

Examiners' report

GCSE

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

**OCR Level 1/Level 2 GCSE (9-1) in
Physical Education**

J587

For first teaching in 2016

J587/02 Summer 2025 series

Contents

Introduction	3
Paper 2 series overview	4
Section A	5
Question 1	5
Question 3	5
Question 4	5
Question 6	6
Question 7 (b)	6
Question 8	6
Question 9	7
Question 10	7
Question 11	7
Question 12	8
Question 13	8
Question 14	8
Question 16	8
Question 17	9
Section B	10
Question 21 (b)	10
Question 21 (c)	11
Question 22 (a) (i) and (ii)	12
Question 22 (c) (i), (ii) and (iii)	13
Question 23 (a)	14
Question 23 (b)	14
Question 23 (c)*	15
Copyright information	20

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. A selection of candidate responses is also provided. 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.

A full copy of the question paper and the mark scheme can be downloaded from [Teach Cambridge](#).

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Paper 2 series overview

J587/02 is one of two examined components for GCSE (9-1) in Physical Education. This component links together the topic areas of socio-cultural issues, sports psychology, health, fitness, and well-being. To do well on this paper, candidates need to apply knowledge and understanding using practical examples from sports and practical activities and to show an understanding of data analysis. J587/02 includes one extended response question that forms part of synoptic assessment, in which the candidates are required to apply knowledge and understanding from J587/01 to this extended question.

Candidates who did well on this paper generally:	Candidates who did less well on this paper generally:
• demonstrated strong understanding of socio-cultural contexts, principles of sports psychology, and concepts related to health, fitness, and well-being • effectively applied theoretical knowledge to practical performance across a variety of sports • showed clear comprehension of the specific demands of different command words used in examination questions.	• displayed a limited grasp of socio-cultural concepts and their implications • did not fully address the question, particularly by overlooking the requirement to include practical examples when prompted • provided responses that lacked relevance or alignment with the question's focus.

Section A

Question 1

- 1 Define the term motor skill.

..... [1]

Most candidates were able to define a motor skill, alluding to the key word of the definition, movement.

Question 3

- 3 Give **two** examples at a sports centre that limit access for a wheelchair user.

1

.....

2

.....

[2]

This question proved a challenge for some candidates. Most were able to offer at least one example; stairs or lack of ramps. More successful responses were more likely to score 2 marks.

Question 4

- 4 Give **one negative** effect of sponsorship on sport.

.....

..... [1]

This question required candidates to apply their understanding of socio-cultural factors and the impact of sponsorship on sport. Many responses successfully identified that promoting certain products, such as tobacco, alcohol, or gambling, is often viewed as inappropriate or set a poor example. Others recognised that sponsors may place unreasonable demands on athletes, potentially creating extra pressure or influencing their performance.

Question 6

6 What does the term well-being mean?

.....
..... [1]

Candidates addressed the question in a variety of ways. A common error was referring to social, mental, physical and emotional health. Those that were successful were able to mention either comfort, happiness and health, or contentment in life.

Question 7 (b)

(b) Give **one** reason why people who identify as White British might take part in more regular physical activity than other ethnic groups.

.....
..... [1]

This question was generally answered well, with candidates identifying more role models or less perceived discrimination as the most common answers.

Question 8

8 One cause of player violence in sport is an unfair decision by an official.

State **three** other causes of player violence.

1
2
3 [3]

Candidates offered successful responses to this question. Centres may wish to note that as this question covered two AO2 marks, responses needed to include a detailed practical example to gain the marks.

Question 9

9 Give **one** advantage of using social media to promote a new exercise class at a sports centre.

.....
..... [1]

Most candidates were able to clearly state an advantage and 'a wider reach' was the most common answer.

Question 10

10 Give **two** reasons why a sports performer might set goals.

1
2 [2]

Candidates were generally successful in responses to this question. Centres should note that 'something to aim for' is the description of a goal and therefore does not gain credit.

Question 11

11 Place a penalty shot in netball in its correct position on the environmental continuum.

Open | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ Closed [1]

Candidates needed to place the 'X' nearer to the closed end of the continuum. Most managed to identify the example as a more closed skill.

Question 12

12 Explain why it is helpful for skills to be classified on a continuum.

.....
..... [1]

Some candidates were able to explain the use of a continuum to compare the complexity of skills. A common error however was describing the two ends of the continuum, e.g. an open skill and a closed skill.

