

# Physical Education

How to get an H1 in the  
Leaving Cert PE Physical Activity Project



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## Introduction

The PAP is a digital written project worth **20%** of your overall Leaving Certificate grade. It takes place over an **8 to 10-week** period from early October to mid-December and will take approximately **20 to 25 hours** of work (expect longer!).

Most of the written work should take place during school hours, depending on whether there are computers available. When it comes to the practical element of the project, testing and data collection should happen during class time, but you will be expected to work on your own training programmes outside of your school hours.

The total word count of the digital booklet is **1,600 words**. Each section A, B and C will be supported with a **short video** that you will edit using a movie-making software. The total time of the 3 videos combined will be no more than **4 mins long**. You must submit them in an **MP4 format**.

## Timeline

The first step involved in the PAP is working with your class teacher to develop an **appropriate timeline** to complete your work in. Your teacher should present you with a template or plan to guide you through the process. Don't be fooled, there is a lot of work involved in the PAP so it's important to take note of the deadlines before you start and make sure you stick to them. And of course, remember to note any holiday or school closure days during this time!

Trust me, you won't want to have any last-minute project work hanging over you, especially as Christmas exams and Mocks creep up on you!!

Below is a sample timeline that you can use to plan your work:

Week	Date	To do	What needs to be done in class & at home	Done
Week 1	3 <sup>rd</sup> of October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking at overall performance</li> <li>Gathering data</li> </ul>		
Week 2	10 <sup>th</sup> of October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking at overall performance</li> <li>Gathering data</li> <li>Starting to Goal set</li> </ul>		
Week 3	17 <sup>th</sup> of October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Goal setting</li> <li>Designing Training programme</li> </ul>		
Week 4	24 <sup>th</sup> of October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completing Training programme</li> <li>Reflections</li> <li>Adapt training programme to meet your needs</li> </ul>		
Week 5	31 <sup>st</sup> of October (Midterm)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completing Training programme</li> <li>Reflections</li> <li>Adapt training programme to meet your needs</li> </ul>		
Week 6	7 <sup>th</sup> of November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completing Training programme</li> <li>Reflections</li> </ul>		

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adapt training programme to meet your needs</li> </ul>		
Week 7	14 <sup>th</sup> of November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completing Training programme</li> <li>Reflections</li> <li>Adapt training programme to meet your needs</li> </ul>		
Week 8	21 <sup>st</sup> of November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Completing Training programme</li> <li>Reflections</li> <li>Adapt training programme to meet your needs</li> </ul>		
Week 9	28 <sup>th</sup> of November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Looking at overall performance</li> <li>Gathering data</li> <li>Writing up PAP booklet</li> </ul>		

## Choosing your activity

Before you begin the PAP, you will need to choose a physical activity to work with. You must choose a competitive sport which has a recognised National Governing Body. If you are unsure about this, you can ask your teacher or search for your activity here:

<https://www.sportireland.ie/national-governing-bodies/ngb-contact-finder>.

You can choose to complete the PAP in one of the following roles:

