



Frequently Asked Questions – Year 12 ATAR Physical Education Studies – School-based practical external assessment

The following questions have been developed based on queries from teachers and school leaders regarding the school-based practical external assessment (SPEA) for the Physical Education Studies (PES) Year 12 ATAR course. The responses to these questions aim to provide additional guidance to teachers and school leaders of schools with students completing the SPEA.

This document should be read in conjunction with the *SPEA Handbook* and course syllabus, which are available under the SPEA heading on the PES course page at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/health-and-physical-education/physical-education-studies>.

School assessment

1. What are my options for the number of sports offered to the class?

The *SPEA Handbook* states four options for the teaching and assessment of the practical component of the course. These options are:

- select one sport to teach to the whole class for the entire year
- select a sport to teach to the whole class, then select a different sport to teach to the whole class for the year (i.e. select two sports for the year to teach the whole class)
- select a sport to teach to the whole class, then allow students to select their second sport for the year
- allow each student to select their sport for the entire year.

2. If Sport 1 and Sport 2 are the same sport, do I need to assess twice?

As stated in the syllabus, each assessment type is only required to be included once. In this instance, the single school-based performance assessment would be the SPEA in **Term 3**.

3. If in the past, schools have hired external assessors and sport specialists to assess the practical component of the course, can they still do this?

No. The SPEA needs to be assessed by the class teacher. As stated in the syllabus, the assessment must be administered by the teacher. The decision on final school-based performance marks for their students is the responsibility of the teacher.

4. Is the new assessment format a requirement for both Years 11 and 12?

The SPEA is a specific task type in the Year 12 ATAR Physical Education Studies (PES) syllabus. Teachers may use the sport-specific support materials provided for the SPEA in their Year 11 ATAR PES and Years 11 and 12 General PES courses.

Year 11 ATAR and Years 11 and 12 General PES students who are asked to participate in the SPEA to allow for game play will not be assessed.

Session logistics

1. Will the Authority schedule two sessions for schools with mixed classes? One session for boys and one session for girls?

There will be a separate SPEA session scheduled by the Authority for each group identified. Generally, each sport to be externally assessed will be conducted separately for male and female students. However, schools may choose to combine students for the purpose of the assessment in badminton, hockey, netball, tennis, and touch football. If this option is selected, it is advised that students are matched by skill level for assessment sessions wherever possible.

2. Regarding the separate assessment of boys and girls, what if there are only two or three girls and eight boys doing touch football, for example?

Schools may choose to combine students for the purpose of the assessment in badminton, hockey, netball, tennis, and touch football. For sports that will be assessed separately for male and female students, separate sessions will be arranged for schools with a mixed class. Where there are not enough students for the assessment, the teacher may use other students they deem suitable, such as Year 12 General PES or Year 11 ATAR or General PES students.

3. If there are two classes, can two sports be offered across both classes and the Authority assess both sports, with students nominating one?

Yes. If there are two sports offered across the two classes, the Authority will schedule separate SPEA sessions for each sport. Each class teacher will need to mark their students' performances in the SPEA sessions that their students are completing. Students will only be assessed for one sport in the SPEA.

4. What is the minimum group size needed for a SPEA session?

Each sport has their own group size. The sport-specific support documents available on the PES course page at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/health-and-physical-education/physical-education-studies> include this information.

5. Do I need to provide a paid umpire/referee for a SPEA session?

No. The requirement is that the person in the role has a good understanding of the game and can let the game progress.

Administration and organisation

1. Can schools change the sport initially indicated?

Yes. As stated in the *SPEA Handbook*, the school has until **Week 10, Term 1** to notify the Authority of any changes to the location or selected sport/s for the SPEA.

2. What is the period of time that all external assessments will take place?

The SPEA sessions will be timetabled between **Weeks 2 and 8, Term 3**.

3. Will schools be provided with a list of the sports other schools in their region are offering so they can work together if needed?

Schools may make contact with other schools to determine sport offerings. If necessary, a school may apply to participate in an Authority-administered SPEA.

4. Can schools combine for the SPEA?

Yes. There are two ways for schools to combine for the SPEA:

- Authority-administered SPEA – to support schools that do not have the minimum number of students required and have exhausted all options for establishing a collaborative SPEA, the Authority may schedule a SPEA session at an appropriate venue of its choosing.
- Collaborative SPEA – a school may choose to combine with another school/s to form a collaborative SPEA where schools organise a shared venue for their students and teachers to undertake the SPEA for one or more sports. The collaborative SPEA is hosted and coordinated by a single school.

See the *SPEA Handbook* for further details about applying for these options.

5. When do schools notify the sports students will be assessed in?

As stated in the *SPEA Handbook*, schools are required to return details to the Authority by **Week 6, Term 1**.

6. How does a school inform the Authority of dates that are not available for the SPEA (e.g. carnivals, camps, pupil free days)?

