

Physical Education

OCR A-level Physical Education (H555)

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Introduction

A-level PE is a popular subject choice. The OCR course is varied and exciting and offers the opportunity for students to develop their practical performance as well as their knowledge of the theoretical aspects of anatomy and physiology, sports psychology and socio-cultural issues in sport. The course is taught by passionate and experienced subject teachers with specialist knowledge, many with international representation in their chosen sports and disciplines. Outside the timetabled curriculum, students have access to high levels of support in both practical and coursework sections, as well as access to excellent online resources such as The EverLearner. Additionally, there is a growing and number of diverse sports-related degrees and career options to pursue, so it is an exciting time to study PE.

Subject Requirements

To succeed with the course content, and particularly the challenging anatomy and physiology aspects, students must have achieved a Grade 7 in GCSE PE. Students who have not taken GCSE PE should be confident scientists, and a Grade 7 in Biology (or the equivalent in Double Award Science) is recommended. As well as a keen interest in all aspects of sport and how social and scientific factors influence it, performance to a high standard in one sport is important to gain maximum marks on the practical side of the course. Performance to county, academy or national level is desirable.

Course Outline

The course is divided into theory and Non-Exam Assessment (NEA). There are three exams which make up the theory component, accounting for 70% of the overall grade. The NEA includes the practical assessment and the Evaluation and Analysis for Performance Improvement (a verbal coursework), accounting for the remaining 30% of the grade. A breakdown of these components is below.

Component 1: Physiological Factors Affecting Performance

Assessment: 2 hour paper (90 marks) 30% of A-level

- Anatomy & physiology
- Exercise physiology
- Biomechanics

Component 2: Psychological Factors Affecting Performance

Assessment: 1 hour paper (60 marks) 20% of A-level

- How the body learns and develops new skills (skill acquisition)
- Sports psychology

- Motivation and arousal
- Feedback and guidance

Component 3: Socio-Cultural and Contemporary Issues

Assessment: 1 hour paper (60 marks) 20% of A-level

- Sport and Society
- Ethics and deviance in sport
- Commercialisation of sport
- Technological influences
- Contemporary issues in physical activity and sport

Component 4: Practical Assessment & Coursework

Assessment: On-going practical assessment and coursework interview (60 marks) 30% of A-level

Practical (30 marks – 15%)

- Students are assessed as either a performer or coach in one activity.
- Technically accurate and effective performance.
- An understanding of strategies and tactics that optimise performance.

EAPI Coursework – 1 to 1 Interview (30 marks – 15%)

- Evaluation and analysis of performance for improvement
- Observation of a live performance and assessed oral response in which students critically analyse the performance and plan the steps that could be taken to improve it

Higher Education and Careers

Previous PE students have accessed undergraduate courses such as Sport and Exercise Science, Sports Technology, Sports Rehabilitation and Sports Marketing at universities that include Loughborough, Leeds, Bath and Exeter. In addition, several students have been successful with US applications with sports scholarships.

Studying PE can lead to a range of career opportunities, from sports journalism to physiotherapy to sports coaching.

What should I study alongside PE?

A-level PE can be studied alongside lots of different subjects, but popular choices include Business, Geography, Psychology and Biology. Some sports-related courses, and particularly Sport and Exercise

Science, require an additional science (Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Psychology or Maths), so if students already know they want to take this pathway, choosing one of these subjects alongside PE may allow them wider university application choices.

Is there anything else I should consider?

A common misconception is that A-level PE is an 'easy' subject. This is certainly not the case and there is a significant step up from GCSE, with extended answers and detailed knowledge of scientific content required. A-level PE is highly respected and universities are increasingly making it a requirement for PE and Sport & Exercise courses.