

Principal Moderator Feedback

Summer 2012

GCE Physical Education (6PE04)

Unit 4: The developing Sports Performer

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GCE Physical Education 9PE01

Units 6PE04

Advanced Level Tasks: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3 and 4.4

This report will review the moderation of coursework tasks for the examination series 2012. This will be for centres that either submitted coursework for the purposes of moderation for component 1A - through cluster moderations or E-portfolios and for all centres submitting component 1B - external moderation. Centres are thanked for their support and punctilious administration this examination series.

General Comments:

It is pleasing to report that for this examination series the majority of centres completed all the specification requirements in terms of administration successfully. Issues still exist on an individual basis concerning the completion of specific examination forms and the adhering to established word counts. In virtually every case the exam board deadlines were met.

The quality of the e-portfolio evidence is improving but some centres are repeating the errors of previous series such as the depth and quality of the evidence being provided, but this is diminishing. The best quality submissions came from centres where staff have been on training courses, had a working knowledge of the IAG and ICE documents and the rubric requirements. Therefore understanding in detail what was required of their candidates.

The majority of candidates were well prepared for units 4 practical elements when performing in a cluster moderation. They were enthusiastic and committed to producing their best performances when undertaking their practical activities. Centres and candidates were punctual for the cluster moderations and the majority were dressed appropriately.

The word count had been omitted on some CRAF sheets for written tasks and there is still leniency shown by centres to comply with this directive. Throughout the process it was clear that several centres were not aware of all of the compulsory supporting evidence that was needed to accompany a personal performance and therefore as mentioned it is imperative that centre staff read the IAG, scan the Edexcel website for updates and centre guidelines as well as liaising with their moderator at all stages.

Experience in the delivery of the course seemed to be a key element in the organisation of the centre. Where the teacher assessors had little or no experience of delivering the A-level course mistakes were made in administration, presentation of the E-portfolio and on the cluster moderation day.

Task 4.3 Personal Performance

Overall, performances ranged from above average to excellent in the mainstream sports such as football, rugby, cricket, hockey and netball as well as in those less mainstream sports. In some cases it was possible to raise marks in sports such as rugby and football. A2 candidates specialising in a single performance role have produced outstanding performances this year and the moderation team have seen many international standard performances while not losing sight of the weaker candidates who have still accessed the mid-range mark band. Few candidates scored under half marks for this task.

It has been pleasing to also see the wider range of sports/activities being presented by candidates such as dance. The range of dance was extensive, ranging from hip hop, street, ballroom, Latin to ethnic Indian and it is pleasing to see sports/activities ranging from skiing to horse riding. Video evidence is still the most complete way to present a candidate's performance abilities - if unable or not required to perform at a live cluster moderation, and while not compulsory requirement for both on and off site sports/activities it should be used where it is impractical to see a live performance. Individual activities, while assessed with some accuracy, were littered with centres which failed to ensure that the student had completed 3 competitive performances within that year. Gymnastics, dance, swimming and athletics were all activities where some students failed to have competitive (and in some cases a complete participation log) evidence for the appropriate period.

In addition, centres are reminded of the need to keep a Performance Log for each candidate. Candidates are required, as with the E-portfolio, to keep a log of the rubric requirements of 3 formal performances and a minimum of 8 weeks participation. Compulsory evidence in general though was well documented.

In the main, students were highly motivated at cluster moderation days and it was obvious they were eager to achieve the best possible marks. Feedback from moderators has indicated that well planned and differentiated sessions also enhanced the student's performance. There was a correlation between the well organised and well differentiated sessions and a student's performance and the least well organised sessions where lower marks were awarded to candidates. This could also be a reflection of the expertise of individual staff in centres.

E-portfolio submissions are still experiencing some issues where centres fail to supply the depth of evidence to judge the quality of a candidate's performance. It is relatively easy to compile the rubric of the course but more difficult to present evidence that will enable the moderation team to make judgements on the quality of the performer.

The resulting difficulty is that where no video evidence was on offer it was extremely difficult to differentiate at times between the mark range of candidates. Practical marks tended to be lower than live moderation

because of the lack of evidence to support marks. Compulsory evidence again was well documented not so other forms such as video. Some centres offering E-portfolio evidence still did not follow the guidelines on submissions and as result requests for more evidence were issued eg dance. Identifying candidates on DVD/video was still a concern with some centres.

Leader / Officiating

The vast majority of performers submitting roles as either leader or official were accurately marked and gained top band marks. Leaders and officials were generally well prepared with accurate logs available, although these were of varying standards. Candidates continue to perform better as participants than as officials or leaders. Centres staff are reminded that if guiding candidates through the leadership and officiating roles then documentary evidence of the training they have undergone is a compulsory requirement as well as the minimum of 3 formal opportunities to display their abilities in these roles.

