
GCSE Physical Education 2016: Guidance on Extended Answer Questions

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Guidance on the extended answer questions

Over the last few months I have delivered many launch events and spoken to many centres and I understand that there is some concern about the 9 mark questions.

I will look at what is expected within the 9 mark question but I want to provide you with a little bit of back ground as to why we increased the marks for the extended writing questions.

At the moment it is extremely difficult to differentiate between candidates, candidates of differing ability are often achieving the same mark in the extended writing questions, as there is very little scope to reward the different levels of skills shown within a response. This is something that we wanted to address and we believe that if there are 9 marks, this will allow examiners to differentiate better. More credit can be given within each level where it is justified due to the range of three marks as opposed to the current 2 marks.

It is important to note that in the extended writing questions, the whole response will be read before placing candidates into a particular mark band. The quality of the response will determine the specific mark within the band, i.e. how well each skill is demonstrated by the candidate.

With the extended writing questions it is important that the candidates are taught how to answer the different types of questions from the very beginning of the course and within each topic. For example when delivering the methods of training, it is important that

- 1) The candidates **know and understand** the different training methods and are able to recall them, define them, describe them etc.
- 2) **Apply them** in different settings – e.g. which is the most important method of training for a long distance runner. Candidates must be able to link their knowledge and understanding to the question.
- 3) **Analyse and evaluate** - for example, given two different methods of training which is the most appropriate for a particular type of sports person. The candidates must justify their answers, provide a rationale for their conclusions. The response must link back to the question scenario, if the question context is long distance running, this must be the applied context used by the students in their response.

The 9 mark questions will require linkage of points to show the required level of development

On the extended writing questions it is essential that there is evidence of recall, explanation and relevant application through the discussion.

Example 1

In the SAMS the question asks:

Evaluate the use of visual and verbal guidance to improve sports performance with a group of beginners in badminton.

In the specification on page 55-56, there is a list of the command words and their definitions. For evaluation candidates are required to 'Review/analyse information, bringing it together to form a conclusion/judgement based on strengths/weaknesses, alternatives, relevant data or information. Come to a supported judgement of a subject's qualities and relation to its context'.

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If a candidate ONLY demonstrates understanding through recall of knowledge they will not get out of band 1, they will be awarded 1, 2 or 3 marks based on the quality of the recalled knowledge.

For example

AO1

- Verbal guidance is when the teacher would tell the candidate how to complete the skill
- Visual guidance is about demonstrating the skill, showing how to perform a skill.

No matter how many of these types of points a candidate makes, they are all AO1 – recall. The comments are factually correct but do not address the evaluative requirements of the question.

AO2

If a candidate can demonstrate their knowledge and understanding of verbal and visual feedback **and apply it** to a badminton player, they are meeting the requirements of AO2

For example

Verbal guidance is when the teacher would tell the player how to complete the skill (what), by giving basic instructions e.g. positioning of the racquet (how) so that they could successfully hit the shuttlecock when trying to hit it over the net (why).

Verbal guidance is when teacher could question the candidate about the correct positioning of the body when serving (what), by asking them to describe/demonstrate the body position of the serve (how) to ensure that the candidate understands what they are trying to do so they have the best chance of hitting the shuttlecock and continuing a rally (why).

Visual guidance is when the teacher demonstrates the skill, e.g. the serve (what). Visually demonstrating the service action, possibly without the shuttlecock first so that the player can see the action they are trying to make. The teacher could then visually demonstrate skill using the shuttlecock (how) so the player can see where on their opponents court they are aiming for the shuttlecock to land (why).

Visual guidance is when the teacher visually demonstrates a skill e.g. the arm action of a return (what) so the learner can see what is required when trying to return the shuttle (how) so they can keep the rally going (why).

The above points on their own are only AO1 and AO2 – the candidate has expanded on their knowledge and understanding and have applied it in relation to the game of badminton. However, they have not shown any evaluation (which the question asks for). This type of response could gain up to 6 marks.

Therefore to demonstrate their ability to evaluate (AO3) candidates must make a connection between the use of guidance, the activity and the level of the badminton player (the questions identifies that the player is a beginner)

The candidate must consider which is the best method of guidance to fit the needs of the players, including the disadvantages of different types for particular players.

AO3

For example

Although visual guidance can be an effective way of helping a beginner, if the skill is broken down into too many parts and the learner is asked to concentrate on too many aspects e.g. arm action, body position etc. it can cause information overload.

Visual guidance could be very effective, but if a player is distracted and is not watching then this may not be the most appropriate method.

If the coach is not a very good player and demonstrates the skill through visual guidance, the players could pick up an incorrect technique.

