



PE.SC4 Socio-cultural Influences: Commercialisation of Sport and the Golden Triangle

AQA 8582 · Calculator allowed · about 50 minutes

Total Marks

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Name: _____ Date: ____ / ____ / ____

Answer ALL questions. Show all your working.

1 What is meant by the 'commercialisation' of sport?

- ☐ A) Sport being run and promoted increasingly as a business, for financial profit
- ☐ B) A sport's official rulebook
- ☐ C) The number of spectators attending a single match
- ☐ D) A performer's personal training schedule

(Total for Question 1 is 1 mark)

2 State what is meant by each of the three parts of sport's 'golden triangle'.

(a) Sport (1)

(b) Sponsorship (1)

(c) The media (1)

(Total for Question 2 is 3 marks)

3 The three parts of the golden triangle rely on each other. Explain, for each pair below, why one part is willing to invest in another.

(a) Explain why a sponsor is willing to pay to be associated with a sport. **(1)**

(b) Explain why a broadcaster is willing to pay a sport for the rights to show its events. **(1)**

(c) Explain why a sport needs both sponsorship income and media coverage. **(1)**

(Total for Question 3 is 3 marks)

4 Explain how increased media coverage of a sport can attract more sponsorship for that sport.

(Total for Question 4 is 2 marks)

5 Explain how sponsorship income can allow a sport or event to improve, giving one example of how the money might be used.

(Total for Question 5 is 2 marks)

6 State two positive effects commercialisation can have on ELITE performers.

(Total for Question 6 is 2 marks)

7 State two positive effects commercialisation can have on SPECTATORS.

(Total for Question 7 is 2 marks)

- 8** Explain one negative effect commercialisation can have on when and how often matches are scheduled, and who this can disadvantage.

(Total for Question 8 is 2 marks)

- 9** Explain one negative effect commercialisation can have on ticket prices or access for fans.

(Total for Question 9 is 2 marks)

- 10** Explain one way that increased commercial pressure, such as sponsor expectations or prize money, can affect performers.

(Total for Question 10 is 2 marks)

- 11** Explain why rule changes are sometimes made to a sport to make it more entertaining for a television audience, giving an example.

(Total for Question 11 is 2 marks)

- 12** Table 1 shows total broadcast revenue and average matchday attendance for the fictional Riverside Basketball League over three seasons.

Season	Broadcast revenue (GBP million)	Average attendance
2023-24	12	3,200
2024-25	18	3,000
2025-26	27	2,850

- (a) State the season with the highest broadcast revenue. (1)
- (b) Calculate the percentage increase in broadcast revenue from 2023-24 to 2025-26. (2)
Show your method.
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- (c) Describe the trend shown in average attendance over the three seasons, and (2)
suggest one commercial reason that could contribute to it.
- (d) State one way the rising broadcast revenue shown in Table 1 could benefit the (1)
league, even though attendance is falling.

(Total for Question 12 is 6 marks)

- 13** Explain why less commercially popular sports can find it harder to attract sponsorship and media coverage, and suggest one consequence of this for performers in those sports.

(Total for Question 13 is 2 marks)

- 14** State two ways a sport or event can generate commercial income, other than sponsorship or broadcast rights.

(Total for Question 14 is 2 marks)

15 Which of the following best exemplifies the golden triangle in action?

- ☐ A) A club changes its badge design
- ☐ B) A broadcaster pays for exclusive rights to a league that a sponsor also funds, both drawn in by the league's growing audience
- ☐ C) A performer changes training venue
- ☐ D) A referee is appointed for a match

(Total for Question 15 is 1 mark)

16 Explain three reasons a national governing body might actively seek greater commercialisation for its sport.

(Total for Question 16 is 3 marks)

17 State two examples of additional costs a sports club or event organiser might face as a direct result of increased commercialisation.

(Total for Question 17 is 2 marks)

18 Explain how technology funded through commercial income, such as a video review system, can affect a sport, giving both a benefit and a drawback.