The better leadership and official candidates had practical activities well planned, but only those with wider experience were able to adjust their sessions when required. Candidates dressed appropriately and acting assertively justifying good marks. Although some centres did not always provide supporting information for their marks. Students did tend to have participation logs and session plans, and included their own evaluations of their progress, however very few had peer/teacher/coach evaluations related to the specification which would have provided stronger support for the marks given.

The best centres include a qualitative assessment which included statements on: organisation, motivation, communication, knowledge of the sport and appropriate development of the session to the strengths and weaknesses of the group in the environment of that moment. Although welfare and safety were referred to centres need to ensure their candidates develop these areas giving examples from their experience during the 8 weeks of Leadership.

e.g. there should be evidence that consideration has been given to the difference between a 17 year old playing rugby and introducing tag rugby to a mixed gender group of 11 year old pupils – this would also demonstrate an understanding of safety and child protection and welfare issues which is not only paramount but also compulsory.

There is some feedback to suggest that a greater inconsistency in leadership which tends to be marked leniently by a higher margin. Inconsistency comes from schools using a variety of either sports specific leadership or general leader training. A number use NGB or CSLA awards as entry to higher mark bands but fail to fully support this with a range of evaluative means. Sessions led tend to be written up and have the leader's evaluation but rarely that essential staff member/coach's validation.

4.1 The Development Plan

The Development Plans were generally of a good standard and mostly marked accurately with a few exceptions. Established centres guide their candidates successfully in the choosing the aim they intend to develop and have sufficient knowledge to help them research and plan each section. The best pieces of work are often exceptional and deserve the full marks awarded to them. Where the Plans were over marked it was inevitably where centre assessors award marks for the mere inclusion of content sections rather than the quality and relevance of what is produced. It should not be the case that the plan with the most content automatically scores the highest mark. Centres are advised that it is not in the spirit of the course for all candidates in a centre to undertake the same development plan. Clearly this 'one fit' does not cater for individual needs

The Planning and Research sections still tend to be where over marking takes place. The DP is 25% of their total A2 mark as such sufficient time should be devoted to provide a depth of research to enable detailed planning to take place so thus providing a depth of knowledge of both physiological and sports scientific principles, training loads, recovery, energy systems and often excluded information on dietary requirements and manipulations. The principles of training are often too generic and not personalised while specific workloads and Intensities of work/rest ratios are inappropriate or not justified.

Some candidates failed to use the concepts of periodisation and the application of training zones, resting and recovery heart rates as a quantifiable measure of progress or the setting heart rate targets for training. In many cases this was missing and likewise many CV based plans failed to use heart rate monitors for accurate planning, monitoring, measurement and testing. The selection of appropriate tests that validate progress on each occasion is paramount – this was not always the case. Candidates need to show greater judgement in terms of what is or isn't relevant to their focus of their plan. There is too much 'all I know about...'and/or simply cutting and pasting of large chunks of information which at times has little or no relevance to the specific aims of the plan - (usually with an over reliance on Brian Mac). Candidates accessing the top mark band must be able to discuss their plan with centre staff and offer insightful scientific and sports training understanding.

The performing and recording section tends to lack detail and yet this is a simple monitoring and recording exercise. In some cases students are using club training sessions as a part of performing even though the amount of training is not quantified and beyond the control of the candidate and as such cannot be included. In a few cases students are only doing one designated training session a week and this is insufficient to realise any identifiable adaptations. Thus there is some evidence this year that students recording of sessions were inconsistent. Too often the recording became a print-out or photocopy of each week's sessions with a couple of changed words or training weights and extending any evaluation to that of a copied

nature. Where mid-term testing was sometimes used however, very few used the information to adapt or change the overall plan based on their progress and original aim(s).

The Review and Evaluation section is often completed with mixed results. In some cases this section is weak because of the lack of physiological and scientific research and therefore candidates have little or no knowledge base from which to form an analysis. Candidates need to evidence their validated results and then discuss the success or not of their Plan and offer insightful observations and conclusions. Factual data aids this process as does the ability to understand the sports science of training. Candidates are also required to report on the impact of the DP on their own performances. This is easier to achieve if undertaken in sports such as athletics and swimming but rarely done successfully in team sports where only a token subjective comment with no coach/teacher evaluation is included or any empirical data by way of support made. Notational exercises similar to those carried out in Unit 2 Task 2.4.3 may solve this problem.

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Task 4.2 International Study

Overall, the impression from this year's moderation process is that these tasks are not completed as successfully as other written tasks and slightly generously marked. Where tasks were accessing the top band marks they included a balance of information on the local and then national provisions, followed the check list of potential sub-headings and included referenced factual data and case studies that supported the points being made.

Often the tasks contain too many stereotypical comments and sweeping generalisations as candidates include generic comments on each country - eg. 'All Americans follow the Lombardian ethic', 'all Australians are competitive' or 'sport is really important to all Australians'. These statements are usually used in the assignment to no known effect and are unsubstantiated.

