

REGULATION

GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education

February 2020 (supersedes Ofqual/15/5675)

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Introduction

About this document

This document (highlighted in the figure below) is part of a suite of documents which sets out the regulatory requirements for awarding organisations offering reformed A levels and AS qualifications.

We have developed all our requirements for GCE qualifications with the intention that AS and A level qualifications should fulfil the purposes set out in the table below:

A levels	AS qualifications
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • define and assess achievement of the knowledge, skills and understanding which will be needed by students planning to progress to undergraduate study at a UK higher education establishment, particularly (although not only) in the same subject area; • set out a robust and internationally comparable post-16 academic course of study to develop that knowledge, skills and understanding; • permit UK universities to accurately identify the level of attainment of students; • provide a basis for school and college accountability measures at age 18; and • provide a benchmark of academic ability for employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • provide evidence of students' achievements in a robust and internationally comparable post-16 course of study that is a subset of A level content; and • enable students to broaden the range of subjects they study.

Requirements set out in this document

This document sets out the GCE Subject Level Conditions for Physical Education.

It also sets out our requirements in relation to:

- assessment objectives – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCE(Physical Education)1.2; and
- assessment – awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCE (Physical Education)2.3.

Appendix 1 reproduces the subject content requirements for Physical Education, as published by the Department for Education.¹ Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements under Condition GCE(Physical Education)1.1.

With respect to the qualifications listed above, awarding organisations must also comply with:

¹ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-physical-education

GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education

- our *General Conditions of Recognition*,² which apply to all awarding organisations and qualifications;
- our *GCE Qualification Level Conditions and Requirements*;³ and
- all relevant Regulatory Documents.⁴

With respect to all other GCE Qualifications in Physical Education, awarding organisations must continue to comply with the General Conditions of Recognition, the *GCE Qualification Level Conditions*,⁵ and the relevant Regulatory Documents.

Revisions to this document

We have revised this document since it was originally published (see Appendix 2 for details), most recently in February 2020.

The February 2020 version of this document replaces all previous versions of *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education* with effect from 12:30pm on 14 February 2020. It incorporates the following change:

- updated Appendix 1 to incorporate the updated GCE PE activity list (published by Department for Education)

Summary of requirements

Subject Level Conditions	
GCE(Physical Education)1	Compliance with content requirements
GCE(Physical Education)2	Assessment

Assessment objectives

[Assessment objectives – GCE Qualifications in Physical Education](#)

Assessment requirements

[Requirements in relation to assessments for GCE Qualifications in Physical Education](#)

Appendix 1 – Subject content (published by Department for Education)

[GCE AS and A level Subject Content for Physical Education](#)

² www.gov.uk/government/publications/general-conditions-of-recognition

³ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-qualification-level-conditions-and-requirements

⁴ www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulatory-documents-list

⁵ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-qualification-level-conditions-for-pre-reform-qualifications

Subject Level Conditions

GCE Subject Level Conditions for Physical Education

Condition GCE(Physical Education)1	Compliance with content requirements
GCE(Physical Education)1.1	<p>In respect of each GCE Qualification in Physical Education which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) comply with the requirements relating to that qualification set out in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled ‘Physical Education GCE AS and A level subject content’,⁶ document reference DFE-00696-2014, (b) have regard to any recommendations or guidelines relating to that qualification set out in that document, and (c) interpret that document in accordance with any requirements, and having regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.
GCE(Physical Education)1.2	<p>In respect of each GCE Qualification in Physical Education which it makes available, or proposes to make available, an awarding organisation must comply with any requirements, and have regard to any guidance, relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for that qualification which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.</p>

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-physical-education

GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education

Condition	Assessment
GCE(Physical Education)2	
GCE(Physical Education)2.1	Condition GCE4.1 does not apply to any GCE Qualification in Physical Education which an awarding organisation makes available or proposes to make available.
GCE(Physical Education)2.2	<p>In respect of the total marks available for a GCE Qualification in Physical Education which it makes available, an awarding organisation must ensure that –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) 70 per cent of those marks are made available through Assessments by Examination, and(b) 30 per cent of those marks are made available through assessments set by the awarding organisation that are not Assessments by Examination.
GCE(Physical Education)2.3	An awarding organisation must ensure that in respect of each assessment for a GCE Qualification in Physical Education which it makes available which is not an Assessment by Examination it complies with any requirements, and has regard to any guidance, which may be published by Ofqual and revised from time to time.

