

December 2006

To: SQA Co-ordinators
Secondary schools and Further Education colleges

Cc: HMIE
LEA contacts
SQA Customer Support Managers

Action by Recipient
Response required
Note and pass on
✓ None — update/information only

Contact Name: Jennifer di Folco at Dalkeith
Direct Line: 0131-271 6774
E-mail: jennifer.difolco@sqa.org.uk

Dear Colleague

National Qualifications — Physical Education Update

The contents of this letter should be passed to the teachers/lecturers responsible for Physical Education.

The newsletter updates staff on issues from last session 2005/06 and highlights important information for the current session 2006/07 for National Qualifications in Physical Education.

I hope the contents of this letter are helpful to you. Please do not hesitate to contact either Lee Ross (0845 213 5481, lee.ross@sqa.org.uk) or myself at the above address.

Yours faithfully



Jennifer di Folco
Qualifications Manager
National Qualifications — Physical Education

National Qualifications — Physical Education

1. Physical Education homepage

The subject page is the main source of information on National Qualifications in Physical Education. It contains the reports of Principal Assessors and the Senior Verifier, Course Specifications/Arrangements documents, specimen question papers and marking instructions for all levels for the 2006 and recent diets.

You can access the Physical Education homepage as follows:

- ◆ www.sqa.org.uk
- ◆ From the NQ/Standard Grade list of subjects, select Physical Education
- ◆ Click 'Go'

2. Principal Assessors Reports

Principal Assessors and their examining team are thanked for their efforts in delivering a successful diet. The Principal Assessors reports published on our website are an invaluable source of advice and good practice. Centre staff are urged most strongly to access this material.

Centres are reminded that all key concepts of the Course may be sampled in the question paper. Further points raised in the reports included:

Standard Grade

Performance

Centres continue to manage Performance very well. Candidates achieve high grades in this component.

Question Paper

Candidates performed better, at each level, in the Evaluating section of the paper. This is attributed to the allocation of marks, which allowed candidates to be rewarded even for limited responses. The video footage, which focuses on individual performances, allowed candidates to fully engage with the questions.

Across all levels, the Knowledge and Understanding content, which consistently reflects the requirements of a Standard Grade Course, proved to be demanding and challenging for the candidates.

The 2006 exam diet saw the Standard Grade Performance footage move to DVD format and as centres will be aware, this was also the last year of issuing the footage in video cassette format. As a result of feedback from the 2006 diet, we recommend that centres use the time available prior to the examination to test the DVD and equipment being used to play it.

Intermediate 1 and 2

Performance

Centres continue to manage this element of the Course extremely well. Candidates continue to perform well – often achieving above the level of the Course entry.

Question Paper

Some candidates' responses indicated an increased depth of knowledge of the key concepts compared to the previous year. It was pleasing to note that candidates are now being successfully presented at the appropriate level.

The number of candidates who attempt to answer all four questions in the examination continues to give cause for concern.

Higher

This year, candidates answered a wider spread of questions across the three most popular Areas of Analysis. Candidates are responding well to questions based on a range of activities undertaken from Courses being studied.

Many responses lacked the necessary depth and detail to access the upper range of marks. In order to gain high marks, performance at Higher level requires candidates to demonstrate excellent knowledge of key concepts.

It was pleasing to note that the Pass rate for this level rose by 5%.

Advanced Higher

Project Report

There were some very good examples of candidates accessing high marks related to specific sections of the Project Report.

Despite SQA Development workshops, the availability of new Course exemplification and 'reminder letters' being sent to presenting centres prior to submission deadlines, many centres submitted candidate work in the old Dissertation format. The consequence of this was that the candidates were unable to access 12 of the marks.

3. Senior Verifier reports

The reports of the Senior Verifiers for Central Verification and Visiting Verification are also published on the Physical Education homepage:

Central Verification

Candidates continue to answer better in Outcomes 1 and 3 with regards to descriptions of methods used for collecting information and descriptions and monitoring of training and performance development.

The main area of concern continues to be Outcome 2 where candidates continue to show lack of depth and detail in their knowledge of key concepts selected and how this knowledge could be applied in the planning of performance.

Visiting Verification

The Visiting Verification exercise has been very successful this session. The Performance element for all Physical Education Courses continues to be a major strength for the majority of candidates.

Centres are reminded that they must make use of the case study videos which exemplify the national performance standards across all levels over a range of activities.

Most centres are comfortable with applying the full range of marks across all levels including Advanced Higher. However, the new mark scale for Advanced Higher introduced this year has caused minor difficulty.

The Advanced Higher Performance scale of 16-30 is used to award each candidate a Performance mark for the Advanced Higher Course. The new scale allows candidates who have a 'minimum level' of performance competence the option of following the Advanced Higher Course.

This Performance mark (out of 30), together with the mark estimated for the Project Report (out of 70), enables centre staff to estimate the candidate's overall performance. Marks are awarded for each component by comparing each candidate's performance with the marking guidelines, the performance scale and the Course Grade Descriptors.

The following table shows how the new AH scale relates to the old AH scale:

Higher Performance Scale	AH Performance Scale	OLD Performance Scale
19	16	61
20	17	62
	18	
	19	63
	20	
	21	64
	22	65
	23	66
	24	
	25	67
	26	68
	27	
	28	69
	29	
	30	70

4. Markers

SQA is again grateful to those who marked in the 2006 diet. There are vacancies for Markers at all levels of Physical Education. We invite and would welcome teachers/lecturers with three years experience of Physical Education Course delivery to apply for what is potentially an excellent professional development experience. To apply please contact Yvonne McGill on 0131 271 6740 or email: yvonne.mcgill@sqa.org.uk.