Some candidates refer to and rely on an appendix too much as validation of the comments made in the text and do not include the relevant information in the task itself and so miss out on valuable marks. Too much emphasis at times is placed on the geography and topography details of the country. In one example a candidate used 450 words on the geography, topography, culture, religion and population demographics thus leaving only 550 words on the chosen sport. Centres need to offer clearer guidance to candidates. The biggest criticism for the International studies was a lack of detailed coverage of all the areas that make up the local and national setting even though this is a tough ask in 1000 words. Many candidates selected Australia or New Zealand but included virtually nothing on the schools provisions. By the same token, candidates covering the USA were limited in providing information on professional competition formats. Most candidates were good on providing information on the ethos of a country and included critical comments but one of the weaker areas was where little detail on

national team preparation and competition formats. The over-riding observation was the lack of specific factual detail to support some very generic comment. Some candidates are still selecting inappropriate nations or activities but this relatively few.

Many candidates exceeded the word count limit for this task and were liberal with the truth on the CRAF.

Task 4.4 The Life Plan

In general this assignment was over marked reflecting perhaps the value centres give to this task and the time when candidates undertake its' completion. The Life Plans were the most disappointing aspect of this year's moderation. In many cases the task on completion is still too subjective (while essentially subjective in design), was not for some personalised and often generic in detail. Some candidates used an appendix, which suggests they are not aware this assignment has no specific word limit and often relevant information is missed. When approached as a sociological study, as opposed to 'just a sports' one', candidates' can often complete the task more successfully. In particular, the effects of ageing made only rare appearances and when present, warranted a passing mention at best. Only the very best examples considered the effects of ageing at each of the candidate's life phases.

Some candidates are now much more aware that the life plan is a detailed account of how an individual perceives their progress in their chosen activity and then in the wider options and roles open to them as they move through distinct stages of life.

While candidates are free to design and construct their own 'time-line' stages, a common thread has emerged. Most did include a time-lines starting at 16 – 18 years, which should include their present state aspirations and commitment in terms of playing, training and travelling. Many candidates, however included their level of playing, but failed to discuss their commitment in terms of time playing, training and travelling.

If analysing the 18 – 22 age range this section should include immediate options, such as university - therefore which one? What is that institutions provision, what are alternative provisions, what is the perceived level of commitment, what are the inhibiting factors, travel, training, academic studies etc. Where candidates who did research the university they hoped to attend however in many cases the inhibiting factors were not discussed or personalised. Those not attending university must detail their sport/activity options linked to employment or travel.

In the mainstream competitive age range 22-35 this should highlight inhibiting factors such as career, family, finance and strategies to overcome them, relating this to national statistics. In general this section was very generic, not personalised or analysed thoroughly in terms of those inhibiting factors. Some candidates included sociological statistics on marriage, raising

a family and sedentary lifestyles, but failed to discuss how they related personally and what specific strategies they would perceive would overcome these hurdles.

In the age range 35 – 50/55, changes occur not only in participation as a performer in an activity but also in roles such as a move into coaching, refereeing and sports administration. Possible sport and activity choices will change and thus candidates should be highlighting inhibiting factors such as injury, attitude, family, career and physiological changes supported by factual referenced data. Most candidates did relate this section to some national statistics, but failed to develop a strategy to maintain their interest in their chosen activity or explain consideration and the dangers of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and family circumstances.

Finally, in the later stages of 50/55 onwards it is expected candidates include physiological changes and strategies to cope. The later stages of life were given scant attention and many plans seemed to end alarmingly early. It should also include later life participation alternatives. Some candidates included some reference to research on injury and drop of rates, but once again many candidates failed to fully explore all the options open to them and failed to relate it to maintaining a healthy life style.

In conclusion, the top performers produced plans that were well referenced and related to general health trends, sporting alternatives and with research employment issues and statistics. The majority of candidates failed to do this in depth and therefore need to focus their research to include much more factual information on sociological information on general health trends, societal issues to do with exercise and the specific injury and participation rates in their sport from NGB data along with comprehensive analysis of other inhibiting factors, such as study, work, family, finance and the physiological effects of the ageing process.

Summary Section:

- Ensure all centre assessors have read the appropriate ICE document, The IAG and Edexcel guidelines
- When submitting E-portfolio evidence include sources that support the quality of a candidates performances for Tasks 4.3
- Through monitoring of Task submissions is required to ensure candidates do not exceed stipulated word count limits
- For each candidate completing Task 4.3 it is a requirement that all Performance Logs are compiled fully documenting 8 weeks training /preparation and at minimum 3 formal performances
- For all Tasks centres are required to carry out their own internal standardisation and rank order their candidates as appropriate. The transfer of clerical data to recording forms should be checked for accuracy
- For live cluster moderations ensure those staff delivering each practical session engage candidates in practices, drills and opened ended tasks that allow for differentiation and extended the performances of those candidates aiming to achieve recognition in the higher mark bands
- all written tasks should include appropriate referencing and a bibliography.

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