Assessment objectives

Assessment objectives – GCE Qualifications in Physical Education

Condition GCE(Physical Education)1.2 allows us to specify requirements relating to the objectives to be met by any assessment for GCE Qualifications in Physical Education.

The assessment objectives set out below constitute requirements for the purposes of Condition GCE(Physical Education)1.2. Awarding organisations must comply with these requirements in relation to all GCE Qualifications in Physical Education they make available.

	Objective	Weighting (A level)	Weighting (AS)
AO1	Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport	20–25%	20–25%
AO2	Apply knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport	20–25%	20–25%
AO3	Analyse and evaluate the factors that underpin performance and involvement in physical activity and sport.	20–25%	20–25%
AO4	Demonstrate and apply relevant skills and techniques in physical activity and sport Analyse and evaluate performance	30%	30%

Assessment requirements

Requirements in relation to assessments for GCE Qualifications in Physical Education

Condition GCE(Physical Education)2.3 allows us to specify requirements and guidance in relation to assessments which are not Assessments by Examination for GCE Qualifications in Physical Education.

We set out our requirements for the purposes of Condition GCE(Physical Education)2.3 below.

Forms of non-examination assessment

Condition GCE(Physical Education)2.2(b) states that an awarding organisation must ensure that of the total marks available for a GCE Qualification in Physical Education, 30 per cent of those marks shall be made available through assessments set by the awarding organisation which are not Assessments by Examination.

In respect of that 30 per cent, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) 15 per cent of the total marks available for the qualification are made available through tasks which assess a Learner's performance in physical activity and sport (the 'Performance Assessment'), and
- (b) 15 per cent of the total marks available for the qualification are made available through a task which assesses a Learner's knowledge, skills and understanding in relation to analysis and evaluation of performance (the 'Performance Analysis Assessment').

The Performance Assessment

An awarding organisation must ensure that each Performance Assessment is designed and set to require each Learner to be assessed in the role of player/performer or coach in one sport or activity listed in the document published by the Secretary of State entitled 'GCE PE activity list',⁷ document reference DfE-00008-2020 (the 'Activity List').

In respect of each Performance Assessment involving a sport or activity which is not capable of live moderation, an awarding organisation must ensure that the Centre which delivered the assessment –

- (a) obtains an audiovisual recording of the evidence generated by each Learner in that assessment which allows the awarding organisation to effectively –
 - (i) moderate that assessment, and
 - (ii) authenticate the evidence generated by the Learner in that assessment, and
- (b) provides that recording to the awarding organisation on request.

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/gce-as-and-a-level-physical-education

The Performance Analysis Assessment

An awarding organisation must ensure that each Performance Analysis Assessment is designed and set to require each Learner to analyse either their own or another's performance in a sport or activity listed in the Activity List.

A Learner is not required to analyse, but is not precluded from analysing, his or her performance the sport or activity which he or she has undertaken for the purposes of the Performance Assessment.

Marking of assessments

Evidence generated by a Learner in an assessment for a GCE Qualification in Physical Education which is not an Assessment by Examination may be marked –

- (a) by the awarding organisation or a person connected to the awarding organisation,
- (b) by a Centre, or
- (c) through a combination of (a) and (b).

In any event, the awarding organisation must demonstrate to Ofqual's satisfaction in its assessment strategy that –

- (a) it has taken all reasonable steps to identify the risk of any Adverse Effect which may result from its approach to marking of assessments (and moderation where appropriate), and
- (b) where such a risk is identified, it has taken all reasonable steps to prevent that Adverse Effect or, where it cannot be prevented, to mitigate that Adverse Effect.

In respect of any performance by a Learner which it observes for the purposes of live moderation, an awarding organisation must ensure that –

- (a) a complete audiovisual recording is made of the evidence used to support the outcome of that moderation, and
- (b) that recording is retained by the awarding organisation for a sufficient period of time to allow for the completion of –
 - (i) all relevant enquiries about results and appeals, and
 - (ii) all appropriate steps to correct or, where relevant, to mitigate the effect of any failure discovered through such enquiries about results and appeals.

Appendix 1: Subject content (published by Department for Education)



Department
for Education

Physical Education

GCE AS and A level subject content

January 2015

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The content for physical education AS and A level

Introduction

1. The AS and A level subject content sets out the knowledge, understanding and skills common to all AS and A level specifications in physical education to ensure progression from key stage 4 and the possibility of development on to further study. It provides the framework within which awarding organisations create the detail of the subject specification. GCE specifications in physical education must reflect the subject aims and objectives.

