

Moderators' report

CAMBRIDGE TECHNICALS LEVEL 2 (2016)

SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

**OCR Level 2 Cambridge Technical
in Sport and Physical Activity**

Award: 05889

Certificate: 05885

Diploma: 05886

Summer 2025 series

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Introduction

Our examiners' reports are produced to offer constructive feedback on candidates' performance in the examinations. They provide useful guidance for future candidates.

The reports will include a general commentary on candidates' performance, identify technical aspects examined in the questions and highlight good performance and where performance could be improved. The reports will also explain aspects which caused difficulty and why the difficulties arose, whether through a lack of knowledge, poor examination technique, or any other identifiable and explainable reason.

Where overall performance on a question/question part was considered good, with no particular areas to highlight, these questions have not been included in the report.

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Unit 2 series overview

Many candidates found the Unit 2 paper for this series a significant challenge. The more successful candidates were well-prepared by their centres, who have clearly been following the contents of the Unit 2 specification closely and taking note of the advice offered in previous examiners' reports. Most candidates were much more successful with questions that required shorter responses. Where questions carried higher maximum marks such as 4 or 6 marks, candidates often struggled to score more than half marks because they did not appreciate the extra depth of understanding they were expected to demonstrate to achieve the higher marks. Furthermore, there appeared to be some difficulty with recognising the intent or purpose of these longer response questions, leading to misunderstandings regarding the response needed.

The quality of written communication overall was satisfactory, and an improvement on recent series. Many candidates scored well for this in Question 6.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• maximised the contribution of the multi-choice, true/false and shorter response questions to their overall score • understood the intention or purpose of the questions by identifying key words in the question • limited themselves to responses related only to the body system referred to in the question • understood that a health benefit, whether short-term (Question 1) or long-term (Question 7(c)), is different from a benefit to a body system such as the musculoskeletal or cardiorespiratory system.	• misinterpreted the intention or purpose of a question • did not recognise the different response required when referring to short-term or long-term benefits • did not recognise the points value of a question and therefore make sufficient valid responses to score well • did not recognise that the 'Levelled' Question (6) required an extended answer • did not understand the importance and meaning of the Command Word used at the start of the question • did not recognise the two distinct purposes behind the two parts of Question 7 (7(a) and 7(b)).

Question 1

Identify **two short-term** health benefits of taking part in sport and physical activity.

[2]

1

2

This question offered candidates a good opportunity to start the paper positively. Some candidates scored well in this question by identifying two short-term health benefits gained from taking part in sport and physical activity, most commonly these would be improved sleep or healthier looking skin. Others correctly referred to its role in improving mood and well-being. However, many candidates did not recognise what was being examined here and did not confine themselves to responses relevant to the short-term health benefits. A common error was to refer to a fitness benefit such as improved cardiovascular endurance. Others referred to long or short-term effects on one of the body systems.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be taught to identify the phrase 'short-term' in the question and know that this refers to what happens during exercise or shortly after. They should also be taught that 'long-term' refers to the changes or adaptations that result due to exercising repeatedly over a prolonged period of days, weeks or months.

Misconception



Candidates need to know how to distinguish between what is a short-term health benefit, and what is an effect on one of the body systems. While all body systems are positively impacted in the short-term by taking part in sport and physical activity, they are separate elements of the teaching content of this unit and consequently are assessed separately. Candidates must make sure they correctly identify the purpose of the question and which of these elements is being examined.

Question 2

State whether each of the following sporting activities is **aerobic** or **anaerobic** with a justification for each.

