



Coimisiún na Scrúduithe Stáit
State Examinations Commission

Leaving Certificate Examination 2026
Physical Education
Ordinary Level

Friday 19 June Afternoon 2:00 - 4:30

250 marks

Examination Number

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Date of Birth

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For example, 3rd February
2005 is entered as 03 02 05

Centre Stamp

Instructions

There are **three** sections in this paper.

Section A	Short questions	80 marks
Section B	Case study	50 marks
Section C	Long questions	120 marks

Answer questions as follows:

- any **ten** of the twelve questions in Section A
- question 13 in Section B - Case Study
- any **three** of the five questions in Section C

Write your Examination Number and your Date of Birth in the boxes on the front cover.

Write your answers in the spaces provided in this booklet. There is space for extra work at the end of the booklet. Label any such extra work clearly with the question number and part. You may also ask for supplementary paper.

Write your answers in blue or black pen.

This examination booklet will be scanned and your work will be presented to an examiner on screen. Anything that you write outside of the answer areas may not be seen by the examiner.

Section A**80 marks**

Answer any **ten** questions, from questions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11 and 12.

Question 1

(a) The following are periodisation cycles:

Macrocycle

Mesocycle

Microcycle

Identify an appropriate timeframe for each of these cycles.

Timeframe	Periodisation Cycle - choose from above
Two months	
A full year	
Two weeks	

(b) Why do coaches use periodisation?

Question 2

Outline **two** safety checks an official should make before a competition, in a physical activity of your choice.

Physical activity:
1.
2.

Question 3

Identify **three** characteristics of a physical activity that could make it appealing to spectators.

Physical activity:
1.
2.
3.

Question 4

Identify if the following statements about Irish anti-doping rules are True **or** False by ticking (✓) the relevant box.

	True	False
An athlete is allowed to sell performance enhancing drugs.		
Three whereabouts failures within a 12-month period can lead to a suspension.		
An athlete must provide a sample when requested by a Doping Control Officer.		
Athletes are allowed cover up for another athlete if they know they are using performance enhancing drugs.		

Question 5

(a) Outline how the psychological factor 'confidence' can affect sports performance.

(b) Identify **one** strategy that could be used to improve confidence.

Question 6

Identify **three** examples of gender stereotyping in sport.

1.
2.
3.

Question 7

Identify an appropriate analysis method or test for each of the performance areas listed in the table below, using the methods / tests provided.

Method of analysis / test		
Anxiety test	Video analysis	Balance test
Sit-and-reach test	Food diary	12-minute run

Area of performance	Method of analysis or test - choose from above
Performance related component of fitness	
Psychological preparedness	
Skill and technique	
Nutrition	

Question 8

Explain how **one** type of practice, from the list below, could be used to improve a skill of your choice.

Massed Practice

Part Practice

Variable Practice

Type of practice:
Skill:

Question 9

Outline how **one** technological development has positively impacted a physical activity of your choice.

Physical activity:

Question 10

(a) Define 'reaction time'.

(b) Identify **two** examples of where reaction time is needed during performance in **one** physical activity.

Physical activity:
1.
2.

Question 11

Outline **two** ways a coach could manage time effectively during a training session.

1.
2.

Question 12

Describe **two** benefits of physical activity for teenagers.

1.
2.

Examine the text and images in the Case Study below and answer question 13.

FIGURE SKATING

Figure skating, as its name suggests, involves skating 'figures' on ice. The sport requires competitors to skate selected patterns or figures as part of their routines.

Figure 1 shows a figure skater's 'pattern' on the ice.

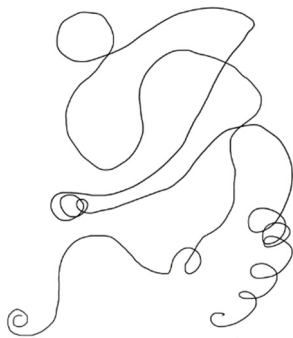


Figure 1



Figure 2

Russian Figure Skater Is Handed Four-Year Ban in Olympic Doping Case

Figure 3

Kamila Valieva competed as an individual Figure Skater and in the Figure Skating team event at the 2022 Winter Olympics. She helped the Russian Olympic Committee (ROC) team to a first place finish, with Team USA in second place.

Valieva was drug tested before the Olympics started, and was found to have the banned substance trimetazidine in her system. Trimetazidine is a heart medication which can boost endurance. Valieva was 15 years old at the time. Her team claimed that the positive notification on the test could have been due to a mix up with her grandfather's heart medication.