Aims and objectives

2. AS and A level specifications in physical education should equip students with both a depth and breadth of knowledge, understanding and skills relating to scientific, socio-cultural and practical aspects of physical education. This will require them to:

- develop theoretical knowledge and understanding of the factors that underpin physical activity and sport and use this knowledge to improve performance
- understand how physiological and psychological states affect performance
- understand the key socio-cultural factors that influence people's involvement in physical activity and sport
- understand the role of technology in physical activity and sport
- refine their ability to perform effectively in physical activity and sport 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
- understand the contribution which physical activity makes to health and fitness
- improve as effective and independent learners and as critical and reflective thinkers with curious and enquiring minds.

Subject content

Knowledge and understanding

3. The content sets out the full range of content for AS and A level specifications in physical education. Content in non-bold text must be covered in AS and A level

specifications; in addition, content in bold text and contained within square brackets must be covered in A level specifications. Awarding organisations may increase the depth and breadth within the specified topics.

4. AS and A level specifications in physical education must be of sufficient depth and breadth to allow students to develop the knowledge, understanding and skills specified below.

5. AS and A level physical education specifications must build on the knowledge, skills and understanding set out in the GCSE content for physical education.

6. Students will be expected to understand the interrelationship between the different areas of study and develop an awareness of the importance they all have collectively on performance.

7. AS and A level specifications in physical education will require students to be assessed in one practical activity as either a player/performer or coach.

8. A level specifications in physical education must cover the minimum content specified in each of the following topics. AS specifications must cover the minimum content specified in each of these topics except for the areas of knowledge and understanding in bold and contained in square brackets [] which are only required for the A level. The topics are:

- applied anatomy and exercise physiology
- biomechanical movement
- skill acquisition
- sport psychology
- sport and society
- the role of technology in physical activity and sport.

Applied anatomy and physiology

9. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of the changes within the body systems prior to exercise, during exercise of differing intensities, and during recovery. There is a minimum requirement for specifications to cover the following:

- musculo-skeletal system
- cardio-respiratory system

- neuromuscular system
- **[energy systems]**

10. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of the adaptations to the body systems specified in section 9 through training or lifestyle, and how these changes affect the efficiency of that system.

Exercise physiology

11. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of:

- diet and nutrition and their effect on physical activity and performance
- preparation and training methods in relation to maintaining and improving physical activity and performance
- **[injury prevention and the rehabilitation of injury]**

Biomechanical movement

12. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of motion and forces, and their relevance to performance in physical activity and sport. There is a minimum requirement for specifications to cover the following:

- biomechanical principles (newton's laws, force, centre of mass)
- levers (components, classes and mechanical advantage)
- analysis of movement in physical activities
- **[linear motion]**
- **[angular motion]**
- **[projectile motion]**
- **[fluid mechanics]**

Skill acquisition

13. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of the principles required in order to optimise the learning of new, and the development of existing, skills. There is a minimum requirement for specifications to cover the following:

- skills continuums and transfer of skills
- principles and theories of learning and performance

- how skill classification impacts on how practice is structured for learning
- use of guidance and feedback
- **[memory models]**

Sport psychology

14. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of the role sport psychology has in optimising performance in physical activity and sport. There is a minimum requirement for specifications to cover the following psychological factors in relation to performance:

- factors (personality, attitudes, arousal, anxiety, aggression, motivation and social facilitation) that can influence an individual in physical activities
- dynamics of a group/team and how they can influence the performance of an individual and/or team
- goal setting
- **[attribution theory]**
- **[self-efficacy]**
- **[leadership]**
- **[confidence]**
- **[stress management]**

Sport and society

15. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of the interaction between, and the evolution of, sport and society. There is a minimum requirement for specifications to cover the following:

- the factors leading to the emergence of modern sport through to the globalisation of sport in the 21st century
- the impact of sport on society and of society on sport
- **[the impact of ethics on sport and sporting ethics on society, including deviance in sport]**
- **[development routes from talent identification through to elite performance]**
- **[the impact of commercialisation on physical activity and sport]**
- **[the relationship between sport and the media]**

The role of technology in physical activity and sport

16. AS and A level specifications must require students to develop knowledge and understanding of technological developments in physical activity and sport. There is a minimum requirement for specifications to include the following:

- the use of technology to analyse physical activity and sport
- **[the development of equipment and facilities in physical activity and sport]**
- **[the role of technology in sport, for the performer and the audience]**

Skills

17. Students must demonstrate the skills outlined in this section in relation to the knowledge and understanding specified in the subject content.