[6]

Sport 1: Weightlifting
Aerobic or Anaerobic:

Justification:

Sport 2: 800 m Freestyle swimming
Aerobic or Anaerobic:

Justification:

In previous series, questions relating to whether an activity is aerobic or anaerobic have caused some difficulty. In Question 2, with the use of two such contrasting activities, most candidates were able to identify that weightlifting was anaerobic, and 800 m swimming was aerobic. However, there was less success in correctly justifying those decisions. Of those who correctly identified weightlifting as an anaerobic activity, only a minority then correctly described anaerobic exercise by stating that it generally takes place at high intensity and over a short duration. Some were able to explain that anaerobic activity would not use oxygen for energy production. Of those who correctly identified 800 m swimming as an aerobic activity, only a minority then correctly justified it as aerobic exercise by stating that it generally takes place at low to medium intensity and over a longer duration. Many candidates did not recognise that the question was asking for two separate characteristics of both anaerobic and aerobic exercise as justification, giving just one of the many possible responses allowed in each case.

Misconception



Although a question of this nature appears in the paper most years, and candidates appeared to be better prepared on this occasion, there still appears to be some confusion around the nature of aerobic and anaerobic exercise. Aerobic exercise tends to be of low intensity over a long duration (such as a 10,000 m run), whereas anaerobic exercise tends to be of high intensity over short duration (e.g. 100 m sprint). Aerobic activity utilises oxygen for energy production, whereas anaerobic activity uses glycogen as the fuel to create energy and is completed without oxygen. It should also be noted that 'with oxygen' or 'without oxygen' would be correct. However – it is incorrect to say aerobic is with 'more oxygen' and anaerobic is with 'less oxygen'.

This series there appeared to be further widespread confusion over the connection between breathing/not breathing and whether an activity is aerobic or anaerobic. In truth, breathing or not breathing is irrelevant; the distinction is whether oxygen is required for energy production or not required. This confusion was exacerbated in this instance using swimming as the given example, with some candidates under the misconception that swimming must take place under water and since one cannot breathe under water, that the 800 m swim must therefore be anaerobic.

Misconception



One of the key identifying characteristics of an anaerobic/aerobic activity is whether they take place over a short amount of time or long amount of time. It is a common misconception to confuse this with short or long distance. In this question, for example, weightlifting is anaerobic, yet no distance is travelled, but it does take place over a very short duration. Likewise, 30 minutes on an exercise bike or rowing machine would be aerobic as they are long duration, but no actual distance is travelled. In short, duration and distance are two different things and only duration should be used.

Assessment for learning



While most questions (such as Questions 7, 9 and 10 on this paper) ask for a specified number of responses for a mark each and give the required number of response boxes to use, candidates would benefit from understanding that questions are still sometimes written like this one, where they are required to explain something and 2 marks are available for giving two characteristics of anaerobic exercise and a further 2 marks are available for giving two characteristics of aerobic exercise. Although the number of different responses required is not directly specified, the requirement to give four separate characteristics for 4 marks is implicit.

Question 3

A long-term effect of training for a high jumper is muscular hypertrophy.

Explain why muscular hypertrophy will be beneficial to a high jumper's performance.

[2]

Most candidates recognised the term key 'hypertrophy' in the question and were able to explain some benefit of it. Most commonly, they would refer to increased size/strength of muscles.

Assessment for learning



Again, there are 2 marks available here, so the expectation is that candidates should attempt to offer two different explanations as to why muscular hypertrophy will be beneficial to a high jumper. Although the number of different responses required is not directly specified in the wording of the question, the requirement to give two separate responses for 2 marks is implicit. Candidates should also recognise that the use of a high jumper in the question is for a purpose; so that they can refer to how their performance might specifically benefit from hypertrophy – in short, to jump higher – to gain the second mark on offer.

Question 4

Regular participation in sport and physical activity can reduce the risk of developing osteoporosis.

Which **one** of the following describes osteoporosis?

Select **one** option.

[1]

- A The bones become weaker, brittle and less dense.
- B The cartilage between the bones wears and causes friction.
- C The ligaments holding the bones together become weak.
- D The tendons attaching the muscle to bone become stronger.

The overwhelming majority of candidates answered this question correctly, collecting the mark available, demonstrating a good understanding of osteoporosis and its detrimental effect on bones (as opposed to cartilage, ligaments or tendons). Perhaps also demonstrating a greater degree of comfort with this multi-choice format of question.

