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Examiners' Report
Principal Examiner Feedback

Summer 2023

Pearson Edexcel GCSE
In Physical Education (1PE0)
Paper 03: Practical Performance

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Introduction

Centres are to be congratulated for their hard work and effort in completing the moderation process this year, and with a welcome return to pre-pandemic assessment requirements of three activities and a moderation sample of thirty candidate-performances.

Most centres are now comfortable and fully conversant with the moderation requirements, and in the main, were very well organised ensuring a smooth-running process. This includes early returns of the Initial Contact Questionnaire (ICQ) Form, accurate and timely completion of the PE2MS Form and Edexcel Online Mark Submission, showing the skills in isolation at an appropriate level of demand to enable candidates to perform to their maximum level of potential, followed by a realistic competitive situation. Where this is not the case, it is usually in the new centres, or centres where there is a new Lead Teacher for GCSE PE, where the processes are not wholly familiar, or in the smaller remote-based centres.

Candidates generally performed very well with high levels of motivation, clearly enjoying the moderation process, and thriving on performing in front of external moderators. They were well-prepared by the centre staff. It was noticeable where centres had held a mock moderation day for their candidates, as this enabled them to focus on the quality of the performance rather than worry about the set-up of the practice. Most candidates were able to demonstrate the full range of ability because of the level of skills and drills that were performed.

Weather conditions were poor during the months of March and April, which impacted the moderation of activities. However, it is pleasing to report that centres dealt with the changing conditions and had alternative plans available to ensure that the moderation was able to go ahead.

Timing of assessment and preparation of candidates for moderation

Many centres and candidates, who had taken the initiative to practise their moderation activities in their own time, such as after school and at lunchtime, performed slightly better than the marks they had originally been awarded by their teacher-assessors. Candidates should have every opportunity to replicate the level of performance at the time when the mark was awarded by the teacher-assessor.

Marks should be awarded at a level at which they can perform consistently, so that replication of that level of performance at moderation is realistic.

Performances at moderation must clearly show how the candidate has gained the marks awarded by the teacher-assessor. This can work both ways of course - with candidates underperforming and showing that they have been

marked leniently by the teacher-assessor - and must be considered when submitting final marks and when preparing candidates for the moderation day.

On-going assessment can assist centres to establish a correct rank order for all their candidates and ensure better accuracy of marking rather than assessing from a one-off occasion. On-going assessment can also assist with information relating to any applications for special consideration where an injury or illness has occurred and prevents a candidate from participating in the moderation day. It is also useful to keep film footage of any ongoing assessments that have been undertaken to present as evidence if an application for special consideration is made.

Accuracy of centre marking

Marking was generally accurate for both elements of the assessment criteria. However, centres are not using the full range of marks in the level bands. There is a tendency to award marks at the top of the level band, when a mark in the middle or lower end of the level band would be more appropriate.

Candidates should be awarded marks from the top of the level band where they are **consistently** able to demonstrate the application of skills, techniques and decision-making in a formal/competitive situation across all or at least most of the performance traits to meet the requirements to achieve marks from the top of the level band with a *'performance that is as good as can be realistically expected'*.

Where they are not able to achieve the above **consistently** it may be more appropriate to award the middle marks in the level band where the performance *'might represent a balance between some characteristics of the level being fully met and others are only barely met'*, or it may be more accurate to award marks from the lower level of the mark band as the performance *'barely meets the requirements of the ...as the performance is the weakest that can be expected within that level'*.

The same is applicable when awarding marks for the isolation of skills, with centres awarding marks at the top of the level band when a performance is not *'as good as can be realistically expected within the level'*.

It was reported that the trampolining activity was marked leniently with a lack of regard for the quality of the performance of the skills in isolation, especially height and travel. While skiing and snowboarding continue to be leniently marked, particularly for the application of skills, techniques and decision-making in a formal/competitive situation. Just because a candidate can ski parallel and negotiate a black slope does not mean that the performance warrants marks from the top of the level five-mark band. More advanced skills and techniques should be consistently demonstrated in a range of

appropriately demanding situations, across all performance traits of the criteria. It should also be noted that allowing candidates to perform and be assessed skiing on an indoor ski slope, albeit on snow, does not give them the opportunity to consistently demonstrate a range of advanced skills and techniques (in context) at an appropriate level of demand, such as on narrow corridors and moguls, with the appropriate level of quality. It would therefore be unlikely that candidates would achieve more than the top of the level three-mark band, for both elements of the assessment criteria.