5. Exemplification

A further set of exemplification materials from diet 2006 is available. Centres are reminded that these are in electronic form and can only be downloaded by SQA Coordinators. The following is a full list of what is available:

Exemplification of Analysis and Development of Performance Unit

Access 3 (2006)

- ◆ Badminton: Skills and Techniques – Candidate 1
- ◆ Badminton: Skills and Techniques – Candidate 2

Intermediate 1 (2005)

- ◆ Badminton: Skills and Techniques – Overhead Clear
- ◆ Volleyball: Skills and Techniques – Volley

Intermediate 2 (2005)

- ◆ Basketball: Preparation of the Body – Importance of CRE and Agility in Basketball (a good pass)
- ◆ Basketball: Preparation of the Body – Importance of CRE and Agility in Basketball (minimum competency)

Higher (2006)

- ◆ Badminton: Skills and Techniques – Overhead Clear
- ◆ Basketball: Structures, Strategies and Composition – Fast Break

Higher (2005)

- ◆ Badminton: Skills and Techniques – Smash
- ◆ Rugby: Preparation of the Body – Strength

Exemplification of Advanced Higher – Course and Units (2006)

Candidate 1

- ◆ Project Report
- ◆ Analysis and Development of Performance: Swimming – Skills and Techniques
- ◆ Perspectives on Performance Development: Swimming – Skills and Techniques

Candidate 2

- ◆ Project Report
- ◆ Analysis and Development of Performance: Badminton – Preparation of the Body
- ◆ Perspectives on Performance Development: Badminton – Preparation of the Body

Exemplification of Advanced Higher – Course and Units (2005)

- ◆ Project Report
- ◆ Analysis and Development of Performance: Basketball – Skills and Techniques
- ◆ Perspectives on Performance Development: Basketball – Structures, Strategies and Composition

6. Understanding Standards

The Understanding Standards website has been developed to allow teaching professionals the opportunity to more fully understand the standards of assessment as they are applied by the SQA examination teams. Visitors will have the opportunity to consider the principles which underlie the marking of their subjects and can apply this understanding by marking a number of candidate responses and comparing the marks they give to those given by the marking team.

The site can be accessed at: www.understandingstandards.org.uk.

Login details for the Understanding Standards website are available from the SQA Co-ordinator for your centre. If you have any problems, please contact the Customer Contact Centre by phone on 0845 279 1000 or email the project team at usw@sqa.org.uk.

7. National Assessment Bank

A further set of National Assessment Bank (NAB) materials for Intermediate 1, Intermediate 2 and Higher levels has now been published.

These NABs (NAB002) offer centres an alternative and different version to the original ones. Please note the original NABs (NAB001) are still valid.

This material is published in electronic form and can be downloaded only by the SQA Coordinator in your centre.

8. Professional Development Workshop

SQA's Professional Development Workshop (PDW) programme has been a great success since its inception in terms of bringing teaching colleagues together to learn about SQA's standards and how they are applied to specific subject areas and levels.

On Saturday 2nd December Physical Education held its first ever PDW event in Napier University, Craiglockart Campus, Edinburgh.

The main focus of the day was dedicated to the promotion of understanding standards in the external component of the Higher Physical Education Course: the question paper.

This was achieved through presentations and workshops where delegates had the opportunity to mark candidates' scripts from the 2006 diet of examinations. There was also opportunity to discuss the rationale and detail of the assessments with the presenters.

In addition, all delegates received a pack of material which they can share with staff in their centres.

The feedback from the day has been very encouraging and we hope the event will become an annual feature of the Physical Education calendar.

Our grateful thanks to the Physical Education colleagues who prepared, planned and presented on the day.

9. Estimates and Appeals

We have recently updated the *Estimates, Absentees and Assessment Appeals: Guidance on Evidence Requirements* document and this is now available on our website. A hard-copy is being issued to every centre. In particular, the document clarifies subject specific requirement as well as guidance on the general principles for generating Estimates and submitting Appeals.

When generating estimates for your candidates, you are reminded that:

- ◆ For Higher level the overall estimate should reflect both Course components eg Performance 40% (a mark out of 40), question paper 60% (a mark out of 60)
- ◆ For Intermediate 1 and 2 the Performance mark is scaled by dividing the raw mark (out of 40) by 4 and then multiplying the answer by 5 to give a scaled mark out of 50

The prelim mark is also scaled by dividing the raw mark (out of 60) by 6 and then multiplying the answer by 5 to give a scaled mark out of 50. These scaled marks are added and, using the mark range (given in the Course Assessment Pack on the PE homepage), a realistic estimate for the candidate can be predicted.

When generating Estimates and compiling evidence for Absentee consideration and Appeals, you should also refer to:

- ◆ Course Arrangements Documents, which include Course Grade Descriptions
- ◆ Course Assessment Specifications
- ◆ SQA Question Papers, including Specimen Question Papers
- ◆ SQA Marking Instructions
- ◆ Principal Assessor Reports, which include information on Grade Boundaries
- ◆ Exemplification materials
- ◆ any other relevant information (eg Course Reports, subject update letters).

These materials are available on the subject pages of our website (www.sqa.org.uk).