

## Question 22 (continued)

- (c) Analyse the psychological strategies athletes could employ to enhance performance. 10

Athletes can use psychological techniques to prevent anxiety affecting performance. Psychologists use these techniques to prepare the <sup>athletes</sup> mind for competition to ensure their physical performance isn't eroded by negative thought patterns. Techniques include:

- Concentration skills (focusing).

The athlete must be able to switch between the different focusing styles and strategies.

~~For~~ For eg, a basketball player would employ a narrow-external focusing style but then must be able to switch to a broad-external style in case he misses and needs to make a pass. The athlete needs to focus on associative strategies (eg heart rate and respiration) but also disassociative focusing style (eg aware of time left) in order to enhance performance.

- mental rehearsal will ensure the athlete is focusing on the task ahead and is positive, motivated and has a clear idea of the ~~task~~ performance ahead.

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## Question 22 (continued)

- visualisation involves ~~the~~ the athlete ~~to~~ successfully picturing themselves ~~ten~~ in performance for eg making a dive in soccer.
  - step-by-step goals will decrease the likelihood of anxiety as the performances ahead can be broken down into achievable goals.
- Other strategies used to enhance the athlete's performance include:
- progressive muscular relaxation where the athlete tenses the muscle for 5 seconds before relaxing it
  - centred breathing - controlling inspiration and expiration triggers muscular relaxation
  - sports massage relaxes the muscles
  - similarly flotation which involves physically floating in ~~the~~ water
- End of Question 22**
- meditation