(Total for Question 18 is 2 marks)

19 Explain one way commercialisation can create unequal funding opportunities between different sports, or between different competitions within the same sport.

(Total for Question 19 is 2 marks)

20 Which of the three parts of the golden triangle directly pays a sport for the rights to broadcast its events exclusively?

- ☐ A) The media
- ☐ B) Sponsorship
- ☐ C) The sport itself
- ☐ D) Spectators

(Total for Question 20 is 1 mark)

21 The Riverside Basketball League (see Table 1) is negotiating a new five-year broadcast deal that would significantly increase its revenue but would require several matches each season to be moved to late weeknight slots to suit the broadcaster's schedule.

Discuss the reasons the league might want to accept this deal, and evaluate its likely impact on the league, its performers and its spectators.

(Total for Question 21 is 9 marks)

Mark scheme · PE.SC4 Socio-cultural Influences: Commercialisation of Sport and the Golden Triangle

Question 1

- **B1** A (sport being run/promoted increasingly as a business, for profit)
- **Answer: A (sport being run and promoted increasingly as a business, for financial profit)**

Question 2

- (a) **B1** the sport, event or performers themselves, the product being watched and followed, oe
- **(a) Answer: The sport, event or performers themselves, the product being watched and followed.**
- (b) **B1** financial or material support given by a business to a sport, event or performer in exchange for promotion/association, oe
- **(b) Answer: Financial or material support given by a business to a sport, event or performer, in exchange for promotion or brand association.**
- (c) **B1** the organisations (TV, print, radio, digital) that broadcast or report on sport to an audience, oe
- **(c) Answer: The organisations, such as TV, print, radio or digital platforms, that broadcast or report on sport to an audience.**

Question 3

- (a) **B1** it gives the sponsor's brand exposure to the sport's audience/fanbase, oe
- **(a) Answer: It gives the sponsor's brand exposure to the sport's audience and fanbase.**
- (b) **B1** showing popular sport attracts viewers, which generates advertising or subscription revenue for the broadcaster, oe
- **(b) Answer: Showing popular sport attracts viewers, which generates advertising or subscription revenue for the broadcaster.**
- (c) **B1** sponsorship and broadcast income fund the sport (facilities, prize money, development), while media coverage grows its profile and audience, which in turn attracts further sponsorship, oe
- **(c) Answer: Sponsorship and broadcast income fund the sport, while media coverage grows its profile and audience, which in turn attracts further sponsorship.**

Question 4

- **B1** more media coverage means more people see the sport, growing its audience/exposure, oe
- **B1** sponsors are attracted to sports with larger audiences, since this offers more exposure for their own brand, oe
- **Answer: More media coverage means more people see the sport, growing its audience and exposure, and sponsors are attracted to sports with larger audiences since this offers more exposure for their own brand.**

Question 5

- **B1** sponsorship provides income the sport would not otherwise have, oe
- **B1** example, e.g. this can be used to improve facilities, increase prize money, or fund grassroots development programmes, oe
- **Answer: Sponsorship provides income the sport would not otherwise have, which can be used to improve facilities, increase prize money, or fund grassroots development programmes.**

Question 6

- **B1** one effect, e.g. increased funding for training, coaching or support staff, oe
- **B1** a second, distinct effect, e.g. increased personal income through prize money or endorsement/sponsorship opportunities, oe
- **Answer: For example, increased funding for training, coaching or support staff, and increased personal income through prize money or endorsement opportunities.**

Question 7

- **B1** one effect, e.g. more live TV or streaming access to events they could not otherwise attend, oe
- **B1** a second, distinct effect, e.g. improved stadium facilities or matchday technology funded by commercial income, oe
- **Answer: For example, more live TV or streaming access to events they could not otherwise attend, and improved**

