

AS

# PHYSICAL EDUCATION

7581/W Factors affecting participation in physical activity and sport  
Report on the Examination

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7581  
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## **General Comments**

This was the second 7581/W AS Physical Education paper and the numbers sitting the paper were down on 2017. The mean mark for this year's paper was also lower than in 2017.

A common mistake seen was students not responding appropriately to the command words, which resulted in them missing out on marks. Interpretation of the command word 'discuss' (questions, 07 and 20) highlighted this point, with many students only gaining up to half marks due to not identifying the impacts of disadvantages in the context of the question.

It was often clear that students understood a topic area, but had not applied or evaluated effectively when required by the question. Often students regurgitated knowledge, with this being particularly evident in the extended answer (8 marks) questions. However, it was very pleasing to see some excellent responses, whereby students had met the assessment objectives very well. Additionally, it was very clear to see where teachers had adapted their teaching to focus on the assessment objectives (AOs) to allow students to access the marks on this more rigorous style of assessment. The application of knowledge was often applied more appropriately in the extended answer responses.

The number of lines in the paper appeared to be well utilised, although some students crammed additional text around and below the designated response space provided. Teachers should work upon the structuring of responses with students, as many of the responses that went on to additional pages included repeated knowledge or application, and many students gained no additional marks. The best responses only ever used the response space provided and met the assessment objectives very well. To respond effectively to extended answer questions, students need to have a thorough knowledge and understanding, which will then allow them to apply and evaluate the impacts of theory.

The multiple choice questions (MCQs) provided evidence of good differentiation. As per 2017 series a number of students were unable to complete the MCQs as directed in the paper and instead circled, ticked or crossed in the box. Again, although students did not lose marks for this, teachers should ensure that students follow the instructions in the paper.

## **Section A – Applied physiology**

### **Questions 01 and 02**

Question 01 provided a good challenge with approximately only a quarter of students identifying the correct plane and axis of motion. Although still challenging, students performed better on 02 with approximately two thirds of students correctly identifying the definition for expiratory reserve volume.

### **Question 03**

This question proved difficult for students, with few getting full marks. Answers were often too vague.

**Question 04**

Many students were able to access some marks, although many missed marks because of a lack of clarity in their descriptions of identified mechanisms. Knowledge needs to be accurately described. For example, it is not the muscle pump that contracts, but the skeletal muscles that contract, which compress nearby veins, squeezing the blood back to the heart.

**Question 05**

This question created good differentiation with just under half of students gaining 2 or 3 marks. It was clear that some students had a very good knowledge of the cardiac conduction system and had applied it to the heart, whereas others had included irrelevant theory or produced very muddled responses with no clarity or coherence. Some students just listed structural features and did not say how this causes the heart to contract. The better answers referenced the generation and flow of the impulse, alongside the effect this had on causing atria and ventricles to contract.

**Question 06.1**

Most students were familiar with the formula and were able to make the calculation, but only a quarter of students gained full marks for using the correct units.

**Question 06.2**

This question created a good range of marks with a fairly even percentage of students being awarded 1, 2 and 3 marks. Those students awarded 3 marks were explaining the how and why of any identified points with more detail.

**Question 07**

A well answered question by students and it was pleasing to see an application to the 200m sprinter being made in a large number of responses. It is worthwhile students considering the context within questions, as although the command word here was 'discuss', the advantages and disadvantages needed to be impacted upon the sprinter and other relevant factors could have been considered, eg the expense of the supplementation, with side effects outweighing any stated benefits.

**Question 08**

The first of the extended answer questions targeted synoptic assessment and saw range of marks awarded and differentiated well. There was excellent application and evaluation evident in some responses and this centred upon a sound understanding of the topic areas. It was evident that when students had a sound knowledge of the theory they were able to apply this well and evaluate the impact upon the long jumper achieving an effective take-off. In a small number of cases, students did not identify the correct topic areas, with motor units and muscle fibre types being covered as the main theory. Schools and colleges should focus on ensuring students can be awarded in the higher banding by evaluating the impact upon performance or context set within extended answer questions. All extended answer questions have the same assessment objective weightings; knowledge and understanding (AO1) = 2, application (AO2) = 3, analysis and/or evaluation (AO3) = 3.

## **Section B – Skill acquisition and sports psychology**

### **Questions 09 and 10**

Approximately half of students correctly identified the type of goal in question 09. Question 10 was the most accessible question on the paper, with nearly all students able to correctly identify the type of transfer.

