

GCE AS and A Level Subject Criteria for Physical Education

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The criteria

Introduction

AS and A level subject criteria set out the knowledge, understanding, skills and assessment objectives common to all AS and A level specifications in a given subject. They provide the framework within which the awarding body creates the detail of the specification.

Aims and objectives

1. AS and A level specifications in Physical Education should encourage learners to become increasingly **physically competent** by:
 - developing the skills and techniques they require to perform effectively in physical activities;
 - applying and adapting a wide range of skills and techniques effectively in different types of physical activity;
 - developing and applying their skills in different roles, such as performer, leader and official within physical activities;
 - applying their skills in different contexts within a physical activity.
2. AS and A level specifications in Physical Education should **enable learners to maintain and develop their involvement and effectiveness in physical activity** through:
 - developing their knowledge and understanding of factors that enable them and others to be physically active:
 - as part of a balanced lifestyle;
 - as part of a lifelong involvement in an active and healthy lifestyle;
 - developing their knowledge and understanding of the relationship between skill, strategy/composition, and body and mind readiness in ensuring effective and efficient performance in their own and others' roles such as performer, leader and official.
3. AS and A level specifications in Physical Education should enable learners to be informed and discerning decision makers who understand how to be involved in physical activity through helping them to:

- understand how they and others make the most of the opportunities and pathways available to be involved in physical activity;
- understand and critically evaluate how contemporary products and consumer-focused influences related to physical activity affect and inform young people's decisions about being involved in a range of physical activities;
- understand and critically evaluate current key influences that might limit or encourage young people's involvement in physical activity.

Subject content

4. AS and A level specifications in physical education should build on the skills, knowledge and understanding set out in the National Curriculum documents for England, Northern Ireland and Wales at key stage 4, and accommodate those learners who have followed GCSE physical education.
5. AS specifications should be concerned with developing learners' physical competence:
 - in different contexts within a physical activity;
 - in roles such as performer, leader and official by:
 - developing the skills and techniques required to perform effectively in specific activities;
 - enabling learners to apply and adapt these skills and techniques effectively across different types of activity;
 - developing learners' knowledge and understanding of roles such as performer, leader and official;
 - helping learners to develop their knowledge and understanding about what constitutes effective performance in these different roles;
 - developing the depth of learners' ability to analyse the effectiveness of the components of performance and their influence on the overall quality of the performance in roles such as performer, leader and official;

- developing the learners' skills of analysis and evaluation to identify key priorities for improving performance;
 - prioritising a range of solutions and using these effectively to improve both the components and the performance as a whole.
6. A level specifications should be concerned with further developing and refining learners' competence in physical activity as a performer or a leader or an official by:
- developing deeper knowledge and understanding of the relationships between the components of performance in their chosen role;
 - developing their ability to analyse performance critically, identifying key factors that affect its quality, effectiveness and efficiency;
 - developing their ability to make critical changes and adaptations to performance to improve its quality, effectiveness and efficiency.
7. AS and A level specifications should be concerned with enabling learners to maintain and develop their involvement and effectiveness in lifelong physical activity as part of a balanced lifestyle by:
- helping them to identify and understand the various factors and influences that impact on them and others, and remaining involved in physical activity;
 - planning ways for them and others to be active and achieve a work/life balance amid conflicting pressures and demands;
 - understanding what constitutes a balanced, active lifestyle;
 - identifying the ways in which a lifelong involvement in physical activity can be achieved.
8. A level specifications should be further concerned with helping learners to become increasingly discerning about why and how they and others choose to get involved in physical activity by:
- identifying the range of opportunities available to them in school, college, club, local communities, regionally or nationally for developing their interests and expertise in different activities;

- following their interests in roles such as performer, leader or official through their chosen activities for the purpose of recreation, elite performance, further study, volunteering or career opportunities.
9. A level specifications should be further concerned with helping learners to become informed and discerning decision makers about being involved in physical activity. They should ensure learners develop the skills and methods with which to evaluate critically contemporary key influences that have a significant impact on young people's participation in physical activity. They should further develop a:
- deeper knowledge and understanding of the effects of involvement in physical activity on young people's wellbeing, health and fitness;
 - critical understanding of how to make the most of influences, opportunities and products to increase young people's participation in healthy physical activity; and
 - critical understanding of how to make young people more likely to make a lifelong commitment to being involved in physical activity.

Assessment objectives

10. Knowledge, understanding and skills are closely linked. Specifications should require that learners demonstrate the following assessment objectives in the context of the content and skills prescribed at AS and A level.
11. The following weightings reflect the importance of physical education as learning both in and through physical activity.