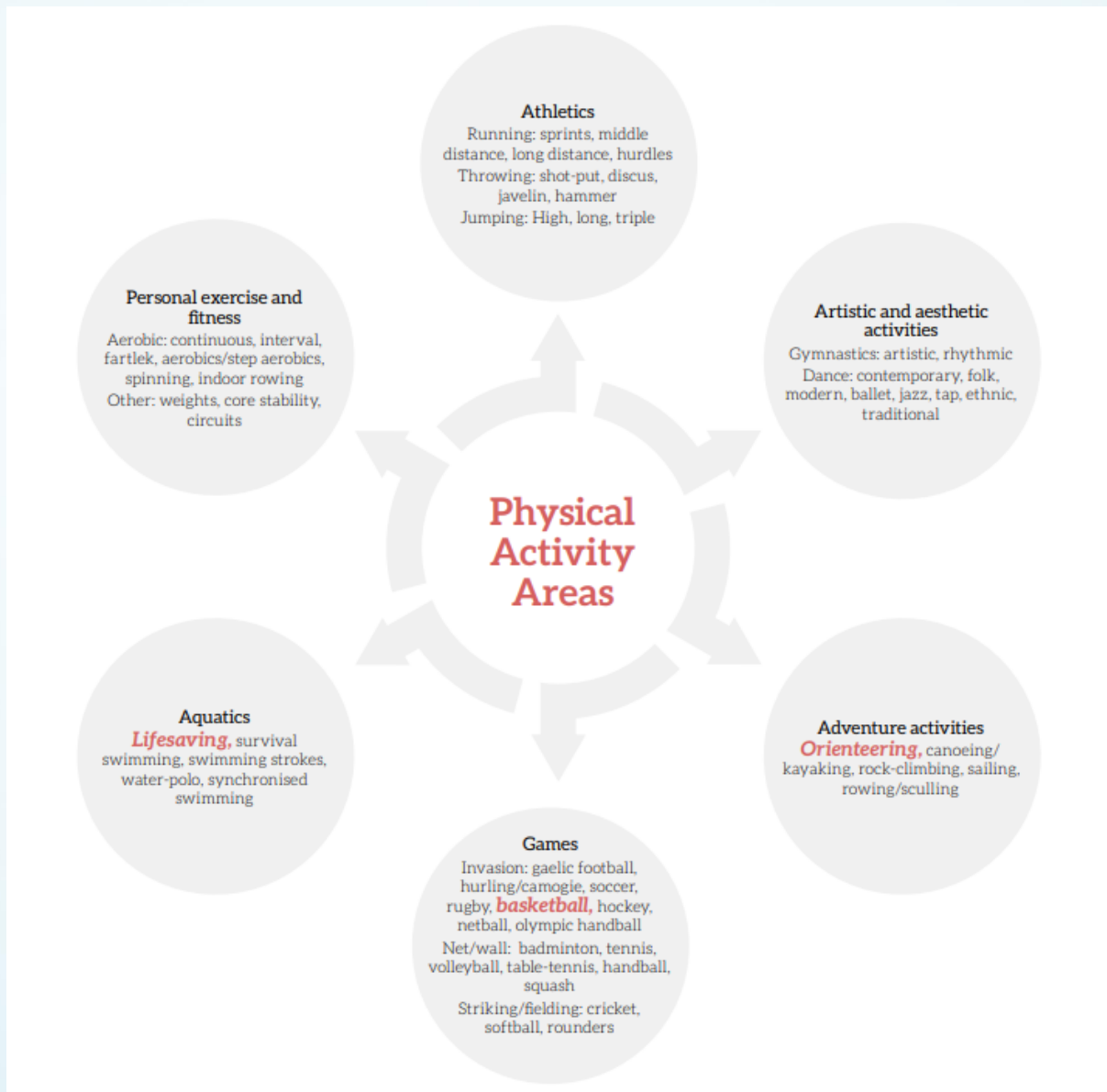
- Performer
- Coach/choreographer

Your teacher will let you know the **three** physical activity choices that are available for the Performance Assessment (PA). It is highly recommended that you decide on the sport you will use for your PA **prior** to carrying out the PAP. This is because in the PA you will be graded on your ability to **perform a skill** from your chosen sport.

### Performance Assessment

If you would rate yourself a highly skilled footballer, then do **NOT** choose soccer for the PAP. Instead, save it for the PA and choose **another** activity. It's important to note also that the activity must come from a **different physical activity area**. See LCPE Specification pg.12 for more details (image below).

For example, hurling and soccer both come under **the games strand** so therefore **only one of the two** can be chosen for the PAP and the PA must come from **another** strand such as athletics or personal health and exercise.



## Needs Analysis

When you choose your physical activity, you then need to carry out a needs analysis. This is where you analyse your sport and pick out the key components that are needed for optimal performance.