18. GCE AS and A level specifications in physical education will require students to demonstrate their ability to:

- apply knowledge and understanding from the different areas outlined in the subject content above to physical activity and sport
- use theories, concepts, principles and models to analyse and evaluate physical activity and performance
- discuss, make judgements, present arguments and draw conclusions about aspects of physical activity and sport
- interpret and analyse a range of data, graphical representations and diagrams in the context of physical activity and performance
- use critically and constructively a range of source material related to physical activity and performance
- perform a range of skills and techniques in physical activity and sport
- make decisions, implement strategies, tactics and/or compositional ideas, and apply knowledge and understanding of rules and regulations while performing physical activity and sport
- apply knowledge and understanding of theories, concepts, principles and methods to physical activity and performance
- evaluate performance in physical activity and sport, applying relevant knowledge and understanding

Quantitative skills in AS and A level physical education

19. In order to be able to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding in physical education, students need to have acquired quantitative skills that are relevant to the subject content, including:

Applied anatomy and exercise physiology

- interpretation of data and graphs relating to:
 - changes within musculo-skeletal, cardio-respiratory and neuro-muscular systems during different types of physical activity and sport
 - **[use of energy systems during different types of physical activity and sport and the recovery process]**
- quantitative methods for planning, monitoring and evaluating physical training and performance

Biomechanics

- knowledge and use of definitions, equations, formulae and units of measurement
- ability to plot, label and interpret graphs and diagrams

Sport psychology and skill acquisition

- understanding and interpretation of graphical representations associated with sport psychology theories

Sport and society

- interpretation and analysis of data and graphs relating to participation in physical activity and sport

Sport technology

- understanding of types of and use of data analysis to optimise performance

20. The assessment of these skills will represent a minimum of 5% of the overall A-level and AS level marks.



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GCE PE activity list

This list is based upon the suitability of activities as a means of assessing students' skills as part of a physical education AS or A level qualification. The Department for Education and awarding organisations developed a set of five key considerations which were applied to each activity in order to ensure parity and rigour. These considerations take into account Ofqual's principles for non-exam assessment (outlined on page 3 [here](#)).

In 2018-2019 the Department conducted a review of the activity list. This review resulted in the addition of some activities. Therefore there are two separate lists: the current list that applies to qualifications awarded until 2021 for A level or 2020 for AS level and the new list that applies to qualifications awarded from 2022 for A level or 2021 for AS level.

The list of activities below is a full and complete list of all available activities. The inclusion or non-inclusion of an activity in the proposed list does not represent a view on the intrinsic legitimacy or value of the activity, but only its suitability for assessing students' skills at AS and A level as set out above. Students must be assessed in one activity in the role of player/performer or coach.

List of activities applying to qualifications awarded until 2021 for A level or 2020 for AS level

Activity	Comments
Amateur boxing	
Association football	Cannot be five-a-side
Athletics	
Badminton	
Basketball	
Camogie	
Canoeing	
Cricket	
Cycling	Track or road cycling only
Dance	
Diving	Platform diving

Equestrian	
Golf	
Gaelic football	
Gymnastics	Floor routines and apparatus only
Handball	
Hockey	
Hurling	
Kayaking	
Lacrosse	
Netball	
Rock climbing	Can be indoor or outdoor
Rowing	
Rugby league	Cannot be tag rugby
Rugby union	Can be assessed as seven or fifteen a side. Cannot be tag rugby
Sculling	
Skiing	Outdoor/indoor on snow. Must not be dry slopes
Snowboarding	Outdoor/indoor on snow. Must not be dry slopes
Squash	
Swimming	Not synchronised swimming
Table Tennis	
Tennis	
Trampolining	
Volleyball	
Specialist activity	
Blind cricket	
Boccia	
Goal ball	
Powerchair football	

Polybat	
Table cricket	
Wheelchair basketball	
Wheelchair rugby	

List of activities applying to qualifications awarded from 2022 for A level or 2021 for AS level