Question 13

13 Explain why skilful movement can be described as aesthetically pleasing.

.....
..... [1]

This was an accessible question, answered well.

Question 14

14 State **one** way taking beta blockers can improve sports performance.

..... [1]

Candidates were generally successful in responses to this question.

Question 16

16 State **one social** benefit of taking part in a walking group.

..... [1]

A high number of candidates scored well on this question and the most common response was making friends.

Question 17

17 Other than losing weight, state **two physical** benefits of taking part in regular physical activity.

Benefit 1

Benefit 2

[2]

Although most responses were correct, a common error on this question was a candidate not referring to a physical benefit and focusing on emotional or social health benefits.

Section B

Question 21 (b)

(b) The Olympic Games is a global event which has a lot of media coverage.

Discuss **three** ways media coverage has a positive effect on the Olympic Games.

- 1
- 2
- 3

[3]

This question was worth three AO3 marks and required the application of knowledge regarding the positive influence of the media. Many candidates successfully identified a single reason, most commonly referring to an increase in financial investment. Higher-scoring responses explored the topic in greater depth, discussing broader effects such as increased participation and enhanced audience viewership. The exemplar below scored 3 marks.

Exemplar 1

- 1 promotes the games so the sports are watched by more people.
- 2 promotes sponsors so athletes can demand for more money for development/ training.
- 3 creates role models which helps eg. women's or disabled sports gain popularity & spectators.

[3]

Question 21 (c)

(c) A long jumper is competing at the Olympic Games.

Name **three** techniques a long jumper can use to **mentally prepare** for their jump.
Explain how each technique would help them prepare.

Name of technique

Explanation

.....

Name of technique

Explanation

.....

Name of technique

Explanation

.....

[6]

Overall, most candidates were able to identify the techniques and explain their benefits for a long jumper. Less successful responses tended to focus on describing the technique itself, rather than analysing its effect on performance. The exemplar below received 6 marks.

Exemplar 2

Name of technique Positive thinking

Explanation The ~~longer~~ long jumper could tell themselves 'I'm going to ^{sump} get the longest distance' to boost their confidence

Name of technique Selective attention

Explanation The long jumper may ^{try to} block out the taunts and noise from the crowd to reduce their ~~nerve~~ ^{nerve} so they don't mess up

Name of technique ~~their long jump technique~~ mental imagery

Explanation The long jumper may imagine themselves successfully performing their long jump before doing it to boost their confidence [6]

their long jump technique

Question 22 (a) (i) and (ii)

22

(a) Both of these statements are **false**.

For each statement explain why they are false.

(i) A tennis serve is classified as a simple skill.

Explanation: [1]

(ii) A dive at the start of a swimming race is an open skill.

Explanation: [1]

This question involved candidates recognising the tennis serve as a complex skill and then providing an explanation of why it was a complex skill. Similarly, candidates needed to describe why the dive was a closed skill. These questions proved challenging for a high number of candidates.

Assessment for learning



Centres should refer to the number of decisions required (simple/complex) and the influence of environmental conditions (open/closed) to prepare candidates in this area.

Question 22 (c) (i), (ii) and (iii)

(c) A coach uses verbal guidance to help a tennis player with their tennis serve.

(i) Outline **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of using verbal guidance.

Advantage

.....

Disadvantage

.....

[2]

(ii) State **one** other type of guidance the coach could use.

..... **[1]**

(iii) Outline **one** advantage and **one** disadvantage of using this type of guidance.

Advantage

.....

Disadvantage

.....

[2]

This question proved challenging for some candidates. Descriptions of guidance were offered, rather than advantages and disadvantages. A common error was suggesting mechanical guidance as another type of guidance the coach could use. This was incorrect as the question asked about a (one) tennis player learning a tennis serve, for which mechanical guidance is not appropriate.

Assessment for learning

Candidates should have a clear understanding of the different types of guidance and what each includes. The question required an explanation of the advantages and disadvantages of each type, but many responses focused more on general descriptions rather than directly addressing the question's demands. Centres should make sure that candidates are well-prepared to recall and apply the benefits and limitations of each type of guidance effectively.

Question 23 (a)

23

(a) Describe what is meant by a balanced diet.

.....