You should choose a broad range of components to research such as:

- Health-related fitness (HRF)
- Performance related fitness (PRF)
- Physiological demands (e.g., tracking hydration, sleep, heart rate etc.)
- Psychological demand (e.g., anxiety levels, motivation etc.)
- Diet & Nutrition
- Improving skill & technique
- Biomechanical (movement) analysis
- Structures & Strategies
- Roles & relationships

Keep track of these in a journal or a document online and find material that is referenced to show why each component is important to your activity!

For example:

- ✓ Online articles
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ Textbooks

*You will need to list these sources later in your bibliography so be sure to store them in a safe place.*



## Testing and Data Collection

Once the PAP window opens you may begin your testing.

Here's what you need to do:

### Design a fitness battery test

Using the information from your needs analysis you will design a fitness battery test for your chosen activity and carry out a series of testing. Your teacher will supervise the testing during practical lessons. Be sure that the equipment you need is available for you to carry out your testing!

### Creating your video

You will need to record all of your testing. This footage will then be used to create a short video that you will submit with your Section A write-up.

Short **10-20 second** snips of each test will be enough as your edited video will only be approximately **1 minute long** for section A.

You can also include other methods of analysis as text files in the images section.

They can include:

- ✓ Match analysis sheets and results
- ✓ Player profile sheets
- ✓ Observation lists
- ✓ Fitness testing results
- ✓ Movement analysis tools
- ✓ Peer and teacher feedback
- ✓ SCAT tests

### Gathering good video footage

Your teacher will talk you through guidelines and tips on how to gather video footage effectively. But be smart and use your common sense- i.e. no students/ unnecessary equipment in the background, appropriate angles and lighting etc.

Be sure to **mute all sound** when uploading your videos and only have background music if appropriate e.g. gymnastics/ dance routine.

Videos with sound **will lose marks**.

#### Note

All testing carried out **must** be recorded on a school iPad or digital device and stored as evidence.

## Section A: Performance Analysis

Section A	Initial Performance Analysis	Marks
Approx 700 words	Analyse performance in the chosen physical activity using the results of a broad series of relevant tests or analysis methods	12

The performance analysis write-up should be approximately **700 words**.

The following information should be included:

- ✓ A brief introduction about you
- ✓ The reason you selected this physical activity for your PAP
- ✓ The level of skill you identify yourself at within the sport
- ✓ The key findings of your need analysis using supporting references from several sources

The results of all testing should be displayed on a table and stored in the images section below the text. Your results must be compared to the normative data.

See the sample table below:

Fitness Test	My results	Normative Data
Cooper Run	2.72 km	2200-2900m
Standing Broad Jump	240cm	204.7 cm
Plank	2:30	1-2 minutes
Balance Stork	40 seconds	31-40 seconds
Sit and Reach	28cm	22.2cm
BMI	22.9	18.5-24.9
Vertical reach	56cm	31.8cm
Co-Ordination (wall toss)	37 catches	20-29 catches
Push-up	34	60-65 reps
Back scratch	Right 7cm, Left 5cm	Right 5cm, Left 2cm
Scat test	17	15
Average sleep	8 hours	8 hours
Daily calorie intake	1,950 calories	2,000 calories
Urine hydration test	1-3 colour chart	1-3 colour chat

Each image used must be labelled appropriately e.g. 'Fig.1' and referred to in the write-up. The purpose of section A is to explore the **results of your testing** and identify your key strengths within your performance.

**Weaker areas should not be discussed** in this section but can be listed as 'areas of concern' in the text or on your table. Your results will be used to identify your **three performance goals** in section B.

## Section B: Identifying Performance Goals

Section B	Identification performance goals Presentation of training/practice plans	Marks
Approx 400 words	<p>Present three clear and distinct rationalised performance goals, relevant to the performance analysis undertaken in section A.</p> <p>Present a separate training/ practice plan designed to reflect each performance goal (please insert in table format where indicated)</p> <p>Provide a brief rationale for the training/ practice plans.</p>	40

Section B is where most of the marks are awarded but you have a lot of information to cover in just **400 words**. That's approximately **130 words** for each performance goal so you need to be clear and concise!