Question 8

- **B1** broadcasters pay for exclusive or prime-time slots, so events may be moved to fit the broadcaster's schedule rather than a time that suits fans or performers, oe
- **B1** this can disadvantage travelling spectators (e.g. an unusual weeknight kick-off) or disrupt performers' recovery/preparation time between matches, oe
- **Answer: Broadcasters pay for exclusive or prime-time slots, so events may be moved to fit the broadcaster's schedule rather than a time that suits fans or performers, which can disadvantage travelling spectators, for example with an unusual weeknight kick-off, or disrupt performers' recovery and preparation time between matches.**

Question 9

- **B1** rising commercial value can push up ticket prices, potentially excluding fans on lower incomes from attending in person, oe
- **B1** coverage moving behind a paywall/subscription can exclude viewers who cannot afford to subscribe, even if the event is more widely broadcast overall, oe
- **Answer: Rising commercial value can push up ticket prices, potentially excluding fans on lower incomes from attending in person, and coverage moving behind a paywall or subscription can exclude viewers who cannot afford to subscribe, even if the event is more widely broadcast overall.**

Question 10

- **B1** increased pressure to win or perform consistently well, to satisfy sponsor expectations and protect their income, oe
- **B1** this pressure can increase stress or risk of burnout, or in extreme cases increase the temptation to behave unethically to meet commercial demands, oe
- **Answer: Increased pressure to win or perform consistently well, to satisfy sponsor expectations and protect their income, which can increase stress or the risk of burnout, or in extreme cases increase the temptation to behave unethically to meet commercial demands.**

Question 11

- **B1** rules can be adjusted to keep the action faster-paced, more predictable in length, or more exciting, to maintain viewer engagement and fit broadcast schedules, oe
- **B1** example, e.g. a shorter-format version of a sport, or a tie-break rule introduced to avoid a very long draw, oe
- **Answer: Rules can be adjusted to keep the action faster-paced, more predictable in length, or more exciting, to maintain viewer engagement and fit broadcast schedules, for example a shorter-format version of a sport, or a tie-break rule introduced to avoid a very long draw.**

Question 12

- (a) **B1** 2025-26
- (a) **Answer: 2025-26.**
- (b) **M1** $(27 - 12) / 12 \times 100$ seen, or equivalent correct method
- (b) **A1** 125%, cao
- (b) **Answer: 125%.**
- (c) **B1** attendance has fallen/declined over the three seasons (from 3,200 to 2,850), oe
- (c) **B1** plausible commercial reason, e.g. matches may be increasingly scheduled at times less convenient for attending in person to suit the broadcast deal, or ticket prices have risen as the league relies more on broadcast revenue, oe
- (c) **Answer: Attendance has fallen over the three seasons, from 3,200 to 2,850. One possible commercial reason is that matches may be increasingly scheduled at times less convenient for attending in person to suit the broadcast deal, or that ticket prices have risen as the league relies more on broadcast revenue.**
- (d) **B1** e.g. it can fund facility improvements, player wages or development programmes, offsetting the effect of lower gate revenue, oe
- (d) **Answer: It can fund facility improvements, player wages or development programmes, offsetting the effect of lower gate revenue.**

Question 13

- **B1** sponsors and broadcasters invest where audiences are largest, since this gives the most exposure/return for their money, so less-watched sports are less commercially attractive, oe
- **B1** consequence, e.g. performers in these sports typically receive less funding for training, facilities or support, oe
- **Answer: Sponsors and broadcasters invest where audiences are largest, since this gives the most exposure and return for their money, so less-watched sports are less commercially attractive; as a result, performers in these sports typically receive less funding for training, facilities or support.**

Question 14

- **B1** one way, e.g. selling merchandise (kit, replica shirts), oe
- **B1** a second, distinct way, e.g. ticket sales, or corporate hospitality packages at events, oe
- **Answer: For example, selling merchandise such as replica kit, and ticket sales or corporate hospitality packages at events.**

Question 15

- **B1** B
- **Answer: B (a broadcaster and a sponsor both investing because of a growing audience)**

