PHYSICAL EDUCATION STUDIES YEAR 12 ATAR

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EXAM PREPARATION

This download offers useful advice on how to select the study strategies that will work for you, the importance of exam practice and how you can improve your marks.

Learning styles

Before we start to talk about your examinations, it is important you understand how best you should prepare. We are all different in the way we learn.

VARK is one of many classifications of learning styles. It can be applied to both a theoretical and practical perspectives. It stands for

- **Visual learners:** those who prefer information presented visually (graphs, charts, colour)
- **Auditory learners:** those who prefer information presented aurally (listening to others, podcasts)
- **Read/write learners:** those who prefer information presented in writing (lists, cue words, biographies)
- **Kinesthetic learners:** those who prefer information presented with action and movement (hands on, learning by doing, video, visualisation).

It is not uncommon that you might prefer a combination of styles.

There are a multitude of learning style tests and questionnaires available. Use a search engine, type in 'learning styles test' and you are away. It is well worth doing as it will help you prepare for your examinations.

Study techniques

What we know about learning is that we retain:

- 10% of what we read
- 20% of what we hear
- 30% of what we see
- 50% of what we see and hear
- 70% of what we talk about with others
- 80% of what we experience personally
- 95% of what we teach to others

So, given you have explored your learning style and you now know what it takes to retain information, here are some strategies you should consider to ensure you best prepare yourself for your examinations.

Summary sheets

What are the key things you need to know and understand and what are some examples? Rewriting your class notes means you process the information in your own words and not your teacher's.

Mind maps

Mind maps are great for visual learners. This technique involves using diagrams to represent key words, ideas and examples, arranged according to the importance of the concepts. Search 'mind maps' online and get free templates. With pens and paper:

- Start in the middle of a page with your central theme.
- Make a little drawing around the central theme. The more unique you can make this little sketch, the easier you will remember it.
- Use different colours for each group of associated ideas that you develop around the central theme.
- Link ideas and keywords to each of these ideas

Concept maps

Concept maps are similar to mind maps. The key difference is they show distinct relationships between concepts.

Key words

Key words. The chapter checklists and 'know the facts' sections in this book are a perfect way to test yourself. They are designed to cover the key words associated with the content in the syllabus. For full marks in exam questions you must use the correct terminology.

Flash cards

Flash cards are another way of testing the facts. Write a question on one side and the answer on the other. They take a bit of time to create but once you have them you can use them any time. Get into study groups and test each other.

Acronyms

Acronyms are abbreviations of concepts or names, for example ATP (Adenosine Triphosphate) or SMARTER (Specificity – Measureable – Action-oriented – Realistic – Timely – Evaluate – Recordable) goals.

- Write the facts you need to remember.
- Underline the first letter of each fact.
- Arrange the underlined letters to form an acronym that is a real word or a nonsense word you can pronounce.

Mnemonics

Mnemonics are a way of remembering words or concepts. They can be rhymes that help us remember concepts, for example, when identifying the classes of levers, FLE=I23. Another strategy is to use the first letters of words to make up one word by means of which you can remember the group of words.

Podcasts

Download or create your own audio files. Listen to them on your way to and from school.

SQ3R

This is a recognised reading study system.

- Survey (scan titles, headings, diagrams, summaries)
- Question (what does this mean)
- Read (and take notes)
- Recite (without referring to book or notes)
- Review (to see how well you recalled or remembered)

There are many other strategies. The key is to find what works for you.

Effective study is a process not an event

Massed versus distributed practice

Which one works best?

Massed	Distributed
Material only makes it to your 'working memory'	Material makes it to your 'long-term memory'
Material will soon be forgotten	Review and revisit material often
Cramming for a test	Information should be reviewed ten minutes after learning and every seven days to keep in long-term memory

Course syllabus

The syllabus outlines everything you need to know. Print out the syllabus and highlight areas you are confident you know and those you consider a weakness. Your revision program should be based on the areas you need to work on.

Examination practice

The design brief/examination cover sheet

This is the document examiners use to set the written exam. It outlines:

- Time allowed
- Number of sections and focus of questions
- Number of question available
- Number of questions students have to do
- Suggested working time

Generally, examinations consist of the following:

1. Multiple-choice

The incorrect answers are distractors and, at first glance, may seem correct. Make sure you read the question carefully to know exactly what is being asked. Underlining the key words will help.

Be careful of questions that are set in the negative, asking which answer is NOT correct.

There is no penalty for an incorrect response, so if you are unsure, eliminate the responses you know are incorrect then have a guess.

2. Short-answer

A stimulus is often used as the basis of these questions. This may include a graph, photo, diagram, table or written article. You are being asked interpret the information and apply your knowledge. If you are asked complete a graph, ensure you label the axes with appropriate units of measurement.

Unless specifically outlined, as a general rule a question worth, say, three marks, requires you to identify three pieces of information and so on.

Short answer questions usually start with a verb, for example, 'explain', 'identify' or 'discuss'. What are these words asking you to do? (See Bloom's Taxonomy on the following page).

3. Extended answer

Use your reading time to identify what is being asked. Before you start, take some time to plan your response using diagrams, concept maps, or notes.

The first part of your response should identify what it is you plan to do. Make sure you don't simply rewrite the question.

Extended answer questions are designed to have you interpret or analyse a situation. Don't be afraid of using tables, diagrams and graphs to support your answer.

Past exam papers, marking key and examiners report

Review previous exams and use this information to plan a structured revision program. The marking key shows you where marks were allocated and for what.

The examiners' report identifies on which questions past students did well and not so well. It is not uncommon for content where students performed poorly to be re-examined the following year.

Scientific terminology

You must use the correct terminology in examinations. Many questions start with you being required to define a term or concept. Use the chapter checklists and other activities in this book to study the facts. A useful strategy is to create an 'I know it!' summary sheet.