When you compare your results to the normative data you will find out the areas that need to improve within your performance.

### Using a SMART strategy

Within section B you will use the **SMART** strategy to develop three different goals from various areas of your performance.

This stands for:

**S**pecific

**M**easurable

**A**chievable

**R**ealistic

**T**imely

The **SMART** strategy will enable you to be specific with your goals. It is not enough to say for instance, "I want to improve my cardiovascular fitness.....".

### Note

Each performance goal must be unique and can only be explored if there is **evidence of testing** in section A. For example, you may not choose to work on agility and coordination as two separate goals as they are both PRF components.

Your goal must follow the SMART strategy. For example:

*"I want to improve my distance in the Cooper Run from 2.72 KM to 3 KM. To achieve this, I will follow a 6-week training programme which focuses on enhancing cardiovascular endurance. I believe 6 weeks of working on high-intensity exercises such as endurance runs, short sprints, cycling and swimming will enable me to meet my goal of running at a faster pace to cover a wider distance within a 12-minute timeframe".*

### Your Training Programme

Once your goal is chosen you will need to design an appropriate training programme to meet the goal (i.e.,4-6 weeks). You can use a weekly template to design the programme. This will be stored in the images section and referred to in your rationale, where you will discuss the appropriate principles of training that were used to develop your programme.

You will need to provide a video for Section B also. This will include any evidence of you carrying out your 3 training programmes. Section B video should be approximately **1-2 mins long**. You will also have space to attach images as evidence.

## Retesting and Section C

Section C	Concluding Performance Analysis	Marks
Approx 500 words	Analyse performance in the chosen physical activity using the results of a broad series of relevant tests or analysis methods	25

The final step in the write-up is to complete section C. This write-up should be approximately **500 words**. Before you begin you will need to return to the testing carried out in section A.

All tests from section A must be **retested**, not just the tests used for your performance goals. The examiner wants to see you identify your unintended outcomes i.e. areas of your performance that improved unexpectedly from carrying out your 3 training programmes.

An example may be that you lost or gained weight unintentionally from cardio training which is a factor influencing BMI results. Similarly, you may have gained muscle mass from carrying out weight training to improve power etc.

Below is a checklist you can use for section C:

- ✓ You need to state whether you achieved your 3 performance goals. Why or why not?
  
- ✓ Begin with; *"I achieved my goal of..... moving from X mins to Y mins in the standing stork balance test.... I will have to continue to do..... In order to fully meet my goal in the future"*.
  
- ✓ Discuss your unintended consequences i.e., the cross-correlation between your training plans and improving other areas.
  
- ✓ Discuss your future steps for each programme. Be realistic!
  
- ✓ You may use the same table from section A to display your results or simply refer back to this table i.e., see Fig.1 in section A etc.



- ✓ You may also add a section on your table for how relevant this test is to your chosen sport if you want. Be sure to always refer back to the testing you carried out in week 1.
- ✓ Images can be tables/ graphs or body profile images etc.
- ✓ For your video, record a snippet of you completing each test and carrying out the test in your own time to learn your results.

## Overall Coherence

Concluding Performance Analysis	Marks
Analyse performance in the chosen physical activity using the results of a broad series of relevant tests or analysis methods	10

There are **10 marks** going for the overall coherence and clarity of your project which includes marks for your supporting references and bibliography.

You won't have the space to waffle with this strict word count, so you make sure you are clear and concise! Make sure you back up everything with supporting references and include your list of sources in the bibliography on the final page of your booklet. The more supporting material you use, the more marks you will get!

## Referencing

In terms of referencing, don't include links to material in your write-up as this will enhance your word count.

Just use brackets at the end of each sentence to say where you sourced your information e.g. (topendsports.com).

Links and other details can then be added to your bibliography at the end. Be sure to keep track of these as you go so that you can identify where all your information has come from. This is particularly important when referencing normative data. Even if the information comes from your textbook, then reference it in your table of results!



Best of luck in the exam!  
You will be great