Valieva was banned for four years as a result of the positive drug test. The ban was backdated to the original test and she was not allowed to compete until December 2025. She was stripped of any medals she won since December 2022, including the Olympic gold medal in the team event. Team USA were awarded the gold medal in the team figure skating event, two years after the original competition. Figure Skating received negative media attention as a result of this case.

Question 13**(50 marks)**

(a) Kamila Valieva tested positive for trimetazidine.

Name **two** other Performance Enhancing Drugs (PEDs) and state how they affect performance.

PED	How it affects performance
1.	
2.	

(b) (i) Outline **two** consequences for an athlete when anti-doping rules are broken.
At least **one** consequence must be from the case study.

1.
2.

(ii) Outline **two** consequences for the physical activity when anti-doping rules are broken.

1.
2.

This question continues on the next page

(c) (i) Explain **one** of the following ethical principles, with reference to the case study:

fairness

integrity

Ethical Principle:

(ii) Identify **three** statements that you would include in a code of ethics for sport.

1.
2.
3.

This question continues on the next page

- (d) Figure skating is scored on artistic and aesthetic criteria including compositional elements.

Figure 1 shows an example of how the space on the ice could be used in a figure skating routine.

- (i) Identify **two** artistic/aesthetic criteria of performance in a physical activity. You may not refer to use of space.

Physical activity:
1.
2.

- (ii) Compare the two performances depicted below in terms of artistic or aesthetic criteria of performance.



Figure 4a. Figure skater



Figure 4b. Artistic swimming team

Section C**120 marks**

Answer any **three** questions, from questions 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18.

Question 14**(40 marks)**

- (a) (i)** Identify **one** symptom of overtraining.

--

- (ii)** Outline **one** strategy to avoid overtraining.

- (b)** Outline how you could use the physical fitness training methods weight training **and** circuit training to improve performance in a component of fitness of your choice.

Component of fitness:
Weight training:
Circuit training:

This question continues on the next page

- (c) Alan is a 16-year-old Gaelic football player. The table shows two of his fitness test results.

Component of Fitness	Alan's Test Result	Average score for 16-year-old male
Coordination	37	25-29
Muscular Endurance	12	15-20

- (i) From the test results above identify which component of fitness Alan scored above average on. Indicate your answer by ticking (✓) the correct box in the table below.
- (ii) State whether each component tested is a Health-Related Fitness (HRF) or a Performance Related Fitness (PRF) component.

Component of Fitness	(i) Above average	(ii) HRF or PRF
Coordination		
Muscular Endurance		

- (iii) Identify **three** fitness components required by an athlete in a physical activity of your choice. You may not use coordination or muscular endurance.
- (iv) Identify whether the components you have chosen are health related fitness (HRF) or performance related fitness (PRF) components.
- (v) State a fitness test for each of these components of fitness.

Physical activity:		
(iii) Component of Fitness	(iv) HRF or PRF	(v) Fitness Test
1.		
2.		
3.		

This question continues on the next page

(vi) Describe how to carry out **one** of the fitness tests identified by you in part **(v)**. You may use a diagram.

Fitness test:

Question 15**(40 marks)**

- (a) (i) Describe each of the following concepts of physical activity by matching the concept to the relevant description:

mass-participation sports play outdoor and adventure

Name **one** example of a physical activity for each concept.

Description	Concept of physical activity - choose from above	Example of activity
Large number of people participating in an event at the same time.		
Activities that focus on fun and enjoyment.		
Activities that have an element of risk and take place outdoors.		

- (ii) 'Physical Education' is a concept of physical activity.

Explain 'Physical Education'.

This question continues on the next page

(b)

Ireland won 7 medals at the Paris Olympics 2024. These medal winners are role models for young people in sport.



Figure 5

Outline **three** characteristics of significant people, like role models, who promote participation in physical activity amongst young people.

1.
2.
3.

This question continues on the next page

- (c) After the success of Irish athletes at the 2024 Olympics, extra funding is being provided to all National Governing Bodies of sport in Ireland.

Describe how a National Governing Body (NGB) can help promote physical activity at local and national levels.

NGB:
Local:
National:

Question 16

(40 marks)

(a) (i) Identify **two** characteristics of skilled performance.

1.
2.

(ii) Describe **two** ways that creative application of a skill can be beneficial to performance.

1.
2.

This question continues on the next page

(b) Describe **three** stages of skill learning.

1.
2.
3.

This question continues on the next page

(c)

Figure 6 is a picture of a person pushing a wheelbarrow. The effort, load and fulcrum of the lever used are labelled.



Figure 6

(i) What class of lever is depicted in **Figure 6**?