Question 16

- **B1** increased funding for grassroots development and facilities across the sport, not just at elite level, oe
- **B1** a higher public profile, which can help grow participation by increasing visibility, oe
- **B1** the ability to attract or retain better performers, coaches or officials through improved funding, oe
- **Answer: Increased funding for grassroots development and facilities, a higher public profile that can help grow participation, and the ability to attract or retain better performers, coaches or officials through improved funding.**

Question 17

- **B1** one example, e.g. the cost of upgrading facilities/lighting to broadcast-standard, oe
- **B1** a second, distinct example, e.g. marketing and media-relations staffing costs, oe
- **Answer: For example, the cost of upgrading facilities or lighting to broadcast standard, and marketing and media-relations staffing costs.**

Question 18

- **B1** benefit: more accurate decision-making, reducing controversial or incorrect calls, oe
- **B1** drawback: can slow the game down or interrupt its flow, affecting the spectator experience, oe
- **Answer: Benefit: more accurate decision-making, reducing controversial or incorrect calls. Drawback: it can slow the game down or interrupt its flow, which affects the spectator experience.**

Question 19

- **B1** competitions that already have larger audiences attract greater commercial investment, since this offers sponsors and broadcasters more exposure, oe
- **B1** this can widen the funding gap over time between already well-established, commercially popular events and less established ones, oe
- **Answer: Competitions that already have larger audiences attract greater commercial investment, since this offers sponsors and broadcasters more exposure, and this can widen the funding gap over time between already well-established, commercially popular events and less established ones.**

Question 20

- **B1** A (the media)
- **Answer: A (the media)**

Question 21

- **Level 3** (7-9): A detailed and coherent response that gives well-explained reasons for accepting the deal and evaluates the impact on the league, its performers and its spectators, applying the discussion specifically to the Riverside Basketball League and the late-weeknight-slot condition. Reaches a balanced, well-reasoned judgement. Sustained, accurate use of socio-cultural terminology throughout.
- **Level 2** (4-6): Some accurate explanation of reasons for accepting the deal and some evaluation of impact, with partial application to the Riverside Basketball League's specific situation, but coverage of league/performers/spectators may be incomplete or underdeveloped, and the evaluation may be one-sided.
- **Level 1** (1-3): Basic or generic statements about commercialisation with little or no application to the Riverside Basketball League's specific situation, and little or no evaluation of impact.
- **Level 0** (0): No relevant content.
- **Indicative content:**
 - Reasons to accept: the significantly increased revenue could fund facility improvements, player wages, coaching and grassroots development across the league (Table 1 already shows broadcast revenue more than doubling over three seasons).
 - Reasons to accept: a bigger broadcast deal raises the league's profile, which can attract further sponsorship (the golden triangle effect explained in Question 4), potentially growing the league's long-term commercial strength.
 - Impact on the league: extra funding could allow investment in facilities, marketing and player development, but the league becomes more financially dependent on the broadcaster and its scheduling demands.
 - Impact on performers: late weeknight matches could disrupt recovery time, sleep and preparation for the following fixtures, potentially affecting performance and increasing injury risk over a long season.
 - Impact on performers: increased league income could still improve wages, support staff and facilities available to performers, a genuine benefit alongside the scheduling cost.
 - Impact on spectators: Table 1 already shows attendance falling as broadcast revenue rises; moving more matches to late weeknights is likely to make attending in person even less convenient for many fans, particularly those travelling or with work/family commitments the next day.
 - Impact on spectators: fans who cannot attend in person may still benefit from wider broadcast access, though this depends on whether the new deal is free-to-air or behind a paywall, which affects who can actually watch.
 - Evaluation: the deal is likely to strengthen the league financially, but the benefits are weighted towards funding and profile, while the costs (matchday inconvenience, player welfare, in-person attendance) fall more on performers and attending spectators.
 - Evaluation: whether the deal is ultimately positive depends on how the league manages the trade-off, for example by limiting the number of matches moved to late slots or investing some of the new revenue in supporting attending fans and performer welfare.