

GCSE, AS and A Level Physical Education: Decisions on Conditions and Guidance



In March 2015 we published a consultation about the rules and guidance that we proposed to put in place for reformed GCSEs, AS and A levels in physical education.

This consultation set out draft Subject Level Conditions and guidance which would apply to all reformed GCSEs, AS and A levels in physical education.

We have reviewed the responses to the consultation and are now announcing our decisions. We are also publishing a more detailed analysis of the responses.¹

GCSE physical education

Conditions

We proposed to require all reformed GCSEs in physical education to:

- comply with the subject content requirements published by the Department for Education,² and with our assessment objectives;
- in line with our previous decisions, allocate 40 per cent of marks to non-exam assessment, with the remaining 60 per cent allocated to exams; and
- comply with our rules and guidance around assessments.

Respondents did not comment on these proposals.

We have reviewed our proposed conditions following consultation and are satisfied that they are fit for purpose and consistent with our overall approach to reformed GCSEs. We have therefore decided to confirm our proposals.

Assessment requirements

We proposed to introduce the following requirements for non-exam assessment in reformed GCSEs in physical education:

¹ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-as-and-a-level-reform-regulations-for-physical-education

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-physical-education

- Non-exam assessment will separately test performance skills (weighted at 30 per cent of total marks) and analysis and evaluation of performance (weighted at 10 per cent of total marks).
- In line with the subject content requirements, students must be assessed in the role of player/performer in three different sports or activities drawn from the lists published by the Department for Education, including at least one team activity and one individual activity.
- Exam boards will set the non-exam assessment tasks. Exam boards may mark the non-exam assessments themselves, or moderate schools' internal marking.
- Wherever possible, marks will be moderated by observing live performances. Exam boards must ensure that all the performances they observe for moderation are recorded. This is to provide evidence of moderation decisions, and to allow schools to appeal against those decisions.
- For the limited range of sports where live moderation is not possible, exam boards must require schools to obtain video evidence to support their marks, and to provide that evidence when it is needed for moderation.

Respondents broadly supported our proposed approach, which is similar to current GCSEs. Some respondents raised concerns about our proposals for the use of video recording and the burden it could place on schools.

To confirm, we do not expect schools to record all students' performances, and this is not what our proposed requirements would mean. The only occasions where recordings would be needed are to provide evidence of:

- students' performance in sports that cannot be moderated using live moderation; and
- moderation decisions taken by exam boards.

We have reviewed our proposed assessment requirements following consultation and are satisfied that they are fit for purpose. We have decided to confirm our proposals, with minor changes to wording for consistency with other GCSE subjects.

Assessment objectives

We consulted on a minor change to the wording of assessment objective AO4 that broadened the types of performance that students could analyse (in line with the subject content). The majority of respondents supported this and we have therefore chosen to adopt the proposed change.

Guidance

We proposed to introduce guidance clarifying the interpretation of our assessment objectives.

Respondents broadly supported our proposed guidance, although some suggested opportunities to improve the wording.

In response to these comments, we have made changes to the drafting where necessary to clarify our expectations.

AS and A level physical education

Conditions

We proposed to require all reformed AS and A levels in physical education to:

- comply with the subject content requirements published by the Department for Education,³ and with our assessment objectives;
- in line with our previous decisions, allocate 30 per cent of marks to non-exam assessment, with the remaining 70 per cent allocated to exams; and
- comply with our rules and guidance around assessments.

Respondents did not comment on these proposals.

We have reviewed our proposed conditions following consultation and are satisfied that they are fit for purpose and consistent with our overall approach to reformed AS and A level qualifications. We have therefore decided to confirm our proposed conditions.

Assessment requirements

We proposed to introduce the following requirements for non-exam assessment in reformed AS and A levels in physical education:

- Non-exam assessment will separately test performance skills and analysis and evaluation of performance (weighted at 15 per cent of total marks each).
- In line with the subject content requirements, students must be assessed in the role of player/performer or coach in one activity drawn from the lists published by the Department for Education.
- Exam boards will set the non-exam assessment tasks. Exam boards may mark the non-exam assessments themselves, or moderate schools' internal marking.

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-physical-education

- Wherever possible, marks will be moderated by observing live performances. Exam boards must ensure that all the performances they observe for moderation are recorded. This is to provide evidence of moderation decisions, and to allow schools to appeal against those decisions.
- For the limited range of sports where live moderation is not possible, exam boards must require schools to obtain video evidence to support their marks, and to provide that evidence when it is needed for moderation.

As with GCSE, respondents broadly supported our proposed approach. Some respondents raised concerns about our proposals for the use of video recording and the burden it could place on schools.

Again, we want to be clear that we do not expect schools to record all students' performances, and this is not what our proposed requirements would mean. The only occasions where recordings would be needed are to provide evidence of:

- students' performance in sports that cannot be moderated using live moderation; and
- moderation decisions taken by exam boards.

We have reviewed our proposed assessment requirements following consultation and are satisfied that they are fit for purpose. We have therefore decided to confirm our proposals, with minor changes to wording for consistency with other subjects.

Assessment objectives

As at GCSE, we consulted on a minor change to the wording of assessment objective AO4 that broadened the types of performance that students could analyse (in line with the subject content). The majority of respondents supported this and we have therefore chosen to adopt the proposed change.

Guidance

We proposed to introduce guidance clarifying the interpretation of our assessment objectives.

Respondents broadly supported our proposed guidance, although some suggested opportunities to improve the wording. In response to these comments, we have made changes to the drafting where necessary to clarify our expectations.

Issues outside the scope of the consultation

A number of respondents also commented on issues outside the scope of the consultation, including:

- the balance between theoretical and practical skills in the subject content;

- the range of sports/activities available for students;
- the level of demand of the subject content (particularly at A level); and
- the weighting of non-exam assessment.

The subject content – including the permitted list of sports/activities and the balance between theoretical and practical content – is a matter for the Department for Education, which has carried out its own consultation⁴ prior to taking decisions on the subject content.

We have already taken decisions on the weighting of non-exam assessment following an earlier consultation.⁵ Respondents did not raise any new issues that cause us to revisit these earlier decisions. Our view remains that the balance between exam and non-exam assessment is appropriate given the expectations set out in the Department for Education’s subject content.

Next steps

We have published the following documents which set out our final rules and guidance for reformed GCSEs, AS and A levels in physical education:

- *GCSE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education*⁶
- *GCSE Subject Level Guidance for Physical Education*⁷
- *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education*⁸
- *GCE Subject Level Guidance for Physical Education*.⁹

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/consultations/gcse-and-a-level-reform

⁵ <http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20141110161323/http://comment.ofqual.gov.uk/developing-new-qualifications-for-2016/>

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-physical-education

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gcse-9-to-1-subject-level-guidance-for-physical-education

⁸ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-conditions-and-requirements-for-physical-education

⁹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-subject-level-guidance-for-physical-education