

Physical Education

How to get an H1 in the
Leaving Cert Physical Education exam



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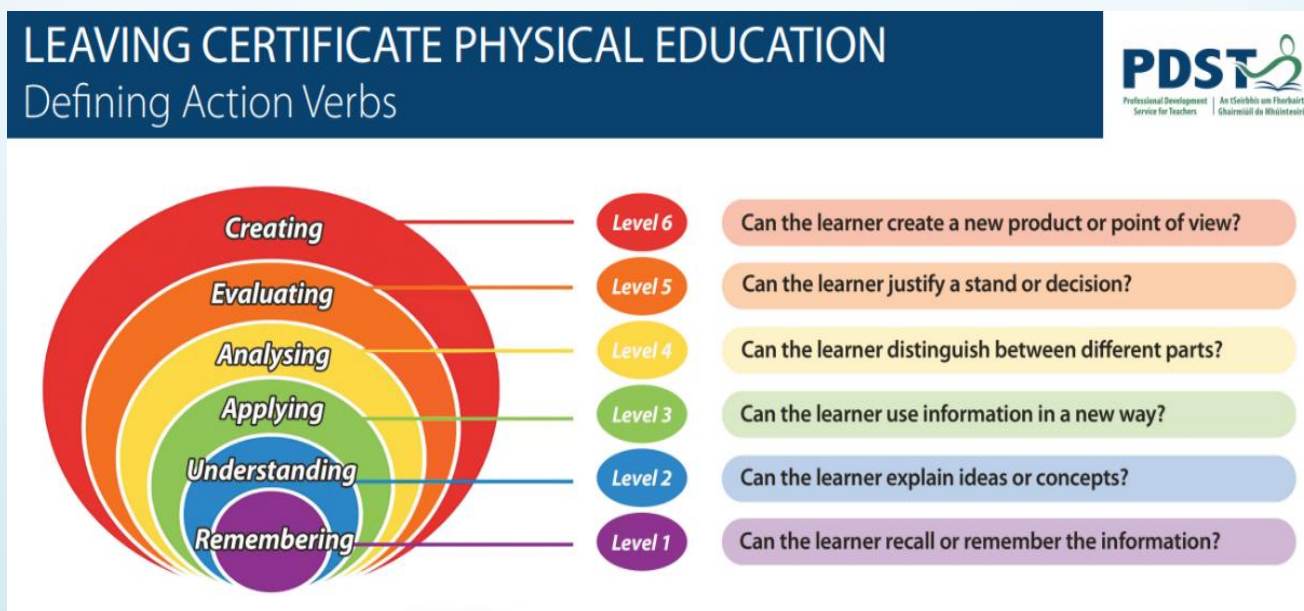
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Introduction

The written exam in LCPE is worth 50% of your total Leaving Cert grade and assesses all theory covered across the two strands of the course. Strand one, 'Towards optimum performance' is covered in 5th Year and strand 2, 'contemporary issues in physical activity' is covered throughout 6th Year.

Action Verbs

Before you tackle the exam, it is a good idea to familiarise yourself with the PDST action verb poster below:



Your teacher should introduce this **early in 5th year**. There are a range of key action verbs that will continuously pop up in exam questions and how to phrase your answers will determine on the level at which each verb lies. Verbs at **level 1-3** on the chart will generally require **lower order answers**, whilst **level 4-6** require more detailed answers and a **higher level of thinking**.

Be sure to examine each verb carefully because sometimes you may be expected to write more than the obvious answer. For instance, the verb **'identify'** requires you to not only list but provide **a brief description** of something. So, if asked to identify a fitness test for cardiovascular endurance then it is not enough to simply name the test i.e. 'the Cooper run'. You must elaborate and explain how the Cooper run is a cardiovascular endurance test which assesses how far an athlete can run over a 12-minute time period.