Question 5

There are many factors that can cause injuries in sport and physical activity.

For each factor given in the table, identify whether the effect is **extrinsic** or **intrinsic**.

[4]

Factor	Extrinsic / Intrinsic
Equipment	
Participant preparation	
Posture	
Type of activity	

This question was answered very well by most candidates, collecting most, if not all, of the 4 marks available and showing a good understanding of the extrinsic and intrinsic factors that might contribute to the causes of injury. Perhaps also demonstrating a greater degree of comfort with this either/or format of question.

Question 6

* A footballer participates in football training and matches 4 times a week. Their coach has advised them to complete a cool-down after each session.

Design a cool-down for the footballer to complete. Explain the purpose of completing a cool-down.

[6]

This question (denoted by an *) required extended writing with a maximum of 6 marks available. The question is relatively simple in structure and appeared to offer candidates a ready-made framework around which to plan their extended response. In effect, they had to design a cool-down for a footballer to complete, post exercise, by identifying each of the two elements of a cool-down (pulse lowering and stretches), give relevant practical examples of each element and provide some further understanding of the purpose of a cool-down. Candidates who scored strongly, generally made good use of this framework, giving good coverage of the many of the factors within a well-written extended response.

This question also included a judgement on the quality of written communication. While the format of this question supported candidates towards better responses than in previous series, some responses were still short and undeveloped. This recognition and identification of the Levelled Response (*) question in future papers is still something that centres can improve on, as well as emphasising the need to write an extended, structured response.

Assessment for learning



Candidates would benefit from understanding how responses to the Levelled Response (*) question are marked in a different way to other questions, with the response placed in one of three levels in accordance with the quality of the totality of the answers, alongside a judgement of the quality of written communication. Candidates would benefit from repeated practice of writing such extended answers using past papers and using past mark schemes to support peer/self-assessment of their responses.

Misconception



Many candidates stated incorrectly that the purpose of a cool-down is to prevent injury or reduce the risk of injury. This is a common misconception. By definition, a cool-down takes place after sport or physical activity, therefore the activity likely to cause or result in injury has already passed. Furthermore, the notion that a cool-down will somehow prevent injuries in the future is tenuous at best. After all that is the purpose of warming up before the next bout of sport or exercise. The overall purpose of a cool-down is to promote recovery.

Question 7 (a)

Eve is 25 years old and has recently moved to a new city on her own to start a new job. Her new job involves working long hours on some days and some weekend work as well.

Eve has not always been very physically active but would like to find a sport or physical activity to take part in.

(a) Identify **three** factors that Eve might consider when deciding what sport or physical activity to take part in.

[3]

1

2

3

Candidates found Question 7(a) particularly challenging, alongside the follow up in Question 7(b). Many candidates did not recognise the different purpose/requirements of the two questions and either duplicated answers for both questions or gave their responses in the wrong question. The purpose of Question 7(a) was to give candidates the opportunity to simply identify three factors (from the eleven factors listed in the mark scheme) that someone needs to consider when selecting a sport or physical activity to take part in. These general factors do not necessarily need to relate to Eve's circumstances or to a particular sport. Candidates who recognised this most commonly referred to time or cost or access/locality in their responses. Many candidates did not restrict themselves to simply identifying factors.

Assessment for learning



Candidates should be taught to fully understand the Command Word in the question. In this case 'identify' means simply to list or name and there is no need to describe in any detail or explain further.

Assessment for learning



The use of the word 'factor' in a question can cause some confusion, as it may not be a word candidates encounter often. Candidates need to know that it refers to anything that influences or contributes to a decision, in this case what sport or physical activity to take part in.

Question 7 (b)

(b) Recommend a sport or physical activity for Eve to participate in and give **three** reasons to justify your choice.