--

(ii) Name **one** example of a sporting action that uses this class of lever.

(iii) Name **two** other classes of lever and an example of where **each** of these levers is used in sport.

Class of lever:
Sports example:
Class of lever:
Sports example:

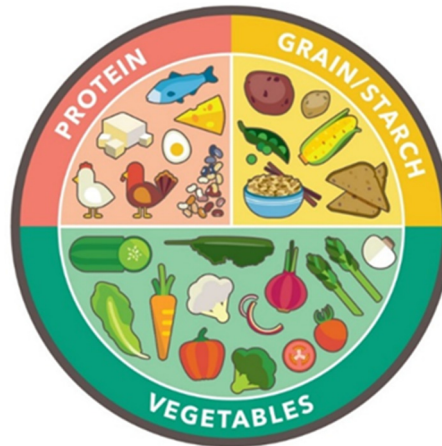


Figure 7

- (a) Identify **two** food or drink choices that would be good to consume after exercise and give a reason for each choice.

Food/drink	Reason for choice
1.	
2.	

This question continues on the next page

(b) (i) Protein can be used as a supplement.

Name **two** other food supplements and give a reason for taking them.

Supplement 1:
Reason for taking it:
Supplement 2:
Reason for taking it:

(ii) Outline **two** challenges to taking sports supplements.

1.
2.

This question continues on the next page

- (c) The pole vault is an athletics event for which elite competitions can take two to three hours to complete in a busy athletics arena. A pole vaulter may only jump four times in a three-hour competition.

(i) Identify **two** reasons an elite pole vaulter's concentration could be decreased.

1.
2.

(ii) Explain a strategy an athlete, such as the elite pole vaulter, could use to maintain their concentration during a long competition.

(a)

**Figure 8**

Figure 8 shows Ilona Maher, an international rugby player. She has defended her body type after lots of negative comments online. In a TikTok post, she encouraged people to take note of all the different body types of athletes competing in the Olympics.

(i) Define 'body image'.

(ii) Outline how body image can influence participation in physical activity. Use **two** examples.

This question continues on the next page

- (b) Describe **two** ways media representation of the body may impact on young peoples' participation in physical activity.

1.
2.

This question continues on the next page

- (c) Parkrun is a 5km run arranged in many locations around the world. The Parkrun happens on Saturday morning and everyone is welcome to participate. Parkrun is an example of a mass participation sports event.

(i) Outline **two** benefits of mass-participation sports events, like Parkrun.

1.
2.

(ii) Describe how media coverage is used positively in mass-participation sports events. Use **two** examples.

Space for extra work

Indicate clearly the question number and part of the question(s) you are answering.

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Acknowledgements

Images

Image on page 10: <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/01/29/world/europe/kamila-valieva-russia-doping-figure-skating.html> (Accessed: 5th June 2024).

Image on page 10: <https://www.liveabout.com/choreograph-figure-skating-routine-1281785> (Accessed: 5th June 2024).

Image on page 10: <https://featured.japan-forward.com/sportslook/kamila-valieva-continues-to-train-as-hearing-to-determine-her-fate-looms/> (Accessed: 5th June 2024).

Image on page 13: <https://synchronb.ca/synchronized-swimming-at-the-olympics/> (Accessed 28th November, 2025).

Image on page 13: <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/2/10/kamila-valieva-russian-media-say-olympic-skater-failed-drug-test> (Accessed 28th November, 2025).

Image on page 18: <https://www.breakingnews.ie/olympics-2024/thousands-gather-on-oconnell-street-to-welcome-irish-olympians-home-1660442.html> (Accessed: 29th October 2025).

Image on page 22: https://www.pitsco.com/blogs/news/t-bot-exploring-simple-machines?srltid=AfmBOor51mNB9tcSkK19bGv5FYmlOQfrj298IC7JOIRepF1mecSlzD_3 (Accessed: 28th October 2025).

Image on page 23: <https://healthy.kaiserpermanente.org/content/dam/kp/chub/images/diabetes/healthy-plate-diagram-4-lg.jpg> (Accessed: 7th June 2025).

Image on page 26: https://www.the50athletes.com/content/images/2023/09/ap_ilona_maher3.jpg (Accessed: 23rd June 2025).

Texts

Text on page 10: Adapted from <https://featured.japan-forward.com/sportslook/kamila-valieva-continues-to-train-as-hearing-to-determine-her-fate-looms/> (Accessed: 5th June 2024).

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Text on page 26: Adapted from <https://www.npr.org/2024/07/31/nx-s1-5058465/ilona-maher-rugby-tiktok-olympics> (Accessed: 23rd June 2025).

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