Where marking was inconsistent, candidates had generally been placed in the correct rank order, but centres are advised to look more carefully at the assessment criteria to align the performances with the assessment traits at each level. Centres should refer to the latest published edition of the **Practical Performance Activity Criteria (PPAC) – Version 5** on the subject webpage [here](#) – for additional guidance on how to place a mark within a level band.

Range of activities being assessed in GCSE PE

It was pleasing to see an increasing range of activities being shown this year, which enabled candidates to maximise their potential and access high marks. This included many of the new activities that have been added to the Department for Education (DfE) approved list in the specification for their first assessment in 2022, such as figure skating, squash, acrobatic gymnastics, sailing and water polo. These activities were offered by candidates who had obviously participated in their chosen sports over a period, and who had progressed from performing the core skills through to being able to demonstrate some of the most advanced skills and techniques, in both elements of the assessment criteria.

In addition to the new activities, association football, rugby union, netball and handball remain the most popular team activities, with trampolining, badminton and table tennis proving to be popular individual activities. Rock climbing was also seen as a popular activity across centres.

There are a couple of issues to consider when candidates are assessed performing in sports and activities that take place outside of school, such as at club/county/academy level - classed as off-site activities. The first is that there is an assumption that if a candidate competes in a sport or physical activity that is taken outside of school, they are automatically awarded marks from the top of the level bands. It is important to remember that no matter what sport a candidate is assessed in, the mark they are awarded must be based on them meeting the criteria that are published in the Practical Performance Assessment Criteria (PPAC), Version 5. This must be using all or the majority of the performance traits, and not on the level of representation they perform at within their sport, including any times or distances that they have achieved. For example, the candidate may be a county footballer or above, and perform the

physical skills/techniques at a very good level and play with very good position-specific skills during a competitive game. However, they may rarely demonstrate any communication skills during the game, therefore having little impact on the team performance, and their response to tactical changes may be inconsistently applied. It would therefore be inappropriate and inaccurate to award marks from the top-level mark band, using a 'best fit' approach to marking as not all the performance traits listed in the criteria have been achieved at a very good level.

Off-site activities

When approving the specification, it was the aim of the DfE and Ofqual to make sure that candidates who pick up a sport one day cannot get a mark from the top-level mark band the next, as it is virtually impossible to master the quality of the core skills as well as the advanced skills and techniques to any great degree over a short period of time. That is, in addition to candidates demonstrating assessment traits such as decision-making, tactical application and strategy, having the motivation, communication skills and higher-end physical skills to influence their own performance in a formal/competitive situation, as well as that of others if applicable, and being able to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the sport or physical activity that will enable them to work at their full potential. It is, therefore, something to be aware of when conducting an assessment following a short-term residential compared with a sustained block of work on an activity. This can also apply where candidates have had little previous experience participating in any school-based sport or activity prior to them taking up the sport, as part of their GCSE PE course.

Adhering to assessment and moderation protocol

It was noted that protocol was accurately observed, with few centres offering forbidden practical combinations. However, it is becoming more apparent that some are not adhering to the requirements of the specification and are not following the additional guidance that has been published in the Instructions for the Conduct of Non-Examined Assessment (NEA) Document.

Activities that are listed in the Specification, Version 4 and Practical Performance Assessment Criteria, Version 5 – are the only activities that can be assessed and are as they appear in the published version of the PPAC. This list of activities has been approved by DfE and will not change until the next review of the specification. It is therefore not possible to deviate from the approved list. For example, it is not possible to offer Tag Rugby as an alternative to a full-sided game of Rugby Union/League, or 5-a-side Football as an alternative to a full-sided game of Football.