Activity	Comments
Acrobatic gymnastics	
Amateur boxing	
Association football	Cannot be five-a-side
Athletics	Long distance running must not exceed 10,000 metres
Badminton	
Basketball	
Camogie	
Canoeing	
Cricket	
Cycling	Track, road or BMX cycling (racing, not tricks) only
Dance	
Diving	Platform diving
Equestrian	
Figure skating	
Futsal	
Golf	
Gaelic football	
Gymnastics	Floor routines and apparatus only
Handball	
Hockey	Must be field hockey
Hurling	

Ice hockey	
Inline roller hockey	
Kayaking	
Lacrosse	
Netball	
Rock climbing	Can be indoor or outdoor
Rowing	
Rugby league	Cannot be tag rugby
Rugby union	Can be assessed as seven or fifteen a side. Cannot be tag rugby
Sailing	Royal Yachting Association recognised sailing boat classes only. The list can be found online at: https://www.rya.org.uk/racing/youth-junior/info/Pages/recognised-classes.aspx . Students must perform as helmsman
Sculling	
Skiing	Outdoor/indoor on snow. Must not be dry slopes
Snowboarding	Outdoor/indoor on snow. Must not be dry slopes
Squash	
Swimming	Not synchronised swimming, personal survival or lifesaving
Table Tennis	
Tennis	
Trampolining	
Triathlon	Sprint only
Volleyball	
Water polo	
Windsurfing	
Specialist activity	
Blind cricket	
Boccia	
Goal ball	

Powerchair football	
Polybat	
Table cricket	
Wheelchair basketball	
Wheelchair rugby	

The five considerations were:

The range and demand of skills and techniques in the activity

This considers whether the activity meets Ofqual's Non Examined Assessment (NEA) rationale and whether the skills needed to perform each included activity have comparable levels of difficulty. This aims to ensure that activities are comparably rigorous and there is parity of assessment across practical activities.

During the review of 2018-19, we considered whether activities put forward for inclusion were comparable with activities on the existing list. The skills needed to perform the activity needed to have comparable levels of difficulty to other activities already on the list.

The application of tactics/strategies/composition in the activity

This considers whether the activity enables students to understand and implement tactics, strategies, and/or composition. An example of tactics and strategy might be a team counter-attacking in football where the student has to show discipline in how they play in order for the team to be successful in this area. An example of composition would be the linking up of movement and gymnastic skills when performing a routine in gymnastics.

The ability to develop skills over a significant period of time

This considers whether successful performance in the activity requires the development of skills over time. For example, if proficiency can be gained in a short time span (e.g. by attending a two-day residential or workshop experience, despite having no prior exposure to that activity) then these types of activities are not considered comparable to others on the list.

Suitable conditions in which to perform

All activities must have a competitive or formal condition in which students can be assessed. Students cannot be assessed in a recreational form of the activity. An example of a competitive condition in this context would be an 11-a-side football game, whereas a formal condition could refer to a gymnastic event.

The level of performance can be realistically assessed by PE practitioners (teachers/ moderators)

This considers whether activities can be accurately and robustly assessed by practitioners. Some activities are so specialist or niche that specific expertise in that activity is required for valid and reliable assessment; these type of activities are not included the list.

It must be possible for activities to be either moderated live or for filmed evidence of a suitable quality to be produced to ensure reliable internal assessment and external moderation. Activities which cannot be filmed live in appropriate detail and accuracy are not included in the list.

In addition to the considerations above, all activities on the list must be sports recognised by Sport England.

Disability activities

Accessibility and inclusion for students has been addressed in a number of ways.

A number of specialist activities are included in the activity list.

Any of the listed activities may be adapted or adjusted to meet the needs of students who share protected characteristics, so long as any adaptation or adjustment does not compromise the rigour and validity of the assessment. Often it is the context of the performance which changes, such as the use of adapted equipment or rules and regulations. In some cases, a particular move or technique required in an activity can be substituted for a suitable alternative, as appropriate.

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Reference: DfE-00008-2020

Appendix 2: Revisions to this document

The table below sets out when the *GCE Subject Level Conditions and Requirements for Physical Education* initially came into force and when they were subsequently revised.

Revisions	Date in force
Incorporated revised GCE PE activity list (published by Department for Education) Ofqual/20/6582	14 February 2020
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Earlsdon Park
53-55 Butts Road
Coventry
CV1 3BH

0300 303 3344
public.enquiries@ofqual.gov.uk
www.gov.uk/ofqual