



Course report 2019

Subject	Physical Education
Level	Advanced Higher

This report provides information on candidates' performance. Teachers, lecturers and assessors may find it useful when preparing candidates for future assessment. The report is intended to be constructive and informative and to promote better understanding. It would be helpful to read this report in conjunction with the published assessment documents and marking instructions.

The statistics used in this report have been compiled before the completion of any post-results services.

Section 1: comments on the assessment

Performance

The performance component of the course functioned as expected. A range of activities were verified. The marking instructions allowed centres to award candidates marks across the full range.

Project

Most candidates selected an activity for their topic in which they had considerable experience and expertise. A wide range of activities and factors were selected and the candidates' work demonstrated a high level of commitment to performance development.

Candidates chose a wide range of factors. Some candidates focused on one factor and considered the impact of this on performance while others considered how a combination of factors led to the required performance development.

Section 2: comments on candidate performance

Areas that candidates performed well in

Performance

Centres reported that candidates performed well on the day of their performance.

Project

Candidates identified a specific personal performance development need and by addressing the identified issue(s) they produced original, focused and authentic work.

Candidates made good use of appendices to ensure that the project was well presented, clear, focused and within the word count.

Section 1(a)

A wide range of relevant methods to gather information about performance were used by the candidates. Candidates justified their selected methods of gathering information. However, in some cases, the quality of the data was insufficient to allow detailed analysis in 1(b).

Section 2(a)

Focused and comprehensive literature reviews were presented. Some candidates, when appropriate, displayed further knowledge through interviewing experts and/or studying video footage of top performers.

Section 3

Candidates produced detailed records of the Personal Development Plan (PDP) and presented the work clearly.

Areas that candidates found demanding

Project

Section 1(b)

In a number of cases the quality and depth of the information gathered in 1(a) was insufficient to allow the required detail of analysis. In addition, some candidates who had gathered sufficient data produced narrative, rather than analytical reports.

Section 2(a)

A few candidates did not acknowledge the source(s) of the information presented.

Section 2(b)

Candidates found analysing the relationship between, and the significance of, different pieces of information to be demanding.

Section 2(c)

Many candidates found justifying their selected targets demanding.

Section 4(c)

Many candidates selected future development needs which were not based on information gathered from the post-PDP analysis and/or evaluation of the PDP.

Section 3: preparing candidates for future assessment

Project

Section 1(a)

Candidates are expected to **justify** the selection of each method used to gather information about performance (for example relevance, reliability). Candidates should ensure that the information gathered is of sufficient quality and depth to allow for detailed analysis in 1(b).

Section 1(b)

Candidates should be encouraged to **analyse** the information gathered in 1(a). It is necessary to include raw data in the appendices to ensure that the main text is analytical in nature.

Section 2(a)

Candidates should be encouraged to present work which demonstrates a depth of study **focusing on the research question**. Information should be from respected and reliable sources and should be appropriately acknowledged and referenced.

Section 2(b)

Candidates should **analyse** links, supportive evidence, and any inconsistencies in research findings.

Section 2(c)

Candidates should ensure that they **justify** their selection of each Personal Development Plan target. This justification should come from analysis in 2(b); personal performance analysis in 1(b) (which has led to the research in 2(a)) can also be helpful in this justification.

Section 3

Candidates should present a brief summary of their programme in the main text. Details of sessions, modifications and comments should be located in appendices. Candidates should ensure that all work in appendices is referred to from the main text.

Section 4(a)

Candidates should ensure that they analyse the post-PDP findings. This should include analysis of the impact on specific targets and overall performance.

Section 4(b)

Referring to information from 4(a) and the Personal Development Plan record (Section 3) may help support candidates in their evaluation of the Personal Development Plan process.

Section 4(c)

This section now requires future development needs to be presented with consideration of the impact on all four factors — further details will be included in the coursework assessment task.

Performance

Centres are reminded that the course specification has been reviewed for next session. The latest version is available on the subject pages of SQA's website.

The wording of the marking instructions for the performance component has been altered to be in line with other levels and to address the removal of the performance unit. Centres must continue to ensure that the activity chosen for the candidate's performance will allow each candidate to access marks in all the sections of the marking instructions.

Centres are reminded that throughout the performance, candidates must be able to demonstrate a broad and comprehensive repertoire of complex skills. These complex skills should be controlled and fluent, with effective decisions being made and problems solved in response to a range of challenging performance demands. The candidate must be able to show the use and application of well-established composition, tactics and roles, safely and effectively. All rules and etiquette should be adhered to and emotions controlled. All of these must be demonstrated in a suitably demanding context.

Centres must ensure that candidates choose one activity, which allows them the opportunity to display a range of movement and performance skills. This performance must take place in a context which sets it apart from normal learning and teaching activities and be suitably challenging for an Advanced Higher Physical Education candidate.

For a number of years guidance has existed on SQA's website to help teachers and lecturers decide which activities are acceptable for assessment. Following views expressed at the Understanding Standards events in 2018 and the National PE survey (May 2019) we have inserted additional information on acceptable and unacceptable activities in the coursework assessment task.

A revised model for verification of the performance component is being introduced in session 2019/2020. This is available on the subject pages of [SQA's website](#).

Grade boundary and statistical information:

Statistical information: update on courses

Number of resulted entries in 2018	430
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Number of resulted entries in 2019	499
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Statistical information: performance of candidates

Distribution of course awards including grade boundaries

Distribution of course awards	Percentage	Cumulative %	Number of candidates	Lowest mark
Maximum mark				
A	23.4%	23.4%	117	70
B	25.9%	49.3%	129	60
C	27.3%	76.6%	136	50
D	12.6%	89.2%	63	45
No award	10.8%	-	54	-

General commentary on grade boundaries

SQA's main aim is to be fair to candidates across all subjects and all levels and maintain comparable standards across the years, even as arrangements evolve and change.

SQA aims to set examinations and create marking instructions that allow:

- ◆ a competent candidate to score a minimum of 50% of the available marks (the notional C boundary)
- ◆ a well-prepared, very competent candidate to score at least 70% of the available marks (the notional A boundary)

It is very challenging to get the standard on target every year, in every subject at every level.

Therefore, SQA holds a grade boundary meeting every year for each subject at each level to bring together all the information available (statistical and judgemental). The principal assessor and SQA qualifications manager meet with the relevant SQA head of service and statistician to discuss the evidence and make decisions. Members of the SQA management team chair these meetings. SQA can adjust the grade boundaries as a result of the meetings. This allows the pass rate to be unaffected in circumstances where there is evidence that the question paper has been more, or less, challenging than usual.

- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted downwards if there is evidence that the question paper is more challenging than usual.
- ◆ The grade boundaries can be adjusted upwards if there is evidence that the exam is less challenging than usual.
- ◆ Where standards are comparable to previous years, similar grade boundaries are maintained.

Grade boundaries from question papers in the same subject at the same level tend to be marginally different year to year. This is because the particular questions, and the mix of questions, are different. This is also the case for question papers set by centres. If SQA alters a boundary, this does not mean that centres should necessarily alter their boundary in the question papers that they set themselves.