Verbal guidance could be very difficult to give if the venue is large and acoustics are poor – the players may not be able to hear. Also if there are other activities taking place at the same time it may be very difficult to hear the coach, or the players may be distracted and not listen.

The candidate must be able to draw a conclusion, making a judgement about which form of guidance is better than the other or if a combination would be the best for a beginners group of badminton players. The conclusion could also bring in other forms of guidance if appropriate to improve performance for a beginner's badminton group.

Example 2

Evaluate whether a 50m front crawl competitive swimmer should use a combination of interval and weight training to improve their performance

The same principles will apply as above.

If a candidate only shows their knowledge and understanding, by being able to recall everything they know about interval training and weight training they will not move out of band 1.

AO1

For example

Interval training is a series of periods of work alternated with periods of rest.

Weight training can be used to increase muscular endurance and muscular strength.

AO2

However, if they can apply their knowledge and understanding of interval training and weight training to a swimmer they will be meeting the requirements of AO2

For example

Interval training is a series of periods of work alternated with periods of rest to allow the performer to recover (what) so that they can work at a high level of intensity during training (how) so that they will be able to repeat the work rate when competing in a race (why).

Weight training can be used to increase muscular endurance and muscular strength (what). A swimmer would be more likely to work on muscular strength as they compete in a sprint distance and will want to develop power (how) to be able to sprint through the water (why).

Weight training can be carried out to allow targeted training on the muscles required for the swimmer (what), they will be able to concentrate on the strength of their legs to allow a fast start (how) so that they can get ahead at the start of the race (why).

AO3

If a swimmer had a programme which included both types of training, this would alleviate tedium and therefore could increase the chances of continuing with the training, and interval training could be specific to swimming by working in the pool.

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It is important that the training schedule is balanced, and not have too much emphasis on weight training because it could have a negative impact on body weight and swimming efficiency.

The candidates must draw a conclusion, make a judgement.

For example both types of training are important, interval training could increase the sprint speed from the start and allow a sprint finish, which could be very important if it was a close race. Weight training will result in greater strength/power which will allow for a stronger start and could give them the edge at the beginning. It could also allow for a greater arm pull and leg kick in the water, thus going faster.

Conclusion could make reference to another method of training and its importance.

Many teachers have asked how many developed points are needed when answering the nine mark questions. There are no set number. It really depends on the question. If the question is talking about 2 things, then obviously the candidates must make developed statements about the 2 areas – otherwise they have not answered the question!

The extended writing questions must be looked at as a whole.

A candidate could achieve top marks if they have made one very well developed argument – it will be the quality of the answer that will determine the mark. Alternatively a candidate could achieve maximum marks by making several developed statements.

Example 3

In the SAMS the question asks:

'Evaluate the need for an endurance athlete to maintain a balanced diet'

If a candidate decided to concentrate solely on nutrients, this is how they could answer the question

AO1

An explanation of the different types of nutrients and the importance of a balanced diet and how that can be achieved – protein is for growth, carbohydrates for energy etc. By explaining this alone the candidate would not move out of band 1

AO2

The candidate must then apply the balanced diet for an endurance athlete. How can the nutrients meet the needs of an athlete?

The athlete will need energy sources to carry out prolonged exercise. The diet must be high in carbohydrates, moderate in protein and low in fat (what). Carbohydrates are important to ensure that the runner has enough storage of carbohydrates (glycogen) in the body to be able to run for a long period of time (how). If they have not got enough energy then they will become tired and be unable to maintain training, and racing, intensity (why).

An endurance athlete must also have protein in the diet. Good sources of protein include lean meat, poultry, fish, eggs and dairy products which contain all of the essential amino acids and thus are complete proteins (what). This is required for muscle growth and repair (how). This is to ensure that if an athlete is training a lot it will help reduce injuries and will allow the athlete to continue with the training programme and prepare for any races (why).

Another key nutrient that is a must for athletes is water (what). An athlete must ensure that they are hydrated at all times. They must be well hydrated at the start of the race because the body can lose water through sweating (how), and if too much water is lost

they could then become dizzy and not be able to continue with the training or the race (why). Also an endurance athlete must take fluid in throughout the training and race (what), through small sips of water (how) to ensure that they do not become dehydrated and not be able to continue (why).

AO3

Make connections between the elements of nutrition and impact on performance. Consideration of manipulating the diet to meet specific demands – carbo overload before a race. Therefore a conclusion could be a balanced diet is required to maintain performance during training but an unbalanced diet just before a race is important to ensure there is enough carbohydrates on board to maintain performance throughout a race!