### **Question 11**

This question was not well answered as students appeared to have limited knowledge of Vygotsky's social development theory and therefore struggled to apply effectively to learning a new skill in badminton. A minority of students understood this new aspect of theory in the specification well and were able to successfully apply it, and these students gained 3 or 4 marks. Some students had clearly been taught the theory very well but did not gain many marks as they failed to apply it to the context.

### **Question 12**

A challenging 6 mark question, but some excellent responses were seen and schools/colleges should be credited for developing some excellent assessment skills within their students. Successful responses to this question were where students had considered the command word of (evaluate), noted the importance of the word 'impact' and finally recognised this in the context of the picture of a player about to take a penalty kick. Some students did not identify the correct theory, which then hindered their application and evaluation, whilst other students identified the relevant theory, but just regurgitated key facts and did not apply this to the context or evaluate its impact on the penalty taker.

Students need to appreciate that application (AO2) and evaluation (AO3) of knowledge will not only be assessed in the extended answer questions, but also within the shorter answer questions.

### **Question 13**

Approximately a third of students gained full marks for this question, but a similar percentage also gained 0 marks. It was very apparent that students either knew this topic area or didn't, and those who gained marks in the range between often missed out on marks because of inaccurate or poorly constructed descriptions. Often students identified the four processes, but then provided poor descriptions.

### **Question 14**

The majority of students were able to pick up some marks here, showing an understanding of the topic area. Some strategies identified would not have altered social loafing, so more careful identification of strategies was needed. Some students failed to consider the impact the strategies would have and therefore didn't pick up further marks, as there was a sub-max of 2 marks for identifying strategies.

**Question 15**

This was the least accessible of the extended answer questions. There were some very good responses, with some students meeting the assessment objects for this style of question. However, many students struggled to demonstrate an understanding of the topic area, which then affected their ability to apply and evaluate its impact on the behaviour of a team member in varying competitive situations. A small minority of students had a good grasp of the theory and were able to apply and evaluate more effectively. These were the students who accessed levels 3 or 4 in the mark scheme. In many cases, students failed to apply their knowledge and more often, evaluation was not apparent at all. It is important for schools and colleges to recognise that for students to receive marks in levels 3 and 4, application and evaluation of knowledge needs to be made often and coherently.

**Section C – Sport and society and technology in sport****Questions 16 and 17**

Question 16 proved more difficult than 17, with approximately three quarters of students able to identify the correct description of prejudice and even more able to identify reliability.

**Question 18**

The majority of students were able to access at least one mark here. Poorly identified characteristics were the main reason why students missed out on marks.

**Question 19**

Students struggled with this question, with approximately half of the cohort receiving zero marks. There were many wrong characteristics of an amateur during the time period identified.

**Question 20**

Many students missed out on marks because they talked about the pre-industrial and industrial revolution, rather than the post-World War II era, whilst many students either did not identify the effects of commercialisation enough or failed to identify any disadvantages. This was a 'discuss' question and therefore required students to consider advantages/positives and disadvantages/negatives of commercialisation on lawn tennis. The most common factor discussed was increased funding in the game.

**Question 21**

This question was the most poorly answered question on the paper, with the vast majority of students not knowing what social stratification was. There were a few exceptional responses but these really were a small minority. This is a topic but teachers are reminded that any area of the specification can be examined and can be assessed in a variety of ways against the assessment objectives.

### **Question 22**

It was pleasing to see that most students utilised the data in the table very well to highlight their points. However, the most popular marks awarded were 2 and 1, as often students did not identify enough points about gender and choice of sport over a five year period, whilst some students also repeated themselves, referring to the same point more than once. Some students went on to give possible reasons for the points they'd identified, which wasn't rewarded because the question required students to just state what the data in Table 2 showed.

### **Question 23**

This was the second question targeting synoptic assessment and it required students to talk about sports analytics and feedback. Many students failed to include one of the aspects in their responses, which meant that they received marks in the lower bands. Those students gaining 5, 6 or 7 marks had addressed all areas of the question, had good depth and breadth of knowledge with variations in the quality of their application and evaluation being seen.

### **Mark Ranges and Award of Grades**

Grade boundaries and cumulative percentage grades are available on the [Results Statistics](#) page of the AQA Website.