The *SPEA Handbook* states that the school's nominated PES ATAR Year 12 course contact is 'to indicate to the Authority details of any significant school event/s occurring in **Term 3** likely to impact the administration of the SPEA.' To support schools with the new process in 2025, this date has been extended and the information should be emailed to spea@scsa.wa.edu.au by the end of **Week 1, Term 2**.

7. Can a school request a particular day or week to run their SPEA?

A school may choose to contact the Authority at spea@scsa.wa.edu.au with preferred days or weeks for their SPEA; however, timetables are subject to external assessor availability, and the Authority cannot guarantee that these preferences will be accommodated. Schools should be prepared for flexibility in scheduling to accommodate the availability of external assessors.

8. Can a school request for the SPEA to take place outside of school hours?

No, all SPEAs will be timetabled during the normal school day.

9. I'm coordinating Year 12 ATAR Physical Education Studies at my school. Why haven't I been receiving emails from the Authority about the SPEA?

Please check with your school's SIRS administrator that you have been nominated as the 'Year 12 Physical Education Studies ATAR Contact' in SIRS, and that your email address has been correctly entered into SIRS.

10. When is the deadline for applications for alternative assessments for students who have an injury or illness that prevents them from completing the practical assessment?

The Authority must receive applications for alternative assessments for students requiring alternative assessments due to injury or illness before the end of **Week 10, Term 2**. The information should be emailed to spea@scsa.wa.edu.au.

11. How does a school notify the Authority of changes to assessment venues?

All SPEA venue information must be entered into the 'Sport Information' page of SIRS. If there is a change to any of the information previously entered, schools must update SIRS and send an email to spea@scsa.wa.edu.au to alert the Authority to the change.

12. What do schools need to provide or organise on the day of the SPEA?

The logistical requirements for schools will vary depending on the sport/s being assessed. For detailed information about playing space, equipment, facilities, umpires/referees etc., see the sport-specific support material on the PES course page at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/health-and-physical-education/physical-education-studies>.

13. How many students are assessed at once in a SPEA?

The number of students being assessed at one time will vary depending on the sport being assessed. For detailed information, please view the sport-specific support material on the PES course page at <https://senior-secondary.scsa.wa.edu.au/syllabus-and-support-materials/health-and-physical-education/physical-education-studies>.

14. Is there funding available to assist schools with administration of the SPEA?

The SPEA replaces the practical examination of the Year 12 ATAR PES course and is designed for implementation in schools. The Authority will fund teacher relief for schools releasing teachers as external assessors for the SPEA.

15. Who is responsible for the transportation of students to SPEA venues?

Transport of students to venues outside their school is the responsibility of the school.

16. Who is responsible for putting arrangements in place for the availability of the classroom teacher for the SPEA?

The classroom teacher must be available for the SPEA and must assess all of their students. Once the SPEA timetable is received, the teacher and school are responsible for arranging teacher relief.

Special provisions

1. What happens if a student is absent on the day of the assessment?

The student must submit a *Physical Education Studies: School-based Practical External Assessment Application for Approved Absence*. The teacher must conduct the assessment upon the student's return to school. This mark will be reported to the Authority.

If a student does not have an approved *Physical Education Studies: School-based Practical External Assessment Application for Approved Absence*, the combined mark (practical) will not be calculated. This means the pair of units enrolled in for that year will not contribute towards the WACE

achievement requirements. A course mark or grade will not be recorded on the student's Western Australian Statement of Student Achievement (WASSA) and the student will not receive a report for the ATAR course.

2. What happens if a student experiences sickness or misadventure that affects their performance or participation in the SPEA?

The student must submit a *Physical Education Studies: School-based Practical External Assessment Application for Approved Absence*.

3. How will students with disabilities be assessed?

For students who are identified as having a disability that does not prevent them from participating in the SPEA, the school may wish to submit to the Authority an *Application for Special Examination Arrangements* such that appropriate adjustments may be made to the SPEA by the Authority for the student if the application is approved. Approved adjustments to the SPEA will be communicated to the external assessor and the teacher of the sport. The adjusted SPEA will be conducted at the same time as the assessment for students who do not have adjustments.

Elite performers and specialist schools

1. Will schools receive the elite standard before selecting specific sports?

The standards for elite classification are included in the sport-specific support material. It is important to note that this classification has no effect on the assessment of any student.

2. If a teacher believes that a student is elite, but is unable to participate in trials for elite teams, can the school indicate them as elite?

Being identified as an elite athlete will have no impact on how students are assessed as the external assessor of the sport will not have this information.

3. Do the elite criteria create a disadvantage for country students?

Being identified as elite will have no impact on how students are assessed as the external assessor of the sport will not have this information.

4. Are there allowances for elite athletes whose sport is not offered by the school?

Schools make decisions about the sports offered from those prescribed in the syllabus.

5. Why is elite performer information required and what will it be used for?

The classification of elite performers by schools for each sport remains the same as with the former Year 12 ATAR PES practical requirements document for the practical (performance) examination. The modified gameplay model for the SPEA allows a school to organise students into teams which may be adjusted to account for skill levels and to provide all students with the opportunity to demonstrate their ability. Identification of elite performers may also assist the Authority when an Authority-administered SPEA has been requested.