Assessment objectives		Weighting		
		AS level	A2 level	A level
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical activity	35–45%	25–35%	30–40%
AO2	Demonstrate the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding in physical activity	40–50%	30–40%	35–45%
AO3	Demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate critically physical	10–20%	30–40%	20–30%

	activity			
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Scheme of assessment

Internal assessment

12. All AS and A level specifications in physical education must have internal assessment with a weighting of between 30 and 50 per cent. Internal assessment should not constitute more than 50 per cent of A2.
13. Where internal assessment is included, specifications must make clear how reliability and fairness are secured, by setting out requirements that ensure the robustness of each stage of the internal assessment, i.e.:
 - the specific skills to be assessed;
 - setting of tasks;
 - extent of supervision in carrying out of tasks;
 - conditions under which assessment takes place;
 - marking of the assessment and internal standardising procedures;
 - any moderation process.

Synoptic assessment

14. All specifications should include synoptic assessment. The synoptic assessment will be set in A2 units. Synoptic assessment in physical education requires learners to draw together the three aims of the subject criteria.

AS performance descriptions for Physical Education

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3
Assessment objectives	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical activity.	Demonstrate the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding in physical activity.	Demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate critically physical activity.
A/B boundary performance descriptions	<p>Learner characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) show a good knowledge and understanding of the roles of performer, leader and/or official and what constitutes effective performance in those roles; b) show a good knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a balanced active lifestyle and how it may be achieved; c) communicate well through the careful selection and use of appropriate technical language. 	<p>Learner characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) accurately apply diverse knowledge taken from the wider context of the AS specification, supporting it well with relevant examples; b) apply appropriate techniques and principles designed to develop an improvement in performance across different types of activity. 	<p>Learner characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) show good ability to analyse the effectiveness of components of performance; b) use their skills of analysis and evaluation to identify key priorities for improving performance; c) organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments in a clear, logical and appropriate form, taking into account the use of specialist vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling.

<p>E/U boundary performance descriptions</p>	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) show some knowledge and understanding of the roles of performer, leader and/or official and what constitutes effective performance in those roles; b) show some knowledge and understanding of what constitutes a balanced active lifestyle and how it may be achieved; c) use limited technical language with some accuracy. 	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) apply knowledge taken from the AS specification, supporting it with some relevant examples; b) show some ability to apply techniques and principles designed to develop an improvement in performance. 	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) show some ability to analyse the effectiveness of components of performance; b) use their skills of analysis and evaluation to identify some ways of improving performance; c) organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments in a reasonably logical manner, using some specialist vocabulary.
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A2 performance descriptions for Physical Education

	Assessment objective 1	Assessment objective 2	Assessment objective 3
Assessment objectives	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of physical activity.	Demonstrate the ability to apply skills, knowledge and understanding in physical activity.	Demonstrate the ability to analyse and evaluate critically physical activity.
A/B boundary performance descriptions	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <p>a) show a good in-depth knowledge and understanding of the roles of performer, leader and/or official and the relationships between the components of effective performance in those roles;</p> <p>b) show a good in-depth knowledge and understanding of the effects of involvement in physical activity on wellbeing, health and fitness and how best to promote that involvement;</p> <p>c) communicate well through the careful selection and wide use of appropriate technical language.</p>	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <p>a) accurately apply diverse knowledge taken from the wider context of the A2 specification, supporting it well with relevant examples;</p> <p>b) show good judgement in applying appropriate techniques and principles designed to make changes and adaptations to improve the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of performance.</p>	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <p>a) show good ability to analyse the effectiveness of components of performance;</p> <p>b) use their skills of critical analysis and evaluation to identify key priorities for improving performance;</p> <p>c) organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments in a clear, informed, logical and appropriate form, taking into account the use of specialist vocabulary, grammar, punctuation and spelling.</p>

<p>E/U boundary performance descriptions</p>	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) show some knowledge and understanding of the roles of performer, leader and/or official and what constitutes effective performance in those roles; b) show some knowledge and understanding of the effects of involvement in physical activity on wellbeing, health and fitness and make some suggestions as to how to promote that involvement; c) use technical language with some accuracy. 	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) apply knowledge taken from the A2 specification, supporting it with some relevant examples; b) show some ability to apply techniques and principles designed to develop an improvement in the quality, effectiveness and efficiency of performance. 	<p>Learners characteristically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) show some ability to analyse the effectiveness of components of performance; b) use their skills of analysis and evaluation to identify some ways of improving performance; c) organise and present information, ideas, descriptions and arguments in a reasonably logical manner, using some specialist vocabulary.
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