The assessment criteria can be adapted for those with disabilities, if the criteria are not compromised or changed. This must also be agreed with the Physical Education Assessment Team and the moderator should be informed if there are any such adaptations or changes to an activity. Meeting Local Needs (MLN) is no longer applicable to the current specification.

It was also apparent that some teacher-assessors had not used the latest version of the **Practical Performance Criteria Activity Criteria (PPAC), Version 5**. Some are still including the skill of heading the ball in the football activity which has been removed from the assessment criteria.

It should be noted that it is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that evidence of both elements of the assessment criteria is available for moderation in all the activities that have been assessed. This includes evidence of activities that have been performed outside of school in outside clubs, or public spaces such as swimming pools. It is recognised that there may be difficulties in collecting evidence from such venues. However, it is an Ofqual regulation that all evidence is available for moderation and if not, '0' marks may be awarded as there is '*no rewardable material for evidence*'. If a centre is unable to provide the evidence of the assessment of a candidate's practical performance, it may be necessary to select an alternative activity to assess to allow this to be moderated.

Centres cannot refuse to show an activity for moderation

Aligned with the above point, and to provide further clarification, it is the responsibility of the moderator to select the sample of thirty candidate-performances either during a live centre visit or by digital submission, not the centre themselves. Although moderators will always negotiate with centres to enable a fair moderation of marks for all candidates, for example in the event that a candidate is injured or suffering from a long-term illness.

It has been reported that occasional coaching during the moderation of activities is still happening. Centres are reminded that this is not allowed during the moderation of any of the sampled activities. Please refer to the Specification, Version 4 - '*During the assessed performances teachers are not allowed to coach their students*'.

Separate evidence of the skills in isolation and the application of skills, techniques and decision making in a formal/competitive situation

It is a requirement that evidence must be seen or submitted separately of the skills in isolation and the application of skills, techniques and decision making in a formal/competitive situation. The moderation of the former – skills in isolation – must not be through the moderation of the performance of the competitive element in the application of skills.

Performance of candidates in the skills in isolation

Although fewer centres are including static and basic practices in moderation sessions, still too many are including them – even for those who had been awarded marks in the top-level mark bands. Instead of the focus being the need to ‘tick off’ the skills that appear in the published list in the criteria, time would be better spent setting up practices that allow for differentiation, with those who have been awarded marks in the Levels 4- and 5-mark bands performing more of the advanced skills and techniques in a more pressured and contextual situation. This includes the performance of the skills in isolation of the dance activity which should be in the context of performing four skills in isolation that are repeated and they should be performed to some form of beat or music. The performance of four static skills such as a demonstration of one singular balance against a wall bar, for example, provides little justification for top-level marks.

In the racket sports, such as badminton, candidates should be able to demonstrate the skills as a combination of strokes and techniques, which would require them to perform at a very good level of technical accuracy, precision, fluency and control to achieve success, such as hitting an overhead clear high and to the back of the court consistently, and then moving to the net for a net shot which just tips over the net; another example is being able to end the rally of shots with a powerful and accurate smash shot (this would not mean that they would score a point at the end of the rally). This kind of scenario enables those who are being awarded marks in the higher-level band the opportunity to maximise their potential.

Where practices moved at a good pace and intensity, and increased in demand, candidates were able to access the full range of marks.

The appropriateness of showing the same four skills at the same level for all candidates must be carefully considered if there is a difference in the marks that have been awarded to the candidates, considering the strengths and weaknesses of the candidates, and the marks that have been awarded.

Showing the skills in isolation in athletics is still very mixed, with some centres providing high-quality evidence of how to present this section of the assessment, while some barely demonstrated the stated skills to justify the marks that had been awarded. It is possible to show the skills in isolation for the middle-distance events, for example by planning a series of drills to highlight the arm and leg action as well as the body position, the starting position, the first few metres as well as pacing towards the end of the race with a sprint finish. An excellent practice to demonstrate pacing/keeping on the opponent’s shoulder up to a sprint finish in the 800m event was observed where two candidates run side by side from just before the final bend, both holding one end of a skipping rope, on the word ‘go’ from the candidate

holding the handles of the rope, they let go of the rope and both have to sprint to the finish line! Centres are reminded that it is not necessary to show the skills in isolation over the whole distance. It is recommended that the skills are shown over approximately 10-20m depending on the skills being demonstrated, using cones to indicate the distance for candidates to run in between.