The following criteria from **the PDST** will help you develop your answers and achieve maximum points in the exam:

	Verb	Students should be able to.....
Level 6	Evaluate	collect and examine evidence to make judgments and appraisals; describe how evidence supports or does not support a judgement; identify the limitations of evidence in conclusions; make judgments about the ideas, solutions or methods
Level 5	Organise	make arrangements or preparations for an event or activity
	Design	plan, create or formulate a procedure or system by careful thought
Level 4	Analyse	examine something in detail, break down in order to bring out the essential elements or structure; identify parts and relationships, and to interpret information to reach conclusions
	Compare	give an account of the similarities between two (or more) items or situations, referring to both (all) of them throughout
	Examine	consider an argument or concept in a way that uncovers the assumptions and interrelationships of the issue
	Debate	Provide a structured argument about a topic

Level 3	Apply	select and use information and/or knowledge and understanding to explain its application in a given situation
	Demonstrate	prove or make clear by reasoning or evidence, illustrating with examples or practical application
	Guide	Influence or support the behaviour or development of an individual or group
	Implement	put a decision, plan or agreement into effect
	Investigate	observe, study, or make a detailed and systematic examination, to establish facts and reach new conclusions
	Present	promote or propose an idea; deliver or illustrate evidence; show something for others to examine
	Provide Evidence	provide data and documentation that support inferences or conclusions
	Research	study materials and sources in order to establish facts and reach new conclusions
	Suggest	propose a solution, hypothesis or other possible answer
	Use	apply knowledge or rules to put theory into practice. Employ something in a targeted way.

Level 2	Describe	develop a detailed picture or image of, for example a structure or a process, using words or diagrams where appropriate; produce a plan, simulation or model
	Identify	recognise patterns, facts, or details; provide an answer from a number of possibilities; recognize and state briefly a distinguishing fact or feature
	Discuss	offer a considered, balanced review that includes a range of arguments, factors or hypotheses. Opinions or conclusions are supported by appropriate evidence
	Explain	give a detailed account including reasons or causes

Level 1	Define	give the precise meaning of a word, phrase or concept
	Outline	present a description or summary

Exam Layout

The paper is 2.5 hours long for both higher and ordinary level and is divided into three sections. Section A; short questions, section B; case study and section C; long questions.

Section A: Short Questions

You will answer **10 out of 12 short questions** from all theoretical aspects of the course and it is recommended to spend **approximately 50 minutes** on these. (Note, the 2023 paper has been edited to comply with Covid learning and students will only have to answer 5 short questions out of 12).

Each short question is **marked evenly** and is generally asked using lower-order questioning (level 1-3). It's a good idea to try and answer **an extra question** if you have time. (For those sitting the 2023 paper, try and attempt 6 or 7 questions).

Section B: Case Study

It is recommended to spend **approximately 40 minutes** on the case study question. You will be asked about a **recent sporting event** that has been in the news and you will apply your theoretical knowledge to answers here. Generally, this question will be divided into **4 or 5 parts** which usually begin with basic action verbs, progressing into higher order questioning.

The case study question will ask about a sport that most students are not familiar with. You are expected to apply your knowledge of theory and show your ability to read the data/ graphs provided.

Common theory-related questions for this question may include the principles of training, rest and recovery strategies, injuries and treatments associated with the sport, training outside the activity etc.

Sports assessed so far in higher-level papers and are unlikely to pop up again in coming years include the following:

- **Long-distance running** (sample paper 2019)
- **Tennis** (2020)
- **Rowing** (2021)
- **Pentathlon** – a multi-event sport consisting of fencing, 200m swimming, show jumping, cross country running and pistol shooting (2022).

Sports assessed so far for OL include:

- **Mid-distance running** (sample paper)
- No OL paper 2020
- **Gymnastics** (2021)
- **GAA** (2022)

Section C: Long Questions

You should spend approximately **1 hour on section C** and complete **3 long questions** out of 5. (Note, the 2023 paper will only require you to answer 2 long questions). You can attempt an extra question if you have the time but always read the question carefully! It's common for long questions to contain **multiple topics** so do not begin answering until you have read all parts of the question!! You **should read the question** in full before you decide on which topics you are most comfortable with. The last thing

you need in an exam is to waste time on a question you cannot fully complete and gain full marks in.

Past Papers:

There are [4 past/ sample papers](#) currently available for higher level and 3 for ordinary level. Each of these along with marking schemes can be found by accessing the examinations archive website:

<https://www.examinations.ie/exammaterialarchive/>.



Best of luck in the exam!
You will be great



