



Department  
for Education

# Physical education

**GCSE short course subject content**

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# Contents

The content for physical education GCSE short course	3
Introduction	3
Aims and objectives	3
Subject content	3
Scope of study	4

# The content for physical education GCSE short course

## Introduction

1. The GCSE short course subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all GCSE short course specifications in physical education. Together with the assessment objectives, this content provides the framework within which awarding organisations create the detail of their specifications.

## Aims and objectives

2. GCSE study in physical education must be broad, coherent and practical, must encourage students to be inspired, motivated and challenged by the subject, and must enable them to make informed decisions about further educational opportunities and career pathways.

3. GCSE short course specifications in physical education must equip students with the knowledge, understanding, skills and values to develop and maintain their performance in physical activities and understand the benefits to health, fitness and wellbeing. This will require students to:

- develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance
- understand how the physiological affects performance in physical activity and sport
- perform effectively in different physical activities by developing skills and techniques, and selecting and using tactics, strategies and/or compositional ideas
- develop their ability to analyse and evaluate to improve performance in physical activity and sport
- understand the contribution which physical activity and sport make to health, fitness and wellbeing

## Subject content

4. GCSE short course specifications in physical education must enable students to make the connections between theory and practice so that they are able to apply their understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport to improve performance. Students will be required to use the technical vocabulary, terminology and definitions associated with the study of physical education.

5. The content sets out the full range of content for GCSE short course specifications in physical education. Awarding organisations may increase the depth and breadth within the specified topics in order to consolidate teaching of the subject.

## Scope of study

6. GCSE short course specifications in physical education must require students to demonstrate knowledge, understanding and skills in the following areas:

### Applied anatomy and physiology

- the key body systems and how they impact on health, fitness and performance in physical activity and sport, including:
  - the structure and functions of the musculo-skeletal system
  - the structure and functions of the cardio-respiratory system
  - anaerobic and aerobic exercise
  - the short and long term effects of exercise

### Movement analysis

- the basic principles of movement and their effect on performance in physical activity and sport, including:
  - lever systems, examples of their use in activity and the mechanical advantage they provide in movement
  - planes and axes of movement

### Use of data

- data analysis in relation to key areas of physical activity and sport, including:
  - demonstrate an understanding of how data are collected – both qualitative and quantitative
  - present data (including tables and graphs)
  - analyse and evaluate data

### Health, fitness and wellbeing

- the benefits of participating in physical activity and sport to health, fitness and wellbeing, including:
  - physical, emotional and social health, fitness and wellbeing
  - the consequences of a sedentary lifestyle
  - energy use, diet, nutrition and hydration

### Practical performance

7. Specifications must require students to develop their ability and aptitude in two different physical activities in the role of player/performer. One of these must be in a team sport/activity and one must be in an individual sport/activity. Through these activities, students must be required to:

- demonstrate skills in physical activity and sport, applying appropriate technique(s)
- demonstrate appropriate decision making skills, strategies and/or compositional ideas within physical activity and sport, taking into account personal strengths and weaknesses
- demonstrate ideas and problem solving solutions in spontaneous and/or pre-determined ways whilst under pressure in physical activity and sport
- use appropriate physical characteristics/attributes (e.g. strength, stamina, speed, agility, flexibility and coordination) to achieve successful performance in physical activity and sport
- demonstrate psychological control (e.g. arousal, anxiety and aggression) to achieve successful performance (and fair play) in physical activity and sport
- adhere to 'rules', health and safety guidelines, and consider appropriate risk management strategies in physical activity and sport
- demonstrate their ability in team sports and activities by:
  - applying team strategies and/or compositional ideas taking account of the strengths and weaknesses of fellow team member(s), as appropriate
  - showing awareness of, and responding to, the actions of other player(s)/performer(s)
  - communicating effectively with other player(s)/performer(s)
  - demonstrating their individual role in achieving the collective outcome



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