Skills in isolation should also be aligned with the performer's playing position, such as in netball, where a candidate's position is Goal Shooter or Centre. Time should be allocated to allowing those candidates to demonstrate their position-specific skills, such as shooting in the circle from different angles following receipt of a pass from outside the shooting area. The players who play in the Centre position could demonstrate separate practices including marking a pass/intercepting. This could also be incorporated with the shooting practice with 2 v 2, or similar playing in a goal third of the court.

The organisation of sessions where other candidates are recruited to make up the numbers for either the conditioned practices or the fully competitive games, was much improved. Those who were not part of the moderation sample were kept away from the moderation area, which made it much easier to focus on those who were being moderated.

Performance of candidates in the application of skills, techniques and decision-making under pressure during conditioned practices and a conditioned/formal/competitive situation

Most centres were able to provide an opportunity for their candidates to perform in a formal/competitive situation, which usually refers to a routine in trampolining, dance or gymnastics for example, a full performance in skiing, rock climbing, cycling and kayaking, alongside a full competitive game in a team or individual sport. Centres are to be congratulated on their efforts to ensure that their candidates had the opportunity to perform to their maximum potential in this element of the assessment, by creating as realistic a situation as possible.

There were a few issues relating to what constitutes a formal/competitive situation, in activities such as boxing and athletics, as well as some of the game activities.

In the boxing activity, it is necessary, as informed by England Boxing, that candidates perform a competitive bout of 3 x 2-minute rounds, with candidates following the National Governing Body's guidelines and being supervised by someone with specialist experience in this area. This does mean that contact is expected, in addition to the skills in isolation being demonstrated. Other 'competitive' situations, such as sparring do not meet the assessment requirements for this activity.

For the athletics activity, it is necessary that candidates demonstrate a fully competitive race or event against appropriately challenging opposition. It does not reflect higher marks, seeing a candidate running a 1500m on their own or a javelin thrower performing three throws on their own, without any form of competition. A good example of a single candidate who was being moderated in the long jump was reported. The competitive element included three other candidates of an appropriate level of ability, and therefore competition. All completed three measured jumps, with the candidate who was being moderated requiring a personal best to beat one of the other competitors who led him/her by 2cms. The moderated candidate put in a highly motivated performance to beat his/her PB and win the competition. It is acknowledged and appreciated that more centres are now recognising the importance of using local athletics facilities, including tartan or similar surface tracks, and specialist throwing and jumping areas to create a realistic, as well as safe situation for their candidates to perform at their maximum potential and justify the marks that had been awarded to them for the application of skills, techniques and decision-making in a formal/competitive situation in athletics activities.

It is important that centres structure their assessment and moderation sessions to ensure that all elements of the assessment criteria for the application of skills, techniques and decision-making in a formal/competitive situation are included. The final mark that is awarded should be one that is a 'best fit', including the assessment not only of the candidates' performances of the physical skills, but also of communication skills (where applicable in a team activity), influence on self and others during a performance, decision-making during the performance, application of tactics, as well as adherence to and application of the rules and regulations/health and safety guidelines of the activity. Candidates do not benefit from 'just' playing a game in the hope that the evidence of all/most of the assessment traits occurs by default.

The addition of small-sided conditioned games would also aid the transition between the skills in isolation and the competitive situation.

Adherence to the rules and regulations of a sport/physical activity

It is important to ensure that the competitive games are officiated correctly, and by suitably knowledgeable officials implementing all rules and regulations of the sport competently and to enhance the competitive element for those who are taking part and those being moderated. This was notably lacking in badminton, table tennis, netball and handball. For example, one game of badminton played up to 21 points is recommended with an umpire officiating at the side of the court.

