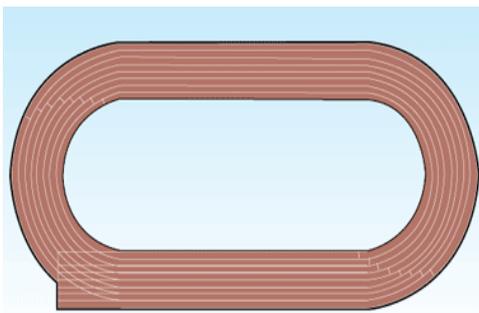


INSIDE



TRACK

September 2022

In the News

Welcome to the thirteenth edition of INSIDE TRACK, the online magazine designed to support the teaching of Pearson GCE PE.

The magazine provides articles written by senior examiners and, on occasions, guest writers, together with contemporary items of news and reviews of resources that may be helpful for teaching or background reading.

In this edition, the focus is on giving feedback about the recent examination series, the first since 2019.

Principal examiners summarise the key points emerging from the examinations and moderations in 2022.

Their full reports can be found on the website and teachers and students are encouraged to read these to support learning in the coming academic year.

Contents:

- *News and Reviews*
- *Protecting young athletes from doping*
- *Feedback on Scientific Principles of PE exam*
- *Feedback on Psychological and Social Principles exam*
- *Feedback on Practical Performance moderation*
- *Feedback on Performance Development Programme moderation*

Other Pearson resources for GCE PE

A wide range of materials, including previous editions of Inside Track, can be found on the Pearson website.

[Edexcel AS and A level Physical Education \(2016\) | Pearson qualifications](#)

Get in touch

If you have particular requests for how the magazine can support you, or you wish to contribute, please contact the editor (Dennis Tattoo) at:

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Anti-concussion gumshields

In the summer, The Times reported that all elite rugby players in England will be offered the chance to wear a 'smart' gumshield to help reduce the numbers of players impacted by concussion injuries.

Sensors in the mouthguard measure the forces of contact situations and the extent of players' skull acceleration.

Pitch-side medics monitor this information to inform decisions about when players might need to receive attention and head injury assessments.



Smart gumshields could help reduce the number of concussions in rugby.

Birmingham legacy set to help Paris plans

In the wake of Birmingham 2022 being praised for its carbon-neutral targets, the BBC reported that organisers of the Paris Olympics are seeking to plan for a 50% reduction on emissions when compared to the last three Olympic Games.

Georgina Grenon, sustainability director for the Paris games, suggested major sporting events should set positive examples in support of climate change and that the 2024 event is to be the first games fully aligned with the Paris Climate Agreement.

Might a minimum age limit in the Olympic Games protect young athletes from doping?

Principal Examiner Colin Maskery outlines a serious issue that students might debate in lessons as they grapple with this important contemporary issue.

Specification subject content 5.4 requires students to explore the topic of ethics and deviance in sport.

More specifically the use of performance enhancing drugs and the responses of international governing bodies. The IOC has long been the prime mover in the battle to combat this issue, largely due to the nature of power production events and the eastern bloc countries willingness to use banned substances dating back to the early 1960s.

Examination papers often test this area and so this topic should provide an interesting debate among teaching groups.

One contemporary issue that ties in with the current need for integrity in sport has been the issue of the 'exposure' of performers whom appear more vulnerable to exploitation due to their age.

At the Beijing 2022 winter Olympics the 15 year old skater Kamila Valieva was the first young athlete to be accused of doping but will possibly not be the last. She was accused of using the banned substance 'trimetazidine'. The delayed announcements and subsequent behind-the-scenes bureaucracy did little to enhance the games.

Age limits are set by the individual International Federations (IF) and not by the IOC. This is the same for gender identification. Fencing has a minimum age entry of 13, 14 for taekwondo and bobsled, 17 for wrestling, cycling and weightlifting and the for the marathon an age limit entry of 20.

Issues of child exploitation and the development of young athletes at such an intensity in order to compete raises serious concerns regarding physical manipulation, psychological pressures and emotional restrictions, and the loss of a more natural growth through childhood and youth life experiences.

Many people believe Valieva was too young to compete and her subsequent under-performance, once reinstated, highlighted this and that Valieva was too young to have doped without adult involvement.

The Olympic movement has been consistent in that doping rules are set and firm. What is different now is the increased awareness of mental health issues and the role of the support network behind an athlete with the associated issues of over-training and early specialisation - Issues which previously centred on Eastern

European and Chinese 'factories' set on exploiting young talent for national prestige.



Fencing has an age limit of 13 for competitions. Would a review of age limits for competition help reduce issues linked to child exploitation in sport?