Write the key words then test yourself to define them without looking at your notes. Each time you get the definition correct, give yourself a tick. When you can do this three times, YOU KNOW IT, and can start focussing on other terms. This activity is a great one to do with friends. Test each other. You could even create palm cards and test each other randomly.

Examination terminology

Bloom's taxonomy is useful to identify the complexity of a question and what is expected as a response.

- **Knowledge-type** questions involve recalling facts, terms, basic concepts. Here are two examples:
  - List – identify key terms associated with specific content.
  - Define – a statement of fact, for example, the meaning or nature of a word, principle or concept.
  - Other words requiring knowledge include name, choose, label, show, select, state.

- **Comprehension-type** questions involve demonstrating understanding of ideas and facts. Examples are:
  - Compare – the way things are similar or different.
  - Summarise – the main points should be written in condensed form.
  - Describe – recount the characteristics of something. Information should be in more detail than a summary.
  - Explain – provide evidence to support why something is true or not. You should include as much detail as possible. This may include using diagrams, data or graphs.
  - Outline – short clear presentation of the facts or statements covering the main points.
  - Other words that mean comprehension include demonstrate, interpret and classify.

- **Application-type** questions require you to use knowledge, facts, techniques and rules to solve a problem or in a different situation. Other examples include:
  - Identify – recognise the main details, determine what group or classification something belongs to
  - Develop – expansion or elaboration of ideas
  - Other words that mean application include construct, solve, plan and select.

- **Analysis-type** questions involve examining information in parts and breaking it down before making inferences from your findings. You might be asked to present an argument and provide a series of reasons, facts, details and/or examples in support of your decision or point of view.

- **Synthesis-type** questions require you to combine information for a variety of sources and/or propose alternative solutions. This is a high-order skill and requires significant practice.
  - Other words that mean synthesise include demonstrate, interpret, design and discuss.

- **Evaluation-type** questions involve presenting and defending opinions by providing information as evidence to validate your response. Like analysis, this is a high-order skill which requires you to think critically and take a stance. Other examples include:
  - Justify – to show how something to be right or wrong. You must provide reasons and evidence to support your argument or stance
  - Suggest – offer an idea, proposition or a plan for consideration
  - Other words meaning evaluate include interpret, explain, appraise, support and assess.

Tips

Going over time in one section of the exam means having less time in another. That then places you under more and more pressure with each new question. So:

- Don't write more for one question that has fewer marks than another.
- Take the time to organise your extended answer questions. It will save you time in the long run.
- Practise under exam conditions. Even if you are only doing a section or one question, identify the time allocation and stick to it.

Examiners will reward:

- Content knowledge
- Illustrating understandings using relevant and specific examples
- Answering the question
- Clarity and coherence
- Critical analysis and evaluation
- Subject terminology used effectively

Motivation tips

Who in your class is motivated to do well? Create a study group. Meet at least once a week. Take turns organising the session based around the key content.

Attend after-school revision programs or holiday workshops. Hearing the same information from a different voice often helps nail those difficult concepts.

Set targets for in-class assessments. Try to improve your rank in the class or the number of marks you score.

How can I improve my marks?

Strengths and weaknesses

Use practice tests and mock examinations to identify strengths and weaknesses and then target weaknesses with a structured revision program.

Correct terminology

We've already mentioned how important it is to use scientific terminology. KNOW IT!

Review past papers

They will provide the best guide to the style of questions being asked.

Review past assessments

Learn from your mistakes. Read through the comments and see where you went wrong. Compare your answers to the marking key.

Exam marking key

This document indicates the knowledge, understandings and skills students need to demonstrate in each section and outlines the key points that must be covered in extended answers to gain full marks.

Good answers guide

Many courses offer a 'good answers' guide to past exam papers. Study these. Where did the students gain marks? What did they write that didn't get them any marks? Compare the answers to the marking key. What else could they have written to maximise their marks?

Practise under pressure

Make the conditions as realistic as possible. The more times you practise under pressure the less pressure you will feel come the exam.

Understand and know the concepts.
Know how to plan an answer.
Understand how the questions are marked.

Exam tactics

Here are some tried and tested tactics for your examination.

- **Reading time:** go straight to the extended response questions and make decisions as to which you will complete.
- **Best question first:** start with the questions you can answer confidently so you get a good start.
- **Terminology:** must be correct. Write terms out in full the first time you use them (eg. Adenosine Triphosphate) so examiners know you know what they mean, then abbreviate (ATP).
- Remember Bloom's taxonomy. Recognise key words in the question so you know exactly what you need to do.
- Read the questions properly and don't guess what is being asked because you see a familiar word. Pay attention to the words 'and', 'or' and even 'a'.
- Point-form answers are often sufficient. The number of marks per question generally gives some idea of the number of points you should make.
  - If you draw diagrams and graphs ensure they are useful, relevant and labelled.
  - If you are asked to interpret graphs or data, check the axes/units of measurement.
  - When asked to provide examples, ensure they best highlight the point you are trying to make, particularly if you are given the option of a sport of your choice.
  - Never leave a question unanswered, especially multiple choice.

Performance examinations

Here are some tips for performance exams:

- Be familiar with the skills, drills, drill description and tactical framework for your selected activity
- Review any materials provided by your examining authority.
- Practise the drills.
- Know the format of the exam
- Double check your allocated time and the venue
- Check your equipment is in good order
- Pack your equipment the night before
- Get a good night's sleep
- Eat a nutritious breakfast and take in plenty of fluids
- Be early to the venue
- Use mental skills strategies to control stress, anxiety and arousal
- Complete a thorough warm-up
- Block out others and give it your best shot

You don't need good luck, you need GOOD PREPARATION!