It is expected that where a centre can demonstrate evidence of candidates taking part in a full-sided competitive game i.e., an 11 v 11 football match, that this would be played on a full-size pitch. It is also a requirement that candidates should have access to a range of resources/equipment to enable them to meet the practical demands of their chosen activities. Resources and equipment used should follow governing body guidelines/rules, for example, the wearing of shin pads as stated in The Association Football rules book and having the correct size goals for handball and football.

Time allocated for the moderation of the skills in isolation and the application of skills, techniques and decision-making in a formal/competitive situation

It was reported that some centres do not get the balance right between the time allocated for the performance of the skills in isolation and the application of skills. Some spend too much time on the skills in isolation leaving insufficient time for the moderation of the competitive game. Others reportedly rush through the skills in isolation. There should be a balance between the two. During a one-hour long session, it is possible to observe candidates performing the skills in isolation for 25-30 minutes, with 30-35 minutes being allocated for the competitive game such as allowing 15/20 minutes for each half, if playing football. This is a guideline however, as the time allotted will depend on the number of candidates being moderated in the activity and what the activity is. It is also important to timetable sessions accordingly to avoid candidate fatigue, especially when they are involved in the moderation of more than one activity.

It is important to ensure that the moderator is able to see enough evidence of both elements of the assessment criteria – the skills in isolation and the application of skills, techniques, and decision-making in a formal/competitive situation. The evidence for both should also be shown separately. For example, it is not acceptable to agree with a centre's marks if a dance routine is shown as the only piece of evidence or a candidate performing in one round of golf. If a moderator does not see both and/or enough evidence of the assessment criteria it is unlikely that they will agree with the centres' marks, as they can only make their judgement based on the evidence provided. This is applicable to both live centre visit moderation and moderation by digital submission.

Remote-based Moderations

Remote moderation centres continue to leave submission of evidence until close to the end of the moderation window. This is not ideal as if there are any problems, for example with 'missing' evidence or centres have difficulty uploading the video material on the Learner Work Transfer (LWT) portal, unnecessary delays may occur and could be to the detriment of the candidates' marks.

Where a live centre visit takes place and includes the moderation of video evidence, centres are reminded that a suitable room should be provided for the moderator to view the video evidence, without the teachers from the centre being present.

It was found that the quality of the footage varied considerably. The best examples were those who had clearly followed the specification and NEA guidelines and had clearly edited the video to show skills in isolation, with each skill being shown in an individual section with captions indicating what was being demonstrated. This extended to the application of skills, where information such as the level of difficulty, moguls or off-piste runs in skiing, for example, were clearly identified to ensure candidates could access the relevant bands in line with their true ability.

It is acknowledged that filming any activity is challenging, although the importance of providing clear and adequate evidence to justify the marks that have been awarded by the teacher-assessors cannot be underestimated.

The full list of guidelines and requirements concerning the recording of the practical performances can be found in the specification in **Appendix 4: Recording practical performances**. Furthermore, a document entitled '**Guidance on Video Recording**' is available to download on the subject webpage.

Mixed reports were received about the quality of video evidence viewed this year. There are still several issues which prevent moderators from seeing the justification of marks that have been awarded to candidates, at the higher levels. These are as follows:

- Candidates are not introducing themselves at the beginning of every activity or wearing sufficiently clear forms of identification throughout the activities. The latter can be achieved **by candidates wearing coloured and/or numbered bibs with numbers being worn on the back and front of the bibs/shirts**. White numbers/letters on red bibs appear to be very clear on film. This is also applicable to live moderation.
- In some cases, candidates introduced themselves at the beginning of an activity wearing one bib i.e., the skills in isolation, and then wore a different bib when participating in another part of the film i.e., the application of skills, which made it very difficult for the moderator to identify them. It is recommended that candidates wear the same bib/identification throughout the moderation of the skills in isolation and the application of skills.
- Video evidence should not be submitted as a series of clips, especially from different times. The evidence should be presented as one piece of

continuous footage, although the skills in isolation and the application of skills can be filmed separately.