[4]

Sport or physical activity:

Justification:

1

2

3

Unsurprisingly, all candidates were able to collect the mark on offer for selecting a sport or physical activity for Eve to take part in. However, there was less success in the 'justification' part of the question. The purpose of the rest of this second part of Question 7 (7(b)) is to examine Eve's personal circumstances and therefore needs and to justify how the chosen sport or activity meets those specific needs. They may have been hindered by the fact these details of Eve's circumstances were given in the preamble to Question 7(a). Nevertheless, some candidates did justify their choice in terms of how it needed to be flexible to Eve's busy lifestyle, address her work/life balance, or meet her need to make new friends in her new city. Mostly though, responses tried to explain why a particular sport is a good one to do in general terms, such as 'swimming is good for stamina', rather than how it can meet Eve's particular needs.

Question 7 (c)

(c) Identify **three long-term** health benefits of participating in sport and physical activity.
Select **three** options.

[3]

- A It can help to control weight and improve metabolic rate.
- B It can improve core strength and posture.
- C It can improve mood and reduce mental tension.
- D It can improve sleep to allow more time for muscles to repair
- E It can increase blood flow to surface and skin will look healthier.
- F It can increase blood pressure.
- G It can prevent osteoarthritis.

The overwhelming majority of candidates answered this question well, with most collecting 2 if not all 3 marks available, demonstrating a good understanding of the long-term health benefits of participating in sport and physical activity. Perhaps also demonstrating a greater degree of comfort with this multi-choice format of question. Where candidates did not gain marks, it was, once again, due to not distinguishing between long-term and short-term health benefits.

Question 8

Identify **one short-term** effect of participating in sport on the musculoskeletal system.
Explain how it can impact on a basketball player in a game.

[2]

Short-term effect:

Impact:

Most candidates recognised which body system was being examined here and confined themselves to responses relevant to the musculoskeletal system. The most commonly given correct answers were related to increased synovial fluid; muscle stretch and lactic acid build up.

Generally speaking, candidates then struggled to explain the impact that these short-term effects had on the body or on the performance of a basketballer in a game, which is what the question specifically asked for.

Assessment for learning



As with the use of the high jumper in Question 3, candidates should recognise that the inclusion of a basketballer in this question is for a purpose; to give them the opportunity to explain how the short-term effects of sport and physical activity might impact performance, either positively or negatively, such 'to intercept more easily' or 'can't break as fast', in order to gain the second mark on offer.

Question 9

Regular, long-term participation in sport and physical activity will increase the volume of oxygen that can reach the working muscles. Explain **two long-term** effects on the cardiorespiratory system which help this to happen.

[4]

1

2

Candidates found this question particularly challenging and struggled to identify two long-term effects of sport and physical activity on the cardiorespiratory system and moreover, in each case, struggled to explain how this helped more oxygen reach the working muscles. Some candidates simply repeated the question, stating that 'more oxygen reaches the muscles' rather than explaining how, for example, through greater gaseous exchange or greater diffusion of oxygen into the blood.

Misconception



Some candidates stated incorrectly that a long-term effect of sport and physical activity on the cardiorespiratory system is that 'the lungs will get bigger/stronger' and that is how the volume of oxygen that can reach the working muscles increases. While this is the case with the heart (cardiac hypertrophy) and many gained marks for identifying this, it is not the case with the lungs. The number of alveoli in the lungs can increase, as can the size and strength of the respiratory muscles, but the lungs themselves do not get bigger/stronger.

Question 10

Describe **three** ways that rugby can be adapted to meet the needs of children under 11 years old.

[3]

1

2

3

This question was well-answered, with most candidates giving descriptions of adaptations to pitch size, ball size, and rules regarding restricting/limiting the amount of contact. Some candidates incorrectly referred to recommendations regarding personal protective equipment, such as headguards, which did not receive a mark, as they are not adaptations to the game itself. Similarly, answers that referred to how the game should be taught or coached did not receive credit.

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