..... [1]

Misconception



Centres should make sure that candidates are clear that a balanced diet includes the correct proportions of each food group, rather than ALL the food groups.

*'Balanced diet - A diet that contains the **correct proportions** (of carbohydrates, fats, proteins, vitamins, minerals, fibre and water) necessary to maintain good health.'*

Question 23 (b)

(b) Outline **three** positive effects of hydration on a basketball player.

1

.....

2

.....

3

..... [3]

Candidates offered a range of correct responses. Some candidates made the same point twice (reduced levels of fatigue and less chance of getting headaches). Centres should note that 'preventing', e.g. fatigue/headaches/dizziness etc, is too vague. Prevention/prevent is incorrect. Candidates must refer to 'reducing the chance/risk of' in this context.

Question 23 (c)*

(c)* Diet is one method a marathon runner can use to optimise performance.

A warm up will also be beneficial.

Discuss how a marathon runner needs to adapt their diet compared to a sedentary individual.
Explain the physical benefits of a warm up for a marathon runner.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

..... **[6]**

Candidates generally performed well across both parts of this question. Most were able to identify the dietary requirements of a marathon runner. However, to achieve Level 2, a clear and direct comparison with the diet of a sedentary individual was necessary.

Exemplar 3

A marathon runner requires more of each dietary component than a sedentary individual, because they expend more energy through running, meaning they must also consume more.

For example they require many more carbohydrates because carbohydrates give them the energy they need to perform. This is why a marathon runner must often carbload the night before or day of a long race, to consume enough complex carbohydrates to sustain them.

Complex carbohydrates may be taken a few hours before the race, for example pasta or rice, as these are a source of slow releasing energy. Simple carbohydrates like sweets or fruit provide a quick release of energy and the runner may take it during the race, or straight before.

The runner also needs much more protein than the sedentary person, because proteins help to muscles to grow and repair. The runner puts much more strain on their muscles and repeatedly contracts them during a race which could cause micro tears which need to be [6]

23(c) repaired by protein. Sedentary people do not use their muscles as much, or put as much strain on them, so must eat less protein. A marathon runner may eat meat like chicken, or steak, as well as eggs, as a source of protein.

A marathon runner would also require more vitamins and minerals to help carry out chemical reactions in the body. They particularly must focus on vitamin D which leads to strong bones, as well as calcium which leads to strong bones and teeth.* Iron is also important for the production of haemoglobin and red blood cells, which is crucial because red blood cells carry oxygen which the runner needs for aerobic respiration. Vitamins and minerals are less important to have in major excess compared to normal sedentary people.

* This is vital as runners put a lot of stress on their bones, so they must have a high density and strength

because all people require sufficient amounts to carry out chemical reactions and function in a healthy way.

Finally, the runner requires more water, particularly after running, to replenish the water that was lost through sweat or breathing, and prevent dehydration. Although runners require more, the sedentary person still needs lots of water as it is used in many chemical reactions.

The first component of a warm up - the pulse raiser - allows the runner's heart ~~to start~~^{rate} to slowly increase, so more blood is pumped to the working muscles. This increases muscle temperature which increases the speed of muscle contractions and decreases the risk of sprains or tears. An example may be a light jog.

The mobility ~~also~~ part of a warm up allows the runner to increase the range of movement at the joint, ~~so that~~ and this also minimises the injury risk. The stretching component temporarily increases the flexibility of the muscles which increases the speed of muscle contractions and decreases the risk of injury such as

leaves. The ~~skill rehearsal~~ dynamic. An example of stretches may be hamstring ~~stretches~~ stretches. The dynamic movements further prepare the muscles for rapid ~~the~~ movements in a race. An example for the runner would be high knees or ~~low~~ heel flicks as these physically mirror the dynamic movements of running. The final ~~skill rehearsal~~ section is skill rehearsal, where the runner can practice the specific skills required in a race. For example, they may carry out sprints to mimic the very end of the race - the 'home stretch'. This makes the runner more prepared and makes ~~to~~ the body ready to perform the specific skill of running.

The first part of the question was answered reasonably well overall. In the second part, most candidates could state the physical benefits of a warm-up. Nevertheless, to progress to Levels 2 and 3, responses needed to demonstrate more depth and higher-order thinking, even when both parts were attempted.

Exemplar 3 is a Level 3 and 6 marks

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