- Some centres are showing either too little or too much footage as evidence. Just as in the case of a live moderation, all evidence must be shown from both elements of the assessment criteria. Where it is a requirement that candidates demonstrate four skills in isolation, it is necessary only to show that number – no more and no less. The skills should be performed in progressively and increasingly demanding and challenging situations and shown in the context of the activity being performed. **The application of skills should be shown as one game** (as has previously been stated) – if showing football, netball, hockey, handball, basketball or rugby, for example, two halves of approximately a minimum of 10-15 minutes each can be used. If showing rock climbing, the three best climbs on a wall of an appropriate level of difficulty should be shown. In skiing, the candidate should be filmed ‘attacking’ a range of increasingly challenging and difficult terrain such as moguls and narrow corridors, on red and/or black slopes – if they are accessing the higher-level marks.
- The skills in isolation should be assessed based on the preparation, execution, and recovery of a skill/technique. The camera, therefore, needs to capture the whole performance of a skill, such as in badminton, tennis or table tennis, where the shuttle/ball lands on the court or the table. Similarly, in athletics, it is a requirement when filming a competitive situation such as a running event, to see the start as well as the finish.
- It is obvious that some centres are not checking the quality of the video that is being submitted, which is a pity as the moderator can only mark on what evidence they are able to see. If all evidence is not available to the moderator and it is unclear as to who or what they are watching it is likely that they will recommend an adjustment of marks. Centres should check the quality of the video that is viewed by or sent to the moderator and ensure that the evidence suitably justifies the marks that have been awarded. This could be conducted during the internal moderation stage.
- Candidates continue to take responsibility for providing their own video evidence for their off-site activities, such as equestrian, boxing, dance, cycling and golf. This is often being done with little support or guidance from centres. Some centres are failing to check the quality of the evidence that is being submitted by their candidates. A contributing factor could be that an insufficient amount of time is allowed to collect the evidence and fully scrutinise it against the marking criteria. Of more concern is that some are relying on external coaches and instructors to mark the activities without necessarily having a thorough understanding of the assessment criteria. Centres are responsible for marking all activities using the criteria, as they would for any activity that is school-based. It is advised that centres take responsibility to

make sure that enough evidence is presented, that it is of good quality and that it has been accurately marked against the activity criteria. A system of internal standardisation is also recommended where there are several different people involved in the assessment process, and especially where candidates have been filmed in off-site activities.

- It is the responsibility of centres to ensure that all video evidence is correctly and accurately labelled and includes appropriate annotations.
- Candidates at the smaller centres struggled to perform in alignment with the marks that were awarded as they did not have the same level of support from their peers as those at the larger centres. It is important that those who have been assessed and are being filmed for moderation have the same or better level of opposition when playing in a formal/competitive situation. This will enable them the opportunity to justify the marks that have been awarded by their teacher assessor.
- The use of music as an overlay for activities is not a requirement and centres should be discouraged from doing so.
- As with visiting moderations, those centres who submit their evidence by video must have evidence of all their assessed activities for all candidates available for the moderator to sample. This should be prepared well in advance of the date for digital submission. It is not appropriate for the sample to be selected by the moderator and then for the centre to film the candidates performing in the sampled activities. This could prove to be problematic in the event of any changes or if the centre has difficulties uploading the evidence.
- Centres are advised to read through the published documents to further support them with filming evidence for moderation, such as **The Guidance on Video Recording Help Sheet**.

Administration

Communication between centres and moderators was generally very good, and most deadlines were met. This is despite problems caused by a long spell of inclement weather and industrial action which caused the postponement and rearrangement of visits. Some centres still had problems with submitting evidence on LWT, although once again, most deadlines were met. Centres should refer to the published documents, such as **The GCSE and A Level Physical Education Digital Submission Guidance** for further support on how to submit their practical performance evidence on LWT.

It is important to remember to upload centre marks onto Edexcel Online in advance so that the clerical check can be carried out prior to moderation sampling being completed.

End

It is hoped that this report will prove to be constructive in helping to raise achievement in future series.

Thank you to all for your positive contribution and hard work in making a success of this moderation series.

Kind Regards,

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