GDPR and the sending of filmed evidence by post and have invested in encrypted USBs. While we commend this approach, centres must make sure that any such encryption can be accessed by both Windows and Apple products; many moderators were not able to open some encrypted sticks due to the differing operating systems.

Centres are reminded that the entirety of the EAPI process should be recorded; the observation/note taking and then the response as one continuous video. This will mean each video recording will be approximately 45 minutes long and where your recording equipment breaks this into two files, each centre should make sure this is pieced together into one file before submitting to the moderator.

Centres are also reminded that the candidate notes used within their EAPI response should be collected and included in their submission. A large number of centres used Submit for Assessment; it is important to ensure that the responses have been uploaded correctly, including the candidates' notes sheets and the video observed if it is not part of the original recording

It is also helpful to include the centre mark sheet; we can then evaluate how a centre has assessed its candidates, and we can provide more detailed feedback. Please be aware that the centre should keep a copy of all filmed evidence, candidate notes and mark sheets.

Most common causes of centres not passing

Candidates who have not prepared or fully understood the task are most at risk of not passing this component. As such centres are encouraged to make sure their candidates are fully versed with the task and how to manage their response.

Development Plans being too basic and lacking a competitive element to the practices until the later weeks of the plan.

An over reliance on theory impacting on the evaluation and the development plan.

Common misconceptions

The response is about a candidate showing their theoretical knowledge to the moderator. This is incorrect as the Application of Theory is only one of three assessed elements. The theory is there to support the observations, which in turn provide the foundation for constructing an appropriate development plan. It was noted that the EAPI task had become overly focused on inserting theory wherever possible, often at the expense of meaningful evaluation and analysis of performance. It is important that candidates are aware of the prescribed theory list.

- All pieces of theory on the prescribed list have to be covered. This is incorrect. The prescribed list is designed to offer a broad range of topic areas across the theory components, from which candidates should select the most appropriate concepts to apply to their observed performance. It is not expected that the entire list be covered. Instead, candidates should focus on applying relevant theory that supports their observations and development plans.
- A candidate who receives 'extra time' in relation to their exams automatically gets this applied to the time limit for the EAPI. This is incorrect as often access arrangements linked to additional time relate to written assessments, so it should not be assumed that these remain relevant to the verbal EAPI response and can be just 'carried over'.
- If a response goes beyond 30 minutes then the candidate can still be awarded a mark in Levels 4-6. This is incorrect as the assessment grid clearly states that any response that is more than the stated time limit cannot be awarded above the top of Level 3, assuming that the other aspects of the criteria

also meet at least the Level 3 requirements. Candidates with a documented and evidenced need may require more time than the maximum stated for the EAPI response. In such cases, centres should in the first instance discuss the candidate with their SENCo/SENDco to discuss appropriate access arrangements and reasonable adjustments. If further advice is required, centres should contact the Special Requirements Team in advance of the assessment taking place.

- Candidates can observe the performance for as long as they wish. This is incorrect. Candidates should begin their response once they have viewed an appropriate range of analysis opportunities within the performance. While this will naturally vary depending on the activity, in general 10 to 20 minutes of observation should provide sufficient material for analysis and evaluation, as well as time to make any necessary notes during the observation period.
- The prompting and timing section of the assessment grid should be included in the consideration of the overall mark. This is incorrect, as it will affect the overall mark if scoring a Level 4 or above in this section and will outweigh the three assessment areas.

Avoiding potential malpractice

- Unfortunately, malpractice does occur in this component and is most commonly found under these categories:
 - Using pre-planned notes in their response. Centres are reminded that the candidates can have access to either the 'candidates' notes sheet' or paper, both of which must be blank, to compile their notes and the observation/note taking must be included in the filmed evidence submitted.
 - The video footage was made available to the candidate beforehand. Centres are reminded that the footage should be new to the candidate. This shows itself when a candidate simply writes without looking at the performance.
 - Candidates receiving clear off-camera prompts by staff. There are times when there is clear communication between staff and students during the assessment process which both halts the candidate in their response and acts as a prompt that is not reflected in the marks submitted by the centre.
 - Use of mobile phone for timing. JCQ rules for conducting examinations apply. If a candidate is using their own phone or watch to monitor the time, the centre must manage any risks around access to other information which may be helpful to the assessment via the device (e.g., smart phones/watches). Evidence at moderation that there may be a risk that candidates accessed information via such a device may be referred to OCR's Compliance team.

Helpful resources

[Teach Cambridge](#) – offers many resources and has all the links to PE forms and [information and guidance for NEA](#)

[Official OCR INSET](#) – please be aware we cannot guarantee the content of non-OCR training.

Additional comments

Centres are strongly encouraged to regularly review the Physical Education pages of the OCR website for updates and attend the free 'Ask the Moderator' online sessions throughout the year to clarify aspects of the assessment process.

It would be helpful for centres to use the updated mark sheet which splits the response into the three assessment areas and to use it in conjunction with the Assessment grid to arrive at their overall mark.

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Don't have access? If your school or college teaches any OCR qualifications, please contact your exams officer. You can [forward them this link](#) to help get you started.

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Access to Scripts

We've made it easier for Exams Officers to download copies of your candidates' completed papers or 'scripts'. Your centre can use these scripts to decide whether to request a review of marking and to support teaching and learning.

Our free, on-demand service, Access to Scripts is available via our single sign-on service, My Cambridge. Step-by-step instructions are on our [website](#).

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Online courses

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What are our online courses?

Our online courses are self-paced eLearning courses designed to help you deliver, mark and administer internal assessment for our qualifications. They are suitable for both new and experienced teachers who want to refresh their knowledge and practice.

Why should you use our online courses?

With these online courses you will:

- learn about the key principles and processes of internal assessment and standardisation
- gain a deeper understanding of the marking criteria and how to apply them consistently and accurately
- see examples of student work with commentary and feedback from OCR moderators
- have the opportunity to practise marking and compare your judgements with those of OCR moderators
- receive instant feedback and guidance on your marking and standardisation skills
- be able to track your progress and achievements through the courses.

How can you access our online courses?

Access courses from [Teach Cambridge](#). Teach Cambridge is our secure teacher website, where you'll find all teacher support for your subject.

If you already have a Teach Cambridge account, you'll find the link to the **Online courses** under the **Assessment** or **Training** tab – hover over **Assessment** or **Training** on the horizontal menu and select **Online courses** from the dropdown.

If you don't have a Teach Cambridge account yet, ask your exams officer to set you up – just send them this [link](#) and ask them to add you as a Teacher.

Access the courses **anytime, anywhere and at your own pace**. You can also revisit the courses as many times as you need.

Which courses are available?

We recommend all teachers complete the module on Online courses – NEA for their subject. These courses provide subject-specific information about course content; how to prepare for planning, marking and submitting; and support with understanding the marking criteria.

The subject-specific courses are tailored for each qualification that has non-exam assessment (NEA) units, except for AS Level and Entry Level. They cover the following topics:

- the structure and content of the NEA units
- the assessment objectives and marking criteria for the NEA units
- examples of student work with commentary and feedback for the NEA units
- interactive marking practice and feedback for the NEA units.

We are also developing courses for some of the examined units, which will be available soon.

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