6. Does this model advantage specialist schools?

The assessment method outlined in this model works no differently from that which has been used up to now in relation to the sports selected/studied by the students. Students can specialise in a sport (sometimes over two years). That decision is made by the school/teacher.

External assessors

1. Who will the Authority's external assessors be and can Physical Education Studies teachers apply for selection as an external assessor?

There is an application and selection process similar to the way ATAR course examination markers are employed. Physical Education Studies teachers are strongly encouraged to apply for these roles. All applicants will need to declare any potential conflicts of interest. Current teachers will need the permission of their Principal to apply to be an external assessor. Expressions of interest are called for through the Authority website and the *7–12 Circular* at the start of the year.

Professional development and support

1. Are there any plans to provide professional development for all Year 12 ATAR Physical Education Studies teachers?

Professional development sessions on the SPEA will be conducted in May 2025. These sessions are available to all Years 11 and 12 ATAR Physical Education Studies teachers. These sessions build on the professional learning conducted over the past three years during the practical validation trial undertaken by the Authority. Registrations are open on the Authority website at <https://www.scsa.wa.edu.au/events/year-11-and-12-atar-physical-education-studies-school-based-performance-external-assessment>.

In addition, the Authority has published the *SPEA Handbook* and sport-specific materials earlier this year.

2. How are teachers expected to ensure valid, reliable and fair assessments?

The Authority has published support materials and marking keys for each of the ten sports prescribed for practical performance in the Year 12 ATAR PES syllabus. Professional learning is available for all PES teachers and the external assessors will be trained for the SPEA.

As stated in the *SPEA Handbook*, for the purposes of moderation, the Authority will treat the SPEA as a practical examination. The mark from the external assessor will be used as part of the validation of the school marks.

3. How are teachers who do not have experience teaching, coaching or playing a specific sport at a level any higher than 'school-based PE lessons' meant to assess students in a valid, reliable and fair manner?

As with all courses, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that teachers are appropriately qualified and supported to deliver the courses for which they are employed and timetabled.

- 4. Are teachers able to have other staff members present with a higher level of expertise, who can assist in accurately assessing students in sports where they feel their experience and expertise is lacking?**

As outlined in the *SPEA handbook*, the class teacher must conduct the assessments and submit their judgements on the sports selected from the prescribed list. The Authority will appoint the external assessor for the SPEA.

As with all courses, it is the school's responsibility to ensure that teachers are appropriately qualified and supported to deliver the courses for which they are employed and timetabled.

- 5. In a hub situation, are teachers from all schools within the hub able to discuss and moderate marks to ensure all students at the SPEA receive fair and valid marks?**

The partnerships previously known as hubs are referred to as a collaborative SPEA or an Authority-administered SPEA. In an Authority-administered SPEA or collaborative SPEA format, teachers from participating schools may discuss the marking key and agree on how to implement it before the event, but the final judgment of the marks to be awarded to each student rests with their classroom teacher. Noting that the external assessor's marks will be used for statistical moderation, teachers **may not** discuss the marking of the SPEA with the external assessor or their colleagues.

- 6. How are students meant to effectively show their breadth of skills, strategies and tactics if they are playing against players where there is a significant difference in skill level?**

As noted in the sport-specific documents, teams are to be monitored to ensure students demonstrate skills in a variety of positions. For example, in hockey, students who play on the wing for an extended period may be rotated to the centre.

- 7. How will the Authority ensure valid and reliable marks across each assessment using a number of external assessors?**

The Authority will deliver professional development sessions for external assessors in **Term 2**. This training process will be similar to practical examination ratification/pre-marker training as in previous years to establish a common understanding amongst external assessors of the standards of marking of the SPEA for each sport before attending an assessment venue.

- 8. Will there be video exemplars aligned with the 1–10 mark allocations/standards?**

Yes. The Authority will be using video exemplars as part of the professional learning.

- 9. Will each SPEA be video recorded to ensure that marks can be validated where necessary – and all students across the state receive a fair and accurate marks? What steps are in place to ensure all students across the state are marked fairly and accurately – within and across sports?**

The Authority does not plan to film the SPEA, just as the Authority did not record the practical examinations for PES. The external assessors will receive training for marking the SPEA.

- 10. Has the subjective nature of assessment in practical sports – and the reliability and validity of marks across markers and sports – been addressed?**

The marking keys provide explicit criteria for assessment.

1. **What are teachers meant to do in practical sessions after the school-based practical external assessment? Should we be doing more practical sessions early to allow for the correct total percentage of practical hours?**

How to program the course to meet student needs continues to be the teacher's decision in the context of their school. Teachers continue to program for teaching, learning and assessment to meet the requirements of the syllabus and their students' needs.

2. **Will there still be a Physical Education Studies ATAR course practical external examination for PES?**

No. The SPEA replaces the external practical (performance) examination that has previously been used.