Was Valieva a true victim because she may have been unaware of what she was taking? If she was a willing user then rather than vilify her, perhaps the system she was exposed to is of more concern. By increasing age limits with some form of unification across all IFs would be sensible, yet we would then be denied those performances by younger athletes that have thrilled us such as Nadia Comaneci's perfect 10 at the 1976 Montreal Olympics when aged 14.

However, raising age limits for competition does not stop exploitative training. The protected persons category in a recent WADA update is a step forward. WADA now acknowledges protected persons as athletes who are under 16 years (or under 18 if the athlete is not part of a registered testing pool or has not competed at international events) or are otherwise not legally competent. The code states that mandatory public disclosure is not required when a protected person commits an anti-doping rule violation, but it does not go so far as to prohibit media reporting on the athlete.

Sporting bodies owe their athletes a clear duty of care and, as such, further action is needed from our rule makers.



Might a minimum age limit in the Olympic Games protect young athletes from doping?

Feedback on Scientific Principles exam

Principal Examiner Ellie Bunston summarises feedback on this summer's paper and provides support for future examinations.

Candidates used the advanced information well and covered a good range of topics. An area for further development is the quality of analysis. Candidates prioritise learning facts (AO1 knowledge) in revision, but it is the application of these facts that is crucial to unlocking the higher grades. It is essential that candidates consider the context of the question and then focus their answer on this.

Below is an example of an extended answer which focusses on the question set - supplements—and how they enhance performance (some wrote about herbal remedies rather than supplements).

For each one not only do they give the factual information - bicarbonate acts as a buffer in the blood — but then go apply this understanding, explaining that this allows the performer a greater anaerobic capacity and how this impacts on their performance.

They do the same for creatine. A lot of candidates stop at the factual information that creatine increases PC stores, but this candidate explains how this applies to performance, that they will have larger supplies readily available and therefore powerful contractions together with a specific example of the weight lifter. Again, with the whey protein a lot of candidates scoring in lower bands would simply say it is for growth and repair but here we get specific detail about how this allows athletes to train more.

21 Using examples, examine how dietary supplements can be used to enhance sporting performance.

(8) Q21

Bicarbonate of soda is a dietary supplement used to act as a buffer in the blood. This reduces the effects of acidic waste products such as lactate, and allows a performer a greater anaerobic capacity, resulting in longer, harder periods of performance. e.g. a 400m sprinter can sprint faster for longer reducing ~~the~~ their time. ~~Protein~~ Creatine can also be used. Creatine increases the phosphocreatine stores in muscles meaning a power athlete specifically can have a larger supply of energy readily available so they can produce larger and more powerful contractions. e.g. a weightlifter can now train harder, stimulating more muscular hypertrophy and lift heavier weights. Whey protein may also be used to promote muscular growth and repair. In taking whey protein, the muscle has greater supplies of amino acids to recover and heal microtears, allowing an athlete to train more and also decrease injury risk e.g. a sprinter can now perform 2x 3x10 100kg leg press with 30s rest between each set, increasing power and stride length in a race. Finally, herbal remedies such as glucosamine and ginseng

(Total for Question 21 = 8 marks) Q21_Total

Feedback on Psychological and Social Principles exam

Principal Examiner Colin Maskery summarises feedback on this summer's paper and provides support for future examinations.

Overall, it was a little disappointing that despite the advanced notice provided for centres, the mean marks for the four individual extended questions and the final grade awards were lower than in 2019. Many candidate responses suggested limited study of these areas had been undertaken.

It is recommended that centres read the full Principal Examiners report on the Pearson subject web pages for a breakdown of each question.

Overall, the knowledge shown for the points based questions and for some of the levels based questions was praiseworthy, although the question on Hick's Law highlighted the need for teachers to cover the whole specification in their teaching.

It was again the extended levels based questions that proved tough for some candidates and few accessed the highest level 5 mark band.

One key point for future examination preparation is for candidates to be fully conversant with the meaning, or intention, of each of the question command words e.g. list, summarise or evaluate. Some candidates for question 15 for instance, merely wrote or produced a *list* of information content in their response rather than correctly using the command word *summarise* which demanded written sentences with fuller content.

Levels based questions:

For the five extended response (levels based) questions two considerations are paramount.

Firstly, candidates are assessed on their depth and breadth of knowledge and understanding and in many cases this is a clear area for development. Many candidates were unable to detail a depth of knowledge beyond the first one or two indicative areas of content.

The mark scheme includes the suggested main indicative content along with wider areas that have relevance to answering the specific question.

Secondly, candidates need to apply their knowledge and understanding to answer the specific set question.

In addition, for those questions which are marked with an *, in order to access the full mark range, candidates are required to use their knowledge and understanding from across the course of study in their answer.

For example, in answers to question 17, many candidates just listed a series of examples of the use of banned substances in sport (Lance Armstrong being a typical case), while ignoring other forms of deviancy. More importantly the question asked candidates to evaluate the 'role of ethics' and few candidates seemed to understand this concept, nor the notion of the 'perceived rise' in deviancy.

