



VCE Exam Advice – Unit 3 & 4 Physical Education

Changes to the 2020 Study Design

- In 2020 the Physical Education course has been amended. Key knowledge within Unit 4 Area of Study 1 relating to the assessment of fitness and the methods of standardised fitness testing has been **removed** and students cannot be asked questions relating to this in the examination. Information about this change and all examinable key knowledge & key skills can be found; <https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/vce/adjustedSD2020/2020PhysicalEducationSD.pdf>

Common Areas of Concern for Students

- Practice (Unit 3 AOS 1) – Students must know which examples of practice fall within the following terms; (Variability: Blocked vs Random; Distribution/Scheduling: Massed vs Distributed; Type: Whole vs Part). This was an issue for students in answering question 1 in 2019.
- Newtons Laws of Motion (Unit 3 AOS 1) – Students are reminded that they must provide the entire description of the law if asked within the exam. e.g Stating that Newton’s First Law is the ‘law of inertia’, does not show expected understanding.
- Impulse (Unit 3 AOS 1) – In 2019, Q2c, it was apparent some students had an incorrect understanding of what impulse is as a biomechanical principle. ‘The change in motion/momentum’ of an object, for example a gymnast landing after a somersault, will have the same change in motion (come to a stop), regardless of if they choose to bend their knees or not. By bending their knees they manipulate the impulse equation ($I = f \times t$) and land safely, by reducing impact force (NOT impulse) through an increase in the time that force is applied over.
- High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) (Unit 4 AOS 2) – Students are strongly encouraged to read the VCAA notes provided on HIIT training (<https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/curriculum/vce/vce-study-designs/physicaleducation/Pages/Index.aspx>) This is a relatively new concept within the course and currently challenges students. It is highly likely this will be examined given these two points. Students must understand at the basic level that this is an aerobic type of training.
- Aerobic vs Anaerobic adaptations (Unit 4 AOS 2) – VCAA commonly require students to not only consider the benefit of aerobic adaptations in an aerobic event (& vice versa for an anaerobic event), they will also challenge understanding of the benefit of aerobic adaptations in a more anaerobic event and anaerobic adaptations in an aerobic event. One example of this in 2019 was Q3c. where students needed to consider the role of anaerobic adaptations in a 1600m run.
- Energy system contribution (interplay) (Unit 3 AOS 2) – Energy system interplay questions are common tasks that are present each year in the exam. Students who perform well on these tasks do not refer to ‘generic text book’ references to show their understanding of rate and yield of each system and instead use as much of the provided data for the given question as possible. See Q8a. 2019.

- Nutritional recovery strategies (U4 AOS 2) – In the current study design students are only required to have an understanding on the role of; carbohydrates, protein and water play in recovery. Students do not need to focus on glycaemic or specific types of sports drinks, as these are no longer part of the study design.

An example from Q4d.2019 gave students the opportunity to acknowledge the benefit of a mix of carbohydrates and protein in recovery: *'A mix of protein ingestion with carbohydrates which would increase the absorption and uptake of carbohydrate and provide protein for improved muscle recovery'*. (VCAA, 2019).

- Qualitative vs quantitative analysis (U3 AOS 1) – Despite being a relatively small component of the course, students are still required to understand the stages of a qualitative analysis & what it is able to provide an athlete in improving performance (description of technique & practice strategies) vs a quantitative analysis. See Q7b. 2019.
- Levers (Unit 3 AOS 1) – Students were challenged in 2019 about the performance implications for increasing the length of a lever (bat). Students should see Q9. 2019 as a good example of a typical question that links the concepts of constraints based learning and biomechanical principles.
- Training program design – Students will have to design elements of a training program as per the first two years of the new study design. What was apparent again in 2019 is 'simple is best' when creating a training program. Students who performed best in Q10 2019 displayed accurate application of training principles & methods, but did so in an uncomplicated way (focusing on one fitness component & two methods).

Specific Examination Advice

- The changes to the study design in 2019 have resulted in a reallocation in the weighting of Unit 3 & Unit 4 internal (SAC) assessments. The exam paper is approximately weighted according to the internal SAC weighting. Therefore, students can expect approximately 60% of the exam to have a Unit 3 focus (30% for each AOS) and 40% to have a Unit 4 focus (~10% AOS 1 & ~30% AOS 2).
- The exam contains 15 minutes reading and 120 minutes writing and has 120 marks allocated to it, including 15 multiple choice questions. One of the extended answer questions will contain one section worth 8-10 marks.
- As is noted above; 120 marks and 120 minutes writing = 1 mark per minute. Therefore, students are encouraged to keep to this time scale when completing the questions.
- VCAA reported the following in their 2019 VCE Physical Education examination report; *'Those who were able to articulate their answers simply, accurately and concisely, generally scored very well. Using correct terminology enabled students to use fewer words in explaining concepts'*. (https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Documents/exams/physicaledu/2019/physicaleducation_examrep19.pdf)
- Make wise use of reading time to;
 - Identify command words (i.e list vs outline) and link these to the mark allocation and provided writing lines to plan & visualise what a subsequent answer must include.
 - Make a mental word of any potential terms that could trip you; 'Not', 'training principle vs training method', 'aerobic vs anaerobic'.
 - Note any questions that involve drawing a diagram or annotating a graph (common tasks within the PE exam).
 - Consider the sequence of questions that will be answered. Generally, in the PE exam, questions are sequenced in a way that the first short answer is often less complex in nature and the last questions more complex in nature compared to questions in the middle of the paper.

- Students must acquaint themselves with the command words that VCAA can use and what this requires students to do in answering the question. For example, in 2019 students were asked to (in order of complexity & likely mark weighting):

Identify

List

Provide

Name

Suggest

Give

Outline (common error of not providing a full sentence)

Draw/illustrate

Justify

Analyse

Determine

Design

Describe

Explain

Discuss

Critique & evaluate (similar skills that require students to present advantages/positives, disadvantages/negatives & a suggested outcome for a given example(s)).

Evaluate

Compare (similarities & differences).

- Understanding what is required from each command term above is an important ingredient to success, however, just as critical is the ability & willingness to use data to support answers where required. VCAA PE examiners require this data to be highly specific reference to given material, which almost always will include numbers.
- Aside from correct application of command words, one other prevalent characteristic that separates middle performing students from higher achieving students is their ability to correctly and **specifically** use data provided in the question. Scanning an answer for 'numbers' is a good checking mechanism to see if specific data has been included.
- In terms of using practice examinations provided to you by your teachers or from other means, students should embark on 'commercial' exams in the earlier stages of the revision period and finish their preparation with a focus on only VCAA questions to ensure familiarity with the wording, style and structure.
- Given 'work to rest' ratio forms a significant component of the course, students should use this as a strategy in completing 'quality & not 'quantity' of practice exams. Adopting a 1:1 work rest ratio should see students commit the same amount of time to review, reflect and revise following completion of a practice task than they did in completing it (i.e 2 hours writing = at least 2 hours going through the review). This includes going through sample answers, writing down a list of areas for further improvement, address these with your teacher, go back and revise these issues, all before attempting the next paper.
- Finally, take the time to read through the Assessor's Reports. These reports contain vital information regarding marking schemes as well as sections of the course that were not well addressed, and hence are likely to be re-examined. Past VCAA exam papers and Assessment Reports are available at <http://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/vce/studies/physicaledu/exams.html>

More subject specific advice will be issued to students at our "VCE Exam Revision Lectures".

Good luck with your exam preparations!

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