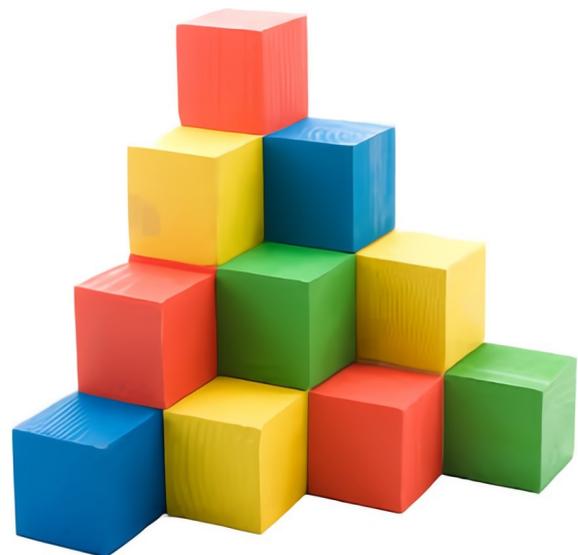
A key point for candidates is to ensure they use the key words contained in a question throughout their response. Highlighting these key words when reading the question is a useful strategy.

Planning answers is also vital – spending a few minutes thinking and planning a logical developed response really helps.

Also of importance, is to write with clear structure. This includes a logical introduction, discrete dedicated paragraphs, together with a final conclusion drawing together key information from the body of the response.

A conclusion allows candidates to offer a summary, including, in certain situations, to offer a subjective opinion, balancing ideas as appropriate related to the demands of the command word. Practicing essay writing regularly can help improve performance in this type question.

Finally, there is no substitute for candidates having depth of knowledge, particularly for the two questions marked with an asterisk. 'Hitting the books' as students were once told and 'reading around a subject' were vital – now it is even easier by hitting the button on a tablet or laptop!



Tips for levels-based answers include referring to the key words in the question within the answer and allocating time to a brief plan.

Practical Performance 2022

Outstanding in many activities

Chief Examiner Dennis Tattoo outlines key issues from the non-examined assessments in 2022.

The quality of practical performances during the moderation process ranged from good to outstanding.

There were a number of elite level performers who achieved maximum marks and moderators reported on a very high standard overall.

Moderators commented on the excellent attitude, behaviour and work ethic of the candidates and also others involved in moderations, such as fellow students who were team members for the full sided competitive performances or for the coached sessions.

Football, netball, and rugby union continue to be popular activities in many centres with a range of ability observed in all three sports. Moderators commented on the high quality of performances in rugby, hockey, and dance.



The high standard of dance was highlighted by moderators.

Although there were fewer coaches this year, those seen planned activities at an appropriate level, and it was encouraging to see them actively seeking to improve the quality of performances rather than simply 'leading' participants by setting up drills and offering generic encouragement and praise. This was an area of progress from prior to the pandemic.

For next year, teachers and students need to ensure they provide evidence of skills, techniques and decision making under pressure, to meet the demands of a conditioned practice **as well as** the formal/competitive situation.

Centres are reminded that recorded evidence should be unedited, not a compilation of highlights.

Performance Development Programme 2022

As with the practical performance, most completed this task as a performer with only a few opting for the coach role.

Work for the physiological section was often well structured with candidates identifying three appropriate components of fitness. In a number however, these choices were not fully justified.

Much of the work in the technical section was of a high standard. Candidates had selected suitable skills and included descriptions and analysis, presenting the work with clear images and compared them to elite performers. Some focused on physiological and mechanical detail but without enough attention on the *technical* analysis, the execution of the skill, which is central to the task.

Much of the planning for the PDP was strong and it was encouraging that more candidates had considered contemporary / valid tests and compared performances with other athlete populations in addition to the norm referenced tables. All candidates should be encouraged to undertake research to identify valid, sport-specific tests which can often be found on NGB websites.

Although many evaluations were thorough, a few candidates struggled to produce the necessary quality of work to score high marks. Candidates need to utilise data more effectively to support the evaluation of the impact of the programme.

Word Count Issues

Moderators reported that a good proportion of candidates had breached the word count.

This included candidates stating a word count in excess of 5000 words, with other word counts inaccurate, or not given at all.

Some candidates had not included the written analysis included in tables and text boxes for the technical / tactical section and should be reminded that their own written analysis included in text boxes count towards the final word count.

Some candidates had also used quotes from research and coaches to excess. Whilst quotes from research material and coaches can be used to support their work, they should be synthesised and applied within the body of the text and not used unreasonably.

The specification states this task has a word limit of 3,500 and is designed to be 'concise'. The overuse of quotes, deemed to circumvent the word count, means the work is no longer succinct and is